



Closing remarks by
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PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC
HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM on “WORKING TOGETHER TO
INCREASE THE DEVELOPMENT IMPACT OF AID”
Luxembourg, 19 October 2011

Honorable Minister Marie-Josée Jacobs,
Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We have come to the end of the Symposium. Let me thank the Government of Luxembourg once again for having hosted this meeting. My gratitude also goes to our moderators and panelists, who have so ably steered very lively discussions. I also wish to thank you all for your thoughtful, passionate and insightful interventions. May I take this opportunity to call on you to applaud our colleagues and conference assistants of Luxembourg and UNDESA, who have worked tirelessly to ensure the success of this meeting.

Our theme – increasing the development impact of aid – was imperative, timely and opportune, particularly given the current world economic circumstances. We debated the various ways of using aid and how aid impacts on peoples' lives. There was a broad range of views on

what works best and on what should be done to generate sustained development progress.

From the discussions, it was clear that there are concerns about the negative impact of the world economic situation on aid levels and sustainability. In addition, some are worried that the interest in the role of the private sector or South-South cooperation may signal a retreat in North-South commitments.

Listening to you over the last two days, I was nonetheless struck by your strong shared commitment to the development of the poorest countries. This in itself signaled the strength of the Global Partnership for Development agreed upon at UN conferences and summits.

I was also happy with the many simple and practical solutions you proposed. Your brilliant ideas, however, should not end here, but be piloted and carried forward.

From my own perspective, as President of the Economic and Social Council, I now wish to highlight a few simple messages on the responsibilities of the DCF in maximizing the impact of development cooperation.

First, the DCF should continue to keep under review aid commitments. However innovative our solutions may be, a fair and adequate level of aid is indispensable. By reviewing trends in development cooperation, the DCF

should encourage stakeholders to come up with a roadmap and concrete steps for meeting existing commitments.

Second, the DCF should continue to safeguard internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, in development cooperation. The DCF needs to look at various aspects of development cooperation from the angle of the MDGs.

Leveraging aid to mobilize other kinds of development finance will only be meaningful if sufficient resources that spur improvements in people's lives can be mobilized. This is the end goal of investment. Indeed, this is the ultimate objective of well functioning tax systems and inclusive financial sectors.

Third, the DCF needs to look at the factors undermining the impact of aid such as the cost of policy incoherence. We need a strong global process to address policy coherence for development on an on-going basis. The DCF can contribute to that process by keeping all stakeholders alert about practices that jeopardize the results of aid.

Fourth, the DCF has a critical role in helping realize the UN global partnership for development. The multi-stakeholder nature of the DCF and its connection to other key fora, for example the Financing for Development and OECD processes, make it a natural centre of gravity, around which solidarity with developing countries can take concrete shape.

Fifth, the DCF should spearhead the most innovative reflection on development cooperation. It is the platform to share and analyze good practices, express and address concerns, as well as to build trust and agreement across the range of development cooperation actors. It has to tackle difficult issues. We just did this here in Luxembourg. We also did this on mutual accountability, through surveys and studies which feed into national discussions. We will also do it again when we look at the implications of the concept of sustainable development for development cooperation.

The Busan high-level forum to be held next month is expected to give new impetus to the efforts to make aid more effective, and to root them in country level dynamics and a broader development focus. The DCF will review its outcome from the point of view of all stakeholders, within or outside the OECD/DAC process, to gauge the implications of Busan.

As the Busan Forum will take place on the heels of the Rio plus 20 Conference, the DCF is also poised to reflect on whether and how to reshape development cooperation in the context of sustainable development.

Furthermore, the review of UN operational activities for development by the UN General Assembly next year will elicit evidence on the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the UN system.

Moving ahead, several milestones are envisaged. In Busan, a DCF side event will be organized to project the impact of the Rio plus 20 for

development cooperation. We also plan to organize another policy-oriented symposium in the first quarter of 2012 around the same subject.

I also wish to state that major studies regarding the catalytic role of aid and south-south cooperation are on the way. I am confident that they will shed light on issues that are rarely looked at elsewhere. The confluence of these streams will be the backbone of the DCF in June 2012.

As we fast approach the 2012 DCF, I would like to invite all of you to join the DCF process. An old African saying goes “When you run alone, you run fast. When you run together, you run far”. I am sure that together, we will run very far and together we will make the 2012 DCF a major success.

I thank you.