



The President
of the
Economic and Social Council

Check against delivery

**Statement by
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PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**OPENING ADDRESS TO THE 2010 DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM
New York, 29 June 2010**

Excellencies,
Distinguished Ministers,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the second high-level Development Cooperation Forum. This year's forum comes at a time when a confluence of crises still threatens to derail the development process. Since the first DCF in 2008, the global economic landscape and the global aid architecture have both changed dramatically.

Now more than ever, the role of aid and other development financing are particularly significant in ensuring progress towards the MDGs. Political momentum and a focus on turning pledges into implementation are urgently needed. All development cooperation actors have to urgently join forces to make progress towards achieving the MDGs. This progress has to come fast and have an impact on the lives of the many poor people in dire need for change.

In this new landscape, the ECOSOC DCF has a unique value as a universal and authoritative forum where the various stakeholders can come together. While the forum has come a long way since it was established as a new ECOSOC

mechanism at the World Summit in 2005, it has an even greater role to play in this endeavour today:

Allow me to briefly illustrate what the forum has achieved so far:

First, with its various high-level preparatory Symposia and the first DCF in 2008, the forum successfully positioned itself as a well-recognized multi-stakeholder platform for frank policy dialogue on key challenges in international development cooperation. It regularly attracts senior development cooperation officials from both developed and developing countries and brings them on one table with civil society organizations and representatives of parliaments and local governments. This builds on a unique consultative process and continued partnerships with the key players in development cooperation and effectiveness.

Second, the DCF managed to have a broad impact on the global debate on development cooperation by raising important issues of aid allocation, conditionality, multi-year predictability and value for money in addition to the principles of aid effectiveness. These are issues of key concern to developing countries and their debate helps to rectify imbalances in the aid relationships. The importance of the forum as a focal point for such holistic consideration of development cooperation within the United Nations was also re-emphasized in the Doha Follow-up Conference on Financing for Development.

Third, against this backdrop, and building on analytical work and engagement with DCF stakeholders and practitioners on the ground, the DCF has moved towards facilitating a process of developing principles for enhanced development impact. This is being pursued in consultation with other aid effectiveness processes in order to avoid duplication and to use potential synergies. This process is most advanced in the areas of mutual accountability in development cooperation, as well as with regard to its gender impact.

For example, in the context of the DCF, DESA conducted a survey on status and progress of mechanisms that ensure accountability of development cooperation actors on their commitments made at country level. The results led to a set of recommendations that should be of value to all Member States, irrespective of their national needs and realities.

Fourth, and last point, knowledge of what works and what does not in development cooperation is important. Therefore, the DCF promotes peer-learning and exchange of lessons learned in formulating, supporting and implementing national development strategies. This can help actors to prioritize and ‘walk the talk’ based on well-informed decisions. This is becoming increasingly challenging, given the dynamic aid landscape and the increased role of non-aid flows for development. The forum works closely with a range of agencies and organizations to ensure a robust feedback loop of new evidence between the country and local levels and the global arena. Your deliberations during these two days will thus reverberate to the country level.

These four comparative advantages of the forum – its multi-stakeholder nature, its impact on global policy dialogue, its role in the development of principles and a spirited exchange between local, national and global level – present its key assets. It is at the discretion of the stakeholders to make use of these components to better deliver on the broad responsibility we all face together.

The preparatory phase of the 2010 DCF has clearly indicated that we need to promote development cooperation in its current context of crisis or slow recovery. While we need to translate our aid quantity and quality commitments into action, we also have to make sure that the reduction of Gross National Income in donor countries does not negatively affect overall ODA. I encourage you to use the forum in its capacity as a global mechanism to promote mutual accountability, notably also on issues of ensuring behavioural change, for example towards using country systems, budget support and aid predictability.

Delivering on these commitments, however, will not have the expected impact unless mutually supportive national policies on trade, debt, investment, technology, climate change, food security, migration and systemic issues are well in place. Equally, the impact of all relevant development cooperation actors – including Southern providers, foundations and civil society organizations – needs to be maximized.

The second DCF represents a unique opportunity to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of development cooperation as a major signpost for those regions and groups most in need for our help, but also for countries with pockets of poverty and those in fragile and post-conflict situations.

The coming two days represent an opportunity we can not miss to develop key recommendations towards achieving the MDGs on the basis of more and better development cooperation.

I will capture the key messages of your discussions throughout the DCF in a Summary, which will also serve as an important input of the DCF into the negotiations for the MDG Summit. It will also inform the fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Seoul in 2011.

Let us use today and tomorrow to come up with concrete action plans and policy recommendations in enhancing the effectiveness and coherence of development cooperation.

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