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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Council Conclusions on the EU common position for the First High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation in Mexico City on 15-16 April 2014

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At its meeting on 17 March 2014, the Council adopted the Council Conclusions set out in the annex to this note.

Council Conclusions on the EU common position for the First High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (Mexico City on 15-16 April 2014)

1. The establishment of the Global Partnership marks a further important step in the shift from aid to development effectiveness. The Council recalls the core EU positions and commitments on this agenda set out in previous Conclusions<sup>1</sup>, which remain valid. The EU and its Member States underline the importance of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in general and in particular of the First High Level Meeting (HLM) in Mexico City on 15-16 April 2014.
2. The Council recognises that inclusiveness is one of the unique strengths of the Global Partnership and encourages the active involvement of emerging economies and private sector representatives and the continued participation of civil society, local authorities and parliaments, in all elements of the HLM and the Global Partnership. The Council also notes that respect for human rights and gender equality are at the core of the Global Partnership.
3. The Global Partnership should continue to focus attention on boosting the impact of development cooperation in Low Income Countries (LICs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and fragile states. Recognising that the majority of the world's poor now live in Middle Income Countries (MICs), a sustainable approach to addressing the concerns of the poorest and most vulnerable must continue to include MICs at the heart of discussions.

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<sup>1</sup> Council Conclusions on “The EU Common Position for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4, Busan, 29 November – 1 December 2011), Doc. 16773/11.

### *Links to the post-2015 agenda*

4. The Council notes that the Global Partnership could make an important contribution to the post-2015 agenda, offering a more effective means of implementation. In order to achieve effective development outcomes, the implementation of the post-2015 agenda should integrate the Busan principles of country ownership, inclusive development partnerships, transparency and mutual accountability, and focus on results.
5. As the elaboration of the post-2015 agenda continues, experience from the Global Partnership could provide valuable input for the development of measurable targets and monitoring mechanisms at country and global levels.

### *Implementation of EU commitments for Busan*<sup>2</sup>

6. The EU and its Member States are strongly committed to Policy Coherence for Development to ensure that their policies across all sectors are consistent with development objectives.
7. The EU and its Member States have made significant progress in implementing commitments since Busan, including through work in thematic Building Blocks:
  - a) The EU Transparency Guarantee has led to significant improvements in transparency of aid data of the EU and its Member States, in line with the Busan common standard for transparency, including implementation of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standard by many Member States as well as the Expanded Creditor Reporting System (CRS++) and the Forward Spending Survey (FSS).

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<sup>2</sup> Doc. 16773/11.

- b) The joint programming process, which wherever possible is led by partner countries, aims to provide a joint response of the EU and its Member States to partner countries' development strategies and therefore strengthen alignment, coordination and ownership. It is underway in 20 partner countries, and may cover up to 40 partner countries over the next few years. In the programming period 2014-2020, joint programming will cover a considerable share of EU bilateral development cooperation instruments.
- c) As part of the promotion of a common results-based approach, the EU is designing its Development and Cooperation Results Framework, which will be based on partner countries' own poverty reduction and related strategies. It will draw on both country-level results frameworks and donor experience, and aim at strengthening accountability, including mutual accountability, and transparency.
- d) The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States has improved the involvement of development partners in a number of countries that have taken it forward, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan and Timor Leste. The EU, which has endorsed the New Deal, reconfirms its commitment to further build on the New Deal framework that is adapted to each local context and calls on others to do likewise.
- e) EU Public-private engagement for development impact has progressed, including through an increased use of innovative financial instruments, such as blending mechanisms, which have significant potential to mobilise additional financing for development from capital markets and private investors.

*The High Level Meeting of the Global Partnership*

8. The Council welcomes the five thematic plenary sessions and a wide range of related focus sessions at the HLM. The Global Partnership should continue to promote the paradigm shift from aid effectiveness to effective development cooperation, adding value to other international processes, in particular in the following areas:
9. **Progress on Busan Implementation and Inclusive Development:** The Council notes that the HLM is a timely opportunity for a global stock-take of progress made towards meeting Busan commitments. In addition to progress in the areas measured by the ten agreed indicators, attention should also be given to other key areas of the effectiveness agenda, such as aid fragmentation. This thematic session should both demonstrate progress and identify bottlenecks around five key pillars: focus on results; transparency and accountability; country ownership; inclusive development; and conflict and fragility. The Global Partnership should reaffirm its commitment to continue to monitor and report on progress.
10. **Domestic resource mobilisation for development:** Recalling the Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on “Financing poverty eradication and sustainable development beyond 2015,”<sup>3</sup> the EU and its Member States remain committed to supporting improved and increased domestic resource mobilisation as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach for financing global development. Underlining the importance of democracy, good governance and the rule of law, the Council notes that the Global Partnership should commit to supporting the development of strong institutional capacity for tax-administration and policy-making. It should also support the fight against corruption, tax havens and illicit financial flows, including through international cooperation on tax matters and on the efficient use of natural resource revenues. Where needed, international support should complement national efforts and reforms, including through the provision of expertise and technical assistance. Strong political leadership in partner countries is crucial for success.

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<sup>3</sup> Doc. 17553/13.

11. **South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and knowledge sharing:** The Council recognises that Southern providers of development cooperation have unique experiences and knowledge of their own transition and development processes to share, as well as increasingly significant financial contributions. Engagement with these actors within the Global Partnership and in the field is necessary to maximise development impact at the country level. The EU and its Member States would welcome a preliminary discussion on areas in which South-South cooperation could add value to the post-2015 discussions. Triangular cooperation has the potential to deliver mutual benefits through innovative partnerships when used in the appropriate circumstances, drawing on the comparative advantages of all partners.
  
12. **Middle-income countries (MICs):** The EU and its Member States recognise that MICs are a heterogeneous group, with a diverse range of challenges including inequality and serious persistent poverty. MICs also play an increasing role in the sustainable management of global public goods and in addressing global, regional and cross-border challenges. At the same time, MICs have increasing internal resources to dedicate to their own development. International co-operation with MICs is therefore to a growing extent designed to address their specific contexts, including through the provision of loans and technical assistance as well as grants where necessary. As South-South actors, MICs have an important role in development co-operation and therefore in the development effectiveness agenda. They also have valuable lessons to share with less developed countries, drawing on their recent experience of growth and poverty reduction.

13. **Private sector – business as a partner in development:** Recalling the aforementioned Conclusions on “Financing poverty eradication and sustainable development beyond 2015,”<sup>4</sup> the Council recognises that the private sector is the key driver of growth, jobs, investment and innovation and has a central role to play in achieving poverty reduction, sustainable development and inclusive growth. The private sector and in particular small and medium-size enterprises can play an important role in expanding access to finance, goods and services to the poor. All governments should aim to maximise the private sector’s contribution through effective, catalytic public-private sector cooperation and partnerships. They should also aim at creating a conducive environment for private investment with corporate social and environmental responsibility and accountability and respect for human rights at its core.

*Global Partnership governance*

14. The Council welcomes the expanded membership of the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership to facilitate improved participation of new providers of development assistance and non-governmental actors. The EU and its Member States will continue to be fully involved and seek to be represented on the Steering Committee. Regional organisations have an important role to play in supporting Steering Committee members through coordination, consultation and information sharing amongst constituencies.
15. The Council notes the need to further improve working practices and structures of the Global Partnership in order to fulfil its potential. Steering Committee functioning could be improved by increased transparency, effective and regular communication and consultations with the full membership and a focused mandate. In particular, the Building Blocks of the Global Partnership should be better integrated into its decision-making, implementation and advisory structures, and more support should be provided to implementation at country level. The proposed annual seminar on country-level implementation, hosted by the Republic of Korea, is a welcome contribution to this ambition.

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<sup>4</sup> Doc. 17553/13.

*Future role of the Global Partnership*

16. The Council reaffirms its commitment to the Global Partnership as a new and innovative structure, and welcomes a continued discussion on its future role in both the international development architecture and implementation at the country level. It can support increased development effectiveness in a rapidly changing world by providing a key contribution to support the implementation of the post-2015 agenda: as new goals and targets are developed to shape *what* we should aim for, the Global Partnership can contribute to showing *how* these could be put into practice.
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