

*On behalf of the Board of CONCORD, I would like to dedicate this CONCORD 10 Year Anniversary Publication to our friend Eduard Soler Cuyas, leader and activist of the NGO sector in Catalunya and in Spain, as well as at EU level, and Board member from 2008-2011.*

*He sadly passed away in May 2012 and we miss him dearly.*

*Olivier Consolo, CONCORD Director*

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### *Preface by Joanna Maycock*

As CONCORD marks its 10 Anniversary, it's important to reflect on our story as a confederation and learn from the achievements and challenges we've faced to move forward.

I'm pleased therefore to present this special anniversary publication "Ten years, Ten testimonies" which gives a voice to the diversity of our membership and partnerships over the last 10 years. The publication features testimonies and success stories from many who have been involved in CONCORD's development, both at national, EU and international level.



We can be proud that together we've built a confederation which puts representative legitimate collective action at its core. Our impact, reputation and legitimacy as a representative of European development NGOs have grown over time. And we now have to use this new, growing influence to really shift the political agenda in Europe towards championing global issues on equality, justice and poverty.

However, too often our work is quite reactive to the political agenda. This doesn't allow a lot of space for us to talk about the world happening around us. Therefore we need to be more proactive and build on our collective identity and put forward our own vision for the kind of world we want to see.

This is why this publication is a must read. We start by taking a look at what CONCORD is about, moving on to a series of views from our international partners and ending with a forward looking view on the new development paradigms.

I hope you enjoy reading and learning from the important contributions put forward in this publication. Let's remain as committed as ever to the core values that have guided our collective work thus far.

And remember, positive change can happen - and is happening.

**Joanna Maycock, CONCORD President**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Maycock', written in a cursive style.

**Member of European Parliament Eva Joly, Chair of the Development Committee, shares with CONCORD her political analysis**



**Eva Joly**

*Photo credits Joëlle Dolle*



**Guido van Hecken**

“The Courier”, the magazine of the ACP-EU partnership, reports that at the foundation ceremony of CONCORD on 30 January 2003 in Brussels, the then Commissioner for Development, Poul Nielson, warned that, “there is a pressing need to prevent the subordination of development aid to foreign policy.” The other guest of honour at CONCORD’s foundation, Belgian Secretary of State for Development Cooperation Eddy Boutmans, stressed, “the importance of restoring development to its place at the top of the political agenda”. “The Courier” ceased publication in 2011...

Almost 10 years later to the day, in its 2013 annual review of the European External Action Service, CONCORD itself is pleading for a progressive EU foreign policy, which should include, “respecting the primary objectives of development aid and humanitarian assistance and ensuring that other political and security interests contribute to their attainment and do not undermine them”. “Strengthening the ties between foreign affairs, security policies, neighbourhood and enlargement policies, and humanitarian and development policies is a worthwhile pursuit,” says CONCORD, “Nevertheless better integration of development cooperation into external policies and the strategies of the EU cannot be used to subordinate development objectives to other EU economic, security or foreign interests, nor to use the development budget for other means than its purposes.” The call for genuine Policy Coherence for Development echoes similar concerns expressed by the European Parliament in almost all reports and resolutions it has adopted over the last ten years at the proposal of its Committee on Development.

Why is it that this warning and this plea have to be repeated all the time? Any government – whatever its political tendency – that listens to the voice of its electorate allots an absolute priority to domestic and national problems, including in its external action and the different components thereof. Moreover, any political appointee or elected office-holder has a “natural” tendency to look for “immediate” solutions and to concentrate on the problems of the moment – after all, in order to be (re-)elected, she or he must be able to show tangible results before the next elections. All this is perfectly comprehensible, and this trend (including its populist, racist and xenophobic aberrations) becomes more marked and visible with the deepening of the financial, economic and social crisis currently affecting our societies.

Development cooperation, however, is a sector that is likely to pay the price of this completely “natural” way politics works. Because the purpose of development cooperation is not to raise the prestige or the visibility of the donor countries, nor to support their companies or their economic, commercial or diplomatic interests. Because development cooperation does not aim either at solving societal problems in Europe, nor does it endeavour to stimulate the return to their country of origin of so-called “illegal” immigrants or to combat unemployment in Europe. The reason development cooperation exists is to contribute to the sustainable economic, social and ecological development of society in our partner countries and to the improvement of the quality of life of their populations, and in the first place of the most disadvantaged groups: the poorest and the marginalized people.

One should therefore not assume that the European institutions and governments will spontaneously maintain the level and the direction of their commitments in the area of international solidarity and development cooperation, in spite of the consistent results of the European opinion polls (in October 2012 still 85% of EU citizens believe that Europe should continue helping developing countries despite the economic crisis and 61% are even in favour of increasing aid to help people out of poverty). But the stark reality is that since 2011 Official Development Aid is in accelerated decline (2012 shows a decline of 4% compared to 2011, and of 6% compared to 2010). This “race towards the bottom” is compounded by the fact that the biggest decline is in aid to multilateral institutions, and that governments are beginning to redeploy to themselves: there is a real danger that whatever progress has been achieved in the 8th Millennium Development Goal (“Develop a global partnership for development”) may begin to unravel.

A little prodding – or rather a massive dose of lobbying and advocacy - to keep our institutions and governments on the right track (development cooperation as an autonomous policy area with the overriding objective of fighting poverty and promoting sustainable human development) is therefore more than ever indispensable and urgent. The fact that the

European Union (the combined budgets of the institutions and the 27 Member States) is still the world's largest donor of development assistance and is formally still adhering to the European Consensus on Development, is in large measure to the credit of the hard work and the perseverance of organisations like CONCORD and the 1800 European NGOs represented in it, and (please allow the authors of this introduction a little lack of modesty), at the institutional level, the European Parliament and its Committee on Development. As the economic editor of the British newspaper "The Guardian" remarked in April 2012, "Even in the good years, politicians had to be pushed into [anti-poverty] action, and this was nearly always the result of public demands for change orchestrated by development groups." Advocacy has been one of the main roles of CONCORD...

... and will have to remain so, at least during the next few years. The debate on a new international development agenda after the expiry of the deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 is gearing up. It takes place at a particularly difficult moment for many institutional participants, deeply affected as their populations are by the global financial and economic crisis, and deeply affected as our Earth is by the effects of global warming and climate change.

There is no doubt that the international development agenda needs to be adapted to new realities and that it must integrate new insights and realisations gained during the first decade of this century. We only mention two:

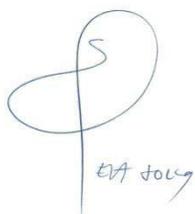
- The relative economic success of the "emerging economies"; however, the persistence of great "pockets" of absolute poverty in these countries makes it clear that economic growth does not by itself lead to poverty reduction, and that it tends to lead to greater inequality in a society; hence the necessity for a thorough reflection on the role of fiscal policies and the establishment of truly redistributive tax systems as a tool for the fight against poverty and inequality;
- In the same vein, the global financial crisis has brought into the spotlight the perverse destabilizing effects on weak and fledgling economies of international tax evasion and the complete lack of transparency of "off-shore" finance. Any new development agenda needs to integrate these insights.

But now that it has become clear that the international community has no reason to be self-congratulatory or boastful about the results of the ongoing international development agenda centred on the MDGs (according to the latest World Bank report governments are on track to meet only five of the 21 MDG targets by the 2015 deadline), it would be irresponsible to abandon the fight against poverty as the central goal of the global development agenda. Global security, the consequences of global warming and climate change, to name just these,

are certainly essential preconditions for sound and sustainable development, but in themselves they are not development – and therefore should not be financed from budgets destined for development cooperation. The commitment made by the donor community in 1970 to dedicate 0.7% of the rich nations' gross national product to Official Development Assistance was based on a relatively narrow definition of development, focusing on poverty alleviation. We suggest that for the other – laudable and necessary – activities which are not in themselves contributing directly to the fight against poverty, additional financial means must be found. (In that context we would like to refer to the possibilities of the introduction of innovative financing mechanisms, such as a CO2 tax on long-distance transport and a Financial Transaction Tax – although we continue to insist that the bulk of the revenues generated by such a FTT should be used as additional means for development itself.)

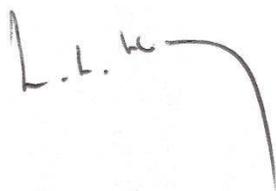
Keeping the European Union and its Member States focused on their commitments and Treaty obligations in the area of development assistance and ensuring that their financial resources for development will finally match their decades-old commitment and continue to be primarily used for the fight against poverty and for sustainable development, and monitoring that Europe maintains this position in the discussions on the new international development agenda, will therefore not be an easy task. It will require considerable commitment and energy.

Over the last 10 years, CONCORD has proven that it possesses both of these resources and that it knows how to put them to the best use. We are therefore confident that it will continue to do so in the next 10 years!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'E' and 'J' that are connected, with the name 'EVA JOLY' written in smaller letters below it.

Eva Joly – Member of the European Parliament

Chair, Committee on Development of the European Parliament

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'G. van Hecken' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

Guido van Hecken –

Senior Administrator, Committee on Development, European Parliament  
(2004 - 2012)

## Un mot d'hommage...



**Assemblée Constitutive de CONCORD – 30 Janvier 2003**

## ...aux Architectes et Constructeurs de CONCORD

**Par Frans Polman, premier Président de CONCORD de 2003 à 2006**

*English version is available page 65*

La création de CONCORD n'est pas le fait d'un ou deux individus, ni d'une poignée de gens. Elle est le fruit de nombreux efforts de concertation, de réflexion, de planification et d'engagement d'un grand nombre de personnes animées d'une passion et d'un enthousiasme communs et hors du commun. CONCORD est née de la volonté renouvelée des ONG de toute l'Europe de travailler avec les Institutions Européennes tout en renforçant leurs capacités de défense et de promotion de leurs intérêts politiques: l'éradication de la pauvreté en était le premier objectif. C'est bien la nécessité d'une mise en commun des connaissances, expériences et capacités de chaque Plateforme, Réseau et Famille d'ONG qui a présidé au processus de rénovation de la collaboration entre ONG au niveau européen. Aussi plusieurs représentants d'ONG de différents pays d'Europe ont-ils concouru à l'établissement de leur nouvelle structure de coordination à Bruxelles, la Confédération des ONG Européennes, CONCORD. Je tiens avant tout à remercier l'ensemble de ces artisans.

L'histoire de la création de CONCORD tient en trois phases, chacune d'elle riche des personnes qui l'ont suscitée puis fait advenir. En Avril 2001, la période d'orientation débute autour d'une interrogation : une nouvelle structure de collaboration entre les ONG et les institutions de l'Union Européenne est-elle nécessaire? Pour y répondre, une consultation élargie fut organisée par un premier comité, chargé de répertorier les besoins et souhaits des ONG à travers toute l'Europe. Mes remerciements vont aux membres de ce comité: Svante Sandberg (Suède), Electra Georgoula-Komitsa (Grèce), Frans Polman (Pays Bas), Paddy Macquinness (Irlande) et Rob van Drimmelen (Aprodev), mais également à leurs conseillers: James Mackie, (ancien secrétaire du Clong), Helen O'Connell (Présidente du Clong), Jean-Louis Vielajus (France), Cecile Muller (Euronaid), Mario Gay (Italie) et Guido Lamote (Belgique).

Le consultant Fabio Poelhekke s'est rendu dans plusieurs pays d'Europe pour enquêter auprès d'un grand nombre d'ONG, lesquelles ont manifesté le désir d'un travail en synergie permettant l'échange régulier d'information et d'expérience, le renforcement mutuel des capacités, et finalement l'amélioration de la qualité de leur travail. Les résultats de cette recherche, sur la base desquels différentes options ont pu être identifiées, ont été publiés dans un rapport présenté le 27 septembre 2001 à Bruxelles lors d'une réunion rassemblant à la fois des représentants de Plateformes Nationales, de Réseaux Thématiques et de Familles d'ONG, mais aussi certains représentants du Parlement Européen et de la Commission Européenne. Cette assemblée a conclu au besoin effectif d'une nouvelle structure centralisée qui regrouperait l'ensemble des ONG Européennes en respectant trois principes: le modèle d'une Confédération mettant Plateformes Nationales, Réseaux Thématiques et Familles d'ONG sur un pied d'égalité, la limitation de ses activités autour de quelques problématiques clés, la place centrale des membres au niveau de la gouvernance comme du financement.

Vint ensuite **la phase de planification**, qui s'est déroulée entre les mois d'octobre 2001 et d'avril 2002. Un deuxième comité a ainsi été formé, alors composé de trois membres des Plateformes Nationales et de trois membres des Réseaux : un grand merci à Paddy MacGuinness (Irlande), Simon Stocker (Eurostep), Ted van Hees (Eurodad), Mario Gay (Italie), Jef Felix (Cidse) et Frans Polman (Président, Pays Bas).

Trois consultants ont été engagés par ce comité pour la prise en charge des aspects légaux, du modèle d'organisation, des statuts juridiques, du business plan, du plan financier, etc : merci à Dirk van Esbroeck (économiste), Fabio Poelhekke (généraliste) et Marleen Deneff (juriste). Les plans ainsi élaborés furent proposés aux représentants des ONG lors d'une réunion le 12 Avril 2002, facilitée comme d'autres grands moments de concertation par Jean Bossuyt : un grand merci à lui pour son excellent rôle de modération et d'animation.

La **phase de constitution**, du 12 avril 2002 au 30 janvier 2003, permit d'achever le processus grâce à un Comité Constitutif qui fut mandaté pour régler les modalités financières,

opérationnelles et légales de la nouvelle structure. C'est ici que furent traitées les questions relatives aux droits de vote, à la différenciation de la contribution des membres, aux dispositions légales concernant le transfert des biens et engagements de l'ancienne structure (Clong) vers la nouvelle structure, à la préparation de l'Assemblée Constitutive ou encore à l'identification des candidats pour le Premier Conseil d'Administration. Ont suivi le recrutement des personnes en charge du secrétariat, la formulation du plan d'action et du budget pour 2003, la proposition du pourcentage de cofinancement par la Commission Européenne. Un grand merci aux membres de ce comité pour la minutie de leur travail: Jef Felix (Cidse), Gerhard Schmalbruch (Euronaid), Mario Gay (Italie), Justin Kilcullen (Irlande), Jean-Louis Vielajus (France), Robert Zeiner (Autriche) et Paddy Macguinness (Irlande), et à leurs conseillers : Ted van Hees (Eurodad) et Guido Dumon (Secrétaire du Clong).

*Toute la période de préparation, incluant réflexion, planification et constitution, a donc duré près de trois ans. C'était le temps nécessaire pour une concertation élargie et un engagement approprié des ONG Européennes.*

Il est important de souligner que **les frais** de voyage pour la participation aux assemblées de concertation, mais aussi aux réunions des comités d'orientation, de planification et de constitution, ont été entièrement financés par les organisations d'origine des participants. Plusieurs Plateformes Nationales et Réseaux Thématiques ont ainsi fourni volontairement un montant total d'environ 65.000 euros pour couvrir les frais des consultants et de leurs rapports, ainsi que les frais de secrétariat et d'organisation des réunions: un grand merci aux plateformes nationales d'Autriche, de Belgique, d'Italie, d'Allemagne, du Luxembourg, des Pays Bas, de Suède, d'Irlande, du Royaume Uni et aux réseaux Aprove, Cidse, Eurodad, Eurostep, Euronaid, Trialog et Voice. Une telle prise en charge souligne un fantastique engagement des ONG pour le renouvellement de leur structure de coordination ! Je remercie ainsi chaleureusement tous ces participants, qui à travers leur appui financier mais surtout leur engagement personnel, ont permis au projet CONCORD d'aboutir.

Nous avons pu sentir tout au long de cette période de concertation, **l'appui des Institutions Européennes**. Nous avons été invités à plusieurs reprises auprès de la Commission, de la Direction Générale du Développement et d'EuropeAid ainsi qu'à la Commission Développement du Parlement. Je remercie ainsi : Poul Nielson, Koos Richelle, Francesco DeAngelis, Pieter Bangma, Aristotelis Bouratsis et bien d'autres qui nous ont soutenu au sein de la Commission Européenne, ainsi que Louisa Morgentini et Max van de Berg au niveau du Parlement Européen.

Par **l'Assemblée Constitutive du 30 janvier 2003** CONCORD a été établie par 10 Réseaux et 18 Plateformes Nationales: les Réseaux ActionAid Alliance, Aprodev, Caritas Europa, CIDSE, Eurodad, EuronAid, Eurostep, IPPF, Solidar et Terre des Hommes, ainsi que les Plateformes Nationales d'ONG des Etats alors Membres de l'Union Européenne auxquelles il faut ajouter celles de Malte, de Slovaquie et de République Tchèque. Un grand merci à ces organisations, membres constitutifs de CONCORD !

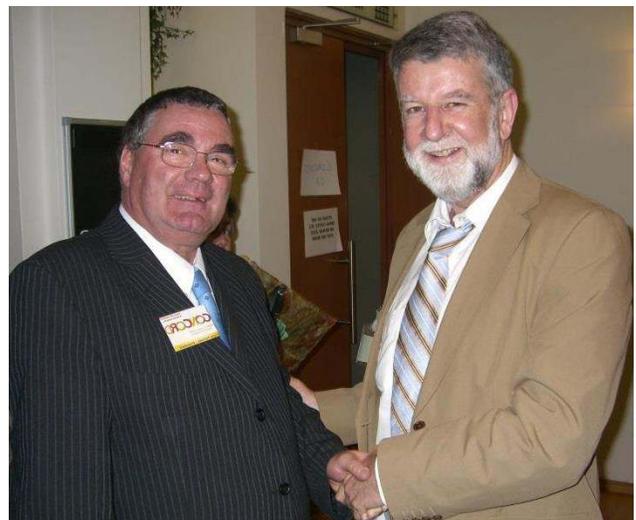
Il ne faut évidemment pas oublier les personnes qui se sont montrées prêtes à prendre la responsabilité de la gestion de CONCORD dès sa naissance, en particulier **les membres du premier Conseil d'Administration**: Giampiero Alhadeff (Solidar), Jake Bharier (Bond, PN Grand Bretagne), Ana Braga Da Cruz (PN Portugaise, REAPN), Eva Christina Nilsson (Church of Sweden, Aprodev), Carlotta Sami (Save the children), Justin Kilcullen (PN Irlande), Jan Plesinger (NP Chèche), Guido Barbera (PN Italie), Jean-Louis Vielajus (PN France), et Frans Polman (Président, PN Pays Bas). Un grand merci de ma part à vous tous pour la confiance que vous m'avez donné comme leader du processus de création puis comme premier Président de CONCORD.

Alors que nous célébrons nos dix ans d'existence, je garde toujours en mémoire les bons souvenirs que nous avons pu partager lors de la période de création de CONCORD. L'Inauguration au Palais d'Egmond était un moment unique, où la mission unique consistant à créer CONCORD fut exprimée en deux mots : *impossible* et *incroyable*. Nous sommes pourtant là aujourd'hui, grâce au travail mené sans relâche depuis dix ans par tous les architectes et constructeurs de CONCORD, dont je ne peux mentionner ici tous les noms tant ils sont nombreux. Soyons conscients et fiers de ce que nous avons pu réaliser quelque chose de grand en travaillant ensemble au niveau européen, en oubliant nos différences et en mettant en commun nos capacités pour lutter contre la pauvreté et l'injustice dans le monde.

**Merci à NOUS TOUS!**



Frans Polman



**Passation de témoin entre Frans Polman et Justin Kilcullen**

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## *CONCORD Board members 2003 - 2013*

Jan PLESINGER

Elke RUSTEBERG

Frans POLMAN

Giampiero ALHADEFF

Bart BODE

Claudia BONK

Justin KILLCULLEN

Carol RASK

Niels TOFTE

Jean-Louis VIELAJUS

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Ana Maria BRAGA DA CRUZ

Eva Christina NILSSON

Jake BHARIER

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Johannes TRIMMEL

Carlos CABO-GONZALEZ

Maria-Izabella TOTH

Marius WANDERS

Rudy DE MEYER

Marina SARLI

Glen TARMAN

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*Testimonies of people  
having engaged with  
CONCORD over the  
last ten years*



**CONCORD**  
**TESTIMONIES**



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## **1. WHY CSOs MATTER – CONCORD, THE EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF DEVELOPMENT NGO**

### **A Decade of CONCORD**

**By Justin Kilcullen,  
Former CONCORD President (2006-2012)**

*Justin Kilcullen joined Trócaire in 1981 as Programme Officer for Africa after having worked in Tanzania, Cambodia and Thailand as an architect with the government and with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. In 1993 he was appointed Director of Trócaire, a member of the Irish national platform (Dochás); he was President of CIDSE from 1998 to 2002. In 2003, he was elected to the Board of CONCORD as a representative of Dochás where he served as vice president and chair of the Advisory Committee, before being elected President of CONCORD in June 2006. He was reelected in 2009.*

CONCORD has made significant progress since its foundation a decade ago but must continue to think big in the future in order to remain effective and relevant. As a former president of CONCORD, I had the opportunity to witness and enable progress within the network firsthand. In particular, one of our great successes was incorporating political skill into our already strong policymaking stances. Going forward, CONCORD faces new challenges in the current turbulent environment.

### **Mixing policy with politics**

When I first entered the presidency, CONCORD was excellent at creating very good policy and writing position papers. However, it struggled with politics, which is how one influences the ministers and commissioners who ultimately make the decisions. To me, CONCORD needed to develop its political capacity to complement its strong policy. Having created a unity of purpose among national platforms and NGO families after the initial founding, this shift marked a second phase in progress that would enable CONCORD to use the potential political power of the confederation

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The six years of my presidency focused on this shift from policy to politics. We began to excel at strategizing and creating political activity around policy. Much of the work around the EU Parliament was influential in this second phase as we translated our policy into political actions.

As a result of this new approach, we began being invited into different fora. A major breakthrough moment was our policy working group's invitation to address the Development Council at the EU. This is where senior officials gather to prepare the way for meetings with ministers and they now wanted to take into account CONCORD's views.

Not only did we increase our presence and policy impact at the EU level, we also began standing up to various other pressures upon us. One example occurred after Louis Michel was appointed EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, a new commissioner who clearly stated he had little time for NGOs since he did not consider them legitimate representatives of civil society in Europe. During successive meetings with the Commissioner, he acted dismissively, but we continued to challenge him. At the German EU presidency development conference in Bonn, in 2007 I argued that CONCORD had a mandate from the people as a network of over 2,000 NGOs with public support through donations amounting to several billion euros. Ultimately, CONCORD asserted its presence at the EU level by making its leadership and mission widely known.

This progress within the last ten years demonstrated that CONCORD could be assertive in promoting well thought out policies in political arenas to including commissioners and members of the EU Parliament.

### *Thinking big for the future*

Coming out of the internal development of a strategic plan for CONCORD, which included the notable success of agreeing on an innovative membership fee last year, one main failure made when trying to strengthen the confederation itself. During my presidency, in part due to the economic crisis but not entirely, relationships between weaker and stronger members became tenuous. Building capacity amongst weaker members is necessary for the future, keeping in mind that weaker members are not necessarily newer members.

Last year, when I gave a closing address after the new president's election, I emphasized that CONCORD must not be afraid to think big. Some NGOs get into a way of thinking that, as small organizations, it is almost an honor to be in a meeting with high-ranking officials or ministers.

This should not be the case. NGOs, and CONCORD, are supported through public donations and campaigns and carry a message widely appreciated by society. We should demand to be heard on an equal basis, even if agreement is not reached.

CONCORD must also continue to operate in a difficult economic environment. There is a distinct lack of political leadership in Europe at the moment as the economic crisis meanders on. Linked to this is a lack of vision for Europe: where are we going, what are we doing, and how do we want to do this?

A challenge to CONCORD members will be to create a vision for society that confronts the status quo and looks for more just, people-centered alternatives. Members should try to make the EU a stronger union through its vision and efforts.

Along with other civil society groupings, CONCORD has great potential at the EU level to influence national populations. These citizens can bring their influence to bear on their politicians on what kind of future and vision they want to see for Europe.

CONCORD has come a long way in its first decade. It was both an honour and exciting to be part of that. Under Joanna Maycock's presidency we can continue to make real progress. The political world is constantly changing. Next year will bring a new Parliament and a new Commission – two more opportunities for CONCORD to shape the politics of European development policy for the years to come. We are well placed to do so!

**SUCCESS STORY: “Building on the past” by Hans Zomer, Director of Dóchas**

My first job after college was working at CONCORD's predecessor, the “Comité de Liaison” or CLONG, at Avenue Cortenbergh, and later Square Ambiorix. That was a long time ago, in a different century. The year was 1992 and it was the beginning of the heydays of NGO networks in Brussels.

The CLONG had been a creation of the European Commission, which wanted to simplify its dealings with the broad and bewildering array of European Development NGOs. The CLONG had succeeded in bringing NGO leaders from across the EU together, at the highest level, and it provided great services to the NGOs and the European Institutions.

However, times changed and the officials in the EU were no longer convinced that the institution they had asked for was what they wanted. And when they decided to pull the plug on the CLONG, the organisation was in serious trouble. It was time to re-invent the tools for EU-wide NGO networking.

I was very lucky to be involved in this ‘re-imagination’ process. After some years working overseas, I had become more convinced than ever that NGO coalitions and networks were the future of development cooperation, and as the first Director of Dóchas I now had the opportunity to assist the ‘founding fathers’ of the new European NGO structure.

It was clear that in creating CONCORD, we wanted to avoid the mistakes of the CLONG (growing too large, too centralised and too dependent on the EU) while building on its successes. What we wanted to build was not a federation, but a network. An organic structure that encouraged members to share with each other, and in so doing improve the quality of NGO work and the impact of EU development policies.

Now, ten years later, CONCORD has succeeded beyond what we expected. More than ever before, NGOs are respected as partners and actors, and are listened to in the Brussels bubble. CONCORD has managed to become influential.

But my two decades of involvement with CONCORD also prompt me to warn that we still have some way to go towards the other part of our founding vision. Like the CLONG, CONCORD is struggling to become a reality outside the confines of Brussels, and to genuinely relate to the reality of the members of its members: European NGOs.

What fills me with hope, however, is that we are aware of this challenge, and that we have the plans and ideas for the future. Through CONCORD, we are explicitly not seeking to merely defend the European NGO sector, but – much more importantly – we are trying to sow the seeds of a broad and dynamic movement. A movement for change, a movement for justice. Open to all, and ready to challenge. If we can become that movement, then CONCORD will truly have achieved the vision that we dreamed of, ten years ago.

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## ***The European Commission and CONCORD: More than a simple partnership***

**By Aristotelis Bouratsis**

**Former Director for Human and Society Development, DG DEVCO, European Commission**

*Aristotelis Bouratsis started at the European Commission in 1981 as an administrator. In 2001, he joined the EuropeAid cooperation office where he headed up several units, including the co-financing with NGOs and Relations with civil society and non-state actors. In March 2008, he was named Director of Directorate F (Thematic Operations) of EuropeAid. As the new DG DEVCO was created out of the merger between EuropeAid and the Directorate-General for Development (DG DEV), he then became Director for Human and Society Development (Directorate D).*

It was the 70s; the European development policy had just been born. A mixture of guilt and the need for persisting influence by the former colonial powers vis-à-vis their former colonies? A mixture of good intentions and political objectives? But it was there, formally, officially and for a long, long time. The players at that time were the European Commission (EC), the Member States (MS) and the (not yet elected) European Parliament (EP). And soon, very soon, the initiative came from the latter. The EP decided to create a special budget line named "Cofinancing with NGOs", putting something like 2.5 million ECUs on it and saying that this money had to be spent on development cooperation through European NGOs. The EP's reasoning for this action was based on the need to involve civil society organisations in this new policy because they were innovative and could reach populations that official cooperation could not reach. This was the birth of the involvement of European NGOs in European development policy.

Some years later the European NGOs became the fourth actor, recognised and appreciated as such by the three official European Institutions, and organised themselves into what was called the CLONG, the Liaison Committee (Comité de Liaison des ONG Européennes). The CLONG consisted of national platforms in each of the EU Member States at that time, with a coordination bureau based in Brussels.

When I joined the "Cofinancing with NGOs" Unit in the newly created EuropeAid in 2001, I had to deal at first with the CLONG crisis. A series of mistakes had led relations between the European Institutions and CLONG to an impasse. No matter what, it had to be solved. And it was solved because the political will of all European Institutions was there and because the actions of European NGOs were judged to be useful and complementary to official

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cooperation, being both innovative and effective. But it was obvious that there was a need for a new beginning, and CONCORD was created to symbolise this new start. I will never forget the long meetings and the engagement of the participants, Frans Polman and all the others, in this long process. It is almost unfeasible to describe the discussions, the passion, and the will that we share for going even further together. CONCORD is the result of a need and a conviction. The European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission were absolutely convinced that no development policy, indeed no policy, could have a real impact without the involvement of civil society actors. CONCORD was a greatly desired child and those who participated in its birth will never forget this.

At the start of the new millennium more actors such as political foundations, trade unions and local authorities (which were already participating through so-called Decentralised Cooperation, but with a small budget) willing to participate in European Cooperation with development countries appeared on the horizon. On the other hand, civil society organisations in the South made clear that they were now able to operate locally by themselves. The European Commission, after organising four seminars with the participation of the EP, the MS, CONCORD and a huge number of Southern NGOs across the four continents, finally took the message into account: it prepared and presented a new policy within the financial framework for the 2007-2013 period, under a special programme named "Non-State Actors in Development".

Non-state actors and local authorities play a prominent role in delivering services, as well as education and advocacy, to the poorest. They are a precious watchdog in dialogue with central governments and administration, and it is quite natural that civil society should be at the heart of the European Commission's cooperation programmes.

The Commission is convinced that together we can improve the already old relationship with civil society based on permanent and fair dialogue. This is the reason why in 2010 the commission launched the "Structured Dialogue," conducted until the end of 2011, to create a permanent and regular link aiming to improve mutual understanding, evaluate policies and actions, and promote best practices in implementation. CONCORD was a precious partner during the whole process.

The second decade for CONCORD, as well as for Europe and development policy, starts under an unprecedented financial, economic and social crisis. On the other hand a wind of change is covering Southern Mediterranean countries, where hope is still alive for more democracy, human dignity, freedom and prosperity. Civil society organisations have to play a crucial role to help these populations to make these noble objectives a reality.

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However, a lot remains to be done on all continents to move towards better human conditions for all and improve mutual understanding. I am convinced that CONCORD will play its important role based on its democratic structure, experience and know-how, and last but not least on the recognition that the federated European NGOs contributed and continue to contribute to a better world that we all need.

**SUCCESS STORY: “Increasing Political Space for Civil Society and how this improves the voice of persons with disabilities” by Lars Bosselmans, CBM International, co-chair of the MFF working group**

CBM advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities living in poverty. While we are active in a number of CONCORD working groups, this example tells the story about our long-standing engagement in CONCORD work towards making the African, Caribbean, Pacific (ACP) EU relationship inclusive of the voice of civil society. The CONCORD Cotonou working group has been acting for more than 10 years to ensure that ACP-EU relations are underpinned by principles of participation, transparency and accountability in all political structures. A major forum within the ACP-EU structures is the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA). CONCORD has been engaging with JPA members for a long time, in order to set the agenda and to debate important development issues. CBM has been actively participating in CONCORD activities at JPA meetings over the last seven years.

In 2011, CONCORD organised a meeting with the Co-Chair of the JPA Committee on Social Affairs, Michèle Rivasi. During that meeting it was agreed that future meetings of the Committee on Social Affairs will systematically invite representatives from civil society to address the Committee. A first opportunity to ‘test’ this commitment was a JPA report on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in developing countries. And indeed it happened. Not only were we asked to provide names of experts from civil society in developing countries to speak at the various committee meetings, but we were also given the floor during those meetings as ‘non-invited speakers’. This open and participatory approach led to lively and informative discussions, as many JPA Members stated. But most importantly, it meant that the content of the Report was largely informed by the views of persons with disabilities from the global south. This is a perfect example of how creating political space for civil society in general helps to promote the rights and participation of marginalised groups, a perfect example of CONCORD-CBM collaboration.

## Central and Eastern European NGOs in the development landscape

**By Nora Beňáková**

**Former President of the Slovak National Platform (MVRO)**

*Nora Beňáková is the Director of the One World Festival since 2010. Between 2006-2009 she was a director of People in Peril, one of the first Slovak development NGOs created in 1990s. Her area of expertise are humanitarian interventions in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Sudan, and also realized several projects in the Balkans. She is actively involved in the Slovak NGDO Platform - MVRO as a former chairman and currently as Policy Coordinator. She has been much involved in different CONCORD structures such as Policy Forum and has represented Slovak Platform during the General Assembly of CONCORD.*

In the last two decades, Central and Eastern European countries have experienced fundamental changes in their political and economic regimes as a consequence of the fall of the former Soviet bloc. The world witnessed a dual transition process from communist rule towards Western-like democracy and from a centrally-planned socialist economy to a market economy in these countries. These changes involved fundamental transformations of virtually every aspect of each country's political, economic and social life.

Slovakia, like many of these Central and Eastern European countries, possesses a wealth of knowledge in managing these long and complex transformative processes. The experience gained during our transition – including our expertise in the use of foreign assistance in support of such a difficult process – is a source of inspiration and presents a great interest and utility for other countries and regions benefiting from the EU's assistance and cooperation programmes. Beyond the fact that many donors and international institutions recommend that Slovakia transfer its experience in the neighbourhood countries of South-eastern and Eastern Europe, in the opinion of the current Slovak NGDO community many aspects of the transition of the entire society can be relevant to any other developing country in Africa, Asia or Latin America that is aiming to transform its society and build up democratic institutions. Sharing experience with these countries can be done in the fields that had to be rebuilt in our country during past twenty years, such as the development of civil society, the support of civic participation, gender equality, interest in environmental protection, rural development, the inclusion of handicapped and marginalized groups, minorities and the fight against corruption. For more than a decade many Slovak NGDOs have been active in countries such as Kenya, Afghanistan and South Sudan. The field presence allowed them to advocate for the incorporation of these territorial priorities in Slovak official development cooperation, which

has resulted in allocating a significant amount of funding to the LDCs and low income countries, alongside more developed countries of the neighbourhood region.

### *How CONCORD has accompanied NGOs experiencing transition*

In 1998, during the conference on development cooperation in Austria in the context of the EU enlargement which was attended by several Slovak NGOs, the first idea to establish an umbrella organization appeared. The theme of the involvement of stakeholders from new member states in development co-operation also appeared at the EU Presidency events in Berlin, Tampere and Sintra from 1998 – 1999. Slovak NGOs were supported during this period by representatives from the Austrian EU Platform and other members of CLONG. The above-mentioned initiatives ended up triggering the TRIALOG programme that started in 2000 to support civil society organisations in the enlarged Europe. TRIALOG has accompanied all 12 new EU member states through the creation of NGO platforms and has supported the establishment of a policy dialogue on development at the national level and the engagement of EU12 CSOs at the EU level. The Slovak National Platform (MVRO) itself became a reality in 2003 and had 15 members at the beginning; nowadays it has 32 member organizations (including full members and observers). It belonged to one of the founding members of CONCORD in 2003, even before Slovakia officially became an EU Member State.

Our representatives joined some of the working groups of CONCORD, through which NGOs experiencing transition significantly developed their policy skills. After Slovakia joined the EU in 2004, the EPAN (Enlargement, PreAccession and Neighborhood) working group of CONCORD offered the opportunity to share the experience in newly established national development co-operation systems among platforms from new Member States.

In 2007, the Development Education Summer School, co-organised by the DEEEP programme (initiated by the DARE Forum of CONCORD) and the Slovak NGO Platform, brought together 100 participants from more than 36 countries for a week-long learning process during which they tackled the issue of the Millennium Development Goals and the role played by development education. Our participation in the DARE Forum and experience from the achievement of many development education projects in co-operation with other European CSOs resulted in the leading role of our platform in writing a National strategy for global education, which was adopted by the Slovak government in January 2012.

Our annual participation in AidWatch increased our watch-dog skills and resulted, since 2010, in writing a national AidWatch report that became the only complex analytical publication on the quality and quantity of Slovak Official Development Assistance. It also increased our

capacity to advocate on aid transparency and the importance of joining the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI).

Participation in the Policy Forum enabled the Platform to build capacities in the area of Policy Coherence for Development. Knowledge gained in the Policy Forum and also intensive interaction and experience exchange with other new and old Member States' platforms have been utilized in building our role of active actor in Slovak development cooperation policies. In May 2010, the Slovak National Platform (MVRO) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the Platform was granted the status of an official partner of the Ministry for reviewing and preparing the key documents related to development policies and development cooperation. This gives evidence of the possibility for civil society operating in a context of multiform transformations to be empowered by its peers and fully acknowledged by decision-makers.

### *EU still waiting for Slovak NGDOs*

Despite the fact that Slovakia is a small country with small-sized NGDOs, our aim is to go beyond such national recognitions and to become equal partners able to offer our expertise amongst the European NGDO community.

Slovak NGDOs, while mainly active within the SlovakAid schemes or schemes of smaller foundations, have rather weak representation in terms of receiving EU funding for activities in developing countries. Some of them successfully carried out projects funded by the EU; however, most of the projects were not implemented in developing countries, but in Slovakia, focusing on awareness-raising, education and advocacy.

The current situation is the result of the following factors. First of all, many of the NGDOs are rather small in terms of personal and financial capacity, and also the years and size of their field presence in developing countries is not comparable to the NGDOs from old member states. Secondly, representation of the interests of new member states within the EU institutions is not developed yet.

Our active involvement in CONCORD advocacy processes and commenting on European development policies is also limited to our existing human capacities, advocacy skills on a European level, and lower field presence in developing countries compared to colleagues from more experienced countries.

Therefore, if EU institutions have a political interest to involve NGDOs from new Member States as equal partners in development cooperation, more efforts have to be made in introducing measures that will increase the participation of small-sized NGDOs from new Member States in European funding mechanisms, as well as in programming and consulting on the EU development policies. We also see a role for CONCORD in building up our capacities to represent our needs and views at the European level.

**SUCCESS STORY: “Romanian NGDO: new and active members of the Confederation” by Adela Rusu, FOND Director**

The Romanian NGDO Platform, FOND, is one of the newer members of CONCORD, officially joining the confederation in 2011. But the very first contact with CONCORD was made back in 2007, the year the Romanian national platform became an official entity representing all Romanian NGOs active in development cooperation.

It was an eye-opening opportunity for Romanian NGDOs to become more familiar with other CONCORD members: platforms and networks with extensive experience in development cooperation, and to better grasp the European perspective of development cooperation policy within the wider global context. Also, CONCORD, as a structure, provided useful insights for FOND on how to successfully run a network, in terms of member coordination, representation and advocacy; very useful lessons learnt for a recently-established platform.

But more importantly, CONCORD made it possible for Romanian NGDOs to feel part of a European CSO community, which above all values and nurtures the needs of its members, while encouraging mutual learning and exchange among them, just like a family, albeit a very “numerous” one, would do.

**SUCCESS STORY: “Experience from a previous EU Enlargement” by Mercedes Ruíz-Giménez, President of the Spanish platform CONGDE -Coordinadora de ONG para el Desarrollo-España**

In 1981 Spain graduated from receiving ODA. In 1986, three NGO funded the Coordinadora de Organizaciones no Gubernamentales. At the end of the year six more joined the Platform, and Coordinadora, itself, joined CONCORD’s predecessor, the Liaison Committee.

But Spanish cooperation was still in its infancy.

It was not until 1987 that the Government approved the first policy guidelines for Spanish cooperation. In the meantime, the Council of Europe launched the North-South Interdependence and Solidarity Campaign aimed to promote consciousness among European citizens on the unfairness of North-South relations. The root causes of poverty needed to be narrated.

Two years later, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation was born, and the First Code of Conduct on Images relating to the Third World was approved by the General Assembly of the European NGOs. The booklets produced to disseminate its guidelines could be found in any of the 63 NGOs that were part of Coordinadora at that time. It strengthened their capacity to avoid over-simplification or over-concentration on sensational aspects when preparing their communication strategies. It also served as the starting point for our future Code of Conduct.

The years 1993 and 1994 are milestones in Spanish cooperation. Thousands of people camped in the streets clamoring for more commitment to global justice and poverty eradication. The 0,7 demand gathered more and more public support.

Spanish Cooperation was on its way to maturity... and more than a decade after, in 2009, Spain became the 7th largest donor in the world.

Meanwhile CONCORD was created in 2003 with a view to enhancing the impact of European CSOs in influencing the European institutions.

This mandate was really meaningful for us, as a National Platform when in 2010 Spain presided over the European Council. We considered it an opportunity to dedicate more efforts to work on European development policies while we strengthened the link with CONCORD. CONCORD's support was absolutely key for that purpose. Its guidance was significant in being able to focus us on what was really relevant. It was not about trying to address and challenge European debates and institutions on our own. It was about being part of the collective action that CONCORD represents. It was about sharing and enriching our experience with that existing at the European level. And, once again, it was about having the support and breadth of more than 1,800 CSOs when you claim to your government that Aid commitments made have to be met.

And now, in 2013, when the economic crisis threatens to devastate us all, we believe, even more than ever, that networking is really worth it. Breaking with organizational individualism is crucial and will be the only way to overcome the challenges we face. We strongly believe and try to advocate for that. When we share the same values and objectives it cannot be impossible, can it? This is in CONCORD's DNA.

Congratulations to CONCORD for its tenth anniversary and for all the work done!

## 2. INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY

### La diplomatie non gouvernementale et la construction d'un nouvel équilibre mondial

**Par Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil**  
**Ancien Président de Coordination Sud ( 2001-2008)**

*English version is available page 68*

*Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil, ingénieur agronome et Docteur en économie appliquée est actuellement conseiller à la direction scientifique du Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD). Spécialiste des questions agraires de développement, il a présidé la plateforme française d'ONG, Coordination Sud entre 2001 et 2008. Il est l'auteur de l'ouvrage La diplomatie non gouvernementale : les ONG peuvent-elles changer le monde ?, dans lequel l'auteur nous conduit à mûrir le concept de diplomatie non gouvernementale."*

Il n'est plus possible aujourd'hui d'ignorer les crises multiples et les périls mortels auxquels l'humanité doit faire face. L'imaginaire de l'abondance est derrière nous, avec sa disparition apparaît l'angoisse du déclin et la dure réalité des pénuries : pénurie de pétrole, pénurie d'emplois, pénurie d'aliments... Ces pénuries ne sont pas nouvelles, mais elles se manifestent aujourd'hui sur le tableau de bord de presque tous les pays et de la plupart des citoyens du monde. Allons-nous nous battre pour conserver nos parts individuelles et collectives de marché ou saurons-nous nous orienter vers un « monde de la sobriété et du partage » ? Les associations de solidarité internationale ont déjà dit leur mot dans ce débat. Elles souhaitent encourager la négociation dans tous les domaines-clés de l'émergence de ce nouveau monde et accompagner sa difficile construction. Pour ce faire, il nous faut définir nos propres objectifs du « développement durable et inclusif » et autant que possible les faire partager à nos concitoyens et à leurs représentants politiques. Pour les convaincre, nos associations vont devoir renforcer leurs actions locales et leurs rôles dans la recherche de solutions adaptées à la diversité des problèmes et des milieux et permettre l'identification d'innovations sociales et techniques susceptibles d'ouvrir à large échelle de nouvelles voies. Nous avons proclamé qu'un « autre monde est possible ». Il nous faut le démontrer. Ce changement d'échelle est aussi affaire de diplomatie car, dans le contexte de mondialisation et d'interdépendance des pouvoirs dans lequel nous sommes aujourd'hui, nous n'avancerons pas sans la négociation de nouvelles régulations mondiales. Nous avons appelé « diplomatie

non gouvernementale »<sup>1</sup> (DNG) l'action des acteurs non gouvernementaux dans le processus éminemment gouvernemental qu'est la négociation internationale.

Au cours des vingt dernières années, qui seront peut-être considérées comme la préhistoire de la DNG, l'action des ONG n'a pas été négligeable. Nous les retrouvons dans tous les processus diplomatiques importants. Dans le domaine de la paix et de la sécurité, elles ont fait connaître des conflits très meurtriers mais largement ignorés comme au Darfour ou en République démocratique du Congo, elles ont mobilisé l'opinion publique et contribué à ce que la désastreuse guerre d'Irak ne soit pas menée au nom des Nations Unies, elles ont porté de bout en bout des négociations contribuant au désarmement, particulièrement celles aboutissant à l'interdiction des mines antipersonnel ou des armes à sous-munitions, elles ont fait progresser le droit humanitaire et le droit de la guerre, elles ont aussi levé le voile de l'impunité des crimes de guerres, crimes contre l'humanité et génocides et contribué largement à la création de la Cour pénale internationale. Dans le champ économique, elles ont pu donner corps à un « camp » anti, puis altermondialiste et stopper le cavalier seul du néolibéralisme, elles sont intervenues dans les négociations menées dans le cadre de l'OMC aussi bien dans l'accord sur la propriété intellectuelle, et ses conséquences dans le domaine de la santé publique, que dans les accords concernant le domaine de l'agriculture. Dans le champ environnemental, elles sont apparues en force au Sommet de la Terre de Rio 92 avec le nouvel ordre diplomatique né du collapse du camp soviétique et de la chute du mur de Berlin, elles ont suivi la difficile mise en œuvre des deux grandes conventions sur le changement climatique et la diversité biologique. Enfin, dans leur domaine de prédilection, le champ social, elles ont accompagné les Nations Unies dans tous les domaines et finalement dans la définition et la mise en œuvre des Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement (OMD), elles ont aussi bataillé pour une réduction des dettes publiques des pays du Sud et une augmentation de l'Aide Publique au Développement (APD) des pays du Nord pour permettre aux gouvernements du Sud de promouvoir le développement économique et de mettre en œuvre des politiques sociales. Bien sûr rien n'est gagné. Certains accords ne sont pas mis en œuvre, des mouvements inverses viennent contredire certaines avancées. Mais dans le champ de forces qu'est la négociation internationale, les petites forces des ONG ont pu contribuer à des résultantes positives. Nous avons pu analyser ce jeu de forces et le rôle joué par les ONG, éclairer cette préhistoire de la diplomatie non gouvernementale et tirer quelques leçons pour que cette action soit encore plus efficace, légitime et démocratique.

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<sup>1</sup> *La diplomatie non gouvernementale, les ONG peuvent-elles changer le monde?* Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil, Editions l'Atelier et neuf autres éditeurs membres de l'Alliance des éditeurs indépendants, 2006

Pour avancer dans leurs actions « diplomatiques » et éviter les abus d'influence et de pouvoir, les ONG doivent veiller à respecter quelques principes fondamentaux, voire se doter d'une devise en cinq mots : « légitimité, compétences, indépendance, représentativité, cohérence »<sup>2</sup>. Légitimité, c'est-à-dire agir localement sur les problèmes dénoncés lors des grands événements diplomatiques et aider les victimes de ces problèmes à s'organiser et à prendre la parole. Compétence, c'est-à-dire face à des problèmes complexes dont les manifestations locales sont très diverses, savoir dialoguer et s'allier avec des milieux experts. Indépendance, c'est-à-dire se donner les moyens d'étudier les problèmes pour ce qu'ils sont en évitant d'être instrumentalisé par des groupes d'intérêt politiques, économiques ou idéologiques. Représentativité, c'est-à-dire agir dans le cadre d'acteurs collectifs représentant la diversité du monde. Cohérence, c'est-à-dire veiller à inscrire chaque action sectorielle dans une vision d'ensemble et dans le cadre des moyens disponibles. Ces quelques principes pourront permettre aux ONG de répondre à ceux qui les accusent, et parfois à bon escient, d'être de simples lobbies défendant des intérêts particuliers.

Nous célébrons cette année les dix ans de CONCORD. Un anniversaire est l'occasion de faire un bilan sous forme d'un coup de chapeau, mais aussi de se permettre de réfléchir aux étapes suivantes. CONCORD a su devenir l'interlocuteur nécessaire et efficace entre, d'un côté, les ONG et leurs plates-formes nationales, et, de l'autre, les institutions européennes. D'autres diront l'excellence de l'action de CONCORD dans ce domaine. Du point de vue de l'action internationale des ONG, disons que l'action de CONCORD, qui a d'abord été inexistante, s'est progressivement développée sur certains sujets comme la question de l'efficacité de l'aide. A l'initiative de l'OCDE, qui regroupe les pays donateurs au sein du Comité d'aide au développement (CAD), des Forums de haut niveau (HLF) se sont réunis tous les trois ans à Rome (2002), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) et Busan (2011) pour évaluer et améliorer « l'efficacité de l'aide ». Dans la Déclaration de Paris (mars 2005), les pays donateurs ont présenté les principes à respecter pour délivrer une aide efficace. Ils ont souhaité inclure les aides non gouvernementales et les ONG dans cette prise de position gouvernementale. La réunion parallèle organisée par les ONG à Paris a montré que ces principes ne pouvaient valoir pour l'action des ONG et a lancé un processus parallèle qui a abouti à l' « Open forum for civil society organisations effectiveness », animé par un « Global facilitation group ». CONCORD a hébergé le secrétariat du consortium et a joué un rôle de leading organisation. Cette architecture internationale, aussi compliquée que celles qui sont issues de la diplomatie gouvernementale, a permis, d'une part, une reconnaissance de la spécificité de la coopération non gouvernementale et de sa vision propre de l'efficacité de l'aide, évitant ainsi le risque

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<sup>2</sup> « Diplomatie non gouvernementales : l'influence croissante de la société civile sur la scène mondiale » par Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil, *Chroniques de la gouvernance 2009-2010*

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mortel d'une gouvernementalisation de l'action des ONG, et, d'autre part, des prises de positions collectives et internationales sur l'aide publique.

Autre approche de l'action internationale de CONCORD, le renforcement de ses relations avec les autres coordinations régionales de plates-formes nationales d'ONG. Ce mouvement s'est imposé à CONCORD naturellement avec le suivi de la diplomatie européenne et des accords de l'Union Européenne avec d'autres ensembles régionaux ou continentaux. Les sommets Europe/Amérique latine ont rapproché CONCORD et la MESA, de même les Accords de Cotonou entre l'Union européenne et les pays d'Afrique, de la Caraïbe et du Pacifique (ACP) ont créé de nombreuses occasions de coopération entre CONCORD et les ONG ou les coordinations régionales de plates-formes nationales d'ONG, comme le REPAOC pour la sous-région Afrique de l'Ouest. Par ailleurs, CONCORD a accompagné le processus de fédération des plates-formes nationales d'ONG, qui a largement contribué au renforcement, quand ce n'est pas à la création, des coordinations régionales et a abouti à la création en octobre 2008 du Forum internationale des plates-formes nationales d'ONG (FIP).

Pour être efficace et démocratique, la DNG, comme la diplomatie gouvernementale, doit articuler des actions et des acteurs nationaux, régionaux et internationaux. Les questions globales et les négociations internationales concernent tous les citoyens du monde et pas seulement les acteurs internationaux. Les coordinations régionales, comme CONCORD, ont un rôle essentiel à jouer dans les chaînes d'acteurs qui vont du local à l'international. Je terminerai donc par un double souhait, celui de l'ouverture de CONCORD vers l'action internationale et celui du développement d'une forte coopération entre CONCORD et les autres coordinations régionales des autres continents. Ces coordinations ont un rôle essentiel à jouer dans le développement des mouvements associatifs des différentes régions et continents du monde, dans le dialogue avec les organisations politiques régionales, mais aussi dans la construction d'une coordination internationale des ONG. Qui d'autre que CONCORD pourrait et devrait être le partenaire européen des coordinations régionales des autres régions du monde?

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**SUCCESS STORY: “Partnerships at the heart of CONCORD priorities” by Gérard Karlshausen, CONCORD Belgium President, Former Board member and referent on Southern partnerships**

For 10 years, the Belgian platform has actively promoted the dimension of partnerships with developing countries within the CONCORD Confederation. How, in fact, can we talk about the impact of policies on developing countries without listening to these countries’ demands and without forming alliances with their organisations? The Belgian platform in particular has, for many years, been a driving force for the working group on the Cotonou Agreement. In this context, a real dynamic has developed between its ACP partners, those of other members and the group’s lobbying activities in Europe: “win-win” alliances, since they strengthen both the credibility of advocacy with European and national institutions and the capacities of partners from developing countries to mobilise themselves in their respective countries. This triangle of developing country actors, national platforms and the CONCORD dynamic is a real benefit for everyone.

In this spirit, the platform has also supported the efforts of CONCORD in forming partnerships with developing country coalitions such as REPAOC (West Africa) and MESA (Latin America). By organising a training session, for example, on Cotonou with the members of the former, or a forum on EU-Latin American civil society with the latter, it is also able to strengthen the advocacy that is needed. This in turn nourishes the links of platform members with their partners in developing countries while building synergies for CONCORD with European networks that are active in these regions.

Everyone wins from these synergies: the platform, CONCORD and the developing country organisations, whose actions and relationships enrich one another.

## *La société civile par-delà les frontières...un point de vue africain*

**Par Momar Talla Kane,  
Ancien Président du REPAOC( 2009 – 2010)**

*English version is available page 71*

*Ancien Président du CONGAD (Conseil des ONG d'appui au développement, la plateforme nationale des ONG sénégalaises) et à ce titre, du REPAOC (Réseau des Plateformes nationales d'ONG d'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre), il a participé à plusieurs cadres de réflexion sur les politiques de développement en y portant la voix des ONG africaines. C'est de cette expérience dont il témoigne ici.*

Au fondement des ONG réside une mission, celle de participer aux efforts des populations et des citoyens à se prendre en charge dans la perspective d'une vie meilleure où les droits de chacune et chacun sont respectés. Les ONG ne sauraient se substituer aux populations, mais travaillent au renforcement de leurs capacités :elles les accompagnent, les appuient à concevoir et réaliser leur développement économique, politique, social et culturel.

A cet effet, les ONG cherchent à influencer sur les politiques publiques aux plans local, national et international pour la prise en charge effective des préoccupations des populations. Elles doivent se constituer en acteur majeur dans l'élaboration, la mise en œuvre et l'évaluation de ces politiques. Elles doivent contribuer à l'approfondissement de la démocratie, de l'Etat de droit et des droits humains. Elles ont l'obligation de veiller à l'efficacité des politiques publiques pour le développement mais aussi à l'efficience de leur propre intervention auprès des populations, des Etats et de tout autre partenaire. Aussi doivent-elles chercher à établir un partenariat véritable avec tous les acteurs dans la seule perspective d'un développement harmonieux et durable de nos pays respectifs pour un monde juste et meilleur. C'est ainsi, en respectant ces obligations, que les ONG porteront haut la Voix Non-gouvernementale.

### *Africaines ou européennes : des ONG multiples unies dans un même combat*

Ensemble, les ONG africaines et les ONG européennes contribuent fortement à la cohérence des politiques en faveur du développement, et ce au travers d'une collaboration multiforme.

En particulier, la participation à deux Assemblées Générales de CONCORD qui ont porté entre autres sur la cohérence des politiques de l'Union Européenne a été l'occasion d'un fort

plaidoyer auprès du Parlement européen, en liaison avec les ONG européennes et CONCORD. Elles y ont porté ensemble les préoccupations des ONG africaines. Ces nombreux efforts de CONCORD en faveur de la cohérence des politiques de l'Union Européenne doivent être poursuivis pour arriver à une large efficacité des politiques de coopération, d'aide et de développement.

Influer sur la conception et la mise en œuvre des politiques de coopération multilatérale et bilatérale est également un domaine important de la collaboration entre les ONG des deux continents. Elles ont pu, ensemble, participer au débat public international dans une interaction avec les autorités gouvernementales qui conduisent les négociations internationales.

C'est d'ailleurs de cette collaboration, impliquant aussi les ONG des autres continents, qu'est né le Forum International des Plateformes Nationales d'ONG (FIP), un cadre idéal de dimension planétaire qui cherche à influencer sur la gouvernance mondiale tout en renforçant les capacités de ses membres, donc des ONG. Cette plateforme des plateformes d'ONG défend essentiellement les préoccupations des ONG au niveau des instances internationales, mais aussi au niveau national. Il est un cadre légitime et représentatif dans lequel les ONG forment des positions communes, partagées pour assumer et assurer leur ambition de prendre en charge les préoccupations des populations et des citoyens, dans toutes les décisions et politiques publiques les concernant.

Ces deux dernières années (2010-2012) le FIP s'est efforcé de matérialiser cela à travers des exercices de diplomatie non gouvernementale dans des thématiques aussi porteuses d'enjeu que le changement climatique, l'aide publique et le financement du développement, la prévention des conflits, la lutte contre les inégalités sociales et l'exclusion, la régulation des marchés agricoles, l'accès à l'eau, l'assainissement et l'environnement favorable. Des rencontres du Groupe de Facilitation de l'époque avec les responsables des institutions internationales (Banque Mondiale, Système des Nations Unies, UE, gouvernements, fondations...etc.) ont été bel et bien décisives. En outre, la mise en place du Partenariat mondial pour l'efficacité de la coopération au développement, lors du Quatrième Forum de haut niveau de Busan en Corée du Sud du 29 novembre au 1er décembre 2011, a été très bénéfique puisqu'elle a officiellement reconnu le rôle des Organisations de la Société Civile dans le développement. Cette reconnaissance a été l'aboutissement de plusieurs initiatives, en particulier l'Open Forum : un processus ouvert par lequel le FIP, avec de nombreuses ONG, a eu l'opportunité de contribuer à ce Partenariat Mondial

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### La présence des ONG africaines sur la scène internationale

La voix des ONG africaines a été souvent portée dans beaucoup de foras mondiaux. Pour les OMD par exemple, lors du Haut Forum à New York, les ONG africaines se sont véritablement exprimées et cela se poursuit pour le Cadre de développement mondial pour l'Après OMD. Au sommet du G20 à Cannes en 2011 à travers le FIP, au sommet mondial de l'eau à Marseille en 2012, au Forum Social Mondial de Dakar et tant d'autres occasions nous avons contribué à porter haut la voix non gouvernementale. Sans aucun doute, les ONG africaines forment leurs positions et les défendent partout à travers le monde, dans les rencontres internationales.

Paradoxalement, beaucoup de pays en développement n'atteindront certainement pas les Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement en 2015. Un pays comme le Sénégal aura pourtant fait beaucoup d'efforts en matière d'éducation, de lutte contre des maladies comme le paludisme et le Sida, qui ont été sensiblement réduites à travers le pays. Il y a eu également des avancées notoires en matière de droits des femmes, notamment avec l'adoption d'une loi instaurant la parité au sein des instances électives du pays. La lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes s'est aussi intensifiée ; les progrès sont donc réels, même s'ils restent insuffisants au regard des objectifs premiers. En réalité, il semble que pour sortir de l'impasse, il faille éviter le piège consistant à vouloir appliquer à tous une approche uniforme, et au contraire accorder plus d'attention à la souveraineté des Etats dans la conception des programmes de développement. En effet, il ne peut y avoir de solution préfabriquée pour les pays du Sud, mais c'est à leurs citoyens, leurs ONG et leurs gouvernements qu'il revient d'apporter des réponses endogènes durables.

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**SUCCESS STORY: “Budget Support: A Victory for Country Ownership, Poverty Reduction & Sustainable Growth” by Natalia Alonso Head of Oxfam EU office and her team, representing Oxfam International**

At Oxfam, we are convinced that providing aid directly to government budgets is one of the best ways to ensure that development efforts are focused on poor countries’ needs, rather than on the political and economic strategies of donors. As a means of delivering aid, ‘budget support’ provides a predictable source of assistance for long-term development strategies which are defined and owned by recipient countries themselves.

In 2011, EU development policy was redefined by the ‘Agenda for Change’; a process which saw renewed debate as to the means by which European aid should be provided. We joined forces the following year with our partners in the CONCORD family in order to ensure that the EU would reaffirm its commitment to use budget support as an instrument primarily designed to support poverty reduction; while at the same time improving the transparency of this aid modality and the accountability of both its providers and recipients. Building on our experience, Oxfam encouraged CONCORD to produce a common position on budget support across its 1,800 members.

Backed by members of a broad, influential and authoritative coalition of civil society organizations with a more unified position, we were able to impact policy makers’ support for this aid modality. We were moreover in a position to both strengthen advancements proposed in the European Commission’s communication on budget support, such as transparency and budget oversight as an eligibility criteria for receiving this support, and to overcome resistance from Member States, a number of which strongly opposed the EU’s continuing use of budget support.

The legacy of our collaborative effort is clearly visible in the conclusions adopted by EU Member States in May 2012 and the European Commission guidelines of September 2012, both of which reflect the majority of our joint recommendations – a renewed focus on poverty reduction, increased transparency and accountability, and support to the oversight role of civil society.

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**Vamos despacio y juntos, porque vamos lejos:**

**Los desafíos de una agenda común entre Europa y América Latina**

**Por Alicia Sánchez**

**Ex-coordinación ejecutiva MESA de Articulación**

*English version is available page 74*

*Por Alicia Sánchez, ex directora ejecutiva de ACCIÓN, ex coordinadora MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes de ONG. Actualmente se desempeña como investigadora de la Universidad Central de Chile.*

La situación de crisis de la mayoría de los países europeos ha vuelto a poner en el debate temas como la desigualdad, la ineficiente e injusta distribución de la riqueza, los límites de la democracia representativa y las consecuencias de un sistema financiero que actúa sin control. Se trata de problemas que movimientos sociales y ONG de América Latina visualizaron hace años y trataron de instalar con fuerza ante sus gobiernos, pero también a nivel internacional. Es en estos días, cuando parece más evidente la urgencia de confluir las propuestas que se han generado al seno de la sociedad civil europea y latinoamericana para enfrentar colectivamente las tensiones no resueltas en nuestras democracias.

En los países desarrollados, la pugna entre keynesianos y austerianos, en palabras del economista Paul Krugman, ha encendido las esferas académicas. Y la sociedad civil tiene algo que decir sobre esta crisis y cómo transformar nuestra sociedad y alcanzar una mayor justicia e igualdad social.

El telón de fondo de estas disputas y de la indignación global es el cuestionamiento e insatisfacción respecto a cómo funcionan la democracia y el actual modelo de desarrollo. De esta forma, los desafíos que hoy tienen las ONG, que se reconocen como actores políticos, son de mayor complejidad y chocan con múltiples resistencias, aunque se abren paso entre las ligeras fracturas que hoy presenta el sistema.

En ambos continentes, sus sociedades coinciden en la desconfianza hacia los partidos políticos y el sistema financiero, hacia las élites políticas y económicas. “La democracia ha sido secuestrada” es un lema que se escucha con fuerza desde una ciudadanía global que mira impotente los rescates a los bancos, que conforma el 99% de la población afectada por las políticas de austeridad o que ha florecido con la primavera chilena de sus estudiantes, que luchan por una educación gratuita y de calidad.

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Estas movilizaciones y sus demandas por un cambio profundo, desafían y remecen también la agenda de las ONGs. Desde hace un par de décadas estas se han articulado en espacios más amplios con el objetivo de aunar estrategias y fortalecer su voz en los espacios globales en los que quieren incidir. Muchas de nuestras organizaciones se encuentran esporádicamente o trabajan juntas en instancias como los Foros Sociales o Cumbres de los Pueblos, y otras se cruzan en redes temáticas. Las plataformas nacionales de ONG, por ejemplo, ya no se sienten aisladas en sus esfuerzos. Parte de su agenda está concentrada en acrecentar alianzas regionales o globales para enfrentar desafíos comunes que van más allá de iniciativas concretas y locales. Hoy se plantean un trabajo de actoría colectiva con miras a la incidencia en espacios políticos como la Celac o Unasur en el caso de América Latina y Unión Europea en el caso de Europa.

Fue en este contexto que comenzó a tomar valor estratégico la integración a instancias que traspasaran lo nacional. Al mismo tiempo que en América Latina el espacio llamado “MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales de Redes y ONG”<sup>3</sup> estableció como una prioridad potenciar sus plataformas nacionales, se definió que esta tarea debía caminar al lado de la ampliación de sus alianzas.

De esta forma, había que pasar de acuerdos puntuales o apoyos específicos entre organizaciones del norte y del sur, como tradicionalmente se ha llevado esta relación, a establecer puntos de convergencia entre sus agendas. En estos últimos cinco años, por ejemplo, la Mesa y sus integrantes han apostado a construir una agenda con CONCORD en los temas de desigualdad y ODM. También se han convertido en un actor fundamental en la conformación del Foro Internacional de Plataformas de ONG (FIP), una iniciativa que surgió al alero de Coordination Sud de Francia en base a la relación que esta había forjado con plataformas de África, Asia y América Latina.

Se han generado instancias sólidas de intercambio y cooperación con las plataformas de ONG europeas en el ámbito de la incidencia política, en un camino que no ha estado exento de dificultades, y que entre logros y tropiezos tiene un norte claro, que es la ampliación de la democracia.

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<sup>3</sup> Los miembros de la MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes de ONG de América Latina y El Caribe son: Abong, Asociación Brasileña de ONG; Acción, Asociación Chilena de ONG; Alop, Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción al Desarrollo A.C; Amarc ALC; Articulación Feminista Marcosur; ANC, Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo, Perú; Anong, Asociación Nacional de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales Orientadas al Desarrollo, Uruguay; Ceaal, Consejo de Educación de adultos Para America Latina; Confederación Colombiana de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales, Ccong; Convergencia de Organismos Civiles por la Democracia, México; Adoc de México; Coordinación de ONG y Cooperativas, Congcoop, Guatemala; Red Encuentro de Argentina; Latindadd, Red Latinoamericana sobre Deuda, Desarrollo y Derechos; Piddhh, Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo; Pojoajú, Asociación de ONG de Paraguay; Propuesta Ciudadana, Perú; Sinergia, Venezuela; Unitas, Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social, Bolivia.

Estos vínculos y el trabajo en red han favorecido la apertura de una nueva forma de cooperación y del aporte que las ONG pueden realizar como agentes democratizadores. Al mismo tiempo, se ha facilitado el flujo de información entre las organizaciones involucradas y se ha buscado establecer determinados consensos en discusiones que apuntan a buscar una mayor justicia social.

No obstante en un contexto de cambios profundos y de crisis sistémica, como el que vivimos actualmente, el trabajo conjunto entre plataformas de Europa y Latinoamérica requiere nuevos desafíos e ir más allá del intercambio de experiencias. No basta con la discusión de mecanismos de incidencia en el ámbito de las relaciones internacionales, o de acordar posiciones comunes frente a cumbres, reuniones y grandes negociaciones a nivel mundial.

Hemos avanzado. Existe una agenda definida en torno a cambios estructurales. En el último Foro Eurolatinoamericano caribeño de la sociedad civil, de cara a la Cumbre de Jefes de Estado CELAC-UE, convocado por la Mesa y CONCORD, se presentaron propuestas consensuadas entre ambas redes, cuyos ejes principales son la formulación de una nueva arquitectura financiera mundial que resguarde los derechos; la coherencia a los modelos de inversiones con los objetivos de desarrollo sustentable, fortalecimiento de los DDHH y la democracia; el fortalecimiento y democratización del diálogo político bi-regional; y la revisión de la cooperación oficial al desarrollo para que estas garanticen de su reciprocidad, estabilidad y previsibilidad.

Desde el 2008 CONCORD y la Mesa organizan este Foro, pero si queremos que esta agenda corra con vigor en las disputas globales, debemos impulsar en nuestras organizaciones ciertas preguntas clave: ¿Cómo fiscalizar de manera eficiente al poder económico y político? ¿Cuál es el nuevo rumbo que debiera definir la relación entre las organizaciones del Norte y del Sur? ¿A través de qué instrumentos canalizamos mejor nuestras ideas y formas de concebir la sociedad para cambiar las reglas del juego? ¿Cómo seducimos a los ciudadanos y ciudadanas para que se sumen a nuestras propuestas?

Una agenda con procesos que amplíen la democracia, garanticen los derechos, resguarden los bienes públicos y den poder a los ciudadanos para ejercer la democracia más allá de las elecciones, es común a las redes de ambas regiones en este momento de la historia. Sin embargo, ponerla en marcha requiere transformaciones en nuestras propias estructuras y prácticas políticas. Es urgente abrir las puertas a nuevos liderazgos, establecer relaciones igualitarias y dar pasos firmes hacia la redistribución del poder tal como se lo exigimos a las élites.

Por otra parte, la instalación de estas ideas en la esfera pública, sobre todo en un momento de crisis, debe plantearse con mayor potencia, creatividad y audacia, teniendo en cuenta los cambios culturales que generalmente avanzan con mayor rapidez, y utilizando las herramientas que nos brindan las redes sociales en internet. El conjunto de experiencias que han dado vida a coaliciones regionales como la Mesa de Articulación y CONCORD y la larga historia de asociatividad de ambas, constituyen buenos cimientos para encarar nuevas dinámicas globales que hagan más robusta la democracia que queremos compartir.

**SUCCESS STORY: “How CONCORD inspired us to engage in a national consultation on development effectiveness” by Christine Dahm, Secretary General of the Luxembourg NGO platform Cercle de Coopération**

Having hosted the Open Forum for Development Effectiveness from 2008 until 2012, CONCORD was very dynamic in leading an international consultation process with civil society organisations worldwide, prior to the historic High level Forum on Development Effectiveness in Busan at the end of 2011.

This process led, among others, to the definition of the Istanbul Principles in September 2010.

Within this process, CONCORD encouraged its members to organise similar consultations at regional or national level.

The Cercle de Coopération, the NGO platform in Luxembourg, took on this challenge and motivated its members to engage in a national consultation, which was launched in December 2010.

Through numerous workshops and exchanges and with the help of Franz Berger (who presented the Open Forum and the concept of a national consultation at a Board meeting of the Cercle) and Andreas Vogt (who presented the Istanbul Principles at the General Assembly of the Cercle in March 2011), this participative process led to the definition of twenty guidelines that were largely inspired by the Istanbul Principles. These guidelines were adopted by the members of the Cercle at an extraordinary General Assembly in September 2011. The guidelines are defined around three themes: Partnerships, Transparency and Mutual accountability, and Human Rights.

Since then, the Cercle has been working on helping its members to implement these guidelines, inspired by the Open Forum Implementation guide for the Istanbul principles.

The Open Forum process did put the topic of development effectiveness and impact-based assessments at the heart of our activities and has since then become a transversal theme throughout our work with our constituency and in our (external) communication. It has helped to raise awareness among Luxembourg NGOs on their role - and responsibility - as development actors.

We are very grateful for the support and the vision that CONCORD has been providing us with on this initiative.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT PARADIGMS**

#### **Adapting to a changing development landscape**

**By Mikaela Gavas**

**Former Chair CONCORD Policy Forum and EU policy officer at BOND, now researcher at ODI**

*When in 2003 CONCORD was created, Mikaela Gavas worked as EU policy officer for the British network for development NGOs BOND and was thus closely involved. She chaired the Policy Forum for two years. Since 2012, she advises the House of Commons development committee and is also research associate at the Overseas Development Institute, a UK think tank on development and humanitarian issues. She furthermore gathered working experiences at the European Parliament as well as at the Commission.*

It is now broadly accepted that the development landscape is undergoing rapid and fundamental changes, and that development cooperation is evolving with it in a number of ways. Firstly, changing patterns of growth have altered the nature of poverty, with many low-income countries graduating to middle-income status while fragile states are left further behind. Although differing predictions exist, the reality is that there is an increasing concentration of poverty in middle income and/or fragile states, and an increasing number of poor countries seeking to reduce dependency on aid. While poverty has fallen around the world, progress has been unequal. In fact, increasing inequality is a major challenge for this era, particularly given that developing countries (especially those newly graduating to middle-income status) increasingly have the financial wherewithal to deal with poverty but lack the political will (Gaught and Glennie, 2012).

Secondly, the most profound change in geopolitics today is the gradual waning of western power relative to emerging (or emerged) economies. Shifting wealth has led to a community of development actors that is more diverse than ever before, with an increasing number of emerging economies becoming donors, including the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), but also a range of smaller emerging countries, such as Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Turkey.

Thirdly, the motives and goals for development cooperation are also shifting, not least through discussions on the post-2015 development goals and the focus on sustainable, climate

compatible development. Development cooperation is increasingly being used to meet regional and global challenges, alongside poverty reduction, and the language of mutual benefit is becoming more common.

Finally there is now a myriad of new financing instruments being applied across the development cooperation spectrum to meet a more complex set of needs. Developing countries are entering a new 'age of choice'<sup>4</sup> with new financing options giving them stronger bargaining power in relation to donors.

These changes have brought about a multi-polar world order with new demands for global decision-making. The increasingly global nature of development challenges, such as climate change, peace and security, food security and financial stability, clearly indicate that these global problems require global solutions and new forms of international cooperation. Increasingly, development cooperation needs to identify and tackle problems at a global scale, in new partnerships composed of both developed and developing countries.

The political landscape in Europe is also changing rapidly as a result of the Eurozone crisis, austerity, pressures for protectionism and increased disenchantment with the EU institutions. Given this pressure, donors cannot allow aid to be perceived by taxpayers as ineffective or at risk of being misdirected. A strong focus on (short-term) results and 'value-for-money' has emerged, along with deepened concerns that aid should bolster wider goals of democracy and accountability. Aid has already started to falter in this environment. Given the ongoing difficult economic situation in Europe, it is unlikely that aid will rise again in the foreseeable.

These changes have profound implications for all actors in the development cooperation arena. Traditional donors and multilateral organisations have long-standing expertise, experience and relationships in aid delivery, but may find their approaches challenged, both by competition from newer donors at the country level that are able to offer faster, less conditional financing, and by the need for greater and more robust forms of multilateralism at the global level. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), both national and international, need to consider how the new landscape will impact on both their funding sources and their value added on the ground.

There is much at stake for the EU in understanding these trends. Such understanding will be vital to making effective decisions about where, how, and on what the EU invests its resources

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<sup>4</sup> See 'The Age of Choice: Developing Countries in the New Aid Landscape' by Romilly Greenhill, Annalisa Prizzon and Andrew Rogerson. ODI Working Paper 364, available at <http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/7163-age-choice-developing-countries-new-aid-landscape>

and focuses its cooperation efforts, as well as who it can collaborate with to achieve its goals. Rather than being limited to development aid to solve national development challenges, EU development cooperation will need to contribute to global problem solving for the benefit of development outcomes. The policy challenge for the EU, therefore, is to find the right balance in addressing poverty reduction objectives and activities whilst simultaneously promoting strategic objectives in ways that deliver optimal outcomes and in the mutual interests of the EU and partner countries (Gavas et. al., 2011).

Kharas and Rogerson ‘stress-test’ the exposure of donor agencies to the changing development landscape. Least exposed agencies are those that are engaged most heavily in the provision of global public goods and those whose activities are focused on the high poverty gap and fragile countries. Highly exposed agencies are those focused heavily on social welfare programmes as compared with either growth or global public goods and middle-income countries. The EU falls into the second highest of the four risk categories (Kharas and Rogerson, 2012).

The EU has, to date, emphasised the primacy of poverty reduction in its development programmes – an approach that has become increasingly incompatible with its large and increasingly heterogeneous partner country portfolio (145 countries) (Koch, 2012). The 2012 EU Agenda for Change attempts to steer EU development policy towards a more differentiated approach to development cooperation and espouses the introduction of new aid allocation criteria with a view to aid graduation for well-off developing countries. It also attempts to concentrate assistance on a limited number of sectors, so that the EU does not continue to spread itself too thinly. However, the Agenda for Change is, above all, an aid strategy for an aid administration (Gavas, 2013). It focuses on the EU’s efforts to improve as an aid agency and does little to link to the rest of the development agenda – climate change, security or trade – and thus fails to be explicit about the need to develop an EU-wide strategy for global development.

For all the current challenges faced in Europe, and by the EU, it remains an indispensable part of the multilateral architecture. It brings multiple assets to the new agenda. It has a long-standing and reasonably effective development and humanitarian aid programme. It contributes to aggregation of aid flows and reduced transactions cost. It acts for all Member States on trade. It is a leader in climate policy. It has an emerging foreign policy and security apparatus, and is especially active in fragile states. And it has strategic political relationships with all regions of the world. However, the structural caveats that hinder the EU’s potential continuously jeopardise its role in shaping the global world. Joined-up thinking and action is limited. Achieving policy and institutional coherence remains the EU’s core challenge in being

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an influential global actor and in successfully tackling global challenges in a multilateral international setting.

As the EU and the other donor agencies rethink their mission, geographical range and instruments to adapt to the changing development landscape, where does this leave CONCORD? CONCORD may find itself following the same trajectory as traditional donor agencies: concentrating its focus on a limited number of sectors and countries, working more at the global level and seeking to integrate itself into global governance arrangements, to support progressive responses to global challenges, and entering into new kinds of partnership with mutual learning.

Nevertheless, the NGO community is diverse and heterogeneous and it will be difficult for it to follow a single route. Yet, as we move into a future dominated by global challenges and driven by a multiplicity of development actors - in which the EU cannot be an effective player in all sectors and in all countries of the world - CONCORD will need to decide what role it wants the EU to play in this new world order.

Should CONCORD continue to advocate for the EU to maintain poverty reduction in pride of place as its primary objective of development cooperation? Although development cooperation in the future is likely to continue to focus on poverty reduction in the poorest countries, there will also be an increasing prominence to a new agenda of global public goods (including climate, security), international governance (for example, finance, trade), and new partnerships with emerging economies - on 'cross-Government support for shared human development objectives and the delivery of global public goods' (Norton and Rogerson, 2012). Donors are increasingly using aid as part of their foreign and economic policy, firming up interests across the world. This does not negate the good intentions and outcome of much development aid. CONCORD needs to ask itself where it is positioned within this mix.

Member States shape EU development policy by 'uploading' their policies and objectives to the European level. Thus, EU policy tends to be a composite of many Member States' policies. The result, however, is an EU development programme with an overloaded and broad agenda, operating in almost every country in the world. The EU has limited resources and needs to make political decisions about how to allocate them. It needs to focus on a selection of issues that it can realistically tackle. But, as the EU attempts to concentrate its resources where its strengths and comparative advantages lie, CONCORD may need to identify what it thinks those strengths and comparative advantages are and specialise in advocating for them.

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**SUCCESS STORY: “Why aid still matters” by Ester Asin, Head of CARE EU offices, Co-Chair of CONCORD PoFo, Head of Policy CONCORD from 2003-2010**

It was a sunny afternoon in October 2005 in Brussels in the cosy meeting room of CIDSE. The Financing for development (FfD) working group was about to dismantle. In the AOB, someone mentioned that EU Member States had agreed in May 2005 to give 0.7% of their Gross National Income to developing countries by 2015. We were wondering whether it was worth holding EU Member States accountable for this commitment ...

In the following months, an unprecedented number of European NGOs rallied and came together under CONCORD to produce the first of a series of ‘Aid Watch Reports’. We took to the streets of Brussels calling for another aid; we contributed to inspiring CONCORD members from Brussels to Lisbon, from Helsinki to Valetta to work together in a truly pan-European effort.

Two years ahead of the 2015 deadline, in these gloomy days for aid, where commitments do not seem to matter anymore, I still think about this paragraph in the 2008 Aid Watch Report ‘No time to waste’, and still feel as inspired as some years ago: *if you were a woman from Kenema, a rural area in Sierra Leone, you would have 1 chance in 16 of dying during pregnancy or birth delivery. You would probably be illiterate. You would have to walk six kilometres a day to fetch water, and one of your five children would have died before the age of five. Aid is not a panacea. But, if you were her, aid could provide you much-needed resources to improve your access to essential services, such as education or health. Aid could make the difference between dying or staying alive. This is what aid could do for you.*

Let’s keep it up.

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## *New development paradigm : Building a joint future for 7 billion inhabitants and only one planet*

**By Mike Mathias,**

**Former Co-Chair CONCORD Policy Forum, former Secretary General Luxembourg platform**

*As former Secretary General of the Luxembourg platform « Cercle de Coopération des ONG de Développement », Mike Mathias was very involved in the transition from CLONG to CONCORD. He later became co-chair of the Policy Forum. Today, he works as adviser for the Group of the Greens- Luxembourg.*

CONCORD is celebrating its tenth anniversary at a critical moment in the history of development. Indeed, since the start of the 50s, since the first “development decades”, each of these efforts has focused on economic growth as a miracle cure for bringing progress, technology and modernity, even freedom and good governance.

However, following the start of the great crisis that broke out in 2008, should we not surrender to the evidence that perpetual economic growth is truly over and that we must find a new development paradigm – with the objective of flourishing and just societies?

Since its beginnings, CONCORD has found itself involved in this debate and with these questions. The key now is to take up the challenge, even if this means shaking up certain truths that we have learned to love.

### *The end of an era*

Ten years ago, CONCORD was born like a phoenix from the ashes of the Liaison Committee to subsequently fly even higher. We have been able to build on over twenty years of fights, reflections, consultations, diplomatic successes and bitter observations regarding the lack of sufficient progress which nevertheless never stopped us from persevering. CONCORD has brought national platforms together with the thematic networks of international solidarity associations in the European Union. It very quickly turned towards central and eastern European countries and tried to mobilise civil society in these countries on questions of international solidarity. At the same time, actors from “old Europe” were able to discover and adopt new dimensions, both difficult and encouraging, to the transition that took place in the eastern countries. CONCORD is also extremely open to other topics put forward by NGOs such

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as human rights, environmental and climate change issues, the problems of the economy and its impact, and social questions in Europe; in short, CONCORD has become involved, in a general way, in the interdependence and the adverse effects of globalisation.

CONCORD has been crossed by various dynamics, a major one of which finds its origins in the alliance between the peasant movements of the South and the North (including Canada and the US). Following the return to power of neoliberal globalisation, with the formation of the WTO, mutual aid had to be put back into perspective not only among peasant movements in the South, but also between peasant movements in the North and South. Together they fought the common causes of obstacles to their development. Of course, CONCORD was not at the heart of these efforts, but it was a key medium at that time for raising awareness of the concerns of peasant movements among European NGOs. It should also be recognised that the approach taken by European NGOs has changed considerably as regards agricultural issues. Although it is impossible to determine the causes with certainty, it was only after 2005 that recognition of the priority to offer special protection to the rural world and small-scale farming throughout the world was finally agreed upon.

The programme of Irish NGOs during Ireland's presidency of the European Council in 2004 have allowed NGOs to move forward in their positioning on human security, a subject which, after 11 September, has been sadly very topical. The war on terror appeared all too often to be a war on the poor. The concept of human security allowed refocusing this debate, which risked dominating the international community's development agenda after 2001. Human security, understood as a human condition free from fear, free from want and free to act, was the precursor to the concept of Human Rights based development.

Finally the preparations for the European elections in 2009 allowed us to position ourselves clearly in relation to the challenges of climate change and the issue of renewable ecological resources and their unfair distribution. We have been able to rediscover the concept of sustainable development and we have begun to integrate it into our work.

But is this sufficient to face up to the challenges of the current crisis, a crisis that is indicating the end of economic models, and therefore the end of development models, based on growth? How can we still stuck to the old-fashioned concept of development if economic growth becomes ever more difficult because we are lacking in ecological and economic resources?

What are the possible conditions of such development?

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### Out of the Box of Development

Is development not mainly a concept created and promoted by economists? When I say economists, I mean those active in the Big Economy which is ruled by finance ministers, corporations, Nobel Prizes and monetary policies, and which is mainly male- and growth-oriented. I do not mean that part of the economy called the “core economy”, which is more or less ruled by Ministers for Family affairs, Education and Culture, and which is mainly rural, female and qualitative instead of quantitative.

It is interesting to see that numerous NGO publications have adopted this economic view on development and see poverty reduction as being directly linked to economic growth. The perspective is not without risk, since poverty alleviation through pro-poor growth has to remain an illusion as long as we do not tackle wealth distribution: minimal levels of income are important, but of little use to the fight against poverty without real progress on limiting wealth accumulation at the other end of the “social ladder”. Are people poor because they cannot satisfy their most basic needs or is it because others are simply richer, much richer, too rich?

In the same way, does it make sense to complain about non-poverty-oriented growth, as economic growth in a capitalist system inevitably imposes an unequal distribution of wealth and income? Those who have the capacities to invest will be rewarded for that and this creates a natural tendency for wealth accumulation, known as capitalist accumulation, which explains why rich people became even richer during the last thirty years.

The UNDP’s 2010 Human Development Report analysed 20 years of HDIs and development progress in the world. The conclusion is clear: there is no direct link between growth and the Human Development Index concept of development. Countries can reach substantial progress in terms of health and education without or with very little growth, or they can have disastrous results in these areas with huge growth rates. The UNDP’s 2013 report states regarding the progress made by low and medium income countries on HDI: *“Yet progress requires more than average improvement in the HDI. It will be neither desirable nor sustainable if increases in the HDI are accompanied by rising inequalities in income, unsustainable patterns of consumption, high military spending and low social cohesion. An essential part of human development is equity.”*<sup>5</sup> In the end it is a question of political priorities. It was not the lack of technical, economic or scientific means that made the MDGs fail as they did, but the lack of political will to really concentrate on rebalancing inequalities, not through economic growth, but by evenly distributing wealth and resources from the top down to the bottom.

<sup>5</sup> Summary, Human Development Report 2013, *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, 2013, p.2, [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

Our world is marked by the myth of the endless expansion of this stuff that feeds our greed. Dominant economic concepts and policies make us believe in a historical necessity for the growth of monetary economic production and exchanges as the only genuine driving force for progress and prosperity. But beware: “development” means unfolding something that is already there; it is only folded in the envelope of uninformed humans. We have to develop them, enlighten them, liberate their energy to develop economic activities – take microfinance as an example – and then development will take off. So it seems that there is no way to avoid this “development”, of the pure human instinct for stuff; the only way would be not to unfold, not to develop. Who would dare not to develop?

Economic growth is the dominant paradigm for development; it is the box we are living in. Development is this bulimic process of economic expansion into our lives. Is it the way to end poverty? Expanding production without giving priority to its equal distribution is the dominant paradigm of the modern world: expanding production without regarding its ecological sustainability for future generations. You might consider this as an awful way of thinking as it does not prevent people from starving to death. Right! But consider that, “between 1990 and 2001, for every \$100 worth of growth in the world’s income per person, just \$0.60 found its target and contributed to reducing poverty below the \$1-a-day line.”<sup>6</sup> This means that \$166 of production and consumption is needed to achieve a single \$1 of poverty, with all its associated environmental impacts. This approach is both economically and ecologically inefficient.

What would development be without expansion? Could it be something like prosperity, a status where you consider that things are going well and that you can reasonably hope (“prosperere” in Latin) that this will not change, that your future will be as good as your present?

### *Global Perspective and Care for a common destiny*

We are living in a global world. It is the image of the butterfly on an island in the Indian Ocean whose movement of wings has an impact on the weather in Europe. Whatever we do, it impacts the livelihoods of people all around the world. If we do not care for social equality, our societies will disintegrate; political legitimacy around the world will weaken dramatically and threaten political stability in the end.

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<sup>6</sup> *Growth isn’t working: The unbalanced distribution of benefits and costs from economic growth*, David Woodward and Andrew Simms, January 2006, the new economics foundation, ISBN 1 904882 06 4

Conflicts over commons –global resources, be they social or environmental – that belong to nobody but are essential to all of our well-being, conflicts which have always been the source of “unsustainabilities,” have been brought to the limits of planet Earth. They are global conflicts about fish stocks, climate change and bio fuels, and these conflicts threaten communities locally and globally all around the world.

We need a new understanding to take care of our common destiny. This should become a policy objective: take care of our common destiny, take care of people’s communities, of their livelihoods all around the world. We are not alone: what happens to them happens to us. This is the meaning of common destiny. If they are too poor, it means that we are too rich. Well-being only exists if it is equally distributed, and this needs economic rebalancing, not economic growth.

Is our way of living prosperous? No: as it is not sustainable, it will not last and it is unequal. So let’s promote this new understanding for global care. Instead of Development Cooperation Departments, we need Departments for Global Care, as development does not at all question the expansion of economics beyond our planet’s carrying capacity and our social systems.

Global Care will integrate all our policy areas to the extent that they impact on the destiny of people in the global sphere, especially when they touch on systemic risks, one of which at the moment is financial and fiscal deregulation.

We should not evaluate governments’ policies with respect to development; we should evaluate governments’ policies on coherence with our global destiny. We have to concentrate on the orientation of politics itself. Is this too global, too abstract?

No, I do not think so, and it is coherent with our self-understanding of global solidarity organisations for a common goal, a goal that concerns all of us in the same way. If we accept this view, we have to redefine what partnership means and bring the social and cultural change we are searching for in the South to our own societies first. Let’s do our homework.

**SUCCESS STORY: “Towards Human Rights Based Approaches to Development”  
by Salvatore Parata, Director of Terre des Hommes International Federation**

*Brussels, 24 November 2004 - “Making Development for All Real: Sharing Rights-Based Analysis and Practice”.* This is the title of that seminar organised by Terre des Hommes IF, Plan Europe, ActionAid International, World Vision and Save the Children. 40 participants attended.

One year after the foundation of CONCORD, this seminar represented the *kick-off* of CONCORD’s discussion on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development.

Have a look at what the seminar’s report said in 2004: *“The goal of the seminar was to start a discussion and share experiences on rights-based approaches among development NGOs, and eventually to bring that discussion into the context of CONCORD’s advocacy work. (...) We aimed to raise questions, rather than provide answers; we hope this report will be a starting point for further action on moving towards a rights-based approach in the European NGO development sector.”*

Ten years later, HRBA constitutes a key objective of CONCORD’s strategy. Members have shared a better common understanding of what HRBA is and agreed to advocate for it. Today, HRBA is fully part of CONCORD’s vision and conviction. HRBA is progressively put as a “cornerstone” of CONCORD’s policy expression. As an example, look at CONCORD’s position for the post-MDG agenda.

HRBA is not an option; it is about legal obligations and political commitments. CONCORD did part of its homework to better integrate such commitment in its work. We are still “in progress”. A lot remains to be done so that NGOs’ “ways of doing” refer clearly to HRBA principles. Moreover, as the main target of CONCORD’s political action, the EU must still turn HRBA from declarations into coherent policy responses, and deliver. This might be the aim of the next decade of CONCORD.

Through CONCORD’s task force on HRBA and other groups, we shall continue our strategic engagement so that the realisation of Human Rights in Development remains a cornerstone of CONCORD.

*Brussels, 6 May 2013*

## What will make a difference?

**By Alison Tate**

**External Relations Director at the International Trade Union Confederation**

*Alison Tate is the Director of External Relations with the International Trade Union Confederation, based in Brussels, Belgium. The ITUC represents 175 million workers in 156 countries and has 315 national affiliates. Alison has worked in Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific in trade union, human rights and community development and is committed to a world that works for everyone.*

The past 10 years has seen civil society, unions and others come together to make a difference, on fair trade, aid, poverty, debt, sustainability, transitional justice in countries emerging from dictatorship and conflict, and that our voices and concerns are taken seriously by governments and international institutions...Notwithstanding some victories, now in 2013, these themes feel like bit players to a huge, unfolding drama on a scale that humanity has never had to face.

Never has the world generated so much wealth while inequality between the richest and the poorest has become wider. The now much talked-about global imbalances have long been obvious to the 1.4 billion people living on less than two dollars a day. The future is clearly that environmental deterioration and social inequalities will continue to intensify. These are our joint civil society concerns.

We face a 600 million jobs challenge in the next decade, globally. Currently 200 million people are unemployed including 75 million young people. 1.52 billion workers are in precarious employment, many of whom are women. 40 million people will enter the labour force every year into economies that cannot accommodate them.<sup>7</sup> Many more survive in the informal economy, with even fewer rights or opportunities. This is an economic and social time bomb.

In times of crisis it would make sense to strengthen rights not attack them. Indeed, crisis recovery through strengthening human rights is currently denied by many politicians, governments, international institutions and media commentators. So we are in a moment in time, where much of what civil society, trade unions and other activists have fought hard to defend is being attacked. For example, despite the terrible social cost of austerity programs across Europe and elsewhere, we do not have a strong momentum to change that trajectory.

<sup>7</sup> International Labour Organization, (ILO) Global Employment Trends, 2012.

Those of us from outside Europe used to look to Europe as the great example, of “world’s best practice” in having agreement on a “social contract” where social dialogue was meaningful. In times of crisis, for example after the First World War, Scandinavian countries developed social protection systems, not because there was money sitting in a pot somewhere waiting to be spent, but because strengthening rights was recognized as a sound strategy to ensure social dialogue and trust building and recovery from crisis. We long looked to Europe, in international policy, to stand up for the universal application of rights. Not any more.

The impact of the programs and policies of the troika - the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has undermined the confidence in Europe and of its institutions to deliver greater social justice.<sup>8</sup>

*So how is civil society responding globally? And what could CONCORD’s role be?*

Firstly, I would argue there is no such thing as “global civil society”. Many organizations and movements act internationally or have links across many countries. The lessons of the last 10 years show us that those who claim to represent civil society and who are acknowledged as representatives by decision makers in government and international institutions, is highly contested. The global development framework is currently being redefined and will be renegotiated over the next 2 years ahead of 2015.

There is no doubt that a vibrant and independent civil society is essential to effective and sustainable democracies. After 10 years of supporting and mobilising political and institutional dialogues at European and international levels on relief and development, CONCORD and its members and partners have much to share.

Few people can anticipate the changes within Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world in the coming 10 years.

Given that the conditions in which civil society and trade unions operate in in many countries, where we face threats, violence, legal restrictions and even criminalization for our legitimate activities. Where genuine consultations do occur, few countries or institutional settings include civil society in co-determination of decision making or of monitoring.

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<sup>8</sup> ITUC Frontlines Report 2013: [www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-frontline-report-2013](http://www.ituc-csi.org/ituc-frontline-report-2013)

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In the current climate, we know that civil society is often more trusted by the public than governments, or big business. But we need to ensure our own accountability and contribution to broader society. Indeed the past 10 years has shown us that we can effectively take action online, as well as in the streets, in the halls of parliament, in workplaces, in art etc. Who can imagine the possibilities of the coming decades?

Then our challenge is to make that voice, as well as those demands for action and for accountability ever more effective. The national platforms that follow the trends and debates and provide a keen analysis of them, are ever more needed. As communities come to terms with the complexity of the challenges of sustainable development, the identity of these platforms, as development NGOs, may need to change. As the devastating impacts of land grabbing, food insecurity, lack of tax justice, corporate accountability and paying a living wage is better understood, as gender, labour, other social and environmental concerns are more fully elaborated, then the nature and functions of development platforms will change. Just as internet users can become more fully aware of their role as voters and organizers, and trade unions, whilst a part of and associated within civil society, also have our own separate identity and roles.

We need to see transformation, not just change.....hope and optimism and actions for achieving social justice and effectively addressing the global dimensions of these challenges. We need coherence and political will to drive that.

The past 10 years has shown us that across social movements, unions, women, youth, development NGOs, and environmental groups at national and international levels, we have a great convergence of values and of analysis on what has caused the multiple crises, and on ways of describing why we are where we are. We do not have a set of common strategies for engaging people into taking action. That is indeed what is wanted - ideas and champions for taking action and addressing the democratic deficits.

CONCORD acting regionally and internationally, and its members, the national platforms, need to strengthen their connections to communities. The role CONCORD can play is to inspire, catalyse and coordinate action, to support people in taking up their own struggles and seeing the synergies between these issues. Social media campaigning has reached and informed millions of people and inspired many to become active online. Beyond signing petitions though, we need to demonstrate community activism and sustained interest in order to move political processes. Good old community organizing and mobilization, alongside a transformational, meaningful framework.

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Many activists speak of a “new narrative” that can make the connections and support people to see pathways for themselves to take action, to get involved...to make the scale of difference that is needed. Let’s get to work on developing the initiatives to create the conditions for people to participate.

**SUCCESS STORY: “Why development education matters” by Rilli Lappalainen, Secretary General of the Finnish NGDO Platform KEHYS, CONCORD Europe Board Member**

Kehys - The Finnish NGDO Platform to the EU also recently reached its 10-year benchmark. During these ten years, Kehys has been highly involved in the work of CONCORD, and together they have successfully negotiated and participated in the different encounters that have emerged during this eventful decade. CONCORD has provided a solid platform and a network for Finnish NGOs to engage with policy discourse. Development education has also been a core priority of Kehys. As the umbrella organisation of NGDOs functioning in Europe, CONCORD has been a focal point for Kehys to follow, building common development education policies and networks together with other member platforms through the DARE Forum (Development Awareness Raising and Education Forum).

Kehys has also been actively engaged in the DARE Forum’s development education project DEEEP (Developing Europeans’ Engagement for the Eradication of Global Poverty), which initially started in 2005. In DEEEP1, one of our member organisations Taksvärkki was part of the consortium behind the management of DEEEP. Through Kehys, the Finnish organisations are represented in the CONCORD DARE Forum and in that way actively influence the pan-European development education discourse. Additionally, CONCORD has brought an added value to Kehys’ work by making the operation of the organisations known to both European and national regions.

During Finland's presidency of the EU in 2006, Kehys, together with CONCORD's DARE Forum, organised an international development education conference, which eventually led to the formulation of a common European Development Education Consensus. As a milestone for cross-sector involvement in development education, the pan-European consensus enabled and gathered multiple stakeholders to reinforce the common European vision in strengthening European citizens' understanding on global issues.

In cooperation with CONCORD's DARE Forum's secretariat DEEEP 3, Kehys organised the Development Education Summer School on the theme of Quality and Impact, which gathered participants from all over the world. Plan Finland was also a leading organisation of DEEEP3. The fourth phase of DEEEP, which began at the start of 2013 under the leadership of Kehys, holds special potential to build upon the networks and content developed during the previous projects and move beyond the boundaries of Europe to expand the engagement of European development education actors as part of CONCORD new political narrative.

## *Postface - 1992 – 2013: Two decades of hope, solidarity, hard work and unfulfilled ambitions*

**From Olivier Consolo, CONCORD Director (2003-2013)**

### *Looking back*

Twenty years is considered to be a long enough period to start assessing the past, achievements as well as failures. It corresponds almost to one 'generation'. The last two decades tell us many things to learn about the state of the world and of the European Union (EU).

Twenty years ago Europe was marked by several important political developments: the official end of the period known as the Cold War, the re-unification of Germany, the beginning of the most ambitious process of European Union enlargement, and finally the new EU treaty called the Maastricht Treaty (which came into force on November 1993). This new treaty opened four major evolutions for the EU: The consolidation of the EU as an open internal market and the agreement on a joint approach regarding international trade, the creation of a new ambition regarding common external relations and defense, the perspective of integrating new Member States (from Eastern and Central Europe), and the launch of the Economic and Monetary Union which has led to the creation of the Euro (a reality 8 years later). In 2013 our European Union's institutional and political environment is still deeply influenced by the Maastricht Treaty.

### *The international agenda*

During the same period, the international community (led by the United Nations (UN) and the International Finance Institutions (IFIs)) was looking to re-launch diplomacy and international negotiations to respond to a new era corresponding to the 'post-Cold War' situation. In 1992, the world summit in Rio known as the Earth Summit embodied unprecedented hope for thousands of activists, NGOs and diplomats. When reading again the preparatory documents or the outputs of Rio twenty years ago, activists will realize that the roads we are following today were already drawn and well apprehended in their complexity, scale of inter-relations and global ambition. Since then, the international agenda has been strengthened by a series of



other international negotiations which reinforced the feeling that the world wanted to move towards a new “progressive” and humanist agenda: Cairo Summit on population- September 1994, Social Summit in Copenhagen- February 1995, Beijing Women Summit- September 1995... Almost a decade which ended with the Millennium World Summit- September 2000. It also marked the launch of the Millennium Development Goals’ agenda (MDGs).

At the same period, activists managed to make their voices heard to stop unfair ongoing trade negotiations. It is the beginning of a new stage for the alter/anti-globalization movements and the creation of the World Social Forum. 2003 marked also the failure of the Cancun 5th Ministerial negotiations of the World Trade Organization.

In summary, the first decade (1992-2003) has been characterized by many initiatives from governments, the UN and civil society across the globe, opening new spaces for international deliberations, alliance building, new agreements and what we believed were to be new ambitions for a better and just world.

### *The member led confederation*

CONCORD was founded by its members in early 2003 after 3 years of internal and institutional discussions and strategic decisions. For its 10th anniversary, CONCORDtoday is trying to look with honesty at the last 10 years and more importantly trying to invent the next 10 years. I like to say ‘invent’ because at the end of the journey, it is women and men, institutions and politicians, organized civil society and grass roots organizations and communities who build (or destroy) the world we live in.

Over the last 10 years CONCORD has made real efforts to be a member-led confederation. We intended to be a fair and active partner with our colleagues from Civil Society in the EU, as well as in other parts of the world, especially in the so-called ‘south’. As a European actor we tried to assume our responsibilities as a regional partner within global coalitions and alliances (GCAP, Better Aid, Open Forum on CSO effectiveness, and more recently in the framework of the Post-2015 agenda). Vis-à-vis European Institutions and national governments of the EU, CONCORD has maintained open critical dialogue and engagement.

### *Achievements*

Regarding the main achievements of the international community over the last 10 years, it seems that the level of ambition and concrete outcomes of the European Union as well as of the international community (mainly based on inter-governmental dynamics and arrangements), have been relatively modest!

Looking at the 50% full-glass-of-water, we (civil society and a few institutions, including the EU) managed to safeguard key principles like the fight against and eradication of poverty as the main objective of the Development Cooperation Framework. Southern actors and governments called for truly equal partnerships (which has been partly translated into the Aid Effectiveness agenda). Civil Society engaging in the development agenda managed to rebuild confidence from institutions and donors on the role we play as development actors in our own right. CSOs engaged in an open process about our own effectiveness and transparency that led to the Istanbul Principles. During the last ten years, many regional and world social forums contributed to connecting thousands of organizations, experiences and good practices across the globe. CSOs and some institutions intended to build alliances and coalitions across the silos we used to work in: on climate and ahead of Rio+20 our sectors managed to partially overcome the traditional divides and competitions. More importantly, millions of local actors have been developing solutions and creating innovations regarding all kinds of problems and challenges everywhere on earth. This last trend represents the greatest potential for the future.

### Challenges

But the 50% empty-glass-of-water encompasses the following failures and challenges: the lives of billions of people remain under the minimum standards of dignity, rights and prosperity. Almost 5 billion people are living today in poverty in the developed and developing world, lacking access to basic services such as health, justice or education, struggling for democracy or being threatened by conflicts and wars. The planet is sick because of our current extractive and financial short-term economic model. Climate change awareness did not lead to a real change in production and consumption patterns for the so-called middle class all over the globe. Local and regional conflicts have replaced the 'high intensity' world wars of the 20th century, contributing to the invisibility of the suffering of millions and millions of men, women and children in all continents. Nearly all international negotiations have failed during the last decade. People are increasingly doubtful about our current models of democracy and institutions, including in the EU. The political space for civil society is shrinking everywhere, including in Europe. The world has never been so wealthy (+220% over the 20 last years) but no significant new resources have been allocated to eradicate poverty, respond to climate and environmental challenges or to invest in a great transition toward more sustainable societies.

### Looking ahead

This short assessment is a call for increased mobilization and joint action to achieve real strategic and sustainable changes in the real life of billions of real women and men affected by

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the current politics, policies and status-quo of the international community. There is an increasing feeling and perception among public opinion that the international 'affairs' are led by an undemocratic economic, institutional and political leadership who resist to pursue the interests of the many, of the majorities (the famous 99%), who call them to respond to the challenges of the planet and to the rights and needs of the present and future generations.

Civil society across the world and CONCORD (as a modest but determined part of it), call for a next decade that delivers promises and expectations of the four fifths of the world population. For the first time in history, human societies have reached the level of knowledge, resources, experience and interdependent relations (networks and collective actions) that allow us to solve the problems the planet and humanity face. This new ambition will also require from CSOs that we fairly review and adapt our strategies for change.

And one of the best ways to achieve these changes is to invest and trust in people's capabilities, aspirations and rights with a clear option for women!

**Olivier Consolo – director of CONCORD (2003-2013)**

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**SUCCESS STORY: “For CONCORD’s 10th Anniversary” by Michael Steeb, representing the German National Platform VENRO**

Ten years of CONCORD are a success story! Never before in European history have so many civil society and development organisations joined together and, together with their partners in the South, raised their voice for this One World; for a world with more justice and a dignified life for all people.

CONCORD: the name says it all. It emphasises the unity in the indispensable diversity of civil society. CONCORD’s strength lies in the extensive knowledge and dedication of its numerous members. Due to their close connection with their partners all over the world, they become Europe’s force for a globalisation of solidarity. They are the ones who do not represent Europe as an institution, but as a partner. They are the ones who give Europe a human and tangible face.

Just as CONCORD needs its members, we members do need CONCORD to enhance our voice on the European stage. In the past few years, CONCORD, with its small office, has mastered this with flying colours. CONCORD is thus an excellent example for the European Union.

The great enlargement of the European Union and a constitutive consolidation of the EU by the Lisbon Treaty even occurred within the past decade. Today, platforms and networks of all EU member countries are represented in CONCORD. This shows that for CONCORD and its members, a united Europe which is open to the world and to humanity is a heartfelt concern.

We are proud of CONCORD and would like to wholeheartedly congratulate it on its 10th Anniversary!

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## ANNEX 1 – ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS FOR ARTICLES IN FRENCH OR SPANISH

### *A word of homage...to the Architects and Builders of CONCORD*

**By Frans Polman**  
**First CONCORD President, 2003-2006**

The creation of CONCORD is not the work of one or two individuals, nor a handful of people. It is the fruit of numerous efforts for consultation, reflection, planning and the engagement of a large number of people driven by a common and out-of-the-ordinary passion and enthusiasm. CONCORD was born of the renewed will of NGOs all over Europe to work with the European Institutions while strengthening their own capacities to defend and promote their political interests, the eradication of poverty being the main objective. It is truly the need to bring together the knowledge, experiences and capacities of each Platform, Network and Family of NGOs that has presided over the process of renewing the collaboration between NGOs on a European scale. Furthermore, several European NGO representatives from different European countries have contributed to the establishment of their new coordination structure in Brussels, The European NGO Confederation, CONCORD. I would like first of all to thank all of these architects.

The history of the creation of CONCORD has three phases, each rich in the people who have triggered and then brought it about. In April 2001, the **orientation period** began based around a question: is a new structure for collaboration between European Union NGOs and Institutions necessary? To answer this, a broad consultation was organised by a first committee, charged with identifying the needs and wishes of NGOs throughout Europe. My thanks go to the members of this committee: Svante Sandberg (Sweden), Electra Georgoula-Komitsa (Greece), Frans Polman (Netherlands), Paddy Macquinness (Ireland) and Rob van Drimmelen (Aprodev), but equally to their advisers: James Mackie, (former Clong secretary), Helen O'Connell (President of Clong), Jean-Louis Vielajus (France), Cecile Muller (Euronaid), Mario Gay (Italy) and Guido Lamote (Belgium).

The consultant Fabio Poelhekke visited several European countries to investigate, among a large number of NGOs, which had shown the desire to work in synergy to allow the regular exchange of information and experience, mutual capacity building, and finally an improvement in the quality of their work. The results of this research, based on which different options could be identified, were published in a report presented on 27 September 2001 in Brussels during a meeting that brought together both representatives from National Platforms,

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Thematic Networks and NGO Families, but also certain representatives from the European Parliament and the European Commission. This assembly pronounced the real need for a new centralised structure gathering together all European NGOs while respecting three principles: modelling a Confederation placing National Platforms, Thematic Networks and NGO families on equal footing, limiting its activities to a few key issues, and affording its members a central role in terms of governance as well as finance.

Next came the **planning phase**, which took place between October 2001 and April 2002. A second committee was formed for this purpose, composed of three National Platform members and three Network members: a big thanks to Paddy MacGuinness (Ireland), Simon Stocker (Eurostep), Ted van Hees (Eurodad), Mario Gay (Italy), Jef Felix (Cidse) and Frans Polman (President, Netherlands).

Three consultants were engaged by this committee to manage the legal aspects, the organisational model, the legal status, the business plan, the financial plan, etc: thanks to Dirk van Esbroeck (economist), Fabio Poelhekke (generalist) and Marleen Deneff (legal expert). With the plans drawn up, they were put before the NGO representatives during a meeting on 12 April 2002 that was facilitated, as with other important moments of dialogue, by Jean Bossuyt: a big thank you to him for his excellent role as moderator and leader.

The **founding phase**, from 12 April 2002 to 30 January 2003, completed the process with the help of the Founding Committee, which was mandated to settle the financial, operational and legal arrangements for our new structure. It was here that questions relating to the right to vote, the differentiation of members' contribution, the legal provisions concerning the transfer of the goods and commitments of the former structure (Clong) to the new structure, the preparation for the Founding Assembly, and even the identification of candidates for the First Board of Directors were discussed. Following that, staff responsible for the secretariat were recruited, an action plan and budget for 2003 were formulated, and the percentage of co-financing by the European Union was proposed. A huge thanks to the members of this committee for the thoroughness of their work: Jef Felix (Cidse), Gerhard Schmalbruch (Euronaid), Mario Gay (Italy), Justin Kilcullen (Ireland), Jean-Louis Vielajus (France), Robert Zeiner (Austria) and Paddy Macguinness (Ireland), and to their advisers: Ted van Hees (Eurodad) and Guido Dumon (Clong secretary).

*The entire preparation period, including reflection, planning and founding, therefore lasted around two years. It was the time needed for extensive consultation and appropriate engagement with European NGOs.*

It is important to highlight that **the travelling costs** for participating in the consultation assemblies, as well as meetings of the orientation, planning and founding committees, were entirely financed by the participants' organisations.

Several National Platforms, Thematic Networks and NGO Families therefore voluntarily supplied a total of 65,000 euros to cover the costs of consultants and their reports, as well as the costs for the secretariat and organising meetings: a huge thanks to the national platforms of Austria, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and to the Aprovev, Cidse, Eurodad, Eurostep, Euronaid, Trialog and Voice networks. Such support underlines the commitment of NGOs to renewing their coordination structure! I would also like to warmly thank all of these participants who, through their financial support and above all their personal engagement, have allowed the CONCORD project to blossom.

Throughout this consultation period we have felt **the support of the European Institutions**. We have been invited on several occasions to the Commission, the Directorate General for Development and EuropeAid and to the Parliament's Development Commission. I would also like to thank: Paul Nielson, Koos Richelle, Francesco DeAngelis, Pieter Bangma, Aristotelis Bouratsis and the many others who have supported us within the European Commission, as well as Louisa Morgentini and Max van de Berg at the European Parliament.

Through the **Founding Assembly of 30 January 2003**, CONCORD was established by 10 Networks and 18 National Platforms: the ActionAid Alliance, Aprovev, Caritas Europa, CIDSE, Eurodad, EuronAid, Eurostep, IPPF, Solidar and Terre des Hommes networks, as well as the National NGO Platforms of the then EU Member States, to which we must add the National Platforms of Malta, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. A huge thank you to these organisations, the founding members of CONCORD!

Of course, we must not forget those who showed themselves ready to take responsibility for managing CONCORD from the very start, in particular **the members of the first Board of Directors**: Giampiero Alhadef (Solidar), Jake Bharier (Bond, Great Britain NP), Ana Braga Da Cruz (Portuguese NP, REAPN), Eva Christina Nilsson (Church of Sweden, Aprovev), Carlotta Sami (Save the children), Justin Kilcullen (Ireland NP), Jan Plesinger (Czech NP), Guido Barbera (Italy NP), Jean-Louis Vielajus (France NP), and Frans Polman (President, Netherlands NP). A big thank you on my part to all of you for the trust you have shown me as leader of the creation process and then as first President of CONCORD.

Although we are celebrating the tenth anniversary, I always cherish the fond memories of the time we shared during the creation of CONCORD. The inauguration at the Egmont Palace was

a crowning moment, where the unique mission that led to the creation of CONCORD was expressed in two words: *impossible* and *unbelievable*. We are nevertheless here today thanks to the tireless work carried out for the last ten years by all of the architects and builders of CONCORD, of whom there are too many for me to mention here. Let us be aware and proud that we have been able to do something grand by working together on a European level, by forgetting our differences, and by bringing together our abilities to fight against poverty and injustice in the world. **Thank you to EVERYONE!**

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### *Non-governmental diplomacy and the construction of a new world balance*

**Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil**  
**Former President of Coordination SUD (2001 to 2008)**

*Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuil is an agricultural engineer and Doctor of applied economics. He is currently an adviser at the scientific officer of the Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD) in Paris. As a specialist in land development issues, he chaired the French platform of NGOs Coordination Sud between 2001 and 2008. He is the author of *La diplomatie non gouvernementale: les ONG peuvent-elles changer le monde?*, in which the author leads us to mature the concept of non-governmental diplomacy.*

It is no longer possible to ignore the multiple crises and mortal perils that humanity must face. The fantasy of abundance is behind us, its disappearance heralding the anxiety of downward social mobility and the harsh reality of shortages: petrol shortages, job shortages, food shortages... These shortages are not new, but they appear today on the dashboards of almost every country and the majority of the world's citizens. Are we going to fight to conserve our individual and collective shares of the market, or will we orient ourselves towards a "sober and sharing world"? International solidarity associations have already had their say in this debate. They want to encourage negotiation in all of the key areas in the emergence of this new world, and accompany its difficult construction. To do so, we must define our own objectives for "sustainable and inclusive development" and as far as possible share them with our fellow citizens and their political representatives. To convince them, our associations will need to strengthen their local actions and their roles in seeking suitable solutions for the variety of issues and situations, and allow the identification of social and technical innovations that are likely to open the way to new approaches on a major scale. We have declared that "another

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world is possible". We have to show this. This change of scale is also a matter of diplomacy since, in the current context of globalisation and the interdependence of power, we will not move forward without the negotiation of new global rules. We have called the action of non-governmental actors in the eminently governmental process of international negotiation "non-governmental diplomacy"<sup>9</sup>(NGD).

Over the course of the last twenty years, which could perhaps be considered the prehistory of NGD, the action of NGOs has not been insignificant. They can be found in all important diplomatic processes. In the field of peace and security, they have made known deadly yet largely ignored conflicts such as those in Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, they have mobilised public opinion and contributed to ensuring that the disastrous war in Iraq was not conducted on behalf of the United Nations, they have lead negotiations on disarmament from start to finish, particularly those leading to a ban on landmines and cluster bombs, they have progressed human rights and the laws of war, they have lifted the veil on the impunity of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocides, and contributed greatly to the creation of the International Criminal Court. In the field of economics, they have given substance to an anti, then anti-globalist, "camp" and stopped the lone cavalier of neoliberalism; they have participated in negotiations conducted in the context of the WTO relating to both the agreement on intellectual property, especially its consequences in the field of public health, and agreements concerning the agricultural sector. In the field of the environment, they came out in force at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit with the new diplomatic order born from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin wall, and they followed the difficult development of two large conventions on climate change and biological diversity. Finally, in their area of expertise, the social sphere, they have accompanied the United Nations in all fields and in defining and implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as well as battling for a reduction in the public debts of developing countries and an increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) from developed countries to allow governments in developing countries to promote economic development and implement social policies. Of course, the fight is not over. Certain agreements have not been implemented, and inverse movements are countering certain advances. But in the field of forces that is international negotiation, the small forces of NGOs have been able to contribute to positive outcomes. We have analysed this game of forces and the role played by NGOs, lit up this prehistory of non-governmental diplomacy and drawn lessons from it so that these actions may be even more effective, legitimate and democratic.

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<sup>9</sup> *La diplomatie non gouvernementale, les ONG peuvent-elles changer le monde?* (Non-governmental diplomacy : can NGOs change the world ?) Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuill, Editions l'Atelier and nine other publishers, members of the International Alliance of Independent Publishers, 2006 – Translated in Spanish and Chinese

To advance their “diplomatic” actions and avoid abuses of influence and power, NGOs must ensure they respect several fundamental principles, or even adopt a five-word motto: “legitimacy, expertise, independence, representativeness, coherence”<sup>10</sup>. Legitimacy, that is, acting locally on the issues brought up during large diplomatic events and helping the victims of these problems to organise themselves and make their voices heard. Expertise, that is, when facing complex issues with very diverse local manifestations, knowing how to discuss and ally themselves with experts in the field. Independence, that is, giving themselves the means to study these issues so that they can prevent them from being exploited by political, economic or ideological groups. Representativeness, that is, acting as collective actors representing the diversity in the world. Coherence, that is, placing the actions in each sector into an overall vision and within the framework of the available means. These few principles will allow NGOs to respond to those who accuse them, and sometimes rightly so, of being simple lobbies defending particular interests.

This year we are celebrating ten years of CONCORD. An anniversary is an opportunity to take stock and give ourselves a pat on the back, but also to allow us to reflect on the next step. CONCORD has become a necessary and effective representative between NGOs and their national platforms on the one hand, and the European institutions on the other. Others will speak the praises of CONCORD’s action in this field. From the point of view of international NGO actions, we can say that CONCORD’s actions, which at first were non-existent, have gradually developed in certain areas such as the question of the effectiveness of aid. Under the initiative of the OECD, which brings together donor countries within the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), High Level Forums (HLF) have been hosted every three years in Rome (2002), Paris (2005), Accra (2008) and Busan (2011) to evaluate and improve “aid effectiveness”. In the Paris Declaration (March 2005), donor countries presented the principles that should be followed to deliver effective aid. They wished to include non-governmental aid and NGOs in this governmental stance. The parallel meeting organised by NGOs in Paris showed that these principles could not hold for NGO actions and launched a parallel process which resulted in the “Open forum for civil society organisations effectiveness”, led by a “Global facilitation group”. CONCORD hosted the secretariat of the consortium and played the role of leading organisation. This international architecture, which is as complicated as that which came out of the governmental diplomacy, has allowed, on the one hand, recognition of the special nature of non-governmental cooperation and its own vision for aid effectiveness, thereby avoiding the mortal peril of the governmentalisation of NGO actions and, on the other hand, collective and international stances on public aid.

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<sup>10</sup> « Diplomatie non gouvernementales : l’influence croissante de la société civile sur la scène mondiale » (Non-governmental diplomacy : the growing influence of civil society on the global scene) by Henri Rouillé d’Orfeuill, *Chroniques de la gouvernance 2009-2010*

Another approach to CONCORD's international actions has been the strengthening of its relationships with the other regional coordinators of national NGO platforms. This movement was naturally imposed on CONCORD with the follow-up of international diplomacy and European Union agreements with other regional or continental bodies. The Europe / Latin America summits have drawn CONCORD and MESA closer together, in the same way that the Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) has created numerous opportunities for cooperation between CONCORD and NGOs or the regional coordinators of national NGO platforms, such as REPAOC in the West Africa subregion. Elsewhere, CONCORD has accompanied the federation processes of national NGO platforms which has greatly contributed to strengthening, or even to creating, regional coordinators and has led to the creation in October 2008 of the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (FIP).

In order to be effective and democratic, NGD, like governmental diplomacy, must structure actions and national, regional and international actors. Global issues and international negotiations concern all of the world's citizens, and not only international actors. Regional coordinators, such as CONCORD, have an essential role to play in the chain of actors from a local to an international level. I will therefore finish with a double wish: to open CONCORD to international action and to develop strong cooperation between CONCORD and the other regional coordinators on other continents. These coordinators have an essential role to play in the development of associative movements across the different regions and continents of the world, in the dialogue with regional political organisations, as well as in the construction of international NGO coordination. Who other than CONCORD could and should be the European partner of regional coordinators in other regions in the world?

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### **Civil society across borders...an African point of view**

**By Momar Talla Kane  
Former President of REPAOC (2009-2010)**

*As former President of the CONGAD (Council of Non-Governmental Organisations for Development Support, the national platform of Senegalese NGOs) and as such, of the REPAOC (West and Central Africa Network of National NGO Platforms), he has participated in several forums for consultation on development policies, providing the voice of African NGOs. It is this experience that he recounts here.*

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At the heart of NGOs lies a mission: that of participating in the efforts of communities and citizens to take responsibility for creating a better life in which every person's rights are respected. NGOs cannot replace communities, but work to strengthen their capacities; they accompany them and support them in conceiving and achieving their economic, political, social and cultural development.

For this purpose, NGOs seek to impact upon public policy on a local, national and international level to effectively deal with communities' concerns. They must become a key player in the development, implementation and evaluation of these policies. They must contribute to deepening democracy, the rule of law and human rights. They have the duty to monitor the effectiveness of public development policies as well as the effectiveness of their own intervention with communities, States and any other partner. They must also seek to establish a true partnership with all actors for the sole purpose of ensuring harmonious and sustainable development in our respective countries for a just and better world. It is in this way, by respecting these duties, that NGOs give non-governmental organisations a louder voice.

#### *African or European: multiple NGOs united in the same fight*

Together, African and European NGOs contribute greatly to the coherence of development policies, through a multifaceted collaboration.

In particular, the participation in two General Assemblies of CONCORD, focusing among others on the coherence of the policies of the European Union, was an opportunity for strong advocacy at the European Parliament in conjunction with European NGOs and CONCORD. Together they brought the concerns of African NGOs before the Parliament. CONCORD's many efforts of this kind in support of the coherence of European Union policies must be pursued in order to achieve widespread effectiveness among cooperation, aid and development policies.

Having an influence on the conception and implementation of multilateral and bilateral cooperation policies is also an important aspect of the collaboration between NGOs from the two continents. They have been able, together, to participate in international public debate by interacting with the governmental authorities leading the international negotiations.

It is as a result of this collaboration, which also involves NGOs from other continents, that the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (**FIP**) was born, offering an ideal framework on a global level for seeking to impact on global governance while strengthening the capacities of its members, that is, of NGOs. This platform of NGO platforms principally defends the concerns of NGOs in international forums, but also on a national level. It is a legitimate and representative framework in which NGOs forge their common positions, sharing them in order

to assume and ensure their ambition of tackling the concerns of communities and citizens in all the decisions and public policies that affect them.

Over the last two years (2010-2012), the FIP endeavoured to make this a reality through non-governmental diplomacy exercises with topics as important as climate change, public aid and the financing of development, the prevention of conflicts, the fight against social inequality and exclusion, the regulation of agricultural markets, access to water, sanitation and the enabling environment. Meetings of the Facilitation Group of the time with the heads of international institutions (World Bank, United Nations System, EU, governments, foundations, etc.) were truly decisive. In addition, the establishment of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, during the Fourth High Level Forum in Busan in South Korea from 29 November to 1 December 2011, was very beneficial as it officially recognised the role of Civil Society Organisations in development. This recognition was the successful outcome of several initiatives, in particular the Open Forum, an open process through which the FIP, along with numerous NGOs, had the opportunity to contribute to this Global Partnership.

### *The presence of African NGOs on the international stage*

The voice of African NGOs has often been heard in many international forums. During the High Level Event in New York, African NGOs were able to truly express themselves on the MDGs, and this was followed by the global development framework for after the MDGs. At the G20 summit in Cannes in 2011 through the FIP, at the World Water Forum in Marseille in 2012, at the World Social Forum in Dakar and on many other occasions we have contributed to flying the flag of non-governmental organisations. Without doubt, African NGOs are forging their positions and defend them in international meetings throughout the world.

Paradoxically, many developing countries will certainly not achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Countries such as Senegal will however have taken many steps forward in terms of education and the fight against diseases such as malaria and Aids, which have reduced notably throughout the country. There have also been unequivocal advances in terms of women's rights, particularly with the adoption of a law establishing equality in elections in the country. The fight against domestic violence has also intensified; the progress is real, even though it remains insufficient in light of the key objectives. In reality it seems that to break the deadlock, it is essential to avoid the substantial trap of wanting to apply a uniform approach to everything, and instead to bestow more attention on the sovereignty of States when designing development programmes. Indeed, there cannot be a prefabricated solution for all countries in the South. Rather it is up to their citizens, their NGOs and their governments to offer endogenous, sustainable responses.

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***We move steadily and as one, because we are going far:***

***The challenges of a common agenda between Europe and Latin America***

**By Alicia Sánchez**

**Former coordinator of MESA de Articulación**

*By Alicia Sánchez, former-Executive Director of ACCIÓN, former coordinator of MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales y Redes de ONG (Coordinating body of national NGO networks and associations in Latin America and the Caribbean). She currently works as a researcher at the Central University of Chile.*

The crisis situation in the majority of European countries has once again raised questions such as the inequality, inefficient and unfair distribution of wealth, the limits of representative democracy, and the consequences of the lack of right monitoring of financial system. These issues of concern have been envisaged for many years by Latin American social movements and NGOs and many attempts have been made to strongly instil them both into their own governments as well as at the international level. The urgency of bringing together the proposals produced within the heart of European and Latin American civil society to collectively confront the unresolved tensions in our democracies is now becoming more evident.

In developed countries, the struggle between Keynesians and austerians, in the words of the economist Paul Krugman, has stirred academic spheres. And civil society has something to say about this crisis and about how to transform our society to achieve greater justice and social equality. The background of these disputes and of the global outrage is the questioning and dissatisfaction regarding how democracy and the current development model do work. Thus, present challenges faced by NGOs, which are recognised as political actors, are more complex and clash with resistance on multiple fronts, although they are opening their path through the slight faults the current system presents.

On both continents, societies concur with the lack of confidence in political parties and the financial system, and towards the political and economic elites. "Democracy has been hacked" is a catchphrase being resoundingly heard from a global citizenship that feels powerless when looking at rescues of banks a citizenship that conforms a 99% of the population affected by austerity policies, or one that has blossomed with the Chilean Spring of its student movement that fights for a free and high quality education.

These movements and their demands for a profound change also challenge and shake NGOs agendas. For a couple of decades, NGOs have come together in larger political spaces with the

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aim of joining forces, uniting their strategies and strengthening their voices in the global spaces that they seek to influence. Many of our organisations meet sporadically or lobby together on occasions such as the Social Forums or Summits of the Peoples, and others work alongside one another in thematic networks. National NGO platforms, for example, no longer feel isolated in their efforts. Part of their agenda is focused on increasing regional and global alliances in order to face the common challenges that extend beyond concrete and local initiatives. Nowadays, NGOs have established a work of collective social action, with the aim of impacting upon political spaces such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), in the case of Latin America, and the European Union in the case of Europe.

It was within this context that integration of activities that passed a national level began to take on a strategic value. At the same time that the Latin American “MESA de Articulación de Asociaciones Nacionales de Redes y ONG”<sup>11</sup> set up as its priority the empowerment of national platforms, it was agreed that this task should be accomplished hand in hand with the broadening of its alliances.

In this way, work had to be shifted from detailed agreements and specific support among organisations in the North and South, as the relationship has traditionally operated, to the establishment of points of convergence between their agendas. In the last five years, for example, MESA and its members have headed toward the construction of an agenda with CONCORD on the topics of inequality and MDGs. In addition, it has become a key actor in the formation of the International Forum of National NGO Platforms (FIP), an initiative that emerged from the efforts of the Coordination Sud in France based on the relationship that it had forged with platforms in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Strong examples of exchange and cooperation with European NGO platforms have been created in the area of political impact. The path has not been free from difficulties, and through achievements and obstacles it has the clear objective of broadening democracy.

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<sup>11</sup> The Latin American and Caribbean members of the group are: Abong (Brazilian NGO Association); Acción (Chilean NGO Association); Alop (Latin American Association of Organisations for the Promotion and Development of Civil Associations); Amarc Latin America and Caribbean; Articulación Feminista Marcosur (Marcosur Feminist Action); ANC (National association for centres of research, social promotion and development), Peru; Anong (National association of development NGOs), Uruguay; Ceaal (Latin American Adult Education Board); Ccong (Colombian NGO confederation); Convergencia de Organismos Civiles por la Democracia (Social bodies for democracy group), Mexico; Adoc de México; Congcoop (NGO and cooperatives coordination), Guatemala; Red Encuentro de Argentina (Encounters network, Argentina); Latindadd (Latin American network on debt, development and rights); Piddhh (Inter-American platform for human rights, democracy and development); Pojoajú (NGO association, Paraguay); Propuesta Ciudadana (Citizen proposals), Peru; Sinergia (Synergy), Venezuela; Unitas (National union of institutes for social action work), Bolivia.

These links and the joint work have given rise to a new way of cooperation and contributions that NGOs can bring as agents for democracy. At the same time, the flow of information between stakeholder organizations has become easier, and specific agreements have been sought in debates that aim to achieve greater social justice. However, in a context of profound changes and systemic crisis that we are currently experiencing, the joint work of European and Latin American platforms requires that we take up new challenges and go beyond the exchange of experiences. It is not enough to discuss lobbying mechanisms in the area of international relations, or to agree on common positions before summits, meetings and large negotiations at a global level.

We have moved forward. There is now an agenda set up around structural changes. In the last European-Latin American-Caribbean Forum of Civil Society organised by MESA and CONCORD, in view of the CELAC-EU Heads of State Summit, proposals agreed between both networks were presented, whose main working themes were the formulation of a new global financial architecture that protects rights; the creation of investment models that are coherent with the aims of sustainable development; strengthening of human rights and democracy; strengthening and democratization of bi-regional political dialogue; and revision of official development cooperation so that it guarantees reciprocity, stability and predictability.

CONCORD and MESA have organised this Forum since 2008. However, if we want this agenda to stand firm in global debates, we must boost certain key questions within our organisations: How can we efficiently monitor economic and political power? What new course should define the relationship between organisations from the North and the South? Which instruments can we use to better channel our ideas and visions of society in order to change the rules of the game? How can we attract citizens to support our proposals?

An agenda with processes that expand democracy, guarantee rights, protect public resources and empower citizens to exercise democracy beyond elections is common to the networks in both regions at this point in time. Nevertheless, putting this agenda in place requires transformations in our own structures and political practices. We urgently need to open the doors to new leaderships, establish equal relations and take concrete steps towards the redistribution of power from the elite.

On the other hand, establishing these ideas in the public sphere, particularly at a moment of crisis, must be done with greater power, creativity and boldness, taking into account cultural changes which generally evolve more quickly, and using the tools offered by social networks and the internet. The sharing of experiences which has given rise to regional coalitions such as the MESA and CONCORD, and the long history of cooperation in both organisations, have laid solid foundations to confront new global dynamics that will strengthen the democracy we hope to share.

## **ANNEX 2 – OVERVIEW ON CONCORD POLICY PAPERS AND ANALYSES**

Chart 1: In the first nine years of its existence CONCORD has published more than **265 policy papers**. They present the positions, analyses and propositions of the Confederation to partners, stakeholders and to the European institutions. They are drafted through an inclusive and participative methodology, which includes research, policy analysis, debate and negotiations to reach common standpoints within the membership.

While the first years only produced an average of one publication a month, the amount has been constantly increasing to reach **more than three publications a month** in 2011.

The four main priorities of CONCORD (**Policy Coherence for Development, Civil Society, ODA and financing, and the broad category of development policies**) are reflected in a balanced way by the policy papers.

**Chart 1:** Overview on main topics over 9 years 2003-2011

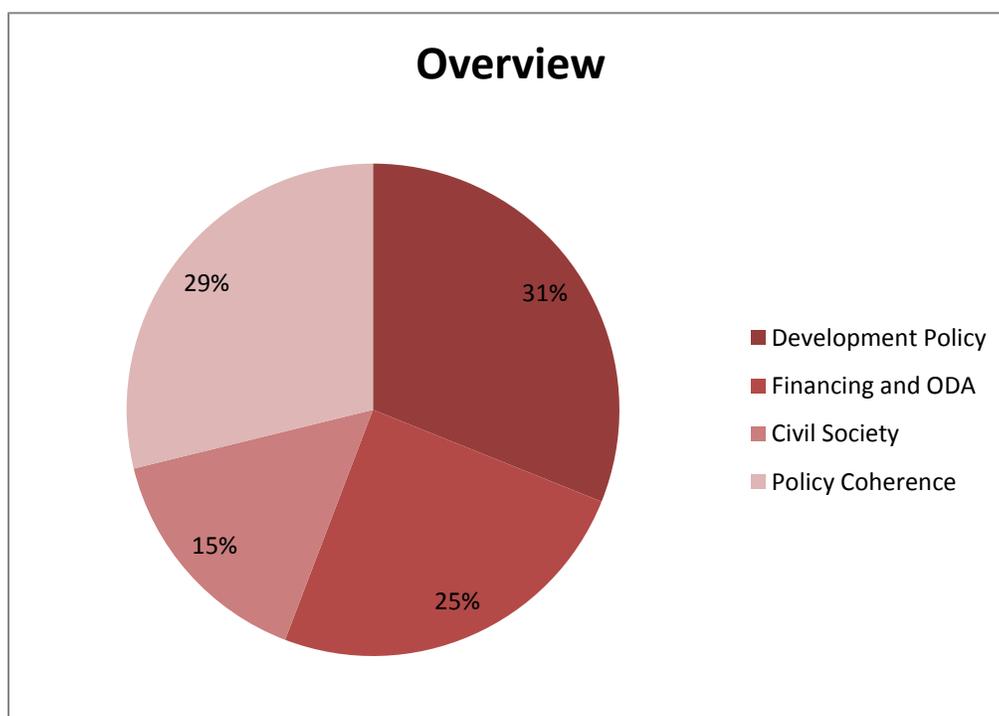


Chart 2: The large scope of papers addressing development policies is primarily composed of regional approaches such as the cooperation with the ACP countries or specific support for Africa. These are summed up under the title external relations which represents more than half of this field. Further important topics for CONCORD are gender and human rights, the position of the Confederation towards the EU developmental framework, the question of development effectiveness and finally the Millennium Development Goals.

**Chart 2:** Proportion of thematic policies shaping Development policy 2003-2011

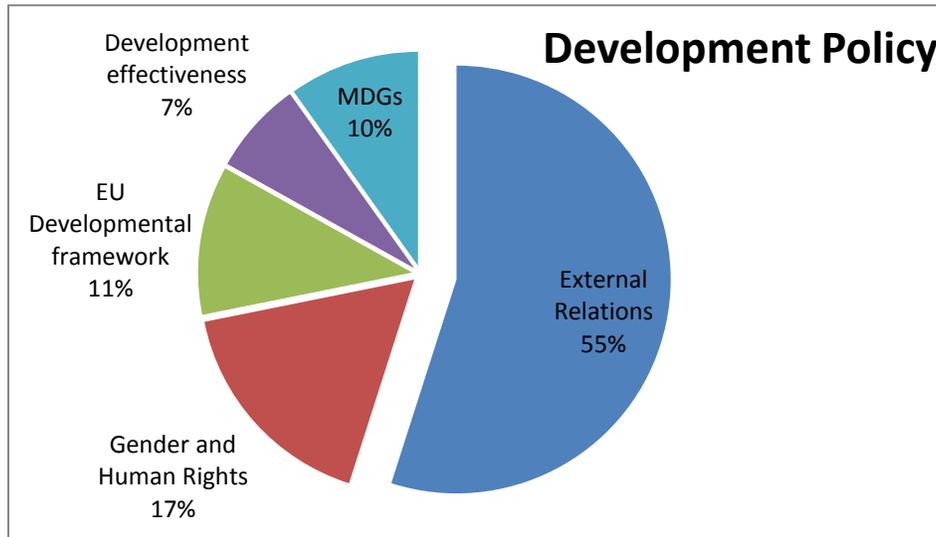
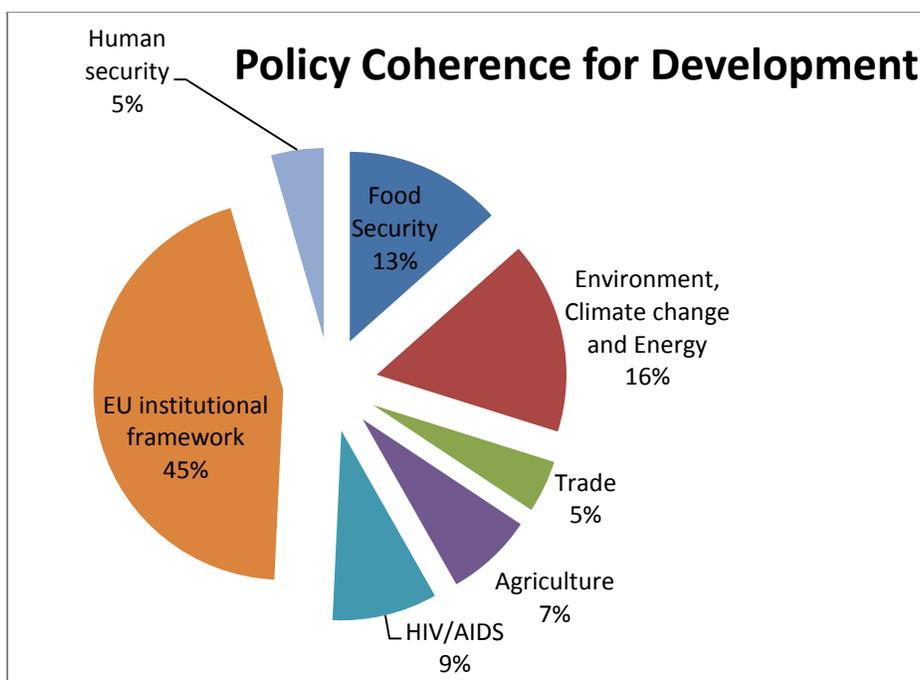


Chart 3: Within the group of Policy Coherence papers, the focus lies on the EU institutional framework. The two main thematic policies regarding coherence are food security and climate change. In CONCORD's policy papers over the last nine years, agricultural policy, HIV/Aids, trade and human security have also been adressed under the perspective of Policy Coherence for Development.

**Chart 3:** Proportion of thematic policies shaping Policy Coherence for Development 2003-2011



**ANNEX 3 - MEMBERS' INVOLVEMENT IN CONCORD**

In general, the participation of members in CONCORD's activities has steadily increased during the 10 years. Especially during the last three years, since 2010, our members have been significantly more engaged in CONCORD's activities, including working groups, seminars, general assembly and board.

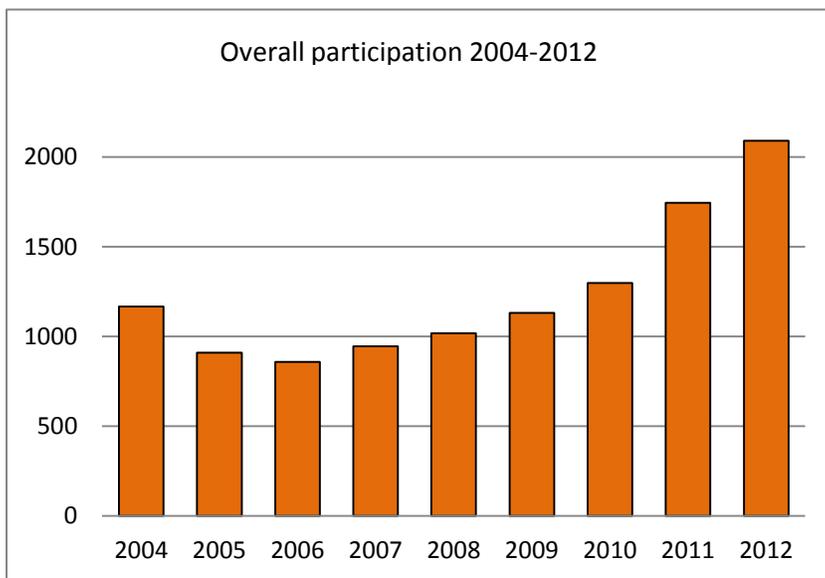


Table 1. The overall participation in CONCORD's activities (working groups, seminars, general assembly, board) between 2004-2012.

*Participation is counted as one person participating in one activity, therefore, if one person attends 2 events, it counts as 2 participations.*

As shown in the table 2 there's a high level of participation in CONCORD's events by both national associations and networks.

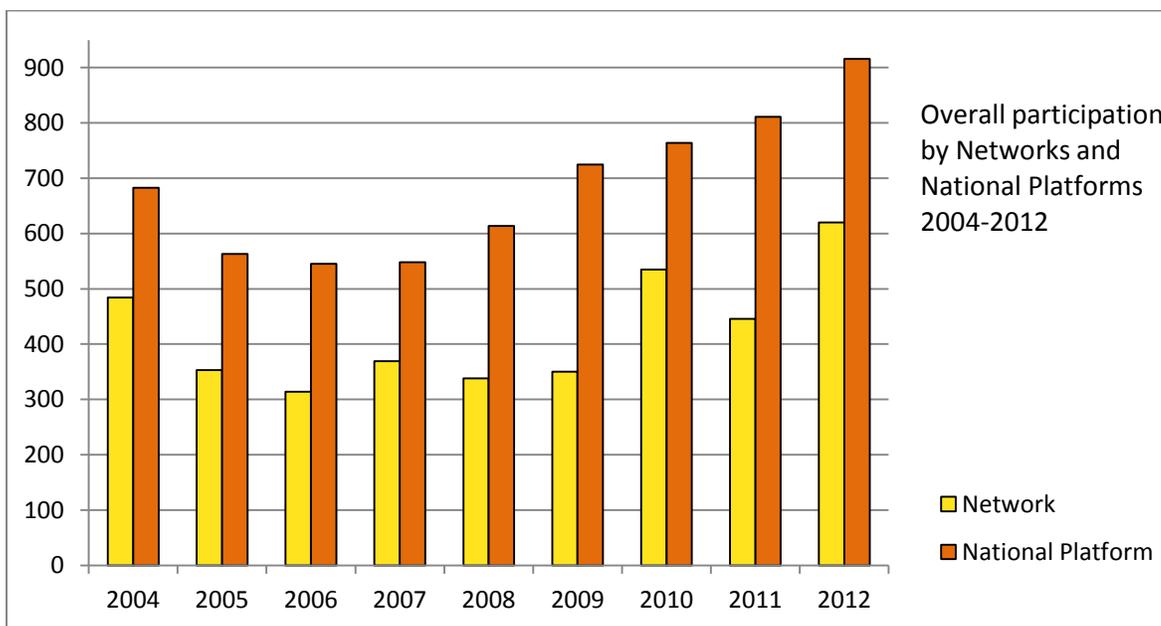


Table 2. The overall participation of Networks and National Platforms in CONCORD's activities (working groups, seminars, general assembly, board) between 2004-2012.

Table 3 and 4 indicate national associations’ and networks’ participation activity for different type of events, including general assembly, board, working groups and seminars. Participation in the general assembly by both national platforms and networks has slightly decreased since 2010, whereas the board activity has maintained approximately the same level throughout the 10 years. However, since 2008 there has been a significant increase in the policy related activities, especially by the national associations.

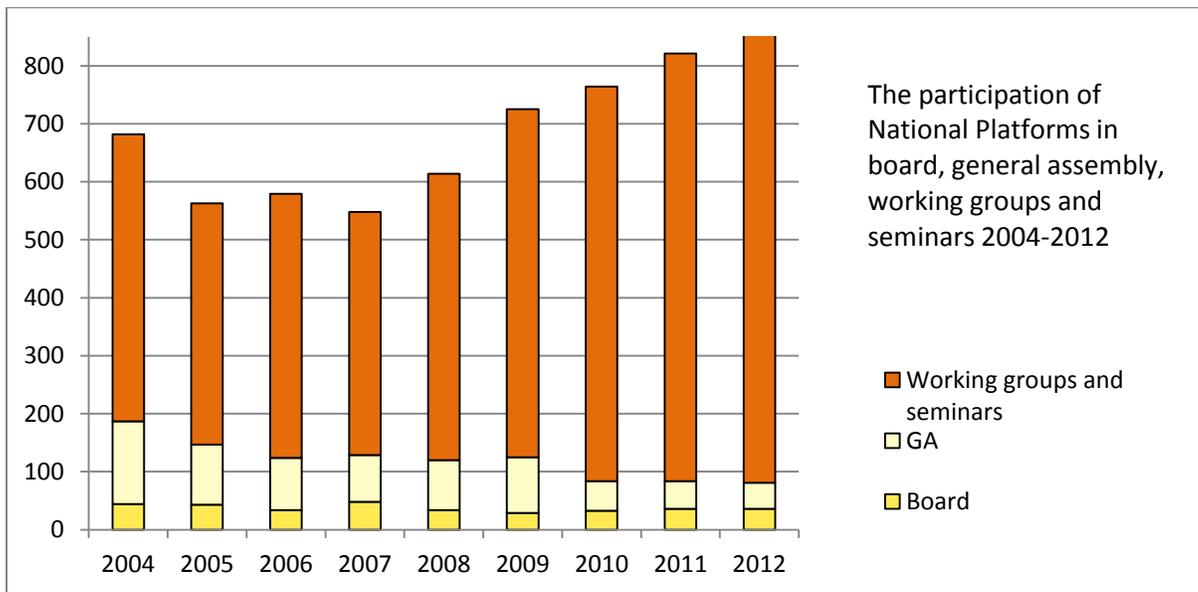


Table 3. The participation of national associations in working groups, seminars, general assembly and board activities between 2004-2012.

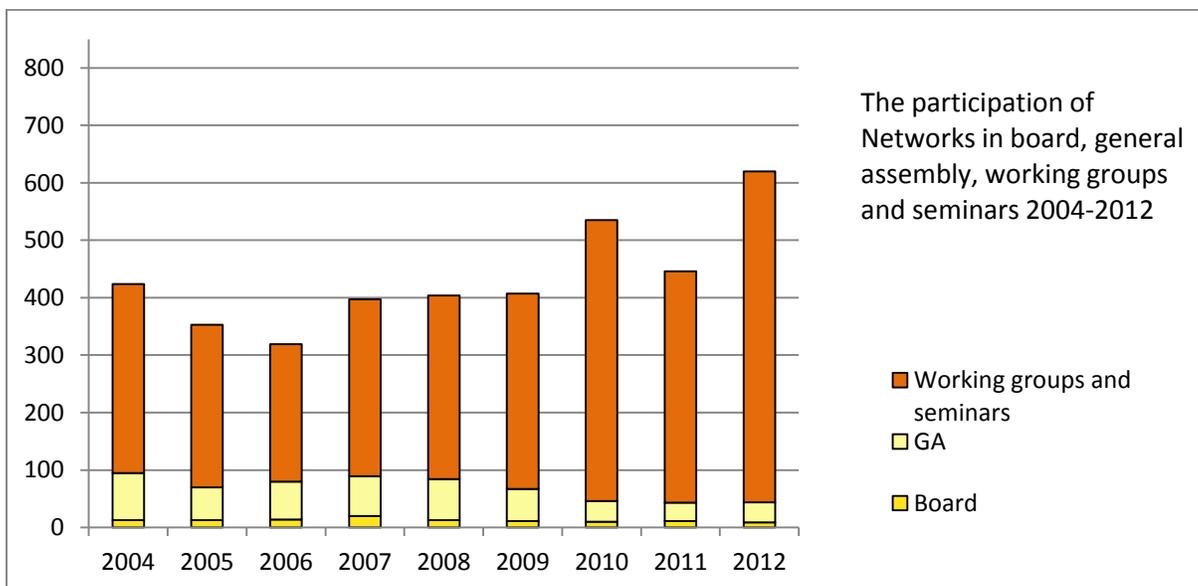


Table 4. The participation of networks in working groups, seminars, general assembly and board activities between 2004-2012.

## **ANNEX 4- BENCHMARKING CONCORD'S PERFORMANCE**

*Extract and quotes from an evaluation report to the European Commission, made in 2010 by Ernst&Young on the 2003-2008 period*

### ***A representative organization...***

<b>Evolution of main CONCORD activity indicators</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Evolution rate</b>
Number of CONCORD members	30	40	47	<b>+ 57%</b>
Number of working groups	17	20	18	<b>+ 6%</b>
Number of attendance to meetings (working group meetings, seminars, General Assembly or Board)	618	1019	2092	<b>+ 238%</b>
Number of position papers	10	38	40	<b>+ 300%</b>
Number of main information and communication tools	5	21	12	<b>+ 140%</b>

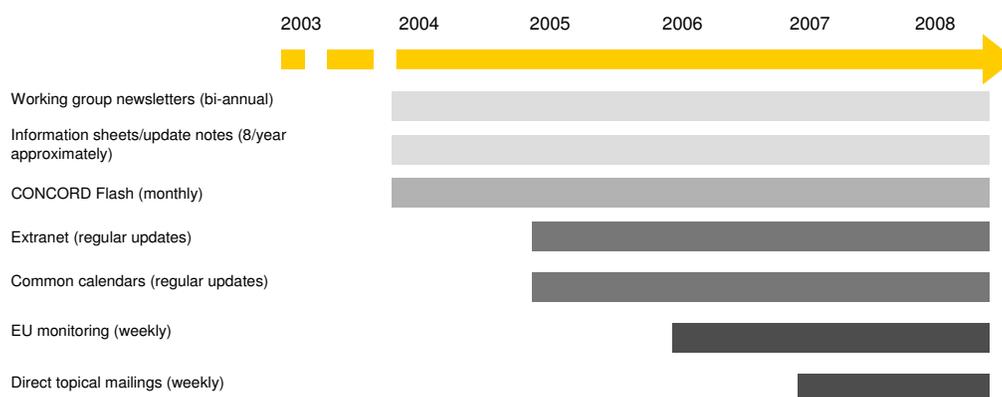
CONCORD ***members feel increasingly represented*** by the organization since its founding due to a stronger impulse for direct representation by members, the updating of internal regulations and the adjustment of staff in accordance with increasing needs.

Likewise, CONCORD has increased its efficiency in representing members' views through a ***4x increase in position papers***. CONCORD has made remarkable efforts to include all its members in the decision making process, through capacity building sessions, or an equal voting system irrespective of the amount of the financial contribution.

***Participation in working groups increased almost 2.5 times*** over the past 10 years with a high level of representative in the core working groups (Funding for Development and Relief, aid watch, and transversal questions).

## *CONCORD as a very valuable vehicle for providing and understanding EU information...*

Evolution of CONCORD information tools on the EU to members 2003-2008



Both representatives from the European Institutions and the NGOs members have underlined the **quality of information** delivered by CONCORD, mentioning the **well resourced and argued position papers** produced by CONCORD, that succeeded in **developing a high level of expertise and knowledge on specific issues** (Funding for Development and Relief, EU-African policies and aid effectiveness)

*CONCORD has strongly participated to the development of knowledge and understanding amongst the EU relief and development NGOs sector.*

## *CONCORD as an active actor in enhancing the institutional dialogue between civil society and EU Bodies...*

### ***A major advocacy and lobbying actor close to the European Commission ...***

- As a partner on the strategic definition and programming of the European Development Policy
- As a partner on the elaboration of the Annual Action Program by the DG development
- As a participant to the Stakeholders' Advisory Group (SAG) aimed to enhance the consultation processes between the European Commission development units (DG Development, Europeaid, DG Relex) and non state actors on development.
- As a major participant to the Development Days since its creation in 2006

### ***A favored partner for institutional dialogue with MS representatives ...***

- As a participant to the biannual dialogue with the CODEV to discuss specific thematic issues regarding the current development policy context at European and International level

- As an increasing advocacy partner to development ministers of Member States
- As a participant to the European Council working parties and initiator of meetings with Member States representatives in an ad hoc basis

***A strong bilateral dialogue with the Development Commission of the European Parliament ...***

- As a provider of field and country information to support the Parliament's decisions
- As an advocacy guest in the hearings regarding development issues
- As a participant to the biannual meetings between bureau members and coordinators of the European Parliament Committee on Development

***An increasing integration of Southern civil society into CONCORD strategy ...***

***Southern civil society partners involved in the advocacy and lobbying activities of CONCORD***

...

- CONCORD organized working groups directly linked with Southern issues
  - Cotonou group, Policy group, Education for Development Forum, Funding for Development and Relief working group
- Southern representatives involved in global action initiatives
  - Campaign of the Global Call for Action against Poverty in 2006; Forum for the development effectiveness of civil society organizations in 2008
- CONCORD efforts to involve Southern civil society representatives into institutional dialogue at the EU level
  - Opened space for Southern partners to participate in the Development Days

***CONCORD formalizing and structuring its relationship with Southern partners ...***

- Official partnerships signed up with Southern NGOs regional platforms setting up joint working agendas and shared activities
  - Official agreement with the Latin-American platform MESA – organization of a steering group to prepare the EU-Latin America summit of 2013; and the Western and Central African platform REPAOC
- Extending of CONCORD membership to other civil society organizations and networks to secure contacts with Southern partners
  - CONCORD participation to common events with Euforic, Civicus, the World Social Forum.

ANNEX 5- CONCORD STAFF 2003-2013

Maria Soledad BRIONES      Gaelle NICODEME  
 Claire FITZGIBBON      Alfonso MARTINEZ SAENZ  
 Olga KHOZAEVA      Mireille POISSON-MIEGE  
 Agnès PHILIPPART      Ester ASIN      Teresa VANDRAMIN  
 Francisco YERMO      Nathalie EWING      Alwin LOECKX      Heather CLARKE  
 Adam DAVIES      Andreas VOGT      Lara PAOLETTI      Julien VAISSIER  
 Pascale LAURENT      An VAN GOEY      Franz BERGER      Jasmine BURNLEY  
 Melis ALGUADIS      Nerea CRAVIOTTO  
 Alessandro BOZZINI      Elise VANORMELINGEN      Joanna VAN AALST  
 Gina WHARTON      Stéphane PEGART  
 Marleen VANDEN BERGHE      Meagan BALDWIN      Olena TARRIT  
 Priti PRAJAPATI      Romain PHILIPPE      Amy BARTLETT  
 Begona ELEZ AMATRIAIN      Franz BERGER      Alina BURLACU  
 Manuela HOUTART      Tobias TROLL      Balazs SATOR  
 Blandine BOUNIOL      Fatima KAIDI      Colin KAMPSCHOER      Daniel PUGLISI  
 Francesca ROMANA MINNITI      Gérard VIVES      Aude LALLEMAND  
 Klavdija CERNILOGAR      Léo WILLIAMS      Lonne POISSONNIER  
 Nathalie BEKIER DJERF      Alison PROCTER      Julien VAISSIER  
 Silvio LAZZARI      Elena MAGDA TOMA      Olivier CONSOLO  
 Orla KERRIGAN      Daniel NUIJTEN      Kate CARPENTER      Sachan KUMAR  
 Claire GUÉNON DES MESNARDS      Tiago STICHELMANS      Sabine TERLECKI  
 Mathilde LEYRIT      Zuzana SLADKOVA      Pascale LAURENT  
 Estela Julieta GONZALEZ      Kenny KWAN

**And all the interns, whom we thank for their valuable work and collaboration**

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**NP National Platform**  
**NW Network**  
**AS Associate Member**

NW	Action Aid International	<a href="http://www.actionaid.org">www.actionaid.org</a>
NW	ADRA	<a href="http://www.adra.org">www.adra.org</a>
AS	ALDA	<a href="http://www.alda-europe.eu">www.alda-europe.eu</a>
NW	APRODEV	<a href="http://www.aprodev.eu">www.aprodev.eu</a>
NP	Austria: Globale Verantwortung	<a href="http://www.globaleverantwortung.at">www.globaleverantwortung.at</a>
NP	CONCORD Belgium	<a href="http://www.CONCORDeurope.org/belgium-CONCORD">www.CONCORDeurope.org/belgium-CONCORD</a>
NP	Bulgaria: BPID	<a href="http://www.bpid.eu">www.bpid.eu</a>
NW	CARE International	<a href="http://www.care-international.org">www.care-international.org</a>
NW	Caritas Europa	<a href="http://www.caritas-europa.org">www.caritas-europa.org</a>
NW	CBM International	<a href="http://www.cbm.org">www.cbm.org</a>
NW	CIDSE	<a href="http://www.cidse.org">www.cidse.org</a>
NP	Cyprus: CYINDEP	<a href="http://www.cyindep.eu">www.cyindep.eu</a>
NP	Czech Republic: FoRS	<a href="http://www.fors.cz">www.fors.cz</a>
NP	CONCORD Denmark	<a href="http://www.CONCORDdanmark.dk">www.CONCORDdanmark.dk</a>
NP	Estonia: AKU	<a href="http://www.terveilm.net">www.terveilm.net</a>
NW	EU-CORD	<a href="http://www.eucord.org">www.eucord.org</a>
NW	Eurostep	<a href="http://www.eurostep.org">www.eurostep.org</a>
NP	Finland: Kehys	<a href="http://www.kehys.fi">www.kehys.fi</a>
NP	France: Coordination SUD	<a href="http://www.coordinationsud.org">www.coordinationsud.org</a>
NP	Germany: VENRO	<a href="http://www.venro.org">www.venro.org</a>
NP	Greece: Hellenic Platform	<a href="http://www.dev-ngos.gr">www.dev-ngos.gr</a>
NP	Hungary: HAND	<a href="http://www.hand.org.hu">www.hand.org.hu</a>
NW	IPPF European Network	<a href="http://www.ippfen.org">www.ippfen.org</a>
NW	Islamic Relief Worldwide	<a href="http://www.islamic-relief.com">www.islamic-relief.com</a>
NW	Handicap International	<a href="http://www.handicapinternational.be">www.handicapinternational.be</a>
NP	Ireland: Dóchas	<a href="http://www.dochas.ie">www.dochas.ie</a>
NP	CONCORD Italia	<a href="http://www.ongitaliane.org">www.ongitaliane.org</a>
NP	Latvia: Lapas	<a href="http://www.lapas.lv">www.lapas.lv</a>
NP	Lithuania: LU	<a href="http://www.litdea.eu">www.litdea.eu</a> / <a href="http://www.pagalba.org">www.pagalba.org</a>
NP	Luxembourg: Cercle	<a href="http://www.cercle.lu">www.cercle.lu</a>
NP	Malta: SKOP	<a href="http://www.skopmalta.org">www.skopmalta.org</a>
NP	Netherlands: Partos	<a href="http://www.partos.nl">www.partos.nl</a>
NW	Oxfam International	<a href="http://www.oxfam.org/en/eu/">www.oxfam.org/en/eu/</a>
NW	Plan International	<a href="http://www.plan-eu.org">www.plan-eu.org</a>
NP	Poland: Grupa Zagranica	<a href="http://www.zagranica.org.pl">www.zagranica.org.pl</a>
NP	Portugal: Plataforma ONGD	<a href="http://www.plataformaongd.pt">www.plataformaongd.pt</a>
NP	Romania: FOND	<a href="http://www.fondromania.org">www.fondromania.org</a>
NW	Save the Children International	<a href="http://www.savethechildren.org">www.savethechildren.org</a>
NP	Slovakia: MVRO	<a href="http://www.mvro.sk">www.mvro.sk</a>
NP	Slovenia: SLOGA	<a href="http://www.sloga-platform.org">www.sloga-platform.org</a>
NW	Solidar	<a href="http://www.solidar.org">www.solidar.org</a>
NP	Spain: Coordinadora ONGD	<a href="http://www.coordinadoraongd.org">www.coordinadoraongd.org</a>
NP	CONCORD Sweden	<a href="http://www.CONCORD.se">www.CONCORD.se</a>
NW	Terre des hommes IF	<a href="http://www.terredeshommes.org">www.terredeshommes.org</a>
NP	United Kingdom: BOND	<a href="http://www.bond.org.uk">www.bond.org.uk</a>
NW	World Vision International	<a href="http://www.wvi.org">www.wvi.org</a>
AS	World Wide Fund for Nature	<a href="http://www.wwf.eu">www.wwf.eu</a>