



Intervention by Denmark's State Secretary for Development Policy, Trine Rask Thygesen, at the Africa Regional Review Meeting, Ministerial Dialogue: Lessons Learned and Building Back Better

- Dear Excellencies, dear colleagues. I am pleased to attend today's important discussions on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the African region.
- As we have witnessed throughout today's interventions, there is no doubt that the **Least Developed Countries** – many of the countries represented here today – are among those **hit the hardest** by the many facets of the pandemic.
- Apart from the immediate health risks, Covid-19 is causing rising numbers of unemployed people, especially among women and youth, stagnant trade and investment flows, increases in poverty and food insecurity as well as overburdened health systems.
- On top of this, many of the Least Developed Countries are also severely impacted by **conflicts and climate change**.
- But let me be very clear: **These are not your challenges – these are our challenges**. As a long-standing and committed partner, Denmark is taking our share of this joint responsibility seriously.
- For more than 40 years, Denmark has been demonstrating solidarity and delivered on the UN goal to commit minimum **0.7 pct. of GNI** in development

aid. We may be a small country. But we are committed to building a more fair, equal and green world.

- In 2020, Denmark reprioritized 1 billion DKK to the Covid-19 crisis in developing countries in **three packages**; first two DKK 615 million focused on projects supporting the acute health crisis. The third package DKK 385 million focused on derived consequences e.g. education, SRHR, and human rights while also trying to build sustainable economies.
- Furthermore, Denmark supports international collaboration to ensure fair and equal access to safe and effective vaccines. Through the EU, Denmark has from the onset supported the **COVAX facility** and secured financing. The EU has contributed 500 million Euro to the facility in grants, loans and guaranties.
- Denmark has also supported the **COVAX facility as a direct donor** with 50 million DKK to purchase vaccines, 50 million to UNICEF Supplies for efficient and safe distribution, and 40 million to the World Bank's initiative on electrification of health clinics in Africa with renewable energy [ESMAP].
- More than ever, we need to work together to ensure that we **build back a better, greener and more equal world** from the pandemic – for everyone, not least those furthest behind.
- Why Denmark has taken global lead on **SDG7** and will continue to work for **sustainable energy for all**. Green investments are not only good for our climate. They also create jobs, providing better lives, and stronger societies. This is the future we believe in.

- On a final note, I would like to highlight that Denmark is in the process of preparing a **new development cooperation strategy**. Africa already is and will remain our key geographical focus with an even stronger emphasis.