

## **\*\*\*CSO media reaction to outcomes of the EU Foreign Affairs Council\*\*\***

### **EU development ministers must step up fight to end extreme poverty**

12 May 2016

Aid figures published ahead of today's Foreign Affairs Council meeting showed that the EU is still failing to live up to commitments made more than 10 years ago.

The data, which is included in an annual report prepared for this meeting, showed that the EU is only dedicating 0.47% of GNI to its aid budgets, falling far short of the 0.7% promise. Even more worryingly, at least 12.5% of that aid was spent in EU countries.

EU leaders have also failed to address the growing trend of EU Member States diverting aid from projects in poor countries to cover costs at home, for example domestic expenditure related to the handling of the large-scale migration flows in some EU countries. It is a moral and legal duty to help refugees who have arrived in our countries, but it should not come at the expense of communities in the world's poorest countries.

Part of the purpose of today's Council Meeting is to launch a 'New Consensus on Development Cooperation' as part of the EU's role in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Luca de Fraia, Deputy Director of ActionAid Italy, on behalf of CONCORD, the European Confederation of Relief and Development NGOs, said: "EU leaders have time and time again promised to reach the 0.7% benchmark, which has been one of their key promises to finance development in the future. A few countries have, but the vast majority has not, and many well-performing nations have recently cut their aid spending. There is also little sign that developing countries are front and centre of deciding how that aid is spent. The EU has previously signed agreements to ensure developing countries' ownership when programming aid as this is vital to ensuring communities' needs are met."

Jeroen Kwakkenbos, Policy and Advocacy Manager at the European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad) said: "EU leaders must ensure that aid reaches the poorest. Rules currently being discussed at the OECD Development Assistance Committee on the role of the private sector risk even more aid being used to subsidise our own corporations through 'tied aid'. The majority of EU Member States sit on this committee. They must ensure that they do not allow this to happen."

**ENDS**

#### **Notes for editors:**

1. CONCORD is the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs, made up of 28 national associations, 20 international networks and 3 associate members that represent over 2.600 NGOs, supported by millions of citizens across Europe. [www.concordeurope.org](http://www.concordeurope.org) CONCORD monitors European aid levels through AidWatch and compares official EU aid figures with the genuine amount

of aid going to developing countries. For more information visit:

<http://concordeurope.org/2015/11/23/aidwatch-report-looking-to-the-future-don-t-forget-the-past-aid-beyond-2015/>

2. EURODAD (the European Network on Debt and Development) is a network of 46 civil society organisations (CSOs) from 20 European countries, which works for transformative yet specific changes to global and European policies, institutions, rules and structures to ensure a democratically controlled, environmentally sustainable financial and economic system that works to eradicate poverty and ensure human rights for all.
3. OECD DAC aid figures for Europe <http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/development-aid-rises-again-in-2015-spending-on-refugees-doubles.htm>
4. In 1970, The 0.7% ODA/GNI target was first agreed and has been repeatedly re-endorsed at the highest level at international aid and development conferences: in 2005, the 15 countries that were members of the European Union by 2004 agreed to reach the target by 2015: the 0.7% target served as a reference for 2005 political commitments to increase ODA from the EU, the G8 Gleneagles Summit and the UN World Summit:  
<http://www.oecd.org/development/stats/45539274.pdf>
5. In 2015, at the Third Financing for Development conference in Addis Ababa, the European Commission recommitted to achieve the UN 0.7% target within the timeframe of the post-2015 agenda, including a specific effort for countries most in need (0.15-0.20% to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the short-term, 0.20% within the timeframe of the post-2015 agenda). [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-5353\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5353_en.htm)
6. OECD DAC aid figures for Europe <http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/development-aid-rises-again-in-2015-spending-on-refugees-doubles.htm>

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