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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

On: 16 May 2019

To: Delegations

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Subject: Policy Coherence for Development (PCD)
- Council conclusions (16 May 2019)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), as adopted by the Council at its 3690th meeting held on 16 May 2019.

ANNEX

Council conclusions on Policy Coherence for Development (PCD)

1. The Council confirms the Union's commitment to Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) and recalls the Treaty obligation to take into account the objectives of development cooperation in all internal and external policies which are likely to affect developing countries. The Council underlines the importance of PCD as a fundamental part of the EU's contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Council further underlines that a coherent and coordinated approach to EU external action will be important also for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda globally¹.
2. Against that background, the Council welcomes the 2019 EU Report on PCD, which takes stock of progress made concerning PCD over the period 2015-2018 both in the Member States and at EU level². The Council also welcomes the External Evaluation of the EU's PCD (2009-2016), as well as the Commission's follow up³.
3. The Council commends the Commission for integrating PCD in its overall work on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and welcomes efforts to increase synergies between different sectoral EU policies. The Council welcomes the new approach to PCD, particularly its broadened coverage beyond the five traditional strategic challenges (trade and finance, climate change, food security, migration and security). In this context, the Council calls on the Commission to further expand the use of PCD screening in relevant future policy initiatives. The Council also calls on the Commission to take concrete measures to strengthen PCD in EU sectoral policies, reflecting the wider scope and universal nature of the 2030 Agenda and the interlinkages between the SDGs. The Council invites the Commission to continue its efforts and to regularly inform the Council on progress.

¹ The new European Consensus on Development (9459/17) and the Global Strategy on the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (13202/16)

² 5806/19

³ 6961/19 - SWD (2019) 88 final

4. The Council recognises the added value of PCD as an important means for achieving the SDGs and a substantial contribution to the broader objective of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD), and considers that PCD should continue to receive an important level of attention. The Council notes the increased clarity brought to the PCD concept in the Commission report, and welcomes further analysis and awareness raising on the interrelation between PCD and PCSD. The fulfilment of the SDGs requires the formulation, adequate budgeting for and regular assessment of sound policies, taking into account any possible impacts on developing countries from the outset of their formulation.
5. The implementation of PCD rests on the shared ownership and responsibility of all EU actors including the Member States. The Council acknowledges that political will is key to achieve PCD and reiterates its political engagement to promote whole-of-government approaches, to ensure political oversight and coordination efforts at all levels, and to support evidence-based policy formulation and decision making for SDG implementation. Strong coordination mechanisms and tools remain essential at both EU and Member States levels to scrutinise policies and effectively apply PCD in the context of the EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Council also underlines the importance of enhanced dialogue with all relevant stakeholders such as local and regional authorities, civil society, private sector and international organisations such as the OECD.
6. While acknowledging the progress made concerning PCD, the Council calls for further efforts to ensure that non-development policies take into account the development objectives of partner countries, thereby minimising negative impacts. At the same time, the Council underlines the need to focus on sustainability, create win-win situations and enhance the positive impact of EU policies on developing countries, including by promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between policies.

7. The Council calls on the Commission services, the EEAS and the Member States to make better and systematic use of existing tools and mechanisms, in particular ex-ante assessments⁴, at the initial stages of all relevant policy and legislative proposals. Assessments should take into account transboundary effects before, during and after the implementation of policy and legislative proposals.
8. The role of EU delegations, in close cooperation with Member States' embassies, remains pivotal in monitoring PCD efforts and EU policies in partner countries. The Council encourages the Member States, the Commission services and the EEAS to improve outreach on PCD, to make their relevant efforts more visible and, when appropriate, to include PCD in their political dialogue with partner countries.
9. The Council welcomes the close links between the 2019 EU Report on PCD and the Reflection Paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030". PCD should remain a key element in the overall EU efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. The Council welcomes the integration of the PCD Report as part of the comprehensive EU reporting on its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs and looks forward to the first reporting at the HLPF in 2019.

⁴ Such as Regulatory Impact Assessments and Environmental and Social Impact Analysis.