



Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**DCD/DAC/M(2017)5/FINAL**

**Unclassified**

**English - Or. English**

---

**8 December 2017**

**DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION DIRECTORATE  
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE**

## **SUMMARY RECORD OF THE DAC SENIOR LEVEL MEETING**

**held on 14 June 2017 at the OECD Conference Centre, Paris**

The Draft Summary Record [DCD/DAC/M(2017)5] was approved under Item 2 of the Draft Annotated Agenda [DCD/DAC/A(2017)11] without modification at the 29 September 2017 DAC meeting and is now issued as FINAL.

Contact: Eric Bensel - Tel: +33 (0)1 45 24 76 52 - E-mail: [eric.bensel@oecd.org](mailto:eric.bensel@oecd.org)

**JT03424442**

## *Summary Record of the DAC Senior Level Meeting held on 14 June 2017*

### **Item 1. Welcome by the DAC Chair and Adoption of the Agenda**

1. The DAC Chair, Ms. Charlotte Petri Gornitzka, opened the proceedings of this Senior Level Meeting (SLM) by highlighting the two decisions that she sought for the day's meeting: approval to transmit the DAC reform package to the High Level Meeting (HLM) in October and to submit the draft action plan to implement the recommendations of the DAC In-Depth Evaluation to the OECD Evaluation Committee.
2. She reported to delegates that the previous evening over dinner, heads of delegation discussed the DAC reform and clarified certain issues surrounding the work on private sector instruments (PSI). On the latter topic, she commented that a note exists from a meeting held last week with a smaller group. That note will be circulated to all members so that everyone is on the same page. The Chair's aim is to take the decision on PSI at the 10 July DAC meeting. A decision on PSI is a step towards a revitalised, decisive DAC.
3. Before opening the formal agenda, the Chair drew participants' attention to the posters and profiles of providers of development co-operation taken from the Development Co-operation Report 2017. These graphics help countries compare their performance against their peers. Producing these profiles was a collaborative effort between the Secretariat and DAC members. She thanked everyone for playing their specific part in making this happen. It is an exciting way to show and use our data.
4. In turning to the agenda, she assured participants that decisions taken here today only engage the responsibility of DAC members, although she encouraged and very much welcomed contributions from other delegations. She then invited delegates to adopt the day's agenda, which they did without modification.

### **Item 2. Keynote Addresses**

5. The Chair announced that to inform today's discussion on reform, she had invited three members from the DAC High Level Panel (HLP): Mr. Michael Anderson, Mr. Jean-Christophe Donnellier, and Mr. Shyam Saran. She handed the floor to them to provide their perspectives on reform in the DAC.
6. They emphasised that the six strategic priorities in the Chair's proposal for reform represent a good interpretation of the HLP recommendations. The HLP had identified challenges to which the DAC must rise, including the considerable changes in the world in recent years and the perception that the DAC is a closed club.
7. To react to the changes in the world, the DAC must ensure that its norms and tools are adapted to the realities of the new 2030 Agenda. The DAC has a specific place in the global development architecture and as such must serve the international community. Reinforcing this role involves placing development effectiveness back in the core of DAC work, acting as a catalyst for private investment, and holding the DAC to account more robustly.

8. To open up the Committee, the DAC should evolve from a club to a hub. The HLP supported the idea of retaining the core membership of the DAC but suggested that the Committee should improve its transparency and extend its outreach to other partners. Collective action, as well as closer collaboration with the Development Centre, is necessary. The Committee's engagement with external partners must include aid recipient countries and countries active in triangular co-operation (e.g., involving them in peer reviews and taking on board their perspective in DAC decisions). While the DAC should expand its inclusiveness, it should not expect full compliance of partners in its decisions.

### Item 3. DAC Reform

9. The DAC Chair introduced the “Chair’s Proposal for a Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Development Assistance Committee” [DAC/CHAIR(2017)1/REV1] and asked participants to share their views on the document, indicating whether there were proposals that they could not agree with.

10. Members and participants in the SLM in general welcomed the Chair’s proposal. In particular, they approved the six strategic priorities outlined in it, namely:

- The DAC will focus on mobilising resources and fostering development impact.
- The DAC will learn from existing development approaches.
- The DAC will explore new development approaches.
- The DAC will reach out to development actors beyond its Membership to influence and be influenced.
- The DAC will proactively self-assess and hold itself to account.
- The DAC will work in effective governance, systems and structures.

11. In addition, most members supported a continued focus on DAC’s core strengths, i.e. defining and monitoring ODA as well as monitoring other official and private flows; setting standards for providers’ engagement in development co-operation; being the forum for members to hold each other to account for their development efforts; and promoting the exchange of views, learning and co-ordination among Members on good practices in development co-operation. Roughly half of the members supported a strengthening of engagement and outreach to countries and development actors beyond the DAC and a smaller number (less than a third) explicitly supported greater efforts on mobilisation of development finance, innovation, learning and communication and transparency.

12. Most members (19 out of 30) had reservations around the proposal of “...developing an ‘index’ of development co-operation performance”, questioning whether preparing such a measure was technically feasible and if it would add value in comparison to existing measures. However, five members supported it, but asked for further clarifications on what elements would be covered by the index.

13. Beyond comments on specific proposals contained in the document, two members asked that future iterations of the proposal for the DAC reform include an overall narrative that explains the rationale for the reform, including a vision for 5 to 10 years that clarifies how the DAC fits within the broader development co-operation architecture. Six members requested clearer references to policy coherence for sustainable development. One member asked for clarification on how the proposed actions for the DAC reform would impact the DAC’s budget and suggested to add a sentence to the document explaining that the reform did not create a precedent for decisions on the DAC

Programme of Work and Budget. This last request was supported by six members who would like to see cost estimates for the reform before agreeing on it.

14. Members also commented on the room document “Chair Proposal for the DAC Reform: Second Draft” [DCD/DAC/RD(2017)7/RD1], which is a living document. They were particularly supportive of the following proposed actions:

- Reform DAC peer reviews so they serve as a tool to foster innovation, continue to monitor international commitments, promote good practices, and trigger improvement and impact of DAC Members’ efforts to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (five members).
- Broaden formal and structured participation of partners (e.g., civil society organisations, recipient countries and international organisations) in the peer review process co-ordinated by the Development Co-operation Directorate (seven Members).
- Set up a new mechanism to fund the DAC Chair and his/her office where the DAC Chair’s salary is paid by a single member (normally its country of origin) and the DAC Chair’s office expenses (including staff and travel) are funded by voluntary contributions. This could help reduce the costs for a member to propose a national to become DAC Chair (five members).

15. Some of the actions outlined in the room document were particularly challenging or problematic for several members. In addition to reticence around developing an “index” of development co-operation performance, fifteen members asked for more clarification on the proposal of exploring new models of decision-making to increase efficiency. Most members would like to keep a decision-making process based on consensus as per usual OECD practice.

16. The DAC Chair concluded that there was overall support for the six strategic priorities as stated in the proposal [DAC/CHAIR(2017)1/REV1]. The six priorities will now give the overall direction of the DAC reform. Discussions also revealed some hesitation around specific aspects of the Chair’s proposal, and to address such hesitations the DAC Chair invited Members to provide any additional written comment on the document by 23 June. Based on the discussions at the SLM and written comments received by the deadline, the Chair’s proposal will be revised and a new version presented for approval at the DAC meeting of 10 July. Between July and ahead of the DAC High Level Meeting in October, the proposal for DAC reform will continue to be refined in consultation with members.

#### **Item 4. Response to the DAC In-Depth Evaluation**

17. The DAC Chair presented the “Draft Action Plan of the Development Assistance Committee to the In-Depth Evaluation” [DCD/DAC(2017)19], which should be finalised and submitted by 28 June so it can be discussed at the Evaluation Committee on 7 July. The DAC Chair asked if all members agreed to it in principle. She mentioned that some minor comments were received ahead of the SLM and invited all members that had any additional feedback to the document to communicate them by 23 June. After that, the document will be finalised and transmitted to the Evaluation Committee.

---

**Item 5. Concluding Remarks from the Chair**

18. The Chair thanked all participants, the Secretariat, Vice-Chairs, and DAC delegates. She expressed her hope that today's discussion helped the DAC to "live" the reform process. She encouraged delegations to push their high-level people to engage and come to Paris in October for the HLM. It is important for the DAC to not focus on details but rather on important issues.