

Press Release

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For immediate release

The EU's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals – Make it more than an illusion

The European Union's credibility as a major player in promoting sustainable development will be at stake next week when European Commission President Barroso and EU Member State leaders address the United Nations High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG Summit)¹ warns Eurostep².

With the official outcome already agreed³ there is little prospect of any tangible collective outcome from the summit. The outcome document titled "Keeping the Promise – United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals" contains few indications about how this promise will be kept. "With just five years left for the promises to be realised, what is really necessary is a sense of urgency and concerted action directed towards ensuring the rights of more than a billion people condemned to live in poverty are respected" stated Olive Towey, Chair of Eurostep. "It is now up to the European Union and other governments to rise to the challenge by setting out concrete actions that will be taken to live up to their commitments".

"The EU consistently claims to be a global leader on development. Next week it must live up to this claim if it wishes to remain credible" said Eva Marn, Chair of Sloga and a member of the Eurostep Board. "Re-orienting the use of existing development budgets towards meeting the MDGs is to be welcomed, but it is no substitute for the EU and its members to provide the aid that has been promised."

"We also expect the EU to demonstrate leadership beyond providing finance. We need a global regulatory system that promotes and protects the interests of all, and not just the economic

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interests of the wealthier parts of the world” said Simon Stocker, Director of Eurostep, “establishing a fair and just international economic and financial regulatory system that promotes sustainable development is equally important for achieving the MDGs”.

“Next week the EU must state how it plans the practical implementation of its vision for the achievement of the MDGs. Rhetoric without action is not enough. And a vision without the political will to achieve it is just an illusion” warned Stocker.

The Eurostep statement can be found at <http://www.eurostep.org>

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¹ In September 2000, world leaders came together at United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the [United Nations Millennium Declaration](#), committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets — with a deadline of 2015 — that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals. For more information, please visit: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

² **Eurostep** is a network of 18 major NGDOs from 14 European countries. Eurostep was established in 1990 to co-ordinate activities of its members at the European level. Its two principal aims are first to influence official development co-operation policies of multilateral institution, and in particular those of the European Union; and secondly to improve the quality and effectiveness of initiatives taken by NGOs in support of people centred development.

The members of Eurostep include: 11.11.11 (Belgium), ACSUR Las Segovias (Spain), Alliance Sud (Switzerland), CFSI (France), Concern Worldwide (Ireland), Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (Germany), FDSC (Romania), Hivos (Netherlands), Kepa (Finland), Manitese (Italy), Marie-Stopes International (UK), Network of East West Women (Poland), Oikos (Portugal), Oxfam Novib (Netherlands), People in Need (Czech Republic), Sloga Platform (Slovenia), SNV (Netherlands), terre des hommes Germany.

³ Provisional agreement was reached on 9 September on the text of the official outcome of the UN High-Level Plenary meeting that is to review the implementation of the MDGs. The document titled “Keeping the Promise — United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals” is subject to formal adoption at the meeting. See text: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/Draft%20outcome%20document.pdf>