



International community holds itself accountable for better use of aid

Paris, March 2, 2005

Over one hundred countries, from the wealthiest to the poorest, as well as development institutions have committed to a practical blueprint to provide aid in more streamlined ways that better meet the needs of developing countries. They also agreed to improve accountability by monitoring the blueprint's implementation.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was agreed at the High Level Forum by developing and donor countries, the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, United Nations, and the World Bank. The Forum was hosted by the French government.

The Paris Declaration has some 50 commitments to improve aid quality, which will be monitored by twelve indicators. Participants also agreed to preliminary quantitative targets for five of them. They will finalise targets by the time of the United Nations' five-year review of the Millennium Declaration in September.

Building on the first High Level Forum in Rome in 2003, twice as many countries and new donor countries participated in Paris. Civil society representatives and parliamentarians were actively involved in the Forum for the first time.

"In 2005, poverty and development are the issues of the year. Aid flows to developing countries are on the increase after a sustained drop for many years. So we must demonstrate that we are using that aid effectively. This will give people the confidence that aid helps the poorest people in the world, and that more aid is a sound investment in all our futures," said Richard Manning, Chair of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee.

There has been considerable progress since Rome in following the leadership of developing countries:

- The Afghan government developed its own national strategy to reduce poverty which limits participation in all its programmes to three donors, with one taking the lead. Donors have agreed to follow the Afghan budget timetable instead of their own timetables.



- Bangladesh and its development partners have reduced the number of different donor accounts in the primary education sector from over twenty to three, while increasing the level of resources.
- Nicaragua has taken charge of improving aid management and has developed an action plan to oversee its implementation. It is sharing lessons it has learned with other countries.
- In Tanzania, eleven donors are following the government's lead and are channelling their support through the country's administration. The Tanzanian government and donors are cooperating to review each other's performances.

“Progress has been made. But we have to move faster. We don't need more analysis. We know what needs to be done. With the Paris Declaration, we have the blueprint to do it,” said James D. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, during the debate.

In his remarks, François Loos, the French Minister Delegate for International Trade, said: “Agreement on the Paris Declaration is a clear sign that the international community is determined to make 2005 a success for development. It shows that we want to live up to our commitments to do more and better in the fight against poverty.”

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