

SPEAKING POINTS

- The achievement of the MDGs is key to the attainment of poverty eradication, which is the overall goal of our development efforts. The MDGs have therefore become the natural framework for EU monitoring of country performance and have been instrumental in fostering the EU's move towards increased results-orientation in our development assistance.
- We believe that the contribution made by a broad spectrum of participants from civil society in the achievement of the MDGs is of crucial importance. The EU has recognized the importance of this contribution to its development policy and we consider that greater participation by non-governmental organizations, economic operators, social partners and the private sector in the efforts to achieve the MDGs should be encouraged.
- For us it is important to reinforce our partnerships with NGOs, both in Europe and in developing countries, and to support capacity-building among non-State players in the partner countries in order to facilitate their participation both in dialogue on strategies and in the implementation of cooperation programmes.
- Achieving the MDGs is of course in the immediate interest of the people and countries that live in extreme poverty. But in the EU we also see it as part of our global common future. We can even say that achieving the MDGs is in the direct interest of the EU in the context of its security policy. We are convinced that so-called "soft security" should have a central role in global efforts for peace and security. In fact, the whole history of the EU is based on the conviction that prosperity, peace and security are intertwined and cannot be attained by force of arms.
- Our deep commitment towards reaching the MDGs has been confirmed in numerous declarations and conclusions of European Councils. Most recently, in June this year, the 25 Member States of the EU declared that the EU
 - Is concerned about the faltering progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in Africa.
 - Wants to strengthen its leadership role in the fight against global poverty.
 - Will intensify its efforts to fulfill the commitments undertaken in Monterrey, including through the exploration of innovative sources of financing,
 - Will strongly support UN attempts to accelerate progress toward the achievement of the MDGs.

- The EU is therefore looking forward to actively contributing to the 2005 UN Major event to give follow-up to the commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration. We need this event to be a success and to bring momentum to the efforts to reach the targets we have set in the Millennium Declaration. What is needed is concrete action, not more rhetoric.
- The EU has entrusted the European Commission with the task of preparing, on the basis of national reports of EU MS, one single EU MDG report, which will be adopted collectively by the EU. This ensures a coherent reporting by the EU, and links up with the Monterrey follow-up. It also correctly recognizes that some key issues on the way towards the MDGs must be dealt with at EU level not just at the level of our Member States. This applies e.g. to policy coherence (including trade policy), harmonization of development actions, volumes of aid, and support to global initiatives.
- So the objective of the EU contribution to the 2005 Major event, as regards the MDG review, will be twofold:
 - To highlight EU efforts in supporting developing countries to reach the MDGs;
 - To make strong proposals on how to achieve the 2015 objectives, including on issues such as ODA-levels, innovative sources of financing and aid delivery, result-oriented development assistance, coordination and harmonization among donors and policy coherence – all of which are needed to accelerate progress towards reaching the MDGs.
- What we shall not do is to attribute the evolution of a particular MDG to our actions or our financing. If another donor finances the vaccines, the local government pays the doctors, and we build the health centre... who can claim the success of an increased vaccination rate? We are all in this together.
- Nor will the EU report addresses in detail the progress made in and by individual developing countries, which is a subject of the progress reports drafted by these countries themselves, as well as by other actors like the World Bank and the UN.
- What we can and will assess in our report is whether we are living up to the challenge posed by the MDGs to the development community as a whole. The report will provide information on the extent to which the EU has focused its strategies, procedures and instruments on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the realization of the MDGs. It will outline how the EU and its member States contribute to progress towards the MDGs, and list the further measures that are in our opinion necessary to promote the realization of the MDGs.

- A particular focus will be given to accelerating progress towards the MDGs in Africa.
- We will also advocate the elaboration of a plan of action to serve as a really substantial outcome from the Major Event and pledge our full support to working on it together with other donors, international organizations and the developing countries.