

Vote Global



European Parliament elections 2009
International development manifesto



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This manifesto was written by BOND and its partner networks, the positions on trade, aid and debt were developed by the relevant networks, Trade Justice Movement, UK Aid Network and Jubilee Debt Campaign.

BOND (British Overseas NGOs for Development) is the United Kingdom's broadest network of voluntary organisations working in international development, with over 340 members. BOND aims to improve the UK's contribution to international development by promoting the exchange of experience, ideas and information amongst BOND members, between networks of NGOs in the UK and internationally, with the UK Government, and between BOND members and other UK bodies with an interest in international development.

BOND is a member of CONCORD, the European confederation of non-governmental organisations working in international development, emergency relief and development education, representing over 1600 NGOs which are supported by millions of citizens across Europe.

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INTRODUCTION

The current financial and economic crises look set to cause great hardship for people in the UK and around the world. The poorest and most vulnerable, already suffering from steep rises in food and commodity prices, will be hardest hit. The current economic system has created great inequalities of wealth and power which are not only morally unjust, but also economically and environmentally inefficient and unsustainable.

With food prices having risen by 83 per cent since 2005, the global food crisis continues to worsen, posing new challenges for people and governments around the world. This has created a global emergency which risks undermining any progress made up to now towards achieving poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At the same time, climate change, the depletion of marine resources and the reduction in biodiversity are imperilling the gains of decades of effort put into human development and threaten the livelihoods of millions of people.

In June 2009, residents of the 27 European Union (EU) member states will elect their representatives to the European Parliament for the 2009-2014 term. UK civil society is using this opportunity to call upon European institutions to work together with European civil society towards a more sustainable model of development.

The elected Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) will need to guide the European Council and the European Commission through many important decision-making processes.

A series of international agreements, in particular relating to climate change, are likely to be negotiated during the next parliamentary term. The outcome of these negotiations must not be at the expense of development and aid policies or human rights. Instead, the EU should establish political and economic partnerships to promote sustainable development based on fair access to resources, distribution of wealth and a mutual commitment to human rights, gender equality and social and economic justice.

At the same time, EU member states will be discussing solutions to the economic crisis and possible reforms of the institutions that govern the world economy. It is key that all governments and civil society are able to participate in such discussions with the objective of creating a system that reduces inequality, creates decent jobs, protects vulnerable people, ensures a healthy, sustainable environment, and works to eradicate poverty.

In this manifesto, UK civil society organisations identify and set out three essential EU objectives: **democratic accountability, sustainable development** and **more and better development aid**. We urge MEPs to act on them.

The EU institutional and financial framework should promote democratic accountability, transparency, and strengthen the participation of civil society organisations and citizens in the definition and implementation of policy.

SECTION 1

DEMOCRATIC

ACCOUNTABILITY



SECTION 1 DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The EU should radically improve democratic accountability, both to European citizens and those in developing countries.

Democratic accountability is necessary for building transparent and accountable EU institutions and policy-making and implementation processes accountable to EU residents and to those in the global south. The European Parliament and civil society are key actors in this respect.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

With a reach that is both deep (into communities) and wide (across national boundaries, via regional and global networks, alliances and coalitions), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are important mechanisms that allow citizens to organise themselves, engage in policy debates and hold governments to account. Strong civil society is thus central to a healthy democracy.

In recent years, however, national security and counter-terrorism agendas have led to restrictions on the ability of CSOs' to exercise their rights.

In light of these challenges, there is now an urgent need to strengthen the partnership between the European Parliament and EU civil society, and to establish a dialogue and common working modes between civil society and European institutions based on common ownership, meaningful collaboration and mutual respect.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU focuses on the demand for democratic accountability by strengthening civil society to fully participate in the building of democratic governance.
- » EU governance and accountability are improved by opening up EU policy processes for scrutiny by partner country governments and civil society in the EU and in the global south.
- » The European Parliament Committee on Development is primarily responsible for overseeing the EU's development cooperation in all parts of the world, and for monitoring other external affairs areas to ensure coherence as regards sustainable development.

There is now an urgent need to strengthen the partnership between the European Parliament and EU civil society, based on common ownership, meaningful collaboration and mutual respect



EU INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND THE EU BUDGET

Institutional reforms and the EU budget have the potential to seriously influence the way European development cooperation can attain its objective of poverty eradication.

It is vital that any future EU institutional framework confirms the need to have poverty eradication as the primary objective of the EU development policy and the need for the EU's external affairs to be coherent with these development objectives, as enshrined in the *European Consensus on Development*.¹

The 2009 EU budget review is a unique opportunity to ensure that the budget matches the EU's aims for sustainable development and to engage with global issues such as poverty, climate change and conflict prevention.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU respects the specific place and objectives of development cooperation as an independent policy within the EU and on an equal footing with EU foreign, security and commercial policy agendas.
- » The European Commission has a dedicated administrative structure responsible for development policy and programming in all developing countries – African, Caribbean, Pacific, Asian and Latin American countries.
- » There is a dedicated Commissioner for Development responsible for policy formulation and implementation, who is in a position to promote the interest of EU development policy within the College of Commissioners and towards the Council.
- » The EU budget promotes and anchors sustainability and poverty eradication as the overarching principles of the EU's international cooperation, including within the fields of trade, development aid and development education.
- » Separate legal instruments are established to finance other external policy areas, such as foreign policy, defence and security. Financial allocation for these instruments should be additional to development funding.

The background image shows a person in a field of young rice plants. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants, and is bent over, working in the field. The field is filled with rows of young rice plants growing in a muddy, water-filled environment. In the foreground, there is a close-up of a single rice seedling with several green leaves and a small root system, growing out of a mound of dark soil. The overall scene is a rural agricultural setting, likely a rice paddy.

The EU should put in place coherent social, economic and security policies that promote the right to sustainable development and responsible citizenship both for citizens of the EU and for the rest of the world.

SECTION 2

SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The main objective of the current EU policy on Europe in the world is to make Europe a strong and competitive actor in the global economy. *Meeting Europe's growth and jobs challenge is the key to unlocking the resources needed to meet our wider economic, social and environmental ambitions.*

Although maintenance of the well-being of European citizens is a fundamental objective of the EU, the underlying policies generate growing income disparities amongst EU residents and have not sufficiently and directly contributed to poverty eradication globally.

In addition, the fact that the implementation of these policies exacerbates the situation of millions of people outside the EU is very often ignored. And yet the EU has a responsibility to all the citizens of the world not to harm but to honour their right to development.

Further to this, European policies and their implementation encourage a lifestyle that leads to the depletion of natural resources and contributes to climate change, the growing evidence and impact of which have been acknowledged. This will not only affect the well being of future generations of EU residents, but also affects many millions of poor people in the global south, who are already bearing disproportionately the costs of deforestation, overfishing and pollution, problems to which they have hardly contributed. There is an undeniable responsibility for the EU to help reverse the situation and to support developing countries in order to diminish the impact of climate change.

Even though the EU has in principle acknowledged its commitment to eradicate poverty, this commitment is undermined by, for instance, its continuing reluctance to commit to the necessary levels of cuts in greenhouse gas emissions which will enable a fair and sustainable agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen and by its aggressive trade policies towards developing countries.

The EU should design economic and other policies that aim at reducing inequality and at poverty reduction, and do not reinforce them



CLIMATE JUSTICE

During the European Parliament's next term, the international community will need to agree on and put into force new international policies and mechanisms to address climate change and manage its inevitable impact. Unprecedented action is required nationally, regionally, and internationally and this is a crucial moment for the EU to demonstrate its support for safeguarding environmental rights and to ensure that vulnerable populations bear neither the costs of lowering greenhouse gas emissions, nor the costs of adapting to climate change. Equal access, including for future generations, to natural resources and sustainable use of these, need to be a leading principles of any international agreement on these issues.

The EU needs to recognise its responsibility towards vulnerable communities around the world that have contributed least to the problem but are first and worst confronted with the impact of climate change. The EU should substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to adaptation efforts with additional resources and ensuring equal access to natural resources.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » EU member states domestically reduce emissions by at least 30% by 2020 and at least 80% by 2050 (both compared to 1990 levels). To achieve these targets, European development will need to veer towards a more sustainable and low carbon development model. The reductions must be achieved entirely within the EU and not bought in from overseas.
- » The EU plays a leading role in promoting cleaner, more efficient approaches for sustainable and low carbon development and sets domestic only and unilateral targets for renewable energy, energy efficiency and low-carbon growth to help tackle climate change. The level of the targets should reflect the scale of the challenge outlined in recent reports such as the UK government-commissioned Stern Report and the

SECTION 2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

International Panel on Climate Change Working Group II Report.

- » The EU makes significant funding available to enable poor, vulnerable countries to adapt to sea level rises, increased drought and more extreme weather. Adapting to climate change relates above all to development and poverty reduction – building resilience at the grassroots – and is becoming increasingly crucial to the safeguarding of development. Thus, the cost of adaptation needs to be integrated into development planning and policy processes.
- » Adaptation to climate change – specific projects and integration strategies – should be financed by funds *additional* to Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and in the form of grants. These funds should firstly benefit the poor and most vulnerable, and should be used to support the National Adaptation Programmes of Action in accordance with the principles of local and national ownership of development.
- » The EU commits to assist the achieving of substantial emissions reductions in developing countries, to support those countries in achieving a significant deviation from 'business as usual' levels of emissions. This will involve a long-term substantial financial commitment that supports sustainable development policies in the South. To this end, it is essential to transfer appropriate low cost and low carbon technologies and to increase financial resources. Such contribution should be, in financial terms, equivalent to at least 15% of reduced emissions (below 1990 levels).

The EU needs to recognise its responsibility towards vulnerable communities around the world that have contributed least to the problem but are first and worst confronted with the impact of climate change



have rejected the aggressive trade liberalisation approach from rich nations, including the EU. Many African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries did not sign Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) before the deadline at the end of 2007 because of development concerns; many of those that did initially did so under threat that trade preferences would disappear. The European Commission continues to pursue its agenda with scant regard for ACP development objectives and regional integration plans.

The primary goal of the EU's *Global Europe* strategy is greater market access for EU companies in third markets, and access to raw materials to fuel the activities of those companies and European consumption. It involves the European Community pushing aggressive and ambitious Free Trade Agreements with a number of nations and trade blocs within developing countries which go well beyond commitments at the WTO. Millions could be pushed further into poverty, losing their jobs and livelihoods and seeing their public services and their environment continue to deteriorate.

In all aspects of its trade and investment policies, the EU must respect the right of developing countries to determine their own development paths, including economic, trade, social and environmental policies.

The Commission has exclusive competence on trade policy, and negotiations are often conducted in secrecy and lack transparency. Without greater transparency and ability to scrutinise policy processes, coherence with wider developmental, social and environmental objectives risk being de-prioritised.

TRADE JUSTICE

The EU is an important global player in trade, both bilaterally and as a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). However, the EU should ensure that trade can be an instrument for development and that the agreements it makes do not undermine human rights and the environment in partner countries. In practice, the EU's trade agenda risks the opposite outcome. At the WTO, developing countries themselves

WE URGE MEPS TO:

- » Challenge the European Commission on its aggressive liberalisation agenda at multilateral and bilateral levels, and call for an urgent, fundamental, review of EU trade policy, including its approach to the EPAs negotiations, so that it delivers sustainable development and respects developing countries' right to determine their own development path.

SECTION 2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- » Challenge the *Global Europe* strategy.
- » Monitor EU performance against its commitment to policy coherence for development including on trade.
- » Open up European trade policy to enable better democratic accountability and scrutiny by parliamentarians and civil society, including the de-restricting of access to the Council Committee C133 and European Council documents.
- » Closely scrutinise future Commission appointments, in particular on trade, to ensure that the Commission changes its aggressive liberalisation strategy.

RESPONSIBLE FOOD SECURITY, NUTRITION AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY

The food crisis should be a wake up call for the EU to adopt sustainable food security, nutrition and agricultural policies that will realise the Right to Food and food sovereignty in all regions of the world, in the context of the converging energy and financial crises and climate change.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU improves coherence in its policies on trade, aid, agriculture, environment and energy, especially in relation to Africa; reasserts the primacy of agricultural, food and related environment policies over trade policies; removes export subsidies and stops the dumping of agricultural goods in other regions; stops the promotion of biofuel targets; reforms the EU's Common Agricultural Policy; and transforms export-led agricultural models towards decentralised, local sustainable food production, the basis of food sovereignty.
- » The EU enables states and regions to regulate and protect their own agricultural production and markets and regulates the activities of large agribusiness conglomerates that disempower small-scale food producers, especially women, who continue to be marginalised despite the fact that they produce more than 50% of the food in the world.

The food crisis should be a wake up call for the EU to adopt sustainable food security, nutrition and agricultural policies that will realise the Right to Food and food sovereignty in all regions of the world



- » EU policies strengthen local communities and the organisations of small-scale food producers, involving them in the design and implementation of programmes that improve their capacities through a plurality of production methods, equitable access to and control over land and local markets and in the optimisation of farmers' knowledge, use and development of biodiversity, which requires the exclusion of patents on life and genetically modified plants and animals.
- » The EU develops a nutrition strategy and takes a lead in developing global proposals for tackling the dysfunctional and fragmented international system for dealing with malnutrition, including through the use of social protection measures. Malnutrition is the underlying cause of 3.5 million deaths per year among children under five years old (a third of all child deaths in developing countries).
- » The EU promotes comprehensive social protection systems that stimulate and stabilise demand for agricultural production at a local level and prevent chronic hunger amongst the poor.

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Women continue to be the majority of the world's poorest and most marginalised people. They experience discrimination in every sphere of political, social and economic life, and at every age, on the grounds of gender. This limits women's rights and opportunities, their personal security, their access to public services and economic resources, and political power.

The causes and nature of women's poverty make it vital to look at gender issues. There can be no sustainable or equitable development, or poverty eradication, unless gender-based discrimination is eliminated. 2009 is the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is time to act.

The European Consensus on Development recognises that gender equality, women's rights

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and sexual and reproductive health are questions of fundamental human rights and social justice, and crucial to achieving all the MDGs and other international agreements. The 2007 Communication, *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation*², commits the EU to stepping up its efforts to promote gender equality while the EC MDGs Communication on EU Aid Effectiveness states that gender equality must be addressed in national development planning.

The achievement of women's rights and gender equality is a political project that MEPs are uniquely well positioned to influence.

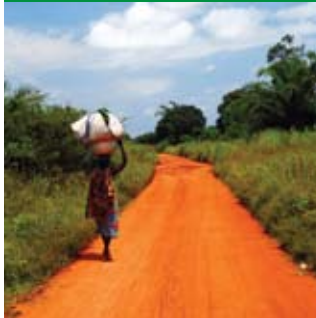
WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » Sufficient human and financial resources are allocated to implement the EU policy in Brussels and in delegations.
- » EC aid supports significant specific actions on women's rights, sexual reproductive health and gender equality.
- » Women's organisations and groups are involved in the planning and implementation of all development co-operation initiatives.
- » Strong accountability mechanisms are set up to ensure staff implement agreed policy.
- » Systematic monitoring is carried out on the impact of European aid and trade on gender equality.
- » Gender thinking is integrated into all EU policies and interventions (trade, foreign and security, climate, agriculture and so on).

SOCIAL AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The best way to help people realise their rights is to invest in social and human development. The *EU Consensus on Development*, adopted by all member states, recognises this by prioritising the MDGs and placing a strong emphasis on human and social development. However, the reality of EU aid does not reflect the official policy.

There can be no sustainable or equitable development, or poverty eradication, unless gender-based discrimination is eliminated. The achievement of women's rights and gender equality is a political project that MEPs are uniquely well positioned to influence.



The EU should prioritise its actions in areas that are key to the achievement of MDGs, such as gender equality, access to basic social services for all, including health and education, especially for the most vulnerable. The EU needs to contribute to the realisation of social rights to reduce inequality and promote sustainable development if the MDGs are to be achieved.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The European Commission is held to account for failing to meet the Parliament's target of spending 20% of ODA on basic social services.
- » The EU plans and allocates sustainable resources to the health sector, focusing particularly on support for comprehensive primary health care and for health system strengthening. EU aid for health should also support progress on neglected tropical diseases and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, as well as on the MDG areas of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria and maternal and child health.
- » The EU allocates and delivers its commitment to increase aid for education. Seventy five million of the world's poorest and most marginalised children still don't have access to basic education, whilst early childcare, adult literacy classes and youth training programmes are a luxury that most poor countries cannot afford. Aid for education should reach the poorest and most vulnerable children through inclusive approaches, and at least 50% of new basic education commitments should go to conflict affected fragile states. There should also be sufficient resources available to ensuring that education in humanitarian responses is funded.
- » The EU integrates and implements disability within international development processes, in particular through ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and fulfilment of Article 32, which states that development policies and programmes must be inclusive of people with disabilities. One in five of the world's poorest

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people is disabled, and 82% of people with disabilities in developing countries live below the poverty line: their specific interests and needs must be addressed if the MDGs are to be achieved.

- » Children and older people are often least able to escape chronic poverty. They often live in multigenerational households, with little or no regular income, and in many cases the middle generations may be missing due to HIV and AIDS and migration. While the MDGs have specific targets on children and youth, they are silent on issues of age. Interventions aimed at achieving the MDGs must respond to the intergenerational nature of poverty and to rapid population ageing. The EU should play a greater role to raise awareness amongst all actors involved in development co-operation of issues relating to ageing and the rights of older people, and (as signatories) support the implementation of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

DECENT WORK

People in developed and developing countries are working more for less money, which is forcing a growing number of them – overwhelmingly women – to make a living in the informal economy, without social protection or rights. Meanwhile, companies are outsourcing to drive down wages and hard fought-for rights. Only an international system based on solidarity and respect for people's rights, as enshrined in United Nations and International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, can halt these trends.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU complies further with the ILO eight core labour conventions, especially the freedom of association and collective bargaining, in all its international relations, encourages and supports the incorporation of these labour standards in national legislation and ensures implementation and enforcement, promotes decent wages and social protection for all and creates and protects decent jobs.

One in five of the world's poorest people is disabled, and 82% of people with disabilities in developing countries live below the poverty line: their specific interests and needs must be addressed if the MDGs are to be achieved.



- » The EU is coherent in its policies and identifies specific targets and indicators relating to decent work in its annual reporting on MDGs with regard to its commitment to the achievement of MDG1 and the ILO's decent work agenda.
- » The EU establishes, in its commitment to corporate accountability, clauses on labour rights that are based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) guiding principles on multinationals and on the ILO's tripartite declaration on multinationals and social policy, which EU corporations are bound to respect.
- » The EU actively monitors the impact of trade agreements on employment and poverty in developing countries, and monitors the implementation of the labour conventions required for its special trade preference regime (GSP+) and undertakes action to guarantee that the ILO core conventions are implemented through all agreements with external countries (eg Economic Partnership Agreements, bilateral and regional co-operation agreements.)
- » The EU allocates resources within its development cooperation policies to develop and extend social protection systems, including universal social pensions, builds institutional capacity to implement ILO labour conventions and allows trade unions and other civil society actors to be genuinely involved in effectively monitoring compliance by public and private institutions and employers, including increased involvement for unions from both Europe and developing countries in the development projects supported by the EU.
- » The EU brings about legislative changes within its commitment to gender equality and undertakes and encourages positive action programmes to promote workplace equality and achieve the full implementation of ILO Conventions 100 on Equal Remuneration and 111 on Discrimination.

SECTION 2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

IMPROVING HUMAN SECURITY, IMPLEMENTING CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

There is now international recognition that conflict is a key obstacle to realising the MDGs and that preventing the resurgence of violent conflict is fundamental to reducing poverty, protecting rights and ensuring sustainable development.

Aid has the potential to play a positive role in preventing violent conflict and development assistance can act as a powerful tool for conflict prevention and stabilisation if it is targeted to address factors that increase the risk of violence, such as poverty, poor governance and inequality between groups. Aid is not a crisis management tool, and should always be delivered based on the identified needs of the people in distress and according to humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence³. This principled approach to aid is recognised as a prerequisite in gaining access to crisis-affected populations.

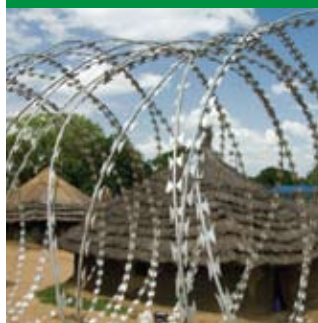
Even well intentioned development initiatives can sometimes end up fuelling or exacerbating conflict if they do not take into account drivers of conflict. Reciprocally, security related programmes such as Security Sector Reform, Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration and Small Arms and Light Weapons should address the people's security needs and concerns if they want to achieve sustainable peace.

EU development strategies and instruments have the capacity to respond to such challenges, provided they are implemented in a conflict-sensitive manner, that is in full understanding of the context in which they operate and of the impact of such programmes on the drivers of conflict.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU implements the Council Conclusions on Security and Development and the Council Conclusions of an EU response to situations of fragility, adopted at the 2831st External

Conflict is a key obstacle to realizing the MDGs and preventing the resurgence of violent conflict is fundamental to reducing poverty, protecting rights and thus ensuring sustainable development



Relations Council meeting on 19-20 November 2007.

- » The EU ensures implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, endorsed by the Göteborg European Council in June 2001, by mainstreaming conflict prevention within its different external relations and development cooperation instruments.
- » The EU adopts a conflict-sensitive approach when designing and implementing development strategies and programmes, therefore basing its engagement on regularly updated conflict analysis so that aid does not contribute to, fuel or exacerbate conflicts.
- » The EU ensures that humanitarian aid, development, conflict prevention and peace-building programmes are given priority over military-driven crisis management activities.
- » The EU further supports the elaboration of an international Arms Trade Treaty and encourages all member states to work in a timely manner to ensure their national legislation is compliant with the Common position defining common rules governing the control of exports of military equipment and technology.
- » The EU actively supports the principle of the Responsibility to protect civilians in crises.

FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Monterrey Consensus of March 2002, revised at the Doha Conference in December 2008, sets the goal of "mobilising and increasing the effective use of financial resources (...) to eliminate poverty, improve social conditions and raise living standards, and protect our environment". In reality, statistics show that instead of North to South financial transfers there is a huge net capital flow from South to North. A much stronger international response needs to be given to these challenges.

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TAX JUSTICE

Tax is the most sustainable source of finance for development, promoting accountability and allowing governments to generate income from their own economic activity to invest in their own infrastructure, healthcare and education. Estimates indicate that just two forms of tax evasion, transfer mispricing and mis-invoicing, cost the developing world £118 billion (US\$160 billion) annually in lost revenue. This is several times larger than the extra £28-42 billion (US\$40-60 billion) the World Bank estimates is needed annually to meet all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

This draining of money is able to go unchallenged because of the permissive regulatory climate surrounding global transfers of cash into jurisdictions offering financial secrecy ("tax havens"), and the ability of international businesses to exploit the limited capacity of domestic tax authorities. In order to address these problems increased transparency is vital. As a general comment the causes of the global financial crisis are also obstacles to effective taxation in the developing world, so the challenge is immense.

WE URGE MEPS TO:

- » Push for an international accounting standard on country-by-country reporting for all sectors, which will enable investors, regulators and tax authorities to assess risks and will highlight abuses.
- » Call for the automatic exchange of information between jurisdictions.
- » Specifically, push for the extension of the European Savings Tax Directive so that it applies to corporations as well as individuals.

DEBT CANCELLATION

European member states are some of the biggest lenders to poor countries. The debt burden of poor countries is still untenable, with low income countries repaying around £70 million (US \$100 million) every day. Almost £63 billion (\$90 billion) in debt cancellation has

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already taken place, freeing up vital resources for investment, but much more is urgently required. A further estimated £279 billion (\$400 billion) in debt relief is needed simply for poor countries to be able to meet their people's basic needs⁴.

WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU argues strongly at international fora for the extension of multilateral and bilateral debt cancellation to all poor countries that need it, at a minimum all International Development Association (IDA)-only countries. The European Parliament should urgently call for expanded debt cancellation by all member states for all developing countries that need it for poverty reduction.
- » The European Parliament conducts a parliamentary audit, highlighting cases of outstanding European states' claims on developing countries, which would result in recommendations on debt cancellation and future lending.
- » The EU calls for member states, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to audit all their outstanding claims on developing countries, and support any citizens' audits.
- » The EU favours grants rather than loans for poverty-reducing expenditure.
- » The European Parliament endorses and supports the Parliamentarians Declaration for Shared Responsibility in Sovereign Lending.
- » The EU works with member states and international financial institutions to end the practice of making debt relief and lending dependent on externally-imposed conditions.
- » The EU calls on member states to change their laws to clamp down on vulture fund activity. An EU framework should be implemented in order to prevent predatory practices on developing countries' sovereign debts. The EU should also give judicial and financial assistance to countries if they are taken to court by vulture funds.

The EU provides most of the development aid in the world, which gives it a crucial leadership role in the fight against global poverty and for a strong, informed and actively engaged civil society; it has already identified poverty eradication as an objective for its development cooperation. The EU has clearly committed itself not only to further increasing the volume of aid, but also to increasing the quality of its aid. But so far, it has not honoured this commitment.

SECTION 3

MORE AND BETTER DEVELOPMENT AID



SECTION 3 MORE AND BETTER DEVELOPMENT AID

Member states will find it hard to reach the targets of giving 0.56% of their Gross National Income (GNI) as aid by 2010 and 0.7% by 2015. Furthermore, EU governments continue to distort their aid figures by counting spending on debt relief, educating foreign students and supporting refugees in Europe.

The EU has defined clear objectives for development cooperation: eradicating poverty and reaching the MDGs. Aid can only be deemed effective if it contributes to these objectives. Moreover, given that 70% of those living in poverty are women and girls, the EU's development policy and actions should actively address gender equality issues.

The European Union has the ambition and opportunity to become a leader in making development assistance more effective. As a signatory to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, it has agreed to a set of principles and has developed policies and instruments to implement these. Such agreements need now to be transparently implemented and measured.

The aid effectiveness agenda is not only a matter of technical implementation but also a political one. More transparency and accountability and respect for real and democratic ownership are crucial elements in the process towards more effective aid.

As the democratic watchdog of the EU, the European Parliament has a key role in ensuring that the EU honours its commitments relating to ODA volumes and aid effectiveness, as well as championing further EU leadership on these issues. The Parliament should call on the EU to prioritise actions in pillar areas that are key to achieving MDGs, such as employment and decent work, gender equality and access to basic social services, such as health and education, especially for the most vulnerable.

The EU has defined clear objectives for development cooperation, such as eradicating poverty and reaching the MDGs. Aid can only be deemed effective if it contributes to these objectives



WE URGE MEPS TO ENSURE THAT:

- » The EU reaches the agreed target of 0.7% GNI for ODA by 2015 or sooner (without including debt relief or other non-aid items), allocates 50% of this increase to sub-Saharan Africa and publishes a binding year-on-year delivery timetable. The EU should also investigate whether an increase in its commitments is needed, to balance the losses in ODA real-value due to the current economic crisis.
- » The EU deepens its commitment to democratic ownership, accountability and transparency, which are at the heart of aid effectiveness, and ensures that residents' voices and concerns are made central to national, regional and local development plans and processes.
- » The EU phases out all economic policy conditionality attached to aid, and agrees on more mutually accountable contractual agreements with partner countries, based on locally defined criteria. The EU should further untie all EU aid to all countries, including food aid and technical assistance, and reform such assistance so that 100% of it is demand-driven and aligned with national strategies.
- » The EU respects the centrality of human rights, gender equality, child rights, social justice and environmental sustainability, which are absent from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and commits to agreeing on additional EU targets that indicate how a human rights-based approach to development is to be conducted in these areas.
- » The EU bases the design of its development programs on a thorough assessment of the national context to ensure that development cooperation contribute to conflict prevention and statebuilding, particularly in situations of fragility and conflict.

References

- 1 The 2005 *European Consensus on Development* is a policy statement that reflects the EU's willingness to eradicate poverty and build a more stable and equitable world. http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/eu_consensus_en.pdf.
- 2 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation*, COM (2007) 100.
- 3 As enshrined in the 2005 *European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid*.
- 4 See Jubilee Debt Campaign's 2008 report, *Unfinished Business* for details of this calculation, which is based on research by the New Economics Foundation.



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