LAUNCH OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON CONFLICT AND FRAGILITY

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This document is provided for the INFORMATION of SLM participants under Item 3 under Item 3 of the Draft Annotated SLM Agenda [DCD/DAC/A(2008)15/REV3]. It informs the SLM about the launch of an International Network on Conflict and Fragility and plans to follow-up two significant Accra commitments related to situations of conflict and fragility.

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Background

1. The international community is increasingly concerned with the slow progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) resulting from state fragility and violent conflict.

   - A third of the world’s poor live in countries where the state lacks either the will or the capacity to engage productively with their citizens to ensure security, prevent conflict, safeguard human rights and provide the basic functions for development.

   - The spill over effects from these countries—the trafficking and exporting of people, drugs, criminality and terrorism—concern many parts of OECD governments beyond aid and development agencies.

   - Since the early 1990s, the DAC’s Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation (CPDC) and, since 2005, the DAC’s Fragile States Group (FSG) have addressed these challenges by developing policy guidance to help improve donor responses to the most challenging development settings and circumstances and to chart results.

The New International Network on Conflict and Fragility

2. Last week saw a step change in the DAC’s engagement in fragile situations with the launch of a new International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF), bringing together the CPDC and FSG into one forum.

   - INCAF has been set up to perform a complementary function to the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness – the focus is on fragile and conflict affected countries, but moving beyond aid management concerns to examine the substantive policy issues of security, peace building and state capacity.

   - In line with the spirit of Accra, INCAF is taking an inclusive approach to its work by engaging with partner countries.

3. The foundations of this Network have been prepared over two years but work has accelerated in recent months. At Accra partner countries began to mobilize with their donor counterparts on a shared agenda which the new Network and an International Dialogue (see below) will take forward.

   - Last week, representatives from twelve partner countries, including four Ministers, together with donors (including Brazil, Chile and China) agreed a preliminary road map to deliver two significant AAA commitments.
Monitoring the DAC’s Fragile States Principles

4. Five developing countries – Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, DR Congo, Sierra Leone and Timor Leste – will work intensively between now and HLF4 to benchmark the quality of international assistance, and their own responsibilities, through the lens of the DAC Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations. This will:

• bring real time challenges and responses to an international audience;

• entail working not just on issues of donor coordination but also on how the collective performance of development, security, defence, humanitarian and diplomatic personnel can be gauged and improved.

5. New partnerships will be needed, which the INCAF has already begun to broker, through joint work with NATO, for example.

An International Dialogue on Peace Building and State Building

6. At Accra, it was acknowledged that more consolidated and coherent international actions will be required on priority peace building and state building objectives, both as the preconditions for achieving the MDGs and as a realistic measure for demonstrating progress over time.

• Under the co-leadership of the DR Congo and France (with support from the UK and the Netherlands), the five countries named above, together with Chad, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Nepal, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo and their development partners, including Brazil, Chile, China, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, and INCAF members, launched an International Dialogue on peace building and state building objectives.

• The Dialogue process, which is not hosted by the OECD but which the Secretariat has been requested to support, will enable partner countries to articulate their priority peace and state building concerns, including bottlenecks to effective international assistance. Their views will be channeled into and analysed in the INCAF.

• Results will be discussed through the International Dialogue (possibly with a meeting in the Central African Republic) in 2009, then fine tuned and fed into other major international development debates, such as the 2010 MDG stocktaking.

Partner Country Engagement

7. Over time, the arrangements for involving partner countries in the INCAF will evolve and may be formalized. For the time being, a pragmatic approach is being taken with those most keen to engage substantively taking a lead and engaging with the INCAF where joint work is required:

• in a dialogue on peacebuilding and state building;

• in tracking the performance of the international community in situations of fragility and conflict.
SLM Support and Resource Implications

8. Support from the Senior Level Meeting will be important to chart the direction and success of INCAF and to foster joint work between donors and fragile and conflict affected states on a range of vital issues.

- Specifically, SLM support in highlighting and sponsoring the work and approach of INCAF at relevant international fora would be welcome.

9. The INCAF’s new agenda which emerged from Accra, together with new ways of working directly with partner countries, have significant and urgent resource implications.

- A mechanism will be required to allow people from the poorest countries in the world to lead and engage substantively in dialogue processes, as well as to participate in regular international meetings;

- The Secretariat will need more staff and an increased budget to support the work, i.e. over and above the current 2009/10 PWB funding, a preliminarily estimated total of EUR 1.5 M would be needed, including the setting up of a possible trust fund.