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Subject : Contribution of the General Affairs and External Relations Council to the Spring European Council (19 and 20 March 2009): "Taking into account the development dimension for a comprehensive post-2012 Climate Change Agreement in Copenhagen"
- Council Conclusions

At its meeting on 16 March 2009, the Council (GAERC) adopted the Conclusions set out in the Annex to this note.

**Contribution of the General Affairs and External Relations Council
to the Spring European Council (19 and 20 March 2009): "Taking into account the
development dimension for a comprehensive post-2012 Climate change agreement in
Copenhagen"
- Council Conclusions**

Key messages to the European Council

1. Climate change is seriously undermining efforts to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty and is becoming a major threat to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by reversing progress made in the last decade. It may also have a considerable impact on security issues.
2. With a view to reaching an ambitious and comprehensive post-2012 climate change agreement in Copenhagen in December 2009, the Council stresses the importance of properly addressing development issues in the ongoing negotiating process, and of ensuring a Development presence at the appropriate level in the different stages of this process and in Copenhagen.
3. Recalling the right of all countries to development, the Council underlines that both mitigation and adaptation to climate change are integral parts of sustainable development. Policies to address climate change mitigation and adaptation will only be fully effective if they are integrated into national sustainable development strategies, including those for poverty reduction where they exist.
4. Ongoing and potential responses to tackle climate change have major implications on financing for development and will incur substantial additional costs on all countries. Additional resource mobilization, including from the private sector, will be required particularly for developing countries, in order to support appropriate national adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions.

General aspects

5. The Council recalls the developing countries' primary responsibility for their development and the importance of national ownership. Mitigation and adaptation actions should be properly integrated into national development strategies, which should address issues of inclusive growth, transparent and effective democratic governance and poverty reduction, including the reduction of inequalities, in particular gender, as well as environment issues. Financial and technical support to help designing these strategies should be provided, particularly to the least developed countries (LDCs).
6. The Council underlines the need for participation by all governments and other stakeholders at various levels, including local communities, both women and men, in order to reach an ambitious agreement in Copenhagen, which should pay particular attention to the most vulnerable groups, especially women and children.
7. The Council recognises that a wide range of financial sources will be needed to provide adequate, predictable and sustainable flows of finance and leverage private investments. The EU is prepared to take its fair share of this financing, in the framework of a global and comprehensive Copenhagen agreement and an appropriate burden sharing between the EU, other developed countries and the most advanced developing countries.
8. The current financial architecture needs to be reviewed and, where necessary, reformed in order to meet the challenge. The Council emphasizes that existing channels for aid delivery should be efficiently used and, if needed, strengthened, before creating new mechanisms. The principles of effectiveness, efficiency, equity, transparency, accountability, coherence, predictability and sound financing management should apply.

Adaptation

9. Adaptation to climate change is a global challenge and of particular importance for the poorest and most vulnerable developing countries, particularly in light of the forecasts for the substantial associated costs. The Council therefore underlines the EU's willingness to provide support to developing countries, particularly LDCs, small island developing states (SIDS) and African countries at risk of floods, drought and desertification, in their ongoing adaptation efforts, in particular through long term, cross-sectoral and participatory local level approaches.
10. Effective adaptation policies should aim at building resilience and ensuring capacity to respond to urgent and immediate needs, as well as move towards a long-term strategic approach. In this respect, the Council recalls its proposal for a Framework for Action on Adaptation (FAA).

Mitigation

11. The Council notes that, along with substantial reduction commitments from developed countries collectively¹, recent analysis indicates that consistency with the 2°C objective will require developing countries as a group, particularly the most advanced ones, to achieve a substantial and quantifiable limitation of their emissions growth rate, in the order of 15-30% below business as usual by 2020, respecting the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.
12. Low-carbon development strategies should be encouraged in all developing countries, as they can increase the potential for sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The Council calls on these countries, in particular the most advanced ones, to propose ambitious low-carbon strategies and plans, or meaningful actions that will form part of them, distinguishing between actions that can be taken autonomously and those requiring international support. For the LDCs and SIDS, the preparation of these strategies and plans should be supported financially and technically. Priority should be given to low cost abatement strategies and actions intended to develop synergies between adaptation and mitigation, such as sustainable forest management.

¹ Conclusions on Climate Change - Contribution to the Spring European Council (19-20 March 2009): Further development of the EU position on a comprehensive post-2012 climate agreement (doc. 7128/09, paragraph 9).

Financial support, capacity building and technology cooperation

13. Developed countries' enhanced support to capacity building, in particular for LDCs and SIDS, will be crucial to achieve their adaptation and mitigation objectives, including in the period preceding the entry into force of the post-2012 climate change agreement. Cooperation on technological innovation will also be critical. In this respect, mitigation and adaptation efforts must be supported by significantly enhanced collaboration on technology research, development, deployment and diffusion. The EU is ready to enhance its work with developing countries in this respect and explore how joint research efforts could be taken forward.
14. Support for developing countries should be delivered in accordance with the principles of aid effectiveness¹. In this regard, the delivery of climate finance should be based on common strategies, shared values and mutual accountability and should avoid creating parallel and additional systems of delivery.
15. Underlining the important contribution of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Adaptation Fund and EU development assistance, including bilateral actions and the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), as well as the contribution of other multilateral development programmes and funds, notably those of the UN and the World Bank, such as the Climate Investment Funds, and other bilateral action, the Council stresses the need to coordinate funding initiatives, promote sharing of best practices and capitalise on experience gained in this respect.
16. Support to appropriate national adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions in developing countries, as well as support to capacity building and technology, will require additional resource mobilization from a wide range of financial sources (public and private, domestic and international), potentially including innovative forms of financing. In this context, the Council highlights the relevance of the experience of the OECD/DAC on ODA reporting.

¹ Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action.