Shaping an inclusive and comprehensive approach to development: Towards a new OECD Strategy on Development

Informal Remarks by Angel Gurría, Secretary-General, OECD

Brookings Institution
Washington, 22 September 2011

(As prepared for delivery)
It is a great pleasure to be here today among prominent experts to share ideas on key development issues.

**An evolving economic and development landscape: the rationale for a new approach to development**

As you know, we are experiencing a major structural transformation at the global level. While many OECD economies are experiencing a protracted economic crisis, developing and emerging economies are becoming a vital source of trade, investment, development cooperation and knowledge. The world’s economic centre of gravity is shifting.

This is associated with lifting more than 500 million people out of poverty in developing countries. In this context, traditional labels such as “North-South”, “rich-poor”, and “donor-recipient” lose their meaning.

The sustainability of existing growth models and development is being called into question. This demands an inclusive dialogue to identify policies to address structural conditions that hamper development and that foster enabling factors at the global and national level. Enhanced knowledge sharing with a wider range of developing countries as well as key stakeholders is a way to tap into the experiences of other countries who have successfully achieved rapid growth and poverty reduction.

Development is multi-dimensional. To understand its prospects requires approaches that cut across multiple disciplines. The OECD brings a unique value added in this field as it gathers a wide range of policy communities whose collective efforts are critical to develop policy solutions to promote global growth and sustainable development in a comprehensive manner.
The OECD did much of the groundwork for the MDGs. And through the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action, we developed a refined vision of development co-operation focusing on results, mutual accountability and healthy partnerships.

**But the OECD is evolving with a vision to enhance its contribution to development and sustainable growth.** At our 50th Anniversary, our members reaffirmed their commitment to global development, endorsed an ambitious strategic Framework and mandated us to design an OECD Strategy on Development. This strategy will seek to exploit the synergies more systematically between our traditions – our development expertise on the one hand - in the DAC, the Development Centre, Sahel and West Africa Club and African Partnership Forum – and our work as policy advisors that has contributed to high standards of public policy in our member states.

This mandate will strengthen the Organisation’s role as a policy sharing organisation, as a global policy network, and ultimately its contribution to global growth and development. We have a lot to offer in terms of policy advice, good practices, and global standards.

An increasing number of developing countries are seeking OECD’s advice on a range of policy issues. We are working to be able to respond more systematically and more effectively to these requests, as much as possible in partnership with other international organisations and key stakeholders who have expertise and field presence.

We have started to apply a broader approach to development, drawing on our multidisciplinary expertise and experience on development cooperation. Through our work, for instance, on tax and development, combining the expertise of two policy communities, we have set up an inclusive Forum – the Tax and Development Task Force – to interact with
developing countries and key stakeholders. Through this platform we are addressing issues of governance and aid together with transfer pricing and cross border tax evasion. We want to broaden and deepen these experiences and enhance the impact of our work.

We have launched an Innovation Strategy that relies on a broader definition of innovation. Our broader perspective underlines the importance of fostering enabling framework conditions such as through education, entrepreneurship, competition, openness to trade, public and private investment in human capital, R&D, capacity building. We are applying the same approach to our Green Growth strategy and our Skills Strategy, but we want to explore how to ensure that these frameworks are relevant also to countries at different stages of development. This is our challenge for the Strategy on Development.

How can we best take into account the different prevailing conditions of developing countries? The substance of our work may need to be adapted, by considering key issues, such as weakness of public institutions, deficient infrastructure, underdeveloped financial markets, informality, scarce human capital and wide social inequalities. We have a lot to offer but need to dialogue more with developing countries to get their feedback and input. And we have a lot to learn from them.

We have also contributed to the inception and advancement of the G20 Seoul Development Consensus and its Multi-year Action Plan on Development, validating our broader approach to development and focus on inclusive and sustainable growth.

Areas where we can make a bigger impact include: innovative and sustainable sources of growth; mobilisation of resources for development; governance for development; and measuring progress for development.
Our aim is also to enhance our contributions to international efforts to achieve the MDGs, looking also beyond 2015; to the work of major international processes and conferences, such as the HLF IV on Aid Effectiveness in Busan - which is a very important moment for development co-operation, also the Earth Summit (Rio+20); and to international initiatives such as the G20 Multi-year Action Plan on Development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The OECD stands ready to put its expertise and knowledge at the service of development. In the current context of structural changes in the global economy, knowledge sharing, policy dialogue and partnerships are crucial. I believe that our discussion today will result in an important contribution to shape our future strategy on development.

For this occasion, we have shared with you a short note that summarises the rationale and the background for this endeavour. This is an excellent opportunity for the OECD to hear your views on development challenges in the current global context, on the gaps in international responses to address these challenges, and on the value added of the OECD. Your views will help us to shape our future strategy on development.

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