

To the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Vice President of the European Commission, the Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy & Enlargement Negotiations, the Commissioner for Trade, the Commissioner for International Cooperation & Development, the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid & Crisis Management.

28 November 2014

Dear Federica Mogherini, Johannes Hahn, Cecilia Malmström, Neven Mimica and Christos Stylianides,

First of all, we would like to congratulate you all on taking office. The new Commission is taking up its duties at a time of important paradigm shifts in development cooperation. In order to remain relevant and make a difference, the EU must adapt and take a comprehensive, integrated, joint approach.

Policy coherence for development

In order to deliver on the post 2015 agenda, policy coherence for development is absolutely essential. Multiple studies show that the development effects of policy coherence may easily outdo those of traditional development cooperation. The EU's mandate on for example, environment, agriculture, fisheries, trade, development cooperation and foreign policy makes the EU the actor "par excellence" to create synergies for the benefit of developing countries. This is the task of the Commission and the EEAS as a whole. We therefore welcome the Commission's new "team working approach" and the strengthened role of the High Representative in coordinating the EU's external action. This should improve policy coherence and facilitate taking a comprehensive approach, working as a team, while fully respecting the competencies of the Commission and its Member States.

In order to make progress on policy coherence for development, we propose to start by concentrating our efforts in the fields of trade, tax and textiles. Good results in these sectors should inspire results in other areas. On trade, we need to ensure that while negotiating the many EU bilateral and regional trade agreements, such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the Economic Partnership Agreements, we take into account the specific needs of developing countries. The EU and the US should explore harmonising the unilateral trade preferences that they grant developing countries to allow them maximum access to our markets. In addition, we need to do our utmost to ensure that progress is made on the WTO's Doha development agenda.

On tax, we could support capacity building in tax collection in developing countries and in line with ongoing work in the relevant international fora assist developing countries that wish to implement international standards. On textiles, we could work to promote sustainable and responsible global supply chains that respect human rights standards, and closely monitor the sustainability compact in Bangladesh, for example. Corporate social responsibility offers great opportunities here, and we look forward to the Commission's proposals for new CSR guidelines.

Post 2015

We must work towards agreeing an ambitious, communicable and compelling set of universal goals that are measurable and implementable so that they make a real difference. The EU should play an active and leading role in the discussions on the means of implementing the post 2015 agenda.

We need to develop a stronger and inclusive global partnership to mobilise action by all countries and stakeholders at all levels based on shared responsibility, respective capacities and mutual accountability, including an appropriate and robust review mechanism. In addition, we should ensure that the future agenda aims at further progress on human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law. It should also reflect a strong EU position on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Innovative approaches will be needed to bring about transformative change. Multi-stakeholder platforms, such as the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, will play a major role. They allow a high level of exchange and collaboration among governments, the private sector, philanthropic foundations, academia and civil society and can achieve higher levels of ambition, innovation and cooperation.

If we want to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development, we have to work simultaneously at different levels, on different topics, with different partners. The EU should continue its pioneering work on innovative financing and partnerships with the private sector to create decent jobs and reduce poverty.

Ebola, refugees and other crisis situations

The number of people dying of Ebola continues to increase rapidly and we need an unprecedented response to defeat this epidemic. The EU will need to reach out and look to the longer term economic and social recovery of the region. If the Ebola crisis has taught us one thing, it is that the disease cannot be fought by one country alone or in one way. The same holds true for many of the crisis situations the world is facing, not least those in the European neighbourhood.

The EU needs to provide a convincing and credible response to worldwide emergencies. The refugee crisis should be placed at the top of the EU's political agenda. We should join hands with other partners in order to tackle the root causes of displacement and to reintegrate refugees. It is important to recognize that displacement should be dealt with not only as a humanitarian problem but

also as a development challenge. We would welcome a multi-DG Task Force on refugees to facilitate a more coherent and coordinated EU approach. In addition, the Commission should consider identifying more resources within the existing budgets that can be made available to find lasting solutions to refugee problems and stabilise the affected regions and host communities.

We should make better use of the instruments that the EU has at its disposal. The EU should be able to act swiftly, especially in situations of fragility to support stability and development.

Conscious of climate change

Climate change is one of the greatest global challenges and the poorest people will be among the most affected. Support for climate change constitutes an important part of EU cooperation budgets. We need to ensure that programming follows aid effectiveness principles and is used in the most cost effective and efficient way to deliver the greatest possible impact, whether in mitigation, adaption or capacity building.

We encourage EU programming to take account and mainstream climate change in all of its development programmes. The EU should look for synergies in its thematic programmes in areas which are particularly vulnerable to climate change or have carbon implications, e.g. water, food security, energy and water, to maximise the co-benefits of support.

Gender

No country can develop if it leaves half of its population behind. Investing in women's rights, gender equality, girls' education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's political and economic empowerment and tackling violence is one of the best strategies for eradicating poverty. You have an opportunity to lead a step change in the EU's level of ambition as you take office and work begins on drafting the next Gender Action Plan. We welcome discussion at the Foreign Affairs/Development Council in December on how the EU can set more ambitious goals for girls and women.

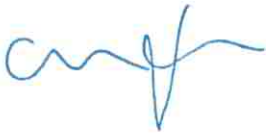
Special efforts are required to ensure that more attention and resources are targeted towards preventing violence against women and girls and tackling the structural root causes of violence. This work needs to be effectively linked to a solid and inclusive monitoring and accountability mechanism, including gender sensitive results indicators, to measure progress towards post-2015 goals.

Aid effectiveness and results

We need to benchmark progress. The new EU results framework is a real step forward. We need to ensure that its implementation has a real impact on the ground. It should also ensure genuine public accountability. In addition, in order to avoid fragmentation and increase efficiency, we need to keep up the momentum on joint programming and document its results.

We look forward to working closely with you on these and other issues in the years to come.

Yours sincerely,



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Minister for Trade and Development Cooperation



Gerd Müller
Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development



Lilianne Ploumen
Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation



Isabella Lövin
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