



TRADE UNION KEY MESSAGES ON EU DEVELOPEMENT COOPERATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

These messages are conveyed by the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network-TUDCN (created by the International Trade Union Confederation-ITUC), in conjunction with the European Trade Union Confederation. They are supposed to feed the conclusions of the European Structured Dialogue process on development effectiveness, as well as, to propose strategic priorities in the light of the upcoming EU Multiannual Financial Framework on external actions.

1. IMPLEMENTING DECENT WORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- **Decent Work** needs to become, in line with previous to EU commitments, a strategic objective of the future development policy of the European Union, supported by adequate financial instruments ensuring its implementation; Social Dialogue, as a core element of the European Social Model and fundamental pillar of the Decent Work Agenda, must also be a priority within the external relations of the EU;
- The ILO Decent Work Agenda (whose pillars are: employment, core labour standards, social dialogue and social protection) recognizes the need for a rights-based approach to development, preventing socio-economic gaps and addressing inequalities within societies, and giving priority to social dialogue as an instrument to achieve Decent Work's Agenda. The **Social Partners**, as actors of the social dialogue, must be given greater role and involvement in EU development policies and instruments;
- The development of the private sector in developing countries is important to create job opportunities, delivering services and enhancing wealth creation. In this regard, trade unions point to the importance of compliance with international labour and environmental protection standards, which gives greater transparency to the social and environmental commitments of companies to ensure fairer development in the countries where they operate;

2. IMPLEMENTING POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

- The EU should proactively promote policy coherence meant as **consistency between aid/development policies and other policies like international trade and investments**. This is fundamental to end economic and policy conditionality attached to aid negotiations, and a precondition for true development effectiveness;
- Trade Unions assert that economic and policy conditionality, for both donor and partner countries must be coherent to **internationally agreed commitments and multilateral standards** in the fields of human rights, labour rights, environmental sustainability etc, complying with obligations administered by the competent multilateral treaty bodies (United Nations agencies and ILO normative frameworks);

3. PROMOTING SOCIAL DIALOGUE WITHIN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY SUPPORT POLICIES

- The importance to maintain a thematic instrument on Human Rights, with its own legal basis, such as the **European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)** is crucial to preserve the autonomy and the right of initiative of CSOs and thus adequately combat and prevent violations of Human Rights and promote and preserve genuine democracy.
- In addition, within the EIDHR itself, **the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights should be given greater relevance**. The protection of labour standards enshrined in the ILO Conventions is today more than ever a key pillar of democracy development;
- The implementation of Social Dialogue, established as a model for reaching the agreement between social partners in the EU, should also be supported in third countries, where it is precisely the dynamics of democracy and conflict prevention, that need to be exercised and strengthened. Therefore, **Social Dialogue** (together with freedom of association and collective bargaining) should become a **specific priority within EIDHR**;

4. PROMOTING DEMOCRATIC OWNERSHIP, AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND AN ACTOR BASED APPROACH FOR COOPERATION WITH CSOs

- The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) recognized Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as “independent development actors in their own rights”. The EU, having subscribed to the AAA, should therefore conceive adequate policies and instruments conducive of the **right of initiative of CSOs** to pursue their own development strategies. In this respect, **thematic instruments and programs** of the EU external actions should be reinforced in terms of financial resources, being the main channel for CSOs to maintain their political independence from possible unwarranted governmental interference;
- In this context, the EU should also recognize the diversity of CSOs working in development that have diverse mandates, objectives, and operational modalities and adapt its cooperation instruments and tools **based on the added value the different actors** can produce. The **global dimension of civil society**, most effectively expressed through membership-based organizations in the North and in the South (such as trade unions), should be recognized and supported by the EU when it comes to policy dialogues on development strategies, as well as, within financial support systems;

5. PROMOTING PERMANENT STRUCTURED DIALOGUE AMONGST DEVELOPMENT ACTORS

- The experience of the Structured Dialogue process has shown the potential there may be to improve practices and approaches for effective in-country development, in bringing together the EU institutional and CSOs development actors. Therefore, we call for a permanent structured dialogue to be implemented following the Budapest Conference. This **dialogue must be permanent, multi stakeholders, actor-based, and financially supported**. The dialogue should focus on both political strategies and programming modalities of EU development cooperation, and it should take place at central level, as well as, in-country level, according to the actors involved and the objectives agreed upon;
- Trade unions are affirming the necessity for the EU to engage more closely with the **overall and global development policy dialogues** such as within the OECD-DAC and other international fora, such as UNDCF. This is indispensable for achieving policy coherence in development cooperation;
- On the basis of the Structured Dialogue results (WG 3), trade unions call for a revision of financial programs' mechanisms, which should include a mix of funding modalities (such as framework agreements, re-granting, core funding) more suitable to support Global Networks such as Trade Unions both in the north and in the South;

6. MEETING EU ODA COMMITMENTS

- The EU has committed itself to the collective target of spending 0.7 % of its GNI on ODA by 2015. In line with this objective, trade unions ask the EU to considerably increase its ODA to meet the 0.7% target within the next MFF;
- Trade unions recall that, according to article 208 of TFEU, development cooperation must have as its primary objective the eradication of poverty. Therefore ODA funds should be targeted accordingly, and not diverted to different purposes in developing countries;
- Trade unions acknowledge the need for a differentiated approach to the diverse group of developing countries, in particular to emerging donors. However, this should not lead to unilateral decisions on the definition of “developing countries” which must continue to be the prerogative of OECD/DAC, by international consensus. In any case, cooperation initiatives with emerging donors (which do not fulfill the OECD/DAC criteria for ODA) must not be financed by a transfer of funds from the DCI and should be channeled through a separate instrument.
