

IS EU DEVELOPMENT AID ENTERING A NEW ERA IN THE WAKE OF THE LISBON TREATY?



February 2008

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DEVELOPMENT POLICY FORUM (DPF)

The **Development Policy Forum (DPF)** is a newly launched partnership between the Brussels-based think tank *Friends of Europe*, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the United Nations and the World Bank. The goal of the partnership is to systematically address forthcoming challenges in the area of development policy through lively debates and sharp written analyses.

Partners noted the growing need for a neutral and regular platform for the debate and analysis of development policy related issues in Brussels. Many development-related debates are ad hoc in nature or are initiated by the actors involved in Europe's development policy. To stimulate wider interest in the issues, the DPF provides a new platform in Brussels to address these topics.

The aims of the DPF are to:

- raise awareness of development issues;
- promote debate on topical and interlinked political, economic and social matters;
- bring together political authorities, members of national, international and European development organisations, commentators and business representatives to discuss and debate development questions.

The highlights of each roundtable as well as the reports published on the occasion of the DPF are widely circulated by *Friends of Europe* so that key messages receive attention throughout the EU and beyond.

IS EU DEVELOPMENT AID ENTERING A NEW ERA IN THE WAKE OF THE LISBON TREATY?

Report of the first Development Policy Forum (DPF) roundtable organised by *Friends of Europe* in partnership with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Friedrich–Ebert–Stiftung, the United Nations and the World Bank

26 February 2008

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AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT (AFD)

Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is a public institution serving a mission of general interest: financing development. A specialised financial institution, the Agency provides financing on five continents – giving priority to Africa, which accounts for two-thirds of AFD's grants – for economic and social projects carried out by local authorities, public institutions, or the private and associative sector.

The projects are aimed at urban development and infrastructure, rural development, industry, financial systems, environmental conservation, as well as education and healthcare.

The Agency's activities fall within the overall framework of the Millennium Development Goals, at the crossroads of objectives for economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental conservation.

To offer a suitable response to each individual situation, AFD proposes a wide range of financial instruments: grants, guarantees, shareholding arrangements, and all forms of loans, both subsidised and on market terms. AFD is the pivotal operator in the French system of official development assistance.

Sustainable development is the foundation of AFD's strategy, which aims to forge financial and intellectual partnerships with donor countries and to help, alongside its supervisory authorities, to create public policies and increase French influence in the development sphere.

AFD's commitments in 2007 amounted to 3.3 billion euros. These commitments cover education for 5.8 million children, the supply of drinking water for 4.3 million people, care for 2.2 million people, and improved housing conditions for 715,000 people.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Following the successful launch debate of the Development Policy Forum (DPF), *Friends of Europe* together with its partners Agence Française de Développement, the UK Department for International Development, the Friedrich–Ebert–Stiftung, the United Nations and the World Bank organised a roundtable on 26 February 2008, “**Is EU development aid entering a new era in the wake of the Lisbon Treaty?**”. Moderator **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, welcomed participants and noted that the roundtable marks the beginning of a series of regular roundtable debates on development issues, especially as they relate to European policymaking.

“The origin of the Development Policy Forum is that, over the years, development issues have been taken up with great enthusiasm, and after a flurry of excitement, they are put down again,” he said. “This ‘now you see it, now you don’t’ quality struck me as damaging. What we need in Brussels is regularity and dependability. The DPF hopes to provide a forum to ensure that important development issues remain at the top of the policy agenda.”

Background

The Lisbon Treaty for the first time clearly states that the reduction and eradication of poverty is the primary objective of the EU’s development cooperation policy. This implies, among other things, that development policy is a policy in its own right, and not an accessory of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). At the same time, the treaty provides for the creation of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who would also be a Vice–President of the European Commission to represent the EU abroad. He or she will draw together resources that are scattered across several

institutions, which is expected to ensure greater coherence and effectiveness in Europe's foreign policy.

If the Lisbon Treaty is adopted, formal negotiations would start on a new implementation structure, the European External Action Service (EEAS). Observers worry that development and humanitarian assistance policies will not remain independent from Europe's broader foreign and security policy agenda. Some NGOs are calling for more transparency in the EU budget. They also want the EU Budget Review to identify a clear distinct budget space for EU development aid and humanitarian assistance, and integrate the European Development Fund into the EU budget.

With six member states having ratified the Lisbon Treaty so far, now is a timely moment to assess the future of the EU's development policies. This roundtable debate was attended by EU and national policymakers, members of the European and national parliaments, academics, representatives of NGOs and business, and media.

Snapshot – the roundtable

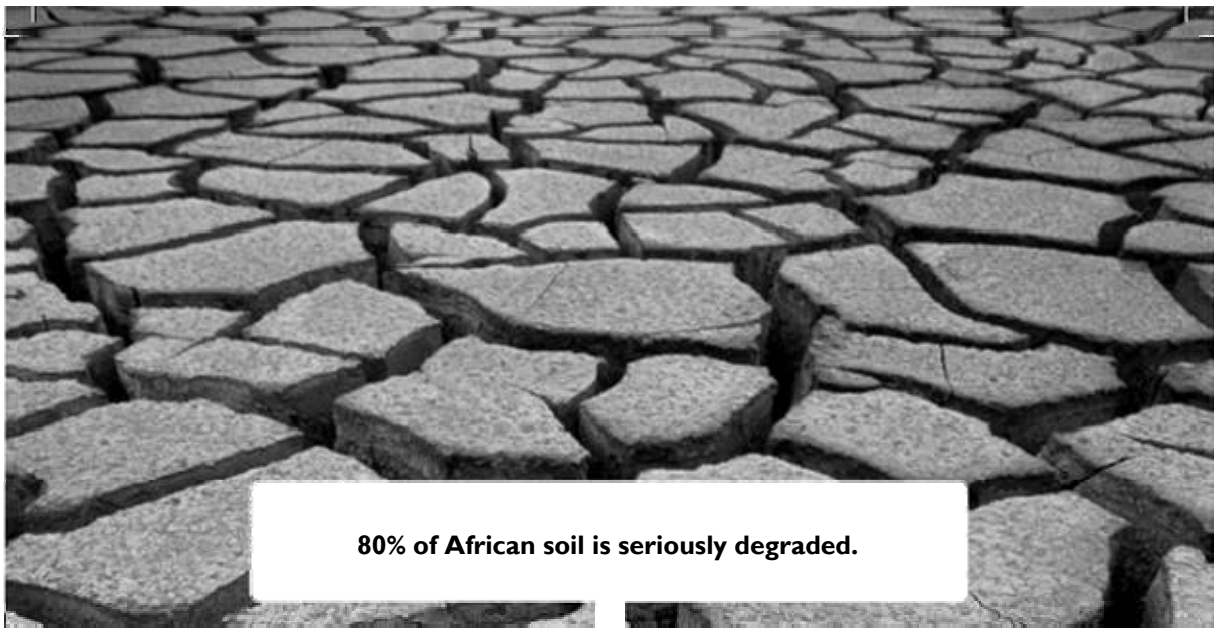
The DPF debate addressed two main questions: whether beefing up the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) will risk sidelining development aid; and whether European NGOs are right to be concerned over key aspects of the Lisbon Treaty. Specifically, the debate assessed the likely impact of the new treaty on the EU's efforts to tackle poverty and promote economic growth in the developing world.

Critics observed that the EU's creation of a new foreign policy chief wearing two hats (High Representative and Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for external relations) could lead to policy incoherence or, worse, could sideline or marginalise Europe's aid. The fact that the EU's overarching development objective – eradicating poverty – is enshrined in the new treaty is a

plus, but participants generally agreed that implementation and results on the ground are key. To this end, the strengthening of the policy and programming capacity of the European Commission Delegations is an important step.

Most welcomed the prospect of a more streamlined institutional architecture at EU level to coordinate Europe's external relations policies, but there were warnings that to be truly effective, development policy must be based on partnership and ownership with recipient countries. European NGOs concerned over key aspects of the Lisbon Treaty were reminded that it offers an opportunity to make important changes to what has not worked in the past in development cooperation, and to bring together all 27 EU member states in a coherent and consistent approach to help meet the enormous – and growing – challenges faced by the world's poor.





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Knowledge grows

WILL BEEFING UP THE EU'S COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY RISK SIDELINING DEVELOPMENT AID?

Critics claim that the EU's creation of a new foreign policy chief with two hats will both sideline and politicise Europe's aid giving. Others argue that the Lisbon Treaty offers an opportunity to create positive change and to ensure "coherence" – a concept that became the *leitmotif* of the DPF roundtable debate. Participants discussed the impact of the new treaty on the EU's efforts to fulfil its potential on the world stage and to achieve its overarching development goal to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty by promoting economic growth in developing countries.

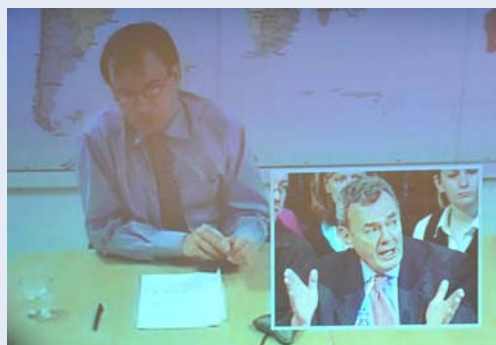
Co-moderator **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, noted that EU development aid would be entering a new era once the Lisbon Treaty is ratified and implemented. The claim that the treaty is expected to create the "political machinery and the institutional architecture" to reinforce Europe's leadership in development assistance – expected to rise to two-thirds of all global aid by 2010 – is ambitious. He reminded participants that most EU countries are falling far short of the promise made in Monterrey to commit 0.7% of GDP to development assistance. Currently, the average spending is about 0.3%, with the exception of a few countries. Merritt urged participants to consider whether the Lisbon Treaty would have the teeth to actually reverse the decline in spending on development aid.

Coherence is key, commented co-moderator **Gie Goris**, Editor-in-Chief of MO. "If Europe is the biggest donor, it is because of the contribution of different member state governments who don't necessarily share the same ideas or practice on the ground. Will the Lisbon Treaty help this?" he asked. Goris also pointed to a potential downside of coherence: "If there is more coherence in the

different policies that affect the EU's external relations [under the Lisbon Treaty], which logic will carry the day? Foreign policy, security or development logic?"

Reinforcing the EU's development efforts

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), **Gareth Thomas MP**, speaking from London via video link, said that the Lisbon Treaty offers the opportunity to continue a series of reforms that have been underway since 2000, which have restored the legitimacy of European Community aid. He pointed to clear common strategy priorities, a common vision to guide EU action under the European Consensus on Development, and common principles with the primary objective of eradicating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



"With these changes [the Lisbon Treaty], the EU will have the power to make an even more significant contribution on the world stage."

Gareth Thomas MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the UK
Department for International Development (DFID)

Thomas recognised the EU's "critical role" in global development efforts and noted that the Lisbon Treaty will provide an opportunity for Europe to play that role even better. To do this, the EU must work on three things under the Lisbon Treaty:

- There needs to be a stronger voice for development within the EU, reinforced by an administration structure responsible for policy and its implementation. A Commissioner for Development should head this in a "stronger way" than is done today.

- To ensure consistency, integrate development and humanitarian programming for ACP countries to take in Asia and Latin America. It does not make sense to have Commissioners responsible for different areas.
- Increasing decentralisation allows decisions to be made locally to improve the quality and speed in which aid can be dispersed. To this end, strong and more effective EC Delegations with policy and programming capacity is key. This work should be accelerated as part of external action service reforms coming on line.

“With these changes, the EU will have the power to make an even more significant contribution on the world stage. The European Commission keeps the member states honest and helps us to use the EU’s perceived neutrality in often difficult political situations,” Thomas observed. “Building on these three things will help the EU fulfil its potential.”

He noted that the Lisbon Treaty reminds member states that although they work in different areas from the European Commission, the work should be complementary and that aid needs to be aligned. “We need to do this as European allies, but also alongside other major development players such as the World Bank, Canada and the United States,” Thomas added.

Thijs Berman MEP, Vice Chairman of the European Parliament Committee on Development, agreed that the treaty changes the relationship between the European Commission and the member states. “The relationship is clarified in the sense that the Commission plays a complementary role that allows it to play a coordinating role as well.” But he said it is “ridiculous” that the European Development Fund is not within the EU budget. “This raises issues of transparency and democratic control, which the European Parliament intends to continue to push for.”

Giving the EU a one-voice policy

The Lisbon Treaty is an important step forward to give the EU a “one-voice policy”, while at the same time improving accountability, upholding the rule of law [in recipient countries] and binding EU institutions on development policy, commented **Elmar Brok MEP**, Member of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs and Trustee of *Friends of Europe*. He pointed to the office of the High Representative and Vice President of the European Commission to ensure policy coherence, but noted that the competence of the EU and the European Commission should not be taken away. The European External Action Service (EEAS) should be attached to the European Commission to ensure coherence and accountability without violating the competences of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

Brok admitted there would be a “politicisation of development aid”, but that the European Parliament will ensure that it goes in the right direction. Development policy is a type of security policy, he noted. Consider the issue of migration: “If people take the risk to cross the sea to come to Europe, it is up to us to give them a better prospect of living in their own countries.”

“If you ask European citizens, they are in favour of doing more, but no one wants to pay more money. We must do more than we have in the past and we must increase the speed and quality of our development assistance.”

Elmar Brok MEP
Member of the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs
and Trustee of *Friends of Europe*



Brok said: “If you ask European citizens, they are in favour of doing more, but no one wants to pay more money. We must do more than we have in the past and we must increase the speed and quality of our development assistance.” The EU



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public consultation on its EU Institutional Strategy Paper (ISP)

“Working with the European Union: Europe for Development”

presented at the

POLICY SPOTLIGHT LUNCH DEBATE

with

Gareth Thomas MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the
UK's Department for International Development (DFID)

organised in partnership with *Friends of Europe*
on Monday 31 March 2008
at the Stanhope Hotel, Brussels

The consultation runs from 31 March to 13 June 2008

For further details visit DFID's website:
www.dfid.gov.uk/consultations

Comments on the ISP may be sent to: **EuropeISP@dfid.gov.uk**



gives more than 50% of the world's development aid, which amounts to €100 per citizen. "It is a lot compared to others, but it is still not enough," he said.

The treaty should be looked at in a positive way as the security and foreign policy aspects of the EU's work will be more coherent in conflict countries, observed **Haleh Bridi**, the World Bank's Special Representative to the EU. But there remain challenges. "There are 1 billion people in the world living in conflict. It is unclear how this strong Directorate General for Development and the new RELEX [Directorate General for External Relations] are going to work together. How can you have aligned policy in this area?" she asked.

Richard Howitt MEP, Vice Chairman of the European Parliament Committee on Human Rights and Rapporteur on CSR, declared: "Anyone in the development community who speaks against the treaty is 'mad'. Anything that makes the EU a stronger global player is good for development."

Currently, Africa is divided: the north depends on the Directorate General for External Relations and the rest on the Directorate General for Development, commented **Mahamat Saleh Annadif**, Permanent Representative of the African Union to the EU. “We want to have a deal with Africa as a single entity. Perhaps the new High Representative will bring a certain coherence. We are hoping for a harmonisation of policy to deal with Africa as a single country.”

The fact that the European Commission wants to “coordinate” is interesting, **Jacques Obia**, Ambassador of Congo to the EU, told participants. “We are still asking questions. Diplomats are to take up development aid, but we are also diplomats. Europe may break solidarity [with ACP countries] because its diplomacy and policies to take care of development aid could be subject to lobbyists,” he said. Obia called for the European Commission to work more closely together with regional organisations in the field.

Improving the institutional architecture

The Lisbon Treaty is the result of six years of talking about institutional architecture. Participants generally agreed there was a great deal of room for improving the architecture of institutional interaction at EU level, but some questioned whether the High Representative/Commission Vice-President would overshadow a European Commissioner for Development and sideline development policy.

“The treaty gives the High Representative the authority to lead and manage the coordination of external policies, which has the potential to bring together the development policy agenda with other policy issues that are fundamental to success,” said **Patrick Child**, Head of Cabinet of the EU Commissioner for External Relations, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. “The fears of a takeover are exaggerated. More effective machinery for Brussels in the world is positive – we should seize the opportunity and go for it.”



“The treaty gives the High Representative the authority to lead and manage the coordination of external policies, which has the potential to bring together the development policy agenda with other policy issues that are fundamental to success.”

Patrick Child

Head of Cabinet of the EU Commissioner for External Relations
Benita Ferrero-Waldner

He reiterated that there is no hierarchy of policies established in the Lisbon Treaty. In addition, there is clearer separation between crisis instruments and the long-term, dependable and partnership-driven development strategies. “This is a welcome trend and I hope it continues,” Child said.

The treaty is an important opportunity to deliver a single development policy to all countries, commented **Simon Stocker**, Director of Eurostep, the Network of Autonomous European Development NGOs. Institutionally, it is critical that a Commissioner for Development has a strong voice in the college. “If you don’t have that, [development will be] filtered by other interests of the Commission. The role in relation to the European Council is also important,” he added, noting that the European Parliament needs to play a stronger role in the process. Stocker called for political will and institutional clarity, and pointed out that citizens perceive the EU as pursuing its own interests in issues such as migration and security.



“Does beefing up foreign and security policy have risks for development? Of course it does. We are debating the future of the Lisbon Treaty, yet there is no consolidated text.”

Simon Stocker

Director of Eurostep, the Network of Autonomous European
Development NGOs

“Whether that is true or not, it leads to a lack of transparency and raises questions about what development policy is actually doing,” he said. “Does beefing up foreign and security policy have risks for development? Of course it does. We are debating the future of the Lisbon Treaty, yet there is no consolidated text. This raises more questions about the transparency of the process. Equally crucial is democratic accountability.”

A question of political will

The new treaty involves “big questions of political will” and the priority is getting it ratified and implemented on time, Child added. “This is one of the reasons the Commission has not been forthcoming or active in thinking about precise questions concerning the current institutional set-up.” However, he admitted, “there is a need for greater coherence and burden-sharing between different EU actors”.

The problem is not the text of the Lisbon Treaty, but the political will to implement it, commented **Dieter Frisch**, Co-founder and Member of the Advisory Council of Transparency International. The treaty is “a step in the right direction”, but the choice of the High Representative is absolutely crucial. “That person must have a heart for development issues, but must also be a pure diplomat. If development comes out of isolation and on an equal footing with other dimensions of foreign relations, it would be positive,” he said. “But if it is eaten up, it would be a disaster.”

Fears that money will dissolve away from development to other external actions are unfounded, said Richard Howitt MEP. “People in Brussels are obsessed about the treaty, but it will only help deliver the goal if there is political will to get there. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, refugee policies and other issues are causing a shift away from the issue of poverty,” he added.

The text of the Lisbon Treaty is not the issue; the issue is implementation of development aid, emphasised **Paul Amuna**, Senior Lecturer and Consultant in International Nutrition & Public Health at the University of Greenwich, United Kingdom. He pointed out that people in the developing world do not have a clue as to what is going on in Brussels. “We say the emphasis of development policy is on poverty reduction, but I see development aid as a long-term investment that borders on many things, including issues such as migration,” he said. However, Amuna warned, “if we do not take into account the interests of developing countries we are wasting our time”.

FRIEDRICH-EBERT-STIFTUNG

To sum up the international activities of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), the political foundation committed to social democracy in Germany, you can do no better than to quote Willy Brandt, Nobel prize winner and former German chancellor: “Development policy represents peace policy in the 21st century”. He said this as early as 1980. Peace, democracy and development in social justice: these are the values supported by the FES in its international work. Promoting these issues is one of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung’s most important objectives in development cooperation.

The FES is represented in more than 90 countries worldwide. In Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America its staff are engaged in projects in the fields of socio-political development and economic and social promotion. Project partners come from politics, business, associations, trade unions, academia, as well as from the communications sector and cultural institutions.

The FES sees its activities in the developing countries as a contribution to:

- promoting peace and understanding between peoples and in partner countries;
- supporting the democratisation of the State and society, and strengthening civil society;
- improving general political, economic and social conditions;
- reinforcing free trade unions;
- developing independent media structures;
- facilitating regional and worldwide cooperation between states and different interest groups; and
- gaining recognition for human rights.

The FES has been represented in Brussels since 1973. Working together with the EU institutions, European and international trade unions, think tanks, diplomatic missions, NGOs and interest groups, the EU Office in Brussels is an important element in the international work of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and its representations worldwide.

At present, the activities of the EU Office in Brussels pursue the following objectives:

- Informing the public about the structures and decision-making processes of the European Union;
- Promoting political dialogue between decision-makers at regional, national and international level and their partners at the European level; and
- Providing an opportunity for exerting influence on the European integration process, social policies and the EU’s development and external policies.

The EU Office organises information seminars, conferences, expert meetings and study visits for selected decision-makers and information multipliers from Germany and other partner countries coming from areas such as politics, trade unions, the media, sciences and NGOs.

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ARE EUROPEAN NGOs RIGHT TO BE CONCERNED OVER KEY ASPECTS OF THE LISBON TREATY?

“Anyone in the development community who speaks against the treaty is ‘mad’, because anything that makes the EU a stronger global player is good for development,” declared Richard Howitt MEP in the first session of the debate. Not everyone agrees with him. Some of Europe’s leading NGOs have been quick to query the implications of the Lisbon Treaty because the text betrays the EU’s longstanding principles of partnership in development cooperation.

In addition, some NGOs are alarmed by the possibility that after 2014, when today’s EU Commissioners will be reduced from 27 to 18, there will no longer be a Development Commissioner.

The second session debate picked up themes from the previous session, with participants viewing the potential of the Lisbon Treaty in a positive light, but also voicing concerns that a security-driven High Representative office would focus on foreign policy rather than on development cooperation and partnership.

Towards consistency and coherence

Several participants pointed to the inextricable linkages between development and foreign policy, security concerns and environmental issues, particularly climate change policy. In this maze of interdependencies and interrelationships, the challenge is how to act with consistency and coherence.

Dirk Messner, Director of the German Development Institute (DIE), commented that organising such complex relationships would inevitably involve trade-offs. The Lisbon Treaty will not weaken development policy because it defines

development as an important component of European foreign affairs. However, a strong Development Commissioner is key. “We need a face and voice for development when we are discussing foreign relations,” he said. “Development administration could be part of the European External Action Service (EEAS) or could have its own administrative structure; both options would mean trade-offs. But there is no optimal institutional solution to handle tension between development policies and other instruments. The major challenge is to build institutional and conceptual bridges between different foreign-oriented policies (development, trade, security and climate change).”



“We need a face and a voice for development when we are discussing foreign relations.”

Dirk Messner

Director of the German Development Institute (DIE)

If European development cooperation does not come up with a consistent and coherent way to coordinate the various development actors, including member states, it will lose ground. “We will have to become better. Foreign relations will become more effective if development cooperation does a better job,” Messner said.

Clearly, there must be policy coherence for development, commented **Jean De Ruyt**, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the EU. But this cannot happen without consistency and efficiency in all of the EU’s external actions. “There is a strong link between security and development in many developing countries,” he pointed out. “The Lisbon Treaty will bring changes, but we must think about the purpose. The objective is to be more efficient and let the EU speak with one voice. There will no longer be a rotating Presidency presenting the position of the Union. There will be a more permanent voice.” De Ruyt dismissed the idea of

abolishing the position of Development Commissioner after 2014 because of the EU's strong global commitment to development aid.



“The Lisbon Treaty will bring changes, but we must think about the purpose. The objective is to be more efficient and let the EU speak with one voice.”

Jean De Ruyt

Permanent Representative of Belgium to the EU

Development cannot be separated from other policies, noted **Klaus Rudischhauser**, Director for ACP General Affairs at the European Commission Directorate General for Development and Relations with ACP States. To this end, the Lisbon Treaty is not a danger to development policy. Development policy is increasingly integrated with other policies. How best should fragile states be addressed, for example? “The discussion has to be about security and development,” he said. “We are still keeping the Millennium Development Goals at the centre of development policy. We still have this focus, but we are implementing it in a different way.”

Rudischhauser agreed that partnership “may not be mentioned prominently in the treaty”. But he reminded participants that partnership is at the heart of the Joint EU–Africa Strategy, a strategic partnership for security and development

“The implementation of the Joint EU–Africa Strategy will very much depend on the involvement of civil society and NGOs.”

Klaus Rudischhauser

European Commission Director for ACP General Affairs



between the European Union and Africa. Among other things, the strategy reaffirms the commitment to increase EU aid to Africa and to improve aid effectiveness.

Jonathan Addleton, Counsellor for International Development and USAID Representative to the EU at the Mission of the United States of America to the EU, observed: “We are having similar discussions in the US. There is no perfect structure or architecture when it comes to decentralisation and policy coherence. The interplay of tension between policy coherence and pragmatic implementation is most important.”

New member states, such as Slovenia, are much less present in development cooperation, but reforms under the Lisbon Treaty will give them an opportunity to participating in shaping EU policy, commented **Marija Adanja**, Head of International Development Cooperation at the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She noted that a coordinated European framework within which member states could participate is a step forward. “Transaction costs are one of the main reasons why Slovenia with its small sums is not more active in Africa,” she said. “We believe that with our expertise we could move beyond working in the Balkans to other developing countries.”

Bernard Ryelandt, Vice President of Caritas International, warned that development cooperation policy should not be subordinated or “instrumentalised”, and must take into account external policies. There is also a need for coherence between development and trade policy.

Where do NGOs fit in?

Moderator **Giles Merritt**, Secretary General of *Friends of Europe*, asked what mechanisms have been put in place for consultation as we push forward with refining development aid under the Lisbon Treaty. “What has really put development policy on the map in Brussels has been the speed with which NGOs

from across Europe and around the world have established listening posts and are lobbying,” he said. “How do we bring them into what is essentially an intergovernmental process?”

Director for ACP General Affairs Klaus Rudischhauser noted that the European Commission has increasingly strong links with NGOs, which are set to continue. “We are convinced it is the right thing to do,” he said. “The implementation of the Joint EU–Africa Strategy will very much depend on the involvement of civil society and NGOs.”

Luis Morago, Head of the Oxfam International Advocacy Office in Brussels, called for moving beyond discussions on text and policies to the political processes and actors. He pointed to the failure of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to deliver and urged the participants to consider the constituencies and alliances out there. “Look at what we can do to use the Lisbon Treaty as an opportunity to make improvements. For example, will the institutional architecture around the treaty respond? Oxfam is now moving into that thorny arena,” he said.



“We look at what we can do to use the Lisbon Treaty as an opportunity to make improvements.”

Luis Morago

Head of the Oxfam International Advocacy Office in Brussels

Civil society and NGOs are not concerned about the text and the principles of the Lisbon Treaty, rather they are concerned about the reforms that will be implemented following its ratification. “How will things be changed in comparison to foreign and security policy agendas? When will the reforms take place? Where is the political leadership – with the Council, the European

Parliament or the European Commission for Development?” asked **Olivier Consolo**, Director of the European NGOs Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD). “Political leadership should come before institutional reform.” Consolo called for “democratic vigilance” so that a new space for dialogue can be opened with all of the stakeholders.



“Political leadership should come before institutional reform.”

Olivier Consolo

Director of the European NGOs Confederation for Relief and Development (CONCORD)

AWEPA (Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa) is a successful example of an NGO working well with governments, explained **Egidijus Vareikis**, Member of Lithuania’s National Parliament. Vareikis is also Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee of AWEPA, an international NGO that supports parliaments in Africa and works to keep Africa high on the political agenda in Europe. Its members comprise some 1,500 current and former parliamentarians from the European Parliament and almost all EU member states, as well as Norway and Switzerland.

Vareikis warned that even if all countries bump up their development aid to 0.7% of GDP, the problems would not be solved. “In the developing world, values and ideas are more important than money,” he said.

The way forward

Moderator Giles Merritt noted that the Lisbon Treaty could serve as a launch pad for European public opinion for development aid. Public opinion is what moves finance ministries, he said. “Only five European countries are meeting the target

of 0.7% of GDP for development aid. We are not far ahead when it comes to our commitment. The problems are growing faster than the solutions and the sheer scale of the challenges ahead means that we are not standing still but falling back.”

We must not lose focus of the real objective of development aid, which is poverty reduction, argued **Stefan Weidinger**, Head of Division of EU Development Policy Coordination at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Poverty reduction has somehow degenerated to mere lip service. Are we looking behind the scenes and measuring it? Do we do enough to identify the poor? They don’t run around with tags that say they are living on less than US\$2 per day. If we cannot identify the poor, then we must ensure the trickle-down process reaches them.”



“Poverty reduction has somehow degenerated to mere lip service. Are we looking behind the scenes and measuring it? Do we do enough to identify the poor?”

Stefan Weidinger

Head of Division, EU Development Policy Coordination, Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In making a plea for Europe to build bridges between communities and transfer its positive pluralism to humanity as a whole, **Hany El Banna**, Founder and President of Islamic Relief Worldwide and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Humanitarian Forum, called for a deeper partnership with NGOs. “When we talk about a trickle-down effect for development aid, we should look to NGOs,” he said. “Instead of implementing in the field, we should be empowering and funding local NGOs and become a middleman to build real civil society movements in developing countries.”

Concerning the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, El Banna stressed the

importance of a Commissioner for Development and the risk of combining foreign affairs and security in one position, which would lead to the EU becoming ‘security-driven’, and may also sideline commitments on development and cooperation. He also called for a Europe that is driven by shared moral values and constructive cultural dialogue. El Banna asked participants to consider what Europe will look like in the future. To this end, a Commissioner for Faith and Values of Europe should be considered to represent the EU’s multi-faith, diverse social fabric, and enhance the ability of different groups to learn and benefit from each other.

“When we talk about a trickle-down effect for development aid, we should look to NGOs. Instead of implementing in the field, we should be empowering and funding local NGOs.”

Hany El Banna
Founder and President of Islamic Relief Worldwide



Increasingly, businesses are becoming major partners in development, noted **Ruth Rawling**, Vice President of Public Affairs Europe and Africa at Cargill. As a major global player in the food and agricultural sector, Cargill is involved in training thousands of farmers. “Where does business fit into this picture? Business is a major partner in economic development if we want to work towards the eradication of poverty,” she said.

Rawling will likely find an answer to her question at the next Development Policy Forum roundtable debate, which will focus on the role of business. “How best can business contribute to Europe’s aid efforts?” will be held on 3 April 2008.

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