



UN Financing for Development (FFD) Forum
Draft intervention by Commissioner Neven Mimica
Monday, 18 April 2016, New York

Thank you Mr Chairman.

- I have the pleasure to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.
- This inaugural meeting of the Forum on Financing for Development is tasked with a significant mission – to pave the way for a successful High Level Political Forum in July.
- We have to ensure systematic follow-up of the Addis Ababa conference of July 2015, also as concerns the Means of Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The EU attaches great importance to ensuring full coherence and coordination between the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The work that will take place in this Forum over the next four days will be instrumental in this regard.
- A key element and true value added of the Addis Agenda is that it goes *beyond finance*. It sets out a range of means: domestic, international, public and private, to support the Sustainable Development Goals. It underlines the importance of policies as diverse as good governance, an enabling domestic environment, trade, private sector engagement, gender equality – as well as an enabling international environment.
- Allow me to dwell on this last point: the Addis Agenda rightly places domestic resource mobilisation, including the fight against illicit financial flows, tax evasion and tax avoidance and enabling national policies at the heart of the action. This will require a supportive international environment. All actors will need to play their part and we need to raise our level of ambition. The challenges facing us and the solutions needed will require a coherent and holistic response.

Mr Chairman,

- The European Union is committed to fully playing its part to implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We will also assist others in their efforts in the spirit of a strong global partnership.
- The EU and its Member States remain the largest provider of Official Development Assistance in the world. We increased our Official Development Assistance to EUR 68 billion in 2015. This is a 15% increase from 2014. I am personally committed to continuing with ambitious financial support to our partner countries.
- Official Development Assistance is an important tool we have at our disposal to finance the new global agenda. It may not be the most important one, but it does have a catalytic effect when addressing major challenges that we are confronted with: climate change, fragility, protection of human right - and the migration challenge, which is particularly pressing in Europe today. In 2015, the EU indeed significantly increased both its support to refugees, as well as its development aid to developing countries.
- In addition and in line with the Addis Agenda, the EU is already supporting countries with other efforts. I am referring to domestic resource mobilisation and also involving the private sector.
- We are committed to reflecting the change of paradigm of the Addis and 2030 Agendas and the universality of the SDGs in our work. Many of our internal and external policies and actions are already making concrete contributions to this end.
- For example, with ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the EU has driven the international efforts to decarbonise the economy and promote sustainable development. In addition to domestic action, the EU and its Member States are actively scaling up support for low carbon and climate resilient development. Together, we accounted for almost 90% of the EUR

17 billion sovereign climate finance announcements made in the run-up to the Paris Climate Agreement.

- Another example of early implementation of the Addis commitments is our approach on domestic resource mobilisation, which I refer to as '*Collect More – Spend Better*'. We plan to support developing countries' efforts to improve their tax systems, without increasing the tax burden on the poor.
- The EU is taking action in other areas, including supporting private sector in developing countries, leveraging investment through blending and promoting the role of girls and women in development.
- Our ambition for the months ahead is to go even further. EU development policy needs to be able to respond effectively to the Addis and 2030 Agendas. I regard a new consensus on development at EU level as an essential element to shape EU policies and cooperation with partner countries to deliver on the SDGs. I personally attach great importance to getting this process right. I believe that a broad, open and inclusive consultation, where all stakeholders participate would be an essential element of this process.

Mr Chairman,

Allow me to dedicate the final part of my intervention to the issue of follow up and review. This is a vital aspect, on which this Forum is uniquely placed to ensure real progress.

- The Addis Agenda is a means to an end; it is about supporting countries to successfully implement the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. For the 17 goals to be achieved we must ensure that the follow-up and review processes of these two Agendas are coherent and mutually supportive.
- The annual Financing for Development Forum should be comprehensive. It should be *the* place to take stock and review, all aspects of the Addis Agenda and Agenda 2030 Means of Implementation while allowing for broad participation. Its outcome should feed into the High Level Political Forum.

- The annual report by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force will make a valuable contribution to discussions on follow-up of the means of implementation. It should also feed into the Financing for Development Forum. This year's report is a strong start. I wish to express our thanks to its drafters and welcome the general approach it describes. The report should bring together analysis from different actors, identify gaps, best practices, and make recommendations for this Forum to consider.

Mr Chairman,

The Sustainable Development Goals - supported by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda - provide us with an ambitious framework to address the challenges of our generation and achieve long-term sustainable development. We must all re-double our efforts to turn our commitments into actions, keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way. You can count on the European Union to be a fully committed partner in this endeavour.

Thank you.