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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: The Overarching Post 2015 Agenda
- Council Conclusions

At its meeting on 25 June 2013, the Council adopted the Council Conclusions on the Overarching Post 2015 Agenda set out in the Annex to this note.

Council Conclusions
The Overarching Post 2015 Agenda

1. The world has undergone enormous change in recent years, and is facing numerous interrelated global challenges; foremost are the eradication of poverty and achievement of sustainable development in all its three dimensions. The challenges are of such magnitude and complexity that they demand a global political commitment and coordinated and coherent action by all countries, at every level and across different policy areas, including addressing inequalities within and among countries. In this context, engaging in the wider post 2015 agenda including agreeing a post 2015 framework, is a high priority for the European Union (EU) and its Member States, which stand ready to engage in an open and constructive dialogue.
2. The Council recalls relevant previous conclusions¹ and welcomes the Commission Communication "A Decent Life For All: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future."²
3. The post-2015 process should reinforce the international community's commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development and set out a single comprehensive and coherent framework for effective delivery and results at all levels. The framework should be defined around a single set of global goals in order to drive action in all countries.

¹ Doc. 15477/1/12 REV 1; doc. 9369/12; doc. 11080/10.

² Doc. 7075/13 - COM(2013) 92 final.

4. The EU and its Member States reiterate their commitment to play a full and active role in the work to define the post-2015 framework and to work inclusively with all partners, including civil society, scientific and knowledge institutions, local authorities, the private sector and social partners, in considering priority areas for the framework. The dynamism and innovative capacity of the private sector should be utilized to realize the transformation necessary for sustainable development. The Council encourages the EU and its Member States, including EU Delegations in third countries, to continue to engage in regular dialogue and outreach on these issues.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Rio +20 follow-up

5. The EU and its Member States reaffirm their commitment to the Millennium Declaration and the outcome document of the 2010 Summit on the MDGs and stress that they remain committed to doing their utmost to help achieve the MDGs by 2015, including through the implementation of the Agenda for Change. The EU and its Member States also call on all partners to redouble their efforts to support the achievement of the MDGs.
6. The MDGs have made an enormous contribution in raising public awareness, increasing political will and mobilising resources for the fight to end poverty. While substantial progress has been made, the achievement of the MDGs has been unevenly distributed, not only between countries but also within countries. Furthermore, the achievement of the MDGs continues to face considerable challenges, especially in fragile and conflict-affected states, as well as in least developed countries (LDCs).
7. The Council underlines the importance of the ‘United Nations Special Event to follow up on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs’ (New York, September 2013), which should strengthen the impetus for the achievement of the MDGs and provide further guidance for the elaboration of an overarching post-2015 framework.

8. A key priority for Member States is to respect the EU's formal undertaking to collectively commit 0.7% of GNI to official development assistance by 2015, thus making a decisive step towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The EU and its Member States reaffirm all their individual and collective ODA commitments, taking into account the exceptional budgetary circumstances.
9. Given the magnitude of the challenges faced, the EU and its Member States resolve to take concrete measures to implement existing sustainable development commitments, including those contained in the Rio+20 outcome document "The Future We Want", through a range of policies and actions at all levels.
10. The EU and its Member States reaffirm that an inclusive and equitable green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication is one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development and underline their commitment in this regard through their strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020) and through other relevant policies and in particular through the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. It is also necessary in the above context to respect planetary boundaries, tackle the unsustainable use and management of natural resources, ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, pollution, climate change and natural disasters, as well as to address inequalities, resilience to stress and external shocks and to promote social inclusion, social protection floors and decent work for all.
11. The EU and its Member States reiterate their strong resolve to support all efforts to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development, while enhancing the role of civil society, in particular through the establishment of the High Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF), the reform of ECOSOC and the establishment of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) with universal membership, as a significant step towards the long term objective of transforming UNEP into a specialised UN agency.

12. The Council stresses the importance of fully operationalising the 10-year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10 YFP) as a major tool for accelerating the change of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and underlines the importance of implementing the Rio+20 commitments such as on marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, marine debris and on land degradation.
13. In order to better reflect the multidimensional nature of poverty eradication and sustainable development, the EU and its Member States reaffirm the need to work with relevant organisations to look beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to broader measures of progress, including social and natural capital.
14. The Council highlights the importance of reflecting full environmental and social costs in prices, as well as the gradual elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies that are incompatible with sustainable development, including for fossil fuels.

Towards an overarching post-2015 framework

15. The Council underlines that the Millennium Declaration and the Rio +20 outcome remain central reference documents when considering a post-2015 framework. The Council stresses that the eradication of poverty in all its dimensions and the promotion of sustainable development are intrinsically linked, mutually reinforcing and should be integrated into a single overarching post 2015 framework as proposed by the Commission in its recent Communication. The Council underlines the need to fully integrate all relevant international processes, in particular the work on the Review of the MDGs and the work of the Open Working Group for the elaboration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into one coherent process.

16. The Council emphasises that the framework should recognise that poverty eradication and sustainable development are mutually reinforcing and interlinked and therefore should:
- a) Work towards sustainable development to eradicate poverty in all its dimensions, including ending extreme poverty in a single generation, and to ensure sustainable prosperity and well-being of all people within planetary boundaries.
 - b) Integrate the three interrelated dimensions of sustainable development, (economic, social and environmental) in a balanced way to ensure:
 - basic living standards, including food and nutrition security, health, education, water and sanitation, sustainable energy, decent work and social protection floors for all;
 - the promotion of the drivers of green economy in the context of sustainable development, including structural economic transformation;
 - the sustainable use, management and protection of natural resources and the ecosystem services they provide.
 - c) Be global in aspiration and coverage and universally applicable, while being based on national ownership and taking into account different national contexts, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.
 - d) Build on the progress made with the current MDGs and ensure the achievement of existing goals as well as addressing any remaining gaps. It should also be consistent with and supportive of other international commitments, goals and targets such as on climate change and biodiversity loss.

- e) Ensure a rights-based approach encompassing all human rights. It should also address justice, equality and equity, good governance, democracy and the rule of law, with a strong focus on the empowerment and rights of women and girls and gender equality, and on preventing and combating violence against women as essential preconditions for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, as well as important values and objectives in themselves. We remain committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences and in this context sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- f) Recognise the impossibility of achieving sustainable development in contexts of fragility, violence and armed conflict and the importance of conflict prevention in this regard, and address peace and security and freedom from violence, and the specific needs of fragile states and countries affected by conflict or in a post-conflict situation, building on the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and the New Deal.
- g) Consist of a single set of clear goals, which are ambitious, evidence-based, achievable, action-oriented, limited in number and easy to communicate, with measurable targets and indicators which are both qualitative and quantitative and which should be reviewed and monitored to ensure transparency and accountability.
- h) Be developed and implemented in close partnership with all stakeholders, including the private sector, in a way that ensures that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard and that their needs are prioritised.
- i) Have a focused timeframe with provision for action in the medium term to 2030 and have a coherent longer term vision.

17. The Council further emphasises that:

- a) Policy coherence at all levels and, in particular, Policy Coherence for Development, need to be enhanced across all sectors, including in their measurability, to better achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development.
- b) The needs and development aspirations of developing countries including least developed countries, small island developing states and landlocked developing countries are fully reflected in the framework.
- c) There is a need for a common and comprehensive approach to financing for development beyond 2015. It will be important to address, in a coherent and comprehensive manner, relevant international processes relating to finance, role of ODA, innovative sources of financing, financial regulation and illicit financial flows, technology transfer, capacity building, trade and those processes undertaken in the context of climate change, biodiversity and desertification. It will also be important to bear in mind the outcome from Rio +20 on a process proposing options for a financing strategy for sustainable development.
- d) The mobilisation of all resources, public and private, domestic and international and their effective and innovative use will be vital for the successful development and implementation of the framework.
- e) The new framework should reflect the existing commitments to improve aid and development effectiveness agreed at the High Level Forums in Rome, Paris, Accra and Busan.

Next Steps

18. The EU and its Member States commit to playing an active and constructive role in all on-going processes and to support their convergence in order to achieve a single overarching post 2015 framework.
19. The Council welcomes the progress in the elaboration of an overarching post 2015 framework and the work of the UN system, that of the UNSG High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda, the Open Working Group on SDG's and the regional, national and thematic consultations led by the UN system, as important inputs to the development of the framework.
20. The EU and its Member States will continue to further develop priority areas, taking into account the proposals outlined in the Commission Communication and proposals by other partners.
21. The Council will continue to follow and engage in the international processes and define and adapt, as necessary, the position of the EU and its Member States towards an overarching post 2015 agenda.