

**“Looking for Results – Coherent Policies for Development”**  
**Eckhard Deutscher**  
**Opening Remarks**

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I am very pleased to be with you and to have the opportunity to offer opening remarks for this important meeting. I am deeply convinced about the importance of Policy Coherence for Development, and this is clearly a forward-looking meeting in an area that should take on growing importance in the OECD.

Turning briefly to the Development Assistance Committee, or DAC, I see a general shift towards a much stronger focus on policy coherence for development. Development co-operation pursued in isolation will not be able to achieve results. Policy Coherence for Development will become much more important.

This is borne out in a strategic reflection exercise we have just completed on the future of development co-operation, and what this means for our work. The report is called “Investing in development – a common cause in a changing world”. This reflects several key points:

- ➔ First, development is an investment, it is not charity.
- ➔ Second, ‘common cause’ means that this investment combines moral obligations with enlightened self-interest; it is in our own strategic interest to support sustainable development and progress in poor countries.
- ➔ Third, the report talks about development, not about ‘development co-operation’. This is to put the objective first: it looks at development as a result. And achieving and demonstrating results is what will be more and more important in the future. The reference to ‘development’ rather than ‘development co-operation’ also acknowledges that development needs more than ODA, more than development co-operation.

It is very appropriate then that policy coherence was one of the key priorities identified for the DAC. And this was to no small extent because of the DAC's home in the OECD. The OECD is unique in bringing almost all areas of public policy under one roof. This makes it the ideal place to understand the linkages between all these different policy areas and development, and to promote greater coherence.

Indeed, we have no shortage of knowledge on where problems or opportunities for coherence are. We have clear, evidence-based analysis on the interface of development policy and areas such diverse as security policy and fragile states, trade, agriculture, environment, anti-corruption, migration etc. We now need to act on this evidence. We need to become serious about policy coherence and whole of government approaches.

I should also like to mention briefly that there is a very keen awareness of the problems within the 'development co-operation business', which undermine the effectiveness of aid. This happens not least through practices that, rather than being driven exclusively by demands of recipients, reflect the life of its own that development agencies and organisations have taken on, with their own interests and institutional priorities; and it is due to a system that is self-referential, and at the same time highly fragmented and inefficient. Again, we need to act; and I am glad to say that we have and are taking strong action on this front with the aid effectiveness agenda.

So, from a donor perspective, does policy coherence mean that, in trying to produce development results, we should no longer focus on development co-operation? No. Rather, it means that effective development co-operation and policy have an important role to play in the quest for sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction – precisely by working more with other policy areas, and by leveraging ODA to achieve stronger coherence and exploit synergies.

This awareness has already shown in the way we have worked on development over the past decade or so. To give you just one example, just last week, we had a joint high level meeting between Development and Environment Ministers, where we dealt with key environment and climate change issues for development.

Clearly, donors, should not, and could not, take the lead on all policy coherence issues. But I believe it is important to understand this: Coherent policies do not come by themselves. Incoherence exists because of policy communities, and lobby groups, which perceive incoherent policies to reflect their, often narrow, political or business interest. Policy Coherence is a tough agenda, and often a tough sell in capitals.

Therefore, development needs a strong voice, and a champion within the government, with a clear mandate and political responsibility, ideally at cabinet level. Similarly, there is also no question that policy coherence could make aid redundant, not today and not in a few years time. Instead, and because of what I just mentioned, the scope for progress on policy coherence is likely to depend to a significant degree on a strong development co-operation programme.

But there is another dimension to this. This is about credibility of commitments, about faith, and trust in international solutions. If we look back over the last two years, we look at years of crises – we had the food crisis, the fuel crisis, and now the financial and economic crisis. All were global crises. All need international solutions. It is clear that isolated responses by individual policy areas are insufficient, and indeed that national responses are insufficient. We need coordinated international action for our globalised world. And we need global solutions that include developing countries: in the way they are discussed and designed, in their coverage and in their implementation.

Aid alone cannot pretend to bear the burden of development in poor countries. But development co-operation must be a central feature of a strategic, international

response to the challenges of globalisation. The objective must be to achieve development results that make aid redundant – but it cannot be the objective to make development co-operation redundant. In both regards, policy coherence for development will have a central role to play.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to the discussion today and the outcome of this meeting.