

Opening speech by Minister Väyrynen at the Development Cooperation Forum High-Level Symposium in Helsinki

**Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)
Helsinki High-Level Symposium
Preparing for the 2010 DCF in New York**

**Official opening on June 3rd, 2010, Helsinki
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Finnish Minister for Foreign Trade and Development**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address this important High-level Symposium. This conference offers an excellent occasion for highlighting the importance of coherence in development cooperation. This gives us a good start for the upcoming Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) as a part of the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) being held in New York later this month. I am very pleased to notice that this Symposium has gathered so wide and competent audience. I am convinced that together we can advance new and innovative ideas how we can more effectively realize the objectives of International Development Cooperation.

Development Cooperation Forum, DCF, is an excellent forum which gathers together the key actors of development cooperation. DCF was established by the 2005 World Summit mandate by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the first DCF was held in 2008.

I had the pleasure of taking part in the first DCF and I remember the lively and productive discussions that were held.

Since the first DCF, the global economic environment has changed dramatically and the positive development results that we have seen in many parts of the world over the past years are in danger due to the global economic crisis. At the same time we are struggling with two other burning global problems, namely the food and the climate crisis. In a changing environment and at a time like this, DCF has something unique to offer as an authoritative and a universal forum where various stakeholders can come across.

This meeting takes place at an exceptional time, currently and in the future we will encounter many challenges, but we have also stories of success to tell.

In order to be effective in our joint development efforts, in order to reach fast and lasting results, we have to build on the principles of sustainable development, both ecologically, economically and socially.

The foundation for sustainable development was laid down in the Rio United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in (UNCED) in 1992 and reconfirmed at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

Economic growth, which is based on a thriving private sector, domestic and foreign investments and trade, is the main contributor to poverty reduction. There is great potential to boost economic development through regional trade and investments. Economic growth must, of course, be inclusive and it must be accompanied by effective national poverty reduction programmes.

Ecological sustainability, especially the challenges related to climate change, requires urgent joint action on the national, regional and global level. The recent Copenhagen Accord stresses enhanced support for both climate change mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. The Copenhagen Summit was however, only a beginning. We must be ready to go further in order to achieve a more ambitious and binding agreement in Mexico in November 2010.

Social sustainability, including good governance, human rights, democracy and rule of law, is an essential and fundamental pre-requisite for sustainable development. Efforts to reduce poverty can bring fast and lasting results only when our development policies are based also on the social dimension of sustainable development. And here, ownership and engagement of developing countries themselves is essential.

In order to be effective in our joint development efforts we have to improve coordination between all the donors and partners. An important step was taken when the EU and the US agreed in their November 2009 summit to strengthen their cooperation in promoting sustainable development. These two actors provide up to 80 % of all ODA and 85% of all humanitarian assistance in the world. This so called transatlantic partnership between EU and US was initiated by Finland a year ago.

We have to continue on this path and enhance cooperation and coordination between all actors in development policy. In our opinion, we must strive for greater convergence in the development policies of all the donors and the partners.

On one hand the traditional, Northern donors, should do more in infrastructure, productive sectors and private sector development. On the other hand, new emerging donors in the South-South cooperation could and should be more active in primary education, health and other social sectors where they have, based on their own recent history, invaluable experience and expertise.

The Southern donors should also follow the example of the Northern donors by providing more grant aid and by giving the least developed countries a full quota and tariff free access to their growing domestic markets.

And, whatever the division of labour among donors will be, we all should follow the principles of broad-based sustainable development, which we have committed ourselves to in several summit meetings.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to see so high-level participation to this Symposium. I hope this Helsinki Symposium will be an important step forward and will give positive boost for the whole international community. Active participation of all the relevant stake-holders is crucial, when preparing the coming meetings in New York in June-July but also the MDG Summit taking place in September. I wish all the success and fruitful discussions for this meeting.