

Press Release

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The new Commission Directorate for Development must deliver on the EU's Commitments

Eurostep welcomes the Commission's decision taken today to establish a new Directorate General for EuropeAid Development and Cooperation. With the imminent establishment of Europe's diplomatic service on 1 December the Commission's decision to establish a single DG for development will help the EU to deliver on its development commitments.

"The EU needs a strong guardian for its cooperation with developing countries" stated Eurostep Director Simon Stocker. "We have long argued that the Commission needs a single dedicated service for development that unites all of its capacities for implementing development policy. Today's decision is a start in the right direction."

The Commission decision is part of the overall reform of the EU's institutions following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty last year. One of the principal objectives of the Treaty changes is to enable the EU to play a stronger role in the world.

"The establishment of the External Action Service should increase the EU's ability to shape global policies and practices" said Olive Towey, Chair of Eurostep. "As long as this is clearly driven by the principles and values that are set out in the Treaty, this would make a substantial contribution towards Europe delivering on its global responsibilities" she continued.

The Lisbon Treaty defines the EU's development policy as the principal framework for the EU's cooperation with all developing countries. The Treaty also establishes poverty eradication as the single principal objective for the EU's development policy. The EU's development policy and its implementation falls under the responsibility of the European Commission.

"The interests of people living in poverty within developing countries are central to the EU's development policies" said Stocker. "The Treaty requires that all of the EU's activities that impact on those countries, including foreign policy and trade, clearly reflect this in their implementation. The new Commission development service must help ensure that this becomes reality."

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Notes

The Commission decision to merge DG Development and EuropeAid into a single Directorate General is part of the reorganisation of the Commission's services following confirmation that the European External Action Service will begin operating on 1 December 2010, the anniversary of the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty. The establishment of the EEAS aims at strengthening the EU's external relations.

The EU's development policy is defined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union under Article 208. According to Art. 208 TFEU,

"The Union's development cooperation policy shall have as its primary objective the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty".

The poverty reduction imperative of development cooperation is therefore binding on the Commission and on the EEAS alike in establishing policies, strategies and actions towards developing countries.

The provision for the establishment of the EEAS is contained in the Treaty of the European Union, in part V on 'specific provisions on the common foreign and security policy. This allows the interpretation that the EEAS' main function is the promotion of CFSP, a solely intergovernmental policy area.

The Commission is the guardian of the Treaty and has an obligation to ensure that its provisions are implemented according to the letter and spirit of the Treaty.

***Eurostep** is a network of 18 major NGOs 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), OxfamNovib (Netherlands), People in Need (Czech Republic), Sloga Platform (Slovenia), SNV (Netherlands), terre des hommes Germany.

For further information see

[Briefing N°48: Defining the EU's Management and Implementation of its External Actions in Accordance with the Provisions of the Treaties](http://www.eurostep.org/wcm/dmdocuments/BP_48_EEAS.pdf)

http://www.eurostep.org/wcm/dmdocuments/BP_48_EEAS.pdf

[Legal Opinion on the draft Council decision establishing the EEAS](http://www.eurostep.org/wcm/dmdocuments/Mekonnen_Legal_Opinion_100511.pdf)

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