

NOTE DE TRANSMISSION

du: Secrétariat
à: la Convention

Objet: Texte transmis par M. Dick Roche, membre de la Convention:
- "Document exposant la position commune sur la coopération au développement dans le nouveau traité de l'Union européenne"

Le Secrétaire général de la Convention a reçu de M. Dick Roche, membre de la Convention, le document figurant en annexe sur lequel il souhaite attirer l'attention de la Convention. Ce document intitulé "Document exposant la position commune sur la coopération au développement dans le nouveau traité de l'Union européenne" a été signé par les ministres du développement de l'Allemagne, de l'Autriche, de la Belgique, de l'Irlande, des Pays-Bas, de la Suède et du Royaume-Uni.

12 May 2003

Sir John Kerr
Secretary-General
European Convention
Brussels

Dear Sir John

Further to the contribution by Mr Peter Hain, Government Representative of the United Kingdom, I am also pleased to submit the Joint Position Paper on Development Cooperation for the draft Constitutional Treaty which has been signed by the Development Ministers of Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The Paper points out the Union's potential to be a strong force in global development. It stresses the unique opportunity which the Convention offers the Union to realise this potential and to reaffirm its solidarity with the developing world. The Paper also sets out a number of basic principles in the area of development cooperation which should inform a future Constitutional Treaty for the European Union.

I strongly support the views set out in the Joint Position paper and would urge other members of the Convention to take them into account. It seems to me an excellent basis on which to guide the Convention's work in framing the Articles on development cooperation in the Constitutional Treaty.

Yours sincerely

Dick Roche TD, Minister for Europe
Convention Representative of the Government of Ireland

Joint position paper on Development Co-operation in the new Treaty for the European Union

Signed by the Development Ministers of Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom

The European Union is a major player in the development sphere. It is the source of more than half of the public aid efforts worldwide and is the main trading partner for many developing countries. It also has long-term relations and close political and historic ties with many developing countries. Bringing these features together, the Union has a tremendous potential for being a strong force for global development.

The discussion on a new Constitutional Treaty for the European Union is an opportunity to realise this potential. By clarifying and making more effective the Union's approach to international development, Europe could make a significant contribution towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and reducing poverty across the globe. Effective development programmes could further galvanise an enlarged EU behind considerable resources and broad consensus for progressive pro-poor policies.

The discussion on a new Constitutional Treaty is also an opportunity to reaffirm Europe's solidarity with the developing world. The Union is committed to promote stability, prosperity, democracy and liberty, human dignity and sustainable development for its peoples. As the European Union grows larger it should increasingly seek to promote these values also in its relations with the wider world, and in particular with the South, within a framework of partnership and mutual respect.

International development cooperation is a vital and distinct element of the Union's external relations. It contributes both to the Union's internal and external goals and is a clear expression of Europe's wish to advance its values and foster peace and prosperity in the wider world. The principal aim of the Union's development efforts should be to eradicate world poverty, in line with international consensus on the future of international cooperation for development that has emerged from a series of UN conferences during the last decade. As stated by the Council of the EU following the World Summit for Sustainable Development, the Union should also "ensure coherence between the internal and external policies, including its development assistance programmes, in order to achieve this goal." The EC Development Policy Declaration of November 2000 provides a useful framework for realising these ambitions.

These basic principles should be clearly reflected in a future Constitutional Treaty for the European Union. It is essential that the Convention give more attention to these important issues in their forthcoming deliberations. We therefore urgently appeal to the Members of the Convention to ensure that a firm place is secured for development policy in the future Treaty and structures of the Union. We propose in particular:

1. That the broad values and objectives of the Union expressed in the Constitutional part of the Treaty should reflect and reiterate the Union's commitment to (i) sustainable environmental,

economic and social development, (ii) human rights, the rule of law, democracy and good governance, (iii) peace and stability and (iv) the eradication of poverty, both in the Union and globally.

2. That the aims and principles of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance should be covered by separate chapters in the Treaty. Humanitarian Assistance should be carried out on an impartial basis and geared to responding to humanitarian needs resulting from natural or man-made disasters.
3. That the Union shall take account of the objectives of its development policy, referred to in the Treaty chapter on development cooperation, in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries.
4. That the Union's development policy is firmly based on the objective of eradicating poverty, a policy which concerns all developing countries and all EC development programmes.
5. That development co-operation and humanitarian assistance should retain the principle of the existing 'complementary competence' between the Union and Member States, whereby both parties can independently pursue their actions in parallel but working towards a common policy framework and common objectives, and increased coordination and consistency.

Capturing all the above in the framework of a Constitutional Treaty would go some way towards achieving the Union's external objectives and also making it a key player in the sphere of development.

In parallel to the work on the future Treaty, efforts must also be made to continue to reform the overall management of EC aid so that it becomes as effective as many other multilateral and bilateral aid efforts. To this effect, it must improve both its effectiveness and its focus on poverty reduction to justify the scale of its effort. Reforms should include: creating the adequate independent institutional and political space for development cooperation in any future reforms of the European institutions; adopting objective development criteria for allocating resources; a more targeted strategy for supporting middle income countries; and simplification in budgetary arrangements for external programmes with the adoption of a clearer legal and financial framework for development programmes in Cat. IV of the EC budget, and with greater autonomy for the Commission in managing the programmes to achieve those objectives.

Signed by,

Benita Ferrero-Waldner
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Austria

Eddy Boutmans
State Secretary for Development Cooperation
Belgium

Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul
Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development
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Tom Kitt T.D.
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Agnes Van Ardenne
Minister for Development Cooperation
The Netherlands

Jan-Ove Karlsson
Minister for International Development Cooperation, Migration and Asylum Policy
Sweden

Clare Short
Secretary of State for International Development
United Kingdom

1 May 2003
