Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

H.E. Thomas Mayr-Harting
Head of Delegation
Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

at the Second Committee of UNGA 67
General Debate

United Nations
New York
8 October 2012

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Acceding Country Croatia*, the Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland[1] and Serbia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

The General Debate of the Second Committee of the 67th General Assembly takes place against a backdrop of a world that is more complex than ever, where globalization is changing attitudes and expectations, and when questions continue to be raised on the role of multilateralism.

The European Union and its Member States remain committed to multilateralism and continue to believe that the Second Committee provides an essential venue to discuss and provide helpful input to many important issues, especially at a time when poverty still remains a major challenge. In this regard it is important for the work of the Second Committee to build on recent discussions and outcomes, such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the substantive session of ECOSOC in July. Our deliberations should also take into consideration the debates and outcomes reached in other relevant fora, such as the upcoming annual meetings of the Bretton Woods Institutions, and the recent G8 and G20 meetings.

Our engagement over the coming year will be guided by our efforts to achieve a successful post 2015 development framework. We will focus on the preparation of the **2013 special event on the MDG review**, as well as the follow-up to the **UN Conference on Sustainable Development** in Rio.

Our commitment towards the **achievement of the MDGs** remains unwavering and we will continue to play our full role in this collective endeavour. The MDGs have been a success story. They have heightened the political focus on poverty and indeed, the number of people living in absolute poverty has decreased by 600 million since 1990. The EU and its Member States have been the MDGs' greatest supporter: we are collectively the largest provider of official development assistance; the EU is also the largest trading partner of developing countries, particularly Least Developed Countries, and the largest economy giving duty- and quota-free access to Least Developed Countries. However, we all recognise that the MDGs remain unfinished business and our immediate priority has to be one last and committed push to meet the existing MDGs. We will continue to press hard right up to the 2015 deadline, especially in countries and sectors most off-track.

On the **post 2015 UN Development agenda**, we welcome the comprehensive report of the UN System Task Team released in June, and the start of a widespread consultation process. We also believe that the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that just met, will provide a useful impetus for a successful preparation of the 2013 MDG Special

* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
[1] Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

event. We very much agree that it would be essential for the work of the HLP and of the working group on SDGs to inform each other in order to ensure both processes are coherent and mutually reinforcing.

As regards **sustainable development**, the EU and its Member States is highly committed to the **implementation of all the undertakings** adopted at the Rio+20 Conference on the inclusive green economy, the priority areas for action, the elaboration of Sustainable Development Goals, the financing strategy for sustainable development and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

On Climate Change the EU welcomes the Durban agreement as an outcome that provides a balanced political dynamic that urges all Parties to accelerate the work.

Regarding trade and development instruments, the EU will work on further improving them. The new EU Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) will increase the focus of unilateral preferences on countries most in need**.** The EU and its Member States will strive to keep a steady flow of Aid for Trade and try to focus more on LDCs, the private sector and domestic reform. We will continue to deepen our bilateral and regional trade relations with developing countries through Economic Partnership Agreements and Free-Trade Agreements; and at multilateral level we remain committed to the Doha Development Agenda and to a multilateral deal on Trade Facilitation.

We will also attach the highest priority to ensure policy **coherence and consistency, not only between the follow up to Rio+20, the post-2015 development agenda, and the Financing for Development process,** but also with many other processes including broader ones such as those relating to democracy, rule of law, human rights, gender equality, empowerment of women, population and development, and migration and development.

Mr Chairman,

The **Financing for Development** item will give us the opportunity to restate our commitment in this respect. The Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration are landmark documents for the global partnership within which the international community must work to reach the MDGs. As the range of financing sources for the post 2015 development agenda and the implementation of the Rio outcomes are similar, an integrated approach to the financing and other means of implementation of both processes, as well as other processes such as climate change and bio-diversity finance, should be pursued. Coherence and non duplication of efforts with regard to the Financing for Development process should be ensured.

The cornerstone of the FfD framework is that domestic resources remain the primary source of finance and domestic policies are key to reaching development goals. International cooperation on taxation and other policy issues complements domestic action, unlocking contributions from private investment and innovative financing. The EU is committed to further work in the area of innovative financing with significant revenue generation potential.

In regard to international support, we believe that a "beyond-aid" approach with shared responsibilities within the international community should be promoted, building on the progress made at the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. **Aid effectiveness** remains one of the key pillars of development cooperation to which the EU and its Member States are firmly committed, and we call on all development partners, traditional and emerging, to use their financial development contributions and development cooperation policies in line with the Busan principles. In this regard the role and responsibilities of emerging economies should reflect their growing weight in the global economy.

Last but not least we should ensure that UN financial resources are managed efficiently and effectively; we therefore attach great importance to the 'Delivering as One' process and the **United Nations Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review**. The QCPR offers an important opportunity to further enhance the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of UN operational activities for development. At a time of strained national budgets, when all donors need to make special efforts to make good on their ODA commitments, it is more than ever necessary to use a value for money approach using optimally the resources to achieve planned outcomes. We recognize that the UN system is making efforts to ensure that it plays its part and it can be assured of full support from the side of the EU to meet these challenges.

Mr Chairman,

We do not underestimate the difficulties in addressing these issues in the weeks ahead, and the results and follow-up to Rio+20, as well as the shaping up of the post 2015 framework, will be crucial in this regard.

We hope that we will continue on the path of improving our working methods and further advance our standing efforts to ensure relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of our Committee. We have made concrete proposals in this regard during the informal consultation of 4 October.

We look forward to fruitful and constructive exchanges in the Second Committee, and would like to give you assurance of our full support in our collective endeavours.

Thank you.