DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 890TH MEETING

held on 13 November 2008 at the OECD Conference Centre, Paris

DAC Meeting, 28 January 2009

This draft summary record is for APPROVAL at the DAC meeting of 28 January 2009.

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 890TH MEETING

HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2008 AT THE OECD CONFERENCE CENTRE, PARIS

I. Adoption of the Agenda [DCD/DAC/A(2008)16]

1. The Chair opened the meeting with an observation that there were too many items related to process, housekeeping, and meeting preparations in Development Assistance Committee (DAC) meetings, expressing a preference for increasing substantive topics. The agenda was then adopted without comment.

II. Summary Record of the 884th Meeting: Peer Review Methodology [DCD/DAC/M(2008)8/PROV]

2. The draft summary record was approved without any comment.

III. Draft Senior Level Meeting documents [DCD/DAC/A(2008)15/REV2]

The Current Development Co-operation Scenery in the Context of the Financial Crisis, including Stocktaking on ODA Commitments

3. In response to questions by many Delegates on this session, the Chair and the Secretariat (Mr. Richard Carey) confirmed that: the main speakers will be from the Bretton Woods institutions and Deputy Secretary-General Pier Carlo Padoan; updated figures on 2007 Official Development Assistance (ODA), simulation on the ODA commitments, and the Secretary General and the DAC Chair’s letter to heads of states on the aid pledge will be tabled at the Executive Committee in Special Session (ECSS) on 24 November; the Secretary General will take the documents and the reactions from ECSS to the Doha Conference on Financing; a room document will be prepared a week before the Senior Level Meeting (SLM) that will summarise studies on the impact of the financial crisis on developing countries; an oral report on the Doha meeting will be given to frame the SLM discussion; and the Global Forum on Development (GFD) event will also discuss the impact of the financial crisis on developing countries.

Post Accra: From Resolution to Action

4. The Committee agreed that current title of the SLM agenda item on Accra should be revised to read: “Plans for implementing the Accra Agenda for Action”. Furthermore, it was agreed that SLM participants should be able to take stock of the evolution of the Working Party’s mandate and be invited to provide comments on its implications for the DAC.


5. The Committee agreed to forward the draft Guiding Principles on Gender Equality, Women’s Empowerment and Aid Effectiveness to the SLM for endorsement without discussion, on the understanding that the High Level Meeting (HLM) will discuss the issue of what DAC Members are doing to make progress in achieving Millenium Development Goals (MDG) 3 (see Item VII in the SLM agenda on Topics for High Level Meeting).

6. The Secretariat (Mr. Richard Carey) explained that the intention was not to replicate discussions taking place in multilateral organisations, but rather to bring attention to how bilateral donors manage their multilateral aid, form multilateral policies and strategies, and assess multilateral effectiveness. Delegates commented on the dual role of the European Commission (EC), which required clearer description in the revised report. The Secretariat responded that this was a recurrent issue, recalling that the EC was treated as a multilateral organisation in the Development Co-operation Reports. On the frequency of publication of the Multilateral Aid Report, some Delegates supported biannually rather than annually.

DAC Strategic Reflection Exercise: Progress Report

7. The Chair suggested organising a Support Group meeting after the Progress Report is issued around 25 November, chaired by Vice Chair Ms. Nicole Gesnot of Canada in his absence, in order to be informed by the Facilitator on where the Reflection Exercise stood. He reminded the Committee that it was the wish of the Reflection Group Members to maintain the Reflection Group meetings closed.

DAC Chair Selection and Financing Reform [DCD/DAC(2008)56]

8. In order to save time, the Committee agreed to give the Secretariat written responses to the eight questions mentioned in the document so that they could be tallied before the discussion of the same topic in the afternoon under Item VII.

Environment and Development Policy Co-operation in 2009: Key Issues

Follow up to the 2006 Meeting of DAC and Environment Policy Committee (EPOC) at Ministerial Level [COM/ENV/EPOC/DCD/DAC(2008)6]

9. The Secretariat (Ms. Alexandra Trzeciak-Duval) explained that, following inconclusive discussions at the Joint meeting of the EPOC Working Party on Global and Structural Policies and the DAC Network on Environment and Development (ENVIRONET) on 31 October 2008 regarding whether or not to organise a Joint EPOC-DAC HLM, the EPOC Chair initiated a written procedure to resolve the issue. Of the nine responses received, the United States (US) wrote to oppose holding the Joint HLM as proposed due to reservations about the timing of the meeting in relation to both the arrival of a new US Administration and the crowded meeting schedule with multilateral organisations in the spring. In follow-up discussions with the EPOC Secretariat, the US suggested three alternative options: postpone the Joint HLM to the 3rd quarter of 2009; hold the meeting without discussing climate change; or have an experts meeting.

10. To this, Delegates stressed three points. First, in order to contribute to climate change negotiations in Copenhagen, there would have to be closure on the Draft OECD Guidance on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation by mid-2009 at the latest. Second, without the crucial joint ownership between the DAC and EPOC of the work on climate change, water and capacity development, the nature of the products will change. Third, holding a joint EPOC-DAC meeting without including climate change will drastically diminish its relevance.

11. The Deputy Director of the Environment Directorate, Mr. Rob Visser, assured Delegates of the commitment of EPOC to continue the joint work with the DAC in all areas mandated by the 2006 Joint Ministerial. The DAC also agreed to continue informal discussions with EPOC to find a way forward on a possible joint meeting. It was further agreed that the SLM participants will be updated on the latest situation and that the SLM discussion on this topic will be adjusted accordingly.
12. The Secretariat explained that the paper had been shaped based on discussions by ENVIRONET Members in an informal session on 29 October 2008. It stressed the importance of a decision by SLM participants to support further work on integrating climate change adaption into the Rio Markers either through a separate adaption marker or through the integration of adaption into the definition of the present climate change marker, in order to allow Members to record their contributions to adaptation without forcing a distinction between development and adaptation. On the matter of Reduced Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD), the Secretariat noted the need for an early discussion of policy criteria that would ensure that this new instrument would be guided by development principles. The Committee made suggestions to improve the document and were requested by the Secretariat to forward any further comments expeditiously so that the final version for the SLM could be issued on time.

13. No comments were made on the Draft OECD Guidance on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation, which will be sent to the SLM in its current version. The draft Policy Statement, which also received no comments at the meeting, will be revised to incorporate written comments by Members.

Topics for 2009 High Level Meeting

14. The following issues arose in the discussion.

Financial Crisis and High Food and Energy Prices

15. The Secretariat (Mr. Carey) stated the need to discuss the financial and economic crises at the HLM. To this, Delegates suggested connecting up the discussion on the economic downturn with high food prices in particular as they are inseparable. At the same time, as the food price topic is very broad, it was commented that a specific focus should be identified for the HLM discussion. The Committee also noted on the need to distinguish between the problems created for the urban poor and the opportunities generated for poor farmers.

Coherent Approaches to Fragile States: Fostering Resilience

16. Delegates asked for a clearer title and a sharpening of the issues to be discussed under this item. The Secretariat (Ms Trzeciak-Duval) informed the Committee that after the next meeting on 21 November to prepare for the Senior Level Whole-of-Government meeting being organised by Switzerland in co-operation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, a draft agenda was likely to emerge that would provide elements to sharpen the annotation. Similarly, the meeting of fragile states being sponsored by France and the Democratic Republic of Congo on 4 December would provide elements for the proposed International Dialogue that could be relevant for inclusion under this item.

Delivering on promises to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment

17. Delegates agreed that this item would consist of a discussion on concrete actions undertaken and progress made on implementing the commitments that several DAC Members have made during the past year to accelerate MDG3, such as the Danish Government’s Global Call to Action on MDG3. HLM participants would also be invited to indicate any new initiatives they are planning for achieving this goal. Delegates also agreed that this item would be distinct from the discussion on post-Accra implementation. The Guiding Principles that the SLM is requested to endorse will be provided to the HLM as background material.
Key Issues at the Interface of Climate Change and Development Co-operation

18. Delegates agreed that Key Issues at the Interface of Climate Change and Development Co-operation and the Draft OECD Guidance on Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation and Policy Statement would be added to the topic of the HLM, in line with the outcome of the SLM discussion on these items and subsequent consultations.

19. The Chair declared the list of HLM topics as approved, subject to the specific modifications suggested.

IV. DAC Bureau Designation [DCD/DIR(2008)16]

20. For the Bureau of 2009, Mr. Eckhard Deutscher of Germany was nominated as the Chair by Italy and seconded by the United Kingdom. For the Vice Chairs, Ms. Nicole Gesnot of Canada was nominated by the United States and seconded by Australia; Mr. Bert van Geel of the Netherlands was nominated by Luxembourg and seconded by Portugal; and Mr. Franco Conzato of the EC was nominated by Japan and seconded by Austria. The Committee concurred with the designation of these Bureau Members and also thanked the out-going Vice Chairs, Ms. Kristin Langsholt of Norway and Mr. Anton Stadler of Switzerland.

V. Oral Report of Recent Meetings

21. The Chair reported on his missions to Brazil, Peru, as well as the EC on the Future of the European Union Budget. He mentioned that a written report will follow.


22. The document was approved, subject to some minor revisions in the text to raise the profile of capacity development and country-based assessment reviews. It was also agreed that resources could be used flexibly to support the decisions of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness on its future work programme and that the ordering of the intermediate outputs in Annex 1 did not imply an absolute ranking of the work of the Secretariat. On this last point, it was further agreed that output result 3.5 was central to the implementation of the Accra Agenda for Action and was of equal priority with intermediate outputs 3.3 and 3.4.

VII. DAC Chair Selection and Financing Reform [DCD/DAC(2008)56]

23. The Secretariat (Mr. Stephen Groff) reported on the results of the questionnaire collected before the afternoon which showed that all questions a) to g) had 18 to 22 Members indicating agreement. However, on question h), there was a significant split over the preference of funding the DAC Chair from either Part I or mandatory equal shares.

24. In the discussion that followed, several Delegates questioned the rationale and urgency of carrying out the reform. In particular, Japan, which was the only Member unable to join a consensus on reforming the DAC Chair selection or financing, stated that the government made its position clear when joining the consensus in the Economic and Development Review Committee (EDRC) on the Part I funding of its Chair. In other words, Japan considered that the EDRC case should be “highly exceptional in view of the uniqueness of the EDRC, and in no case shall it set a precedent resulting in the proliferation of funding for other chairs” and that the Part I budget should be used to fund “important works of the OECD” [ECO/EDR/DIV/M(2008)26 and C(2008)205]. Several non-DAC OECD Members also indicated that they would oppose Part I funding of the Chair at the Budget Committee or Council level.

25. However, the Committee, including Japan, agreed to table the topic at the SLM in order to move forward on this issue. Basically, two key questions will be posed on whether there is agreement on reforming the
selection process and financing mechanism and, if so, whether the Chair should be financed through Part I or mandatory equal shares.

VIII. Any Other Business

26. Mr. Groff referred Delegates to the Room Document [DCD/DAC/RD(2006)16/RD2] which sets out the state-of-play on pledges of voluntary contributions to finance the Programme of Work and Budget 2009-2010 where the funding gap is still very significant. Members who have not yet submitted their pledge were invited to do so as soon as possible so that their pledge could be included in the updated document for the SLM.

27. Sweden encouraged Members to prepare their capitals on the aid pledge initiative by the Secretary General and the DAC Chair that will be addressed at the ECSS on 24 November so that they would be able to take a positive message to the Doha Financing Conference.

28. The Chair thanked the departing Delegate of the United States, Mr. George Carner, who was the dean (longest serving among the current Delegates) and former Vice Chair, for his exceptional contributions to the Committee.
Participants list for Development Assistance Committee  
SLM documents preparation  
Liste des participants pour Comité d'aide au développement  
Preparation des documents pour le SLM  
13/11/2008

Chairperson/Président(e)  
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DAC Chair

Australia/Australie  
Ms. Caitlin WILSON  
Counsellor (Development Cooperation)  
Permanent Delegation

Belgium/Belgique  
Mr. Martinus DESMET  
Conseiller de la Coopération Internationale  
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Permanent Delegation

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Switzerland/Suisse

Mr. Anton STADLER

Turkey/Turquie

Ms. Lale AGUSMAN

United Kingdom/Royaume-Uni

Mr. Roland FOX

United States/États-Unis

Mr. George CARNER

EC/CE

Mr. Franco CONZATO

International Monetary Fund (IMF)/Fonds monétaire international (FMI)

Mr. Pierre EWENCZYK

World Bank/Banque mondiale

Ms. Barbara GENEVAZ

Ms. Larisa BURTIN
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