



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Commission presents proposal to address global poverty and sustainable development

Today the European Commission adopted a Communication to contribute to the EU position in international negotiations on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs are intended to reinforce the international community's commitment to eradicating poverty and supporting sustainable development, challenges that affect the lives of current and future generations. The Commission Communication describes key principles and proposes priority areas and potential targets for the years following 2015, as a step towards establishing a limited number of Sustainable Development Goals.

European Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik said: *"A new framework is needed to rally the international community to tackle the intertwined challenges of eliminating poverty, improving well-being while ensuring that progress is sustainable within planetary boundaries. The UN post-2015 agenda should be universal, and provide a comprehensive response for all."*

European Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, added: *"It is now recognized that, for the first time, the world has the technology and resources to eradicate extreme poverty in our lifetime. There is no excuse for us failing to do so and avoiding it must be our stated commitment. This can only be done through growth and development which is sustainable. We need to find solutions which truly balance economic, social and environmental objectives. And we need to bring together governments, but also civil society, private sector and citizens to set up a global framework that will ensure a decent life for all."*

The Sustainable Development Goals will contribute to a new international framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals. The framework will be universal and apply to all, on the basis of a partnership between all countries, as well as with civil society and the private sector. All countries should contribute their fair share towards reaching the global goals, and should be held to account by their citizens and the international community. The framework will be based on the three dimensions of sustainable development: social, environmental and economic. Thus, it will also have tangible benefits for EU citizens: further promoting and encouraging the drivers of inclusive and sustainable growth, better social conditions and a healthier and cleaner environment.

Proposed priority areas

The Commission proposal calls for tackling issues of global concern such as poverty, inequality, health, food security, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, sustainable energy, decent work, inclusive and sustainable growth, sustainable consumption and production, biodiversity, land degradation and sea and oceans.

The post-2015 framework should also ensure a rights-based approach and address justice, equality and equity, good governance, democracy and the rule of law and address peaceful societies and freedom from violence.

Next Steps

The Communication will now be discussed by Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. The outcome will guide the EU's position in the negotiations at UN level and contribute to the preparation of the UN Secretary General's report on the post-2015 framework, due later in the year. The conclusions of the Open Working Group are expected to be published next month.

Background

Today's Communication builds on earlier EU positions set out in Council Conclusions of June 2013 on "the Overarching post-2015 Agenda", and a previous Communication "A Decent Life for All: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future". It also builds on relevant international discussions on sustainable development and poverty eradication in particular the UN Open Working Group on SDGs, as well as public consultations.

The UN General Assembly Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2013 had already agreed the main parameters of the post-2015 development agenda, building on progress with the MDGs, and on the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference, which agreed to develop Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Today's Communication is a step towards developing a more detailed EU position in the negotiations to establish the SDGs.

At a UN summit in 2000, eight Millennium Development Goals were agreed, to be achieved by 2015. Known as the MDGs, they cover areas such as poverty eradication, gender equality, child mortality, HIV, environmental sustainability and development. Progress towards the goal has been remarkable but, and as the 2015 deadline approaches, significant challenges remain in many countries. The SDGs will be at the heart of a framework which aims to resolve outstanding problems by addressing poverty eradication and sustainable development together.

Further information:

Link to the Communication:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/international_issues/index_en.htm

See also:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/international_issues

<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1300>

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