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Committee on Development

200511    05.02.2013

**Subject: Multiannual Financial Framework: protect the EU development and humanitarian budget**

Dear

The Lisbon Treaty was applauded as a milestone in creating a stronger, more visible and influential EU on the world scene. The EU has more power on the global stage when it speaks in a coordinated voice, and EU development cooperation has proven to be a strong means to support this ambition.

As recently as in the Foreign Affairs Council meeting of May 2012, EU Member States restated their firm commitment to achieve all their development aid targets, including the collective 0.7% ODA target to be reached by 2015, and that these would guide the design and implementation of external action instruments under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020. Ministers restated that the rapidly changing global environment requires a more comprehensive, responsive and effective approach in EU external action and development policy, the Arab Spring being a case in point.

We would consequently like to express our deep concern at Mr Van Rompuy's proposal to make substantial reductions to the MFF for 2014-2020 from the level initially proposed by the European Commission. The latest draft budget proposal to be tabled would slash development aid and humanitarian assistance by almost €10 billion, to €60.6 billion.

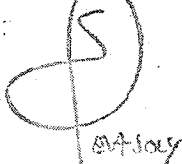
EU aid to the poorest nations is recognised by the OECD and independent organizations like Publish What You Fund as among the most efficient, effective and transparent in the world. According to the Eurobarometer survey, 85% of EU citizens believe that Europe should continue helping developing countries despite the economic crisis. EU aid costs each European only €0, 50 per week.

There are not many investments that, with so little money, have such a strong impact on the world's poorest, and at the same time represent an investment in the future of Europe. Indeed, as shown in a report by the campaigning organisation ONE, the current proposal from the European Commission could lead to a net gain in EU gross domestic product (GDP) of €11.5 billion by 2020.

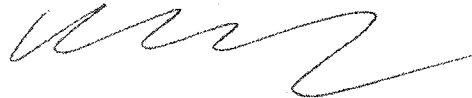
Any agreement on the MFF should protect this investment which represents only 6% of the total budget and has significant impact. In the past five years it paid for more than 10 million children to go to primary school and provided 32 million with clean water.

This letter has been sent to all European Ministers attending the General Affairs Council, so that our concerns may be heard in time for the next GAC. We hope that you will show coherence with your publicly-stated commitments and refrain from asking for cuts at the expense of the poorest in the world.

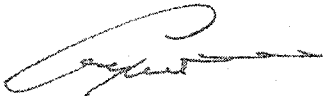
Yours sincerely,



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Chair of the Committee on Development



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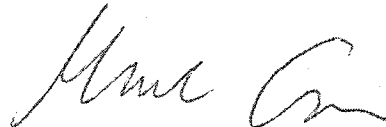
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