

Press Release – 10 January 2012

Report: 'EEAS one year on: Work in progress for poverty eradication'

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EEAS marginalises anti-poverty objectives in EU foreign policy

(Brussels 10/01/2012) The European Union is marginalizing anti-poverty objectives within its new foreign policy arm, the External Action Service (EEAS), outlines a new report by CONCORD, the European confederation of Relief and Development NGOs today.

The report comes amid a storm of criticism from 12 European Member States last week on the EEAS' first year performance.

“EU foreign policy is turning a blind eye to poverty eradication as the new EEAS fails to integrate development policy in the new service. In regions such as the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, anti-terrorism and security operations have been prioritised with little consideration to long term development efforts. Catherine Ashton and her colleagues need to realize that while poverty remains, conflict and instability will always find fertile ground. We're also concerned that development policy risks being instrumentalised for self-interest policies.

One year on, there is still no clarity on how the European Commission and the EEAS will coordinate €11billion in development programming. Our report shows that competition rather than co-operation prevails between the two institutions,” said **Klavdija Cernilogar**, CONCORD, Head of Policy.

Failing to meet legal responsibility

The European Union has a legal responsibility to ensure its policies in areas such as agriculture, trade, energy and tax don't have a negative impact on development objectives [2]. But the report finds that the EEAS has done little to prioritise Policy Coherence for Development in its programmes.

“With the EEAS, the EU has staff on the ground who can measure the damage being done by its policies first hand. But they're not doing this.

By ignoring this 'policy coherence for development' problem, the EU is effectively ignoring its responsibilities on global poverty eradication,” said **Laura Sullivan**, ActionAid's Head of European Policy and Campaigns.

5 ways for the External Action Service to improve

Narrative on EU development cooperation: The EEAS should develop a narrative on EU development cooperation and its interaction with security and human rights policies. Under its watch, no further erosion of the civilian character of development cooperation through military or quasi-military spending should take place.

Clarify roles on programming: In the interest of transparency and accountability, the EEAS and DEVCO should complete and publicise the Memorandum of Understanding on how they will divide tasks and responsibilities for development.

Make PCD a reality: The High Representative should acknowledge her role in making Policy Coherence for Development a reality through the EEAS, particularly its delegations. She should make a statement

setting PCD as a clear priority for the service, explaining clearly to staff their role in relation to PCD when developing regional and national strategy papers.

Sharpen development expertise: Expertise on development policy and practice must be present at all levels in the institutions, including the EEAS. The EEAS and the European Commission's Development and Cooperation Directorate General (DEVCO) should develop a training programme for all new EEAS staff to ensure their ability to understand and apply a rights based approach to development issues, including PCD.

Work with civil society in country: At the delegation level, both the EEAS and DEVCO should work more actively to engage in political and policy dialogue with stakeholders including CSOs and NGOs, who know the context of human rights and poverty on the ground and can help to shape strategies to tackle it.

ENDS

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Notes to Editors:

1. CONCORD is the European NGO confederation for relief and development. CONCORDs 26 national associations and 18 international networks represent over 1,600 NGOs which are supported by millions of citizens across Europe. CONCORD leads reflection and political actions and regularly engages in dialogue with the European institutions and other civil society organisations. www.concordeurope.org
2. What is Policy Coherence for Development?
Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) is a Lisbon Treaty provision: It is about ensuring that the aims and objectives of EU development co-operation policy are not undermined by other EU policies, such as those on climate, trade, energy, agriculture, migration, and finance matters.
Read more on PCD in our report and website: <http://coherence.concordeurope.org>