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**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

Communiqué of the 2023 DAC High Level Meeting

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COMMUNIQUÉ

14-15 November 2023

1. We, the Members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), met at high level on 14 and 15 November 2023. Present at the meeting were also OECD non-DAC Members, DAC Participants, OECD Accession Countries, OECD Key Partners and non-governmental partners.
2. Today, development co-operation operates in an environment of geopolitical tensions and unprecedented global challenges, from climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss, increasing food and water insecurity; to the pushback against whole of society inclusion and gender equality; the long-term effects of COVID-19; the negative impacts of conflict and fragile situations on the achievement of the SDGs; and the combined wider effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, in particular on low- and middle-income countries, and especially in Africa. After decades of progress on human and social development and poverty reduction, achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is in peril, as is achieving the Paris Agreement objectives. We are now at a critical juncture, charged with delivering on our promises and bolstering global solidarity that meets increasing humanitarian needs and supports resilience, and sustainable and equitable development.
3. The UN SDG Summit reaffirmed the world's commitment to fully implement the 2030 Agenda. We will increase our efforts to accelerate development progress across the SDGs and help shape a post-2030 agenda based on our fundamental core values of democracy, rule of law, peace, human rights, gender equality, freedom and leaving no one behind. We will reinforce our efforts to strengthen international co-operation and partnerships and renew our commitments to co-ordinated action in our interconnected world. We will direct our development co-operation efforts effectively towards responsible and socially just sustainable and equitable growth, and driving digital, green and social transitions.
4. We reiterate our resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We recommit our strong support for Ukraine. In our efforts to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, we will use DAC evidence, best practices and standards. Ensuring strong co-ordination and the implementation of the OECD instrument on anti-corruption will promote Ukraine's good governance that will add to the quality and impact of the reconstruction effort.
5. We recognise that ownership by partner countries is the basis of our development co-operation. No country should have to choose between reducing poverty and inequalities, long-term sustainable development and net zero transitions. We commit to taking comprehensive measures to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality, and to tackle climate change, protect biodiversity and address pollution. We also restate our conviction that development co-operation must strive to support positive transformation, add value in strategic sectors, contribute to regional and global public goods, and apply good practices and innovation.
6. The global context is evolving and so must the DAC. We will find common ground for co-operation with other providers, further strengthening engagement and mutual learning to increase our impact and

effectiveness on the basis of internationally endorsed development effectiveness principles, and the highest standards of transparency and mutual accountability in development co-operation globally. Building on our existing mandate and contributions to international development policy, and acknowledging the concerns of our partners, the DAC will present in 2024 a revised strategy, framed in a renewed narrative, that ensures we adapt and modernize our ambitions and instruments to this evolving context.

7. We will work actively as individual members to contribute to successful outcomes of upcoming major international meetings, such as the 2023 United Nations' Climate Change Conference (COP28), the 2024 4th International UN Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCS), the 2024 Summit of the Future and the 2025 Fourth Financing for Development Conference.

Advancing DAC's partnerships and outreach

8. We will work to shape and co-create international development co-operation policies through open, strategic and inclusive dialogue and partnerships with partner country government, bilateral and multilateral official development co-operation providers, OECD Key Partners, civil society, the private sector, multilateral organisations, including development banks, development finance institutes, and other relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international level. We will continuously update, adapt and monitor DAC standards and recommendations based on evidence to foster such dialogue. At the same time, we continue to invite all providers of development co-operation to adhere more closely to international standards and practices that improve transparency and accountability in development co-operation globally.

9. Guided by the DAC Global Relations Strategic Directions, we will forge solid relationships for a more inclusive and globally oriented development co-operation policy community, inter alia, through triangular co-operation approaches, and building on the first DAC Global Providers meeting.

10. We welcome Lithuania and Estonia as new Members of the DAC. We will continue to seek and welcome new DAC Members and Associates for more and better development co-operation in line with the revised guidelines on enlargement and accession criteria.

11. To foster and facilitate sustainable and inclusive economic growth that reduces poverty and inequalities, we will, in dialogue with partners, work to:

- a. support the leadership, ownership and agency of countries and peoples
- b. align with the priorities and needs of partner countries and enhance their capacity to lead co-ordination for more effective and impactful development co-operation
- c. issue new guidance for action to reduce poverty and inequalities
- d. develop practical approaches, measurement and common guidelines on locally led development

- e. deepen our analysis and evidence of the impact of development co-operation and of its contribution to regional and global public goods.

12. We will step up dialogue with partners, notably African countries and institutions, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. We will continue to deepen our partnership with SIDS, supporting the work of the Alliance of Small Island States-DAC Taskforce. We will also consider how different evidence-based approaches to vulnerability in all its forms may be reflected in Members' policies, informed by many sources of information and evidence, including the final report of the UN High Level Panel on the development of a multi-dimensional vulnerability index (MVI).

13. We will engage with the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) and make use of its monitoring exercise to strengthen multi-stakeholder dialogues and mutual learning at the country level and adapt our policies, practices and partnerships based on the evidence it generates.

14. We will strengthen the transparency, comprehensiveness, quality, timeliness and analysis of development finance statistics and mobilised private finance in collaboration with other public providers of development co-operation, including through the International Forum on Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD) and open, inclusive and transparent discussions on Official Development Assistance (ODA).

15. We will continue to strengthen engagement with civil society organisations as well as efforts to protect civic space, guided by the DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Assistance. We commit to step up implementation of this recommendation and report on progress in 2026.

16. The work of DAC Peer Reviews, the subsidiary bodies and communities of practice is a valuable resource in shaping development thinking and practice, ensuring the transparency, relevance and inclusiveness of the work of the DAC. We invite development partners – including other providers of development co-operation, international organisations, private sector, foundations and civil society representatives – to engage in relevant discussions in these fora to improve the quality and impact of our work at all levels.

17. In line with the OECD Recommendation on policy coherence for sustainable development, we will seek OECD wide collaborative solutions to better address the transboundary, social and environmental effects of other relevant policies and finance. As a priority, we will strengthen promotion and application of OECD standards on Responsible Business Conduct in development co-operation.

18. In collaboration with other OECD bodies, we will step up efforts to embed international development perspectives across OECD policies and standards, support mutual learning using the OECD's multidisciplinary expertise and policy networks, and contribute to international processes such as the G20 and G7 on relevant issues for development such as equality, quality infrastructure investments, trade and global value chains. In particular, reinforcing linkages between development co-operation and trade is crucial to securing economic development. We note that to follow up on the Summit for a New Global Financing pact (NFP), the OECD will host the Secretariat of the 4P Joint Working Committee.

Mobilising and aligning financing for sustainable development

19. We reaffirm the critical contribution of ODA to developing countries most in need. In this regard, we reaffirm our respective ODA commitments, including the commitment by many to the UN targets of 0.7% ODA/GNI and 0.15-0.20% ODA/GNI for least developed countries. We further underscore the need for continued efforts to scale up high-quality and results-driven ODA.

20. To help meet partners' rising needs for sustainable finance, it is more urgent than ever to use official development finance strategically, including to mobilise additional resources and align investments with sustainable development goals. To achieve this goal, we will:

- a. deepen our co-operation with the private sector and other key partners to increase both resources for and development impact and effectiveness of the finance mobilised by guarantees and other blended finance instruments in both public and private markets.
- b. support partner countries' enabling environments, including for mobilisation of domestic resources and well administered, equitable and effective tax systems, and incentives for private investment.
- c. accelerate the upcoming review of the DAC Recommendation on Untying Official Development Assistance.
- d. work to maximise our impact by being effective donors to multilateral organisations and work together to deliver on further reform and more coherent bilateral and multilateral efforts for sustainable development outcomes in an increasingly fragmented international development co-operation system. We will develop guidance on more effective engagement with multilateral partners, led by and serving partner countries.
- e. embark on the transition to the new reporting methods for private sector instruments (PSI) adopted in October 2023. These new methods will contribute to increased transparency and may help to mobilise further private sector investments for development.
- f. Promote transparent and fair development finance in line with international rules and standards.

21. To help secure long-term sustainable development financing as countries' income levels evolve, we will strive to align and adapt development co-operation to national sustainable development strategies and promote concerted action on global public goods. We will anticipate countries' transition to other sources of domestic, and where available, external finance, and explore options together with partner countries to continue co-operation through other avenues.

22. We will deepen our co-operation with the multilateral, regional and national development finance institutions and banks, as well as with the private sector, and other key partners to increase the effectiveness, impact and transparency of concessional and non-concessional public and private finance for sustainable development, including by working through country level co-ordination mechanisms.

23. We acknowledge the need to improve the assessment of project risk in developing countries, building on additional disclosure of data and increasing the quality, relevance and faithful presentation of the information made available to credit ratings. Innovative arrangements, including through blended finance instruments, that are backed by entities with high credit ratings may help to mitigate the project risks. Based on further analysis and discussions in relevant DAC fora, we will engage with credit rating agencies.

24. The rise in public debt levels in many low- and middle-income countries is concerning. In a deteriorating global environment, partner country public resources to meet sustainable development needs are constrained with less room for manoeuvre when crises, including natural catastrophes, occur. We reiterate that borrower countries and official bilateral and private creditors need to work together to prevent and resolve unsustainable debt situations, and that the G20 Common Framework needs to be implemented in a predictable, timely, orderly and co-ordinated manner. We are exploring solutions to help alleviate debt burdens, and together with international finance institutions and private creditors, we are looking at opportunities to invest in resilience through, for example, debt-for-nature swaps which can be associated with buybacks, climate-resilience debt clauses or other instruments. We also call upon the international community to further enhance debt transparency through actions by all creditors and debtor countries. Our bilateral lending and involvement in multilateral lending decisions will support and continue to be informed by the IMF and World Bank's debt sustainability analyses, and dialogue with the Paris Club and other relevant fora.

Addressing critical global development opportunities and challenges

25. We will accelerate progress on all SDGs with a strong focus on overcoming growing constraints to whole-of-society inclusion and the gender equality pushback by hardwiring gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in all development, humanitarian, and climate programmes, and diplomacy efforts. We will strive to increase direct and targeted financing for gender equality in development co-operation, including for local women's rights organisations, ending sexual and gender-based violence, and gender-responsive social protection systems. With the new DAC Guidance on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls, as appropriate, we will enhance our work on transformative approaches to addressing root causes of gender inequalities and explore the development of a DAC Recommendation on gender equality.

26. We reaffirm our commitment to step-up the implementation of the DAC Recommendation on Ending Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH), ensuring development and humanitarian assistance 'does no harm', tracking SEAH funding to enable deeper analysis for improved accountability and ethical standards in tackling this form of sexual and gender-based violence. We will follow implementation in 2024 and beyond, contributing to monitoring, reporting, and new tools to support faster progress.

27. We are determined to: step up our support for the poorest and most vulnerable countries in their pursuits of climate-resilient pathways; increase support for and action on adaptation; support developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change in responding to loss

and damage; and promote the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, in particular through implementation of the Water Action Agenda adopted at the UN 2023 Water Conference. We recognise the particular impacts on Indigenous Peoples and their important role in building resilience to these impacts. We will continue to provide and mobilise finance to support a green and inclusive transition in developing countries, including transition to sustainable food systems, and maximise the benefits of development co-operation and climate finance by taking a holistic approach that recognises the link between climate and sustainable development, noting the importance of each country's just transition for workers and communities. Mindful of the particular importance of increasing adaptation finance, we will continue to pursue efforts to better balance finance for adaptation and mitigation as set out in the Paris Agreement.

28. We will deliver on and strengthen our implementation of the DAC 2021 Declaration on Climate and support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. We will publish a comprehensive report on the implementation of the declaration, including all statistics, in 2024.

29. We will enable effective development outcomes by addressing the enablers and impact of corruption in line with the OECD Recommendation for development co-operation actors on managing the risk of corruption. We will take action to counter the transnational nature and negative impact of money laundering, terror financing, and other forms of illicit financial flows.

30. Investing in an inclusive digital economy and society and in digital public infrastructure as a lever for sustainable development is key for global development co-operation. Investment needs to be done in ways that promote and strengthen democratic governance, media integrity, respect for human rights, gender equality and civic space online and offline. We will share practices and learn from all partners to ensure that our support of digital transformation fosters inclusive and sustainable development.

31. In fragile, conflict-affected and other contexts where democracy and the social contract are severely weakened, we commit to seek avenues for promoting real and positive change in line with our core standards and values. We will continuously adapt our engagements to take into account changing political conditions and to promote a coherent approach for more inclusive and comprehensive whole of society, locally led responses. We will improve synergies between diplomatic and development capabilities for more coherent responses.

32. In all contexts, it is important we build on the principle of conflict prevention and peace always, development wherever and whenever possible, and humanitarian assistance only when and as long as necessary. The Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus is the most important vehicle in this regard. We will take stock of progress in the implementation of the DAC HDP Nexus Recommendation in 2024.

33. We invite the Committee and the OECD Secretariat, under the Committee's guidance, to apply these policy directions throughout existing and new working methods and provide an update on progress at the next DAC High Level Meeting.