

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

Cancels & replaces the same document of 28 May 2013

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 48th HIGH LEVEL MEETING (HLM)

**held on 4 December (afternoon) and 5 December (morning) 2012
at Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, United Kingdom**

*Further to the written procedure launched on 17 April 2013, one name change has been received from a Delegation.
This document is now considered as APPROVED and issued as FINAL.*

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 48TH HIGH LEVEL MEETING

Item 1. Adoption of the Agenda [[DCD/DAC/A\(2012\)15/REV2](#)]

1. The agenda was adopted without comment.

Item 2. Launch of the 2012 Development Co-operation Report, “Lessons in linking sustainability and development” [[DCD/DAC\(2012\)38](#)]

2. The High Level Meeting opened with the launch of the *OECD Development Co-operation Report (DCR)*, which brought together the thinking of 18 global leaders, thinkers and pioneers in diverse policy areas and disciplines – public and private, international and national, OECD countries and developing countries (such as Brazil, China, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia) – to review progress made in advancing sustainable development, reflect on the challenges the world faces in this regard, and examine how the various policy communities support developing countries in achieving *The Future We Want* (title of the Rio+20 outcome document). A special panel moderated by the DAC Chair discussed successful examples of actions – undertaken by OECD countries, multilateral organizations, civil society and the private sector – to mitigate environmental degradation, natural resource scarcity and greenhouse gas emissions and to help the poor to adapt and become more resilient to climate change. Panel members included Ms. Charlotte Oades, Coca Cola’s Global Director of Women’s Economic Empowerment; Mr. Erik Solheim, DAC Chair-elect and former Norwegian Minister of Environment and Development; Mr. Andris Piebalgs, EU Development Commissioner, and Mr. Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary General. In the discussion that followed, Ms. Camilla Toulmin, Director of International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), challenged governments to step up the integration of efforts to tackle development and environment simultaneously.

Item 3. The post-2015 agenda: How can we contribute to the UN-led process? [[DCD/DAC\(2012\)47/REV1](#)]

3. Ms. Justine Greening, Secretary of State of the United Kingdom, and Members of the UN High Level Panel, Ms. Amina Mohammed, Assistant United Nations Secretary General and Special Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning and Mr. Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner for Development for the European Commission, briefed HLM participants on the state-of-play with ongoing work and international discussions focused on shaping the post-2015 agenda. It became clear that the agenda for post-2015 must continue not only to focus on central concerns of development (especially poverty reduction), but as well to look at other global challenges (inequality, broader notions of well-being, sustainability, climate change, fragility, resilience, and others) in an ambitious way. There was overall consensus that at this point in time the world has to agree on truly global goals (instead of seven goals for developing and one goal for developed countries e.g. just “another development framework”). Participants enumerated the challenges at stake – including priorities, no-go areas, hopes and fears for the process – without taking collective positions. Through the Communiqué, the DAC emphasized, in general terms, how the MDGs demonstrated the importance of having development goals, its support for the UN-led process, and the fundamental need for strong engagement and leadership from all partners in this endeavour.

4. In terms of substance, participants encouraged the DAC and the OECD to contribute their assets - relevant knowledge, tools and good practice - to the process as offered by the OECD Secretary General. These include evidence-based policy-making, quantitative as well as qualitative analysis, statistical capacity-building, knowledge-sharing/lesson-learning/peer exchange/peer pressure in such areas as women's empowerment, peacebuilding and statebuilding, inclusive green growth, taxation and domestic resource mobilisation, and tools for measuring progress in education, gender and environment which can be applied to developing countries. It was acknowledged that the DAC was instrumental in laying the basis for the initial development goals and remains a hub for evidence-based analysis and policy development which could help as countries determine their needs and as the UN-led process advances.

5. In terms of process, most speakers agreed that the goals ("the what") and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (e.g. the GPEDC or "the how") should come together: The GPEDC should serve as a platform for sharing knowledge and development solutions, and as a forum and sounding board for post-2015 debates and implementing goals (particularly by improving development effectiveness and by helping to overcome growing fragmentation and silo approaches). Wherever possible, progress should be made by "coalitions of the willing". At the same time, there are other fora to be aware of - especially regional partnerships, organisations and initiatives – in addition to the GPEDC.

6. Reaching agreement ahead of 2015 will be a challenge. A better understanding of the different points of view of the growing number of stakeholders will enhance the scope for a successful outcome. Concerns were raised about ending up with a Christmas tree (i.e. an excessive number of goal proposals from divergent stakeholder groups). Many stressed an urgent need to integrate the sustainability agenda with the MDGs - working for the people and the planet. Similarly, development needs and priorities vary among countries and this must be a guiding principle underpinning universal commitments and responsibilities by all countries (e.g. global and national goals and targets). Realistic and measurable targets are required for a results-oriented "goal" focus. There was no consensus on whether post-2015 goals should also deal with enabling policies or approaches that would be helpful for achieving them (some participants were in favour of including "enablers", while others were more hesitant or not supportive). Elements that were mentioned include the following: aid as a catalyst; (innovative) financing including taxation; human rights; human security; policy coherence for development efforts; and the provision of Global Public Goods and global policies.

Item 4. The Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation: Enhancing the future contribution to development by all stakeholders [[DCD/DAC\(2012\)35/REV2](#)]

7. Participants welcomed two of the co-chairs of the GPEDC, Minister Ms. Armida Alisjahbana of Indonesia and Secretary of State, Ms. Justine Greening of the United Kingdom. The creation of the GPEDC provides the development community with a platform for peer-to-peer dialogue and joint efforts to improve the way international support for development is organised and delivered in order to maximize its impact on the ground. The nature of the Partnership entails shared principles but also differentiated commitments. It provides a framework to promote learning, reform, and transparent and accountable co-operation. The Global Partnership is seen as a unique new space which needs to be nurtured and where developing countries can lead in achieving their own development goals with the support of different constituencies. The Partnership could also be the intellectual centre of the development co-operation community over the coming years: it is a space where the international community can discuss the "how" of the development agenda in a post-2015 framework.

8. The two co-Chairs of the Global Partnership shared their views on what a post-Busan paradigm for development co-operation means in practice. Minister Armida focused on developing country perspectives and priorities, highlighting the importance of the shared principles of ownership, transparency, results-orientation and accountability as the foundation of a true partnership. Ms Sigrid Kaag, representing UNDG and UNDP, emphasised that from the UN perspective, Busan outcomes can build a bridge to post-2015 and accelerate needed reforms. The UN is heavily committed to invest in capacity at global and country level to take the Busan agenda forward.

9. In turn, ministers, heads of agency and other senior officials shared their priorities and aspirations for the Global Partnership in terms of improving relationships and opportunities for more inclusive co-operation in years to come. Given its voluntary nature, the impact and credibility of the Global Partnership depends on sustained commitment by the DAC as one constituency among others (government, the private sector, civil society, parliamentary organisations and South-South co-operation partners).

10. The inclusive nature of the Global Partnership was emphasised throughout the discussions, to ensure that it provides a space for CSOs and emerging donors. All forms of co-operation – north-south, south-south and triangular – were highlighted as complementary development partnerships. Participants committed to promote all such forms of development co-operation. On triangular co-operation specifically, they identified the opportunity to build new partnerships that foster knowledge-sharing and effective development, keeping in mind the importance of changing behaviours. Joint risk management was highlighted as an area of further work in order to meet Busan commitments, especially in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Reference was made to collaboration with multilateral organisations in this regard.

11. Participants shared concrete examples of how the Busan agreement is being advanced with a focus on implementation at the country level, where the underlying principle is to implement context-sensitive solutions to specific challenges. All participants frankly acknowledged the lack of progress on some key areas of unfinished business and acknowledged that more needs to be done to meet some of the time-bound Busan commitments. DAC high-level representatives underlined the need to lead by example, noting that the DAC is uniquely placed to capitalise on its comparative advantage in delivering on Busan commitments.

12. Officials discussed what it would take for results to be achieved and identified where the challenge going forward is to convert theory into practice and to develop proper result frameworks. They agreed to address the barriers to reducing aid fragmentation and the proliferation of multilateral channels and instruments, as well as improving predictability. They also discussed areas of “unfinished business” such as the need to further untie aid and addressing the issue of under-aided countries. DAC Members encouraged further exploration around how the DAC could become a “hub” for work on transparency with a view to avoiding the creation of parallel initiatives in this area.

13. Members noted that inequality was an important determinant of wellbeing in developing countries. They urged all stakeholders to take the needs of populations into account in their decision-making and, in this vein, to continue working with middle-income countries.

14. Going forward, the DAC High-Level Meeting committed to maintain and strengthen political support for the Global Partnership and to convey these messages to the subsequent meeting of its Steering Committee. DAC ministers and heads of agency reaffirmed their willingness to promote accountability - and to be held accountable themselves – in the work of the Partnership. They committed to monitor behaviour on development finance in order to inform future actions in support of their respective commitments.

Item 6. New directions in DAC measurement and monitoring of external development finance
[[DCD/DAC\(2012\)48/REV2](#)]

15. HLM lead speakers, Minister Bach of Denmark, Ms. Godrun Kopp, Parliamentary State Secretary of Germany, and Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, Senior Advisor to the UN SG on Economic Development and Finance, kicked off the discussion by identifying a number of considerations that underscored the importance of assessing the scope and dynamics of the international development finance system at this time:

- The international development context had significantly changed over the past 20 years: new actors, goals and instruments had emerged, yet the reporting system was focused on official concessional flows -- and very little political recognition was given to flows other than ODA. There was a need to jointly create a new post-2015 reporting system consistent with breadth and scope of today's development finance system;
- There is no need to replace ODA with a totally different measure -- but the debate on measurement and monitoring of external development finance is timely as there is a need to report on international engagement in a broader manner, including by taking into account both qualitative and quantitative aspects of these resource flows;
- Private flows, whether philanthropic, investment-related or remittances, were increasingly important sources of finance – but they did not necessarily support achievement of the MDGs. New developments, such as innovative development finance (which had mobilised USD 5.5 billion for health and USD 2 billion for climate finance) and “impact investments” (which combined positive social impact with competitive financial returns) were promising innovations – but they often depended on official sector financing, which in any case remained very important for developing countries.
- ODA could be used in different ways and be delivered through different distribution channels and, in terms of reporting, it was necessary to look at the big picture – and acknowledge that reporting on gross ODA enhanced transparency.

16. In the debate that followed, several members supported the view that the system for measuring and monitoring development finance needed to reflect the changing nature of development co-operation and include all instruments and actors. In this regard, DAC should be encouraged to continue expanding its statistics to non-DAC providers of development co-operation and to develop the reporting system jointly with them.

17. Several members commented on innovative financing and the use of aid for catalysing private investment. Several examples of innovative financial initiatives were mentioned where a minimal amount of official resources had mobilised a significant volume of private investment for development, while others had multiplier effects (e.g. the IFC food security facility, various revolving funds, social entrepreneurship funds and pension funds). Because new market-based instruments could provide support complementary to ODA, it was important for the DAC to develop harmonised and more comprehensive data systems on aid and beyond. Post-2015 reporting on development finance should take these new instruments into account. Moreover, it would be important to link DAC work on measuring and monitoring development finance with UN processes (including Monterrey Consensus follow-up) and explore the scope for engaging the Global Partnership as a platform for discussing these issues.

18. Several participants expressed the view that aid needed to be used with caution and targeted on areas where it could be used strategically as a catalyst for other flows. It was emphasised that reporting on development finance post-2015 should have a poverty focus, but needed to provide incentives for instruments – such as guarantees – that had a major catalytic role. ODA was still the most important and stable source of financing for low-income countries and fragile states. One member further commented on domestic resource mobilisation, emphasising the importance of strengthening the capacity of tax authorities in developing countries and raising the question as to whether and how the impact of this new kind of aid, which avoided trillions of dollars leaving developing countries illicitly, could be measured in the post-2015 framework. Another linked this with the policy coherence for development agenda and raised a similar question regarding how to capture the impact of improved transparency of extractive industries.

19. Several members spoke about the need to revise the ODA concept to maintain credibility and ensure uniform application. The concessionality discussion had shown that a thorough revision of ODA was required and that donor effort and recipient benefit could not be combined in one concept. A number of other members stressed keeping ODA commitments until 2015 as donors would lose credibility if these were changed. There was a call for a cautious approach in order to prevent a dilution of the key contents and role of ODA. The DAC ODA accounting method has been an important point of reference, and ODA statistics should be supplemented and improved rather than replaced – and the possible side effects of new data series also need to be considered.

20. The Chair concluded the discussion by noting that HLM participants had clearly given the DAC a mandate to study the issues raised in the background paper [[DCD/DAC\(2012\)48/REV2](#)] and revisit the system for measuring and monitoring broader development finance. He thanked participants for providing directions for this work (see the HLM Communiqué).

Item 7. Finalisation of the Communiqué

21. In the light of discussions that took place on 4 December and a range of comments forwarded to the Secretariat, the draft HLM Communiqué was revised and circulated to meeting participants in the course of the plenary session on 5th December. Further amendments were proposed by a number of delegates regarding both the proposed revised text and also reflecting the sense of the discussion on external development finance. On request by the Chair, these changes were identified and enumerated by the Secretariat, and additional clarifications were sought and provided by selected participants. The draft Communiqué was subsequently endorsed by acclamation. Following the meeting it was circulated to all meeting participants before being made available to the public.

ANNEX

**SUMMARY OF THE HLM BREAKFAST DISCUSSION
ON THE CONCESSIONALITY OF ODA LOANS**

1. The Chair stated that the DAC faced a crisis over the interpretation of concessionality. It had become evident that DAC members report ODA loans on the basis of different interpretations of the requirement that they be “concessional in character”, and months of discussions had not resolved this. The issue went to the heart of the DAC’s function of providing comparable and credible ODA statistics.
2. The 1972 ODA grant element formula, which used a reference rate of 10%, was clearly insufficient as a test of concessionality. “Concessionality in character” was a complementary requirement to the grant element, and needed to be specified. Some members had proposed borrowers’ rates – what the borrowers could otherwise obtain commercially – as a complementary benchmark, but others wanted to continue the traditional focus on donor effort. The Chair stressed the need to find a consensus position.
3. On 1 November 2012, the Chair had proposed five criteria for a sound definition of “concessionality in character”, e.g. that it should be able to:
 - withstand critical public scrutiny
 - avoid large fluctuations in ODA levels
 - be generally consistent with multilateral agencies’ conceptions
 - maintain the definition of ODA, and
 - clearly state that ODA loans could not be offered on a for-profit basis.
4. No member had signalled disagreement with these criteria prior to the breakfast.
5. The Chair also recalled his suggestion, as an interim measure, to limit ODA loan reporting to loans with an interest rate below 75% of the Differentiated Discount Rates (the “DDR minus 25” option). He believed this was the best option available until the DAC could reach agreement on a longer-term solution.
6. The EU (Mr. Piebalgs) observed that private loans were largely unavailable in Africa, while grant ODA could not meet all development finance needs. The EIB thus filled a financing gap, and public money was involved, especially since the EU was “on the hook” if its loans were not repaid. If EIB loans were not classed as ODA, EU members’ support to the EIB would be affected. The debate over concessionality could continue, but equal treatment of all members was most important. In answer to a question from the Chair, Mr. Piebalgs stated that the EU was reporting in accordance with the Directives, but was ready to provide further information on EIB loans to enable scrutiny.
7. Against the background of the discussion, Finland urged the OECD to examine whether the EIB fulfilled the requirements of a modern development bank, in view of doubts raised by a recent report submitted to the European Parliament on the activities of the bank.

8. The Chair reiterated that the DAC needed a solution quickly and urged that DDR-25 be adopted as a clean benchmark that could serve until a potential broader re-examination could be undertaken for the period after 2015. If members did not reach a decision on how to handle the issue, the DAC could not give clear guidance to the Secretariat. It would then fall to the OECD as keeper and guardian of ODA statistics to handle this issue. The DAC Chair said that the OECD Secretary General had told him that his intention would be to avoid any change of practice. The Secretariat would thus continue to apply its current approach, to ask for evidence of a subsidy if loans made from market-raised funds were reported as concessional.

9. Several members supported the Chair's proposal for a DDR-25 benchmark. Denmark (Mr. Bach) described it as a good compromise. Ireland (Mr. Costello) supported it, emphasising that ODA loans should not be made for profit. The United States (Mr. Steinberg) supported it, observing that it would prefer an even more demanding test of concessionality. Austria (Mr. Linhart) supported it, but also wished to know how transparency would be implemented. Norway (Mr. Gadgil) supported it, although he considered it as only a very minimal test – it was vital to retain the credibility of the ODA concept, and the Norwegian government and parliament could not accept any widening of the ODA concept. Australia (Mr. Baxter) supported it and, like Norway, preferred it to a qualitative approach that would leave room for ambiguity. Mr. Baxter was most concerned to ensure clear interpretations. He observed that the wide variance in DAC members' interpretations in another area, which had been revealed by a DAC study, had recently led to an effective cut in Australia's development budget of some 400 million dollars.

10. Other members could not accept the DDR-25 option. France (Mr. Chataigner) described it as a solution based on the past, rather than looking to the future. The development finance picture had changed, but this was not the right way of adapting to it. France did not see that a subsidy was required in ODA loans. France was aware that it was in breach of the 1978 DAC Terms Recommendation, which required an overall grant element of 86%, but it would be taking steps to remedy this. Meanwhile there should be equal treatment of all members, and a clear statement of what criteria the Secretariat was applying. Germany (Ms. Kopp) emphasised that she could not accept the "DDR minus 25" option as it would introduce a new constraining element to the DAC statistical reporting directives that did not exist before. Germany would, however, be ready to establish transparency on the terms and conditions of its loans. She underlined further that all members should be treated equally while not changing the existing ODA definition. The United Kingdom (Ms. Featherstone) agreed that the Secretariat should accept unsubsidised EIB loans as concessional, given the absence of a clear interpretation of the concessionality criterion, provided there was full transparency on loan terms. She accepted that the OECD had a legitimate role in quality assurance, but the issue was rather one of governance of the statistical system.

11. Several other members accepted that the DDR-25 suggestion would not secure a consensus. Japan (Mr. Umeda) found there was a very reasonable argument for it, but that it needed to be put aside at present. Like New Zealand (Ms. Ellis) and Portugal (Mr. Brites Pereira), Japan believed that a wider consensus needed to be built, that greater transparency was necessary in the meantime, and that a solution needed to be both credible and practical. The Netherlands (Mr. Swartbol) emphasised the need for a more fundamental reconsideration that would make ODA and OOF concepts "future proof" against an expected proliferation of new financing instruments. Italy (Ms. Bregato) could have accepted a "DDR minus something" option, but like Sweden believed that transparency was the minimum compromise that could be achieved now. As an EU member, Italy supported the inclusion of EIB loans as concessional, with full transparency on loan terms.

12. The Chair stated that members should not assume that a failure to reach consensus meant no decisions had been taken. No consensus meant that the Secretariat would continue to employ current practice and would presumably not count loans where there was no evidence of subsidy; this was a decision in itself. In the absence of clear guidance by members of which loans to include in ODA statistics, the Secretariat would have to ensure consistent reporting on the basis of established practice and clearly defined criteria.

13. Upon the Chair's invitation to elaborate on this point, the Secretariat (Mr. Lomøy) emphasised that the question was not whether market borrowing to finance development loans was desirable, as it was clearly making a positive contribution to development. The only question was whether it was concessional. The distinction was not new: development loans could clearly be either concessional or non-concessional, as shown by the distinction in the World Bank between IBRD and IDA loans. Both were developmental, beneficial and desirable, but only IDA loans were concessional. The Secretariat undertook quality control and asked many questions of members about their reporting of ODA and other flows. Mr. Lomøy further explained that since its inclusion in DAC statistics the EU had always been a unique case - however, it was clear from the Directives that EU institutions were multilateral in DAC statistics. The EIB loans had thus been assessed as those of a multilateral development bank. There was a clear, long-standing criterion for assessing multilateral development loans as concessional, and reporting of EIB loans had traditionally followed the same practice as that of other multilateral banks, on the basis of the same information on which loans were subsidised. It had later become apparent that DAC countries had, like the EIB, been raising funds on the capital market and relending them with or without subsidies. The Secretariat had asked for further information on these loans and would assess situations case-by-case. It would reassess EIB loans on the same basis if information could now be provided on which of them had been subsidised. Mr. Lomøy hoped the Committee would accept that in performing its quality assurance role, the Secretariat should not be obliged to accept any reporting merely on the basis that it had been made in good faith.

14. While acknowledging the important role of the Secretariat, several members stressed the member-driven character of the DAC and that therefore the Committee needed to assume its own role in defining the terms for ODA loans.

15. The Chair summed up the discussion by noting that the problem was the continuing lack of clarity on how to define "concessionality in character". Although the DDR-25 option was clean and it would clearly alter current OECD practice, there was no consensus to adopt it. There was general agreement on the Chair's five principles contained in his memorandum of 1 November 2012, though one member had suggested that the practice of rolling over loans into new development loans should be allowed. There was agreement that every DAC member should be treated equally, and there was agreement on transparency. On the latter issue, the Chair stated that he would ask the Secretariat to make information on loans available in line with his suggestions in [DAC/CHAIR\(2012\)5](#). It was suggested and agreed that the Secretariat would prepare a note describing the criteria it was applying in assessing loan concessionality, including the degree of subsidy needed which should be used to identify ODA loans that are being reported in line with the Directives. This document would then be open for debate and approval by members. While bilateral loans may differ from multilateral loans, the Chair underscored the need to make reference to the standards used by multilateral institutions - that Mr. Lomøy had indicated as reflecting current practice - and warned against creating a double standard. Members' decisions about this would determine the policy to be applied up to 2015. More information was required on new, creative lending instruments that were mainly available to "AAA-rated" members. The Chair asked the Committee to commit to defining prior to 2015 the term "concessional in character" in a way that reflected modern financing conditions. He observed that the grant element criterion could not continue to be calculated at a discount rate that was clearly unrealistic if it were meant to be a benchmark for concessionality. Hearing no objections, the Chair thanked the members for their co-operation in getting through a difficult issue and for agreeing to a viable interim solution. The meeting was then adjourned.

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LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM**

4/12/2012 - 5/12/2012

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