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Greeting words....

Expressing gratitude for the leadership of the European Union in setting the ambition for the Agenda 2030.

I believe that the Agenda 2030 brought about three important shifts of paradigm in regard to the previous period that was the period of the Millennium development Goals (MDGs) and I think that those 3 shifts of paradigm hold within them quality checks that we have to apply to our development cooperation on a continuous basis.

The 1st shift of paradigm is that instead of focussing on just a few sectors, the 2030 Agenda takes a holistic view. It addresses development challenges in its complexity and its integration.

Basically, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are indivisible and are interconnected. That brings with it a very practical requirement to check whether we have everyone in the room, whether we are actually speaking across our thematic silos and whether we are living up the challenge of policy coherence.

The 2nd one is the commitment to Leave No one Behind. Remember the MDGs said “we will reduce poverty by half” Sorry for the other half!!! Here in the 2030 Agenda, in every goal and in every target there is a strong sense that if any economic or social group is left behind, our development will not be sustainable. There is a very practical strategic check for that: do we even know who the most vulnerable people are? Do we have systems in place? Are we close enough to the field so that we know who the most vulnerable people are? So that we understand the risks that they are facing? And that we are able to help to build their resilience on a continuous basis.

The 3rd shift, and I want to underscore, these are achievements that the European Union championed and I think without the EU, they would not have been part of the Agenda 2030! The 3rd shift of paradigm is a reversal of the accountability. Indeed, in the 2015 time, it was all about accountability of the receivers to the donors. I believe that the agenda 2030 in order to be implemented needs to become a social contract between the states and their people. So we are changing from an upward-outward accountability towards and inward-downward accountability and that also has a very practical and strong check related to it namely the simple question: when we arrive in a context, is everyone looking at us as a donor or are states encouraged to be accountable to their people? Are we strengthening the relationship in our actions between duty bearers and rights holders or are we simply strengthening the accountability to us as development partners or as donors?

Now my messages to you, ladies and gentlemen, are:

Message 1: Development effectiveness is vital to achieve the Agenda 2030 and to make the most of development

We all know that:

- Aid budgets continue to be under threat. ODA dropped by 2.7% from 2018 to 2019, with a declining share going to the neediest countries¹.

- Our publics have a mixed perception of what aid delivers. While 9 out of 10 Europeans think development co-operation remains important and 7 out of 10 think it is vital to address inequality and migration,² there are large regional differences in the perception of aid, and the proportion of those who think spending should continue as it is. Currently has declined by 5% since 2018 alone.

- To produce results for those that are most in need, we must continue to improve the way we provide co-operation. We cannot afford to ignore this – development effectiveness is vital, not only as it underpins how we deliver our support, but also how we effectively partner with each other to deliver support. Since the 2000s, the EU and its members, and other donors have been working with partner countries, and increasingly also other development actors, to promote effective development co-operation. This effort builds around four main principles:³

- **Ownership:** Partnerships can only succeed if they are led by developing countries, implementing approaches that are tailored to country-specific situations and needs.
- **Focus on Results:** Development efforts must have a lasting impact on eradicating poverty
- **Inclusive Development Partnerships:** Openness, trust, mutual respect and learning which lie at the core of effective partnerships, recognising the different and complementary roles of all actors.
- **Transparency and accountability to each other:** Accountability between donors and partner countries, and accountability to the intended beneficiaries of development co-operation, as well as to citizens, organisations, constituents and shareholders, relationships between duty bearers and rights holders as mentioned before, is critical to delivering results. Transparent practices form the basis for enhanced accountability.

While these Principles remain true, we cannot be dogmatic about how we implement them. It is about being aware of the changes in the development context and the challenges we are facing.

The world has changed, it is more polarized, the contexts in which we work are more fragile – in some cases even very fragile.

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/newsroom/development-aid-drops-in-2018-especially-to-neediest-countries.htm>

² https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/special-eurobarometer-eu-citizens-and-development-cooperation-2019_en

³ Could use the graph here: <http://effectivecooperation.org/about/principles/>

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The presence of other countries and donors, with different approaches and sometimes with more money that we have, has reduced our influence in the policy dialogue.

My Second Message is that: Development co-operation cannot and will not work in isolation. Coherent donor policies are as critical as development effectiveness itself for the positive impact of development financing.

- Our contribution to the SDGs hinges upon a coherent ‘whole of government approach’. The European Consensus on Development looks at the impact of diverse EU policies on developing countries. The ambition to ensure delivery of the SDGs, gender equality, civil society support and other priorities across all the EU institutions’ work is vital and welcome. As a non EU country, I can say that we look up to this leadership and we are looking forward the EU blazing the trail in this regard. Yet, many topics, such as migration, and national or geopolitical interests override our overall development ambitions and commitments. While EU institutions and some member countries lead the way in promoting coherence in sectors and on specific issues, greater awareness of the dilemmas and trade-offs involved in such decisions is key to exert pressure and change policies and action.

My Third Message is that: Time is running out to change political mind-sets as we approach 2030: we have evidence, we have a global platform, and we count on the European Parliament to help increase attention for effectiveness.

The Global Partnership Monitoring Report provides you with information and facts for better scrutiny of development efforts and budgets. It analyses a large data set from effectiveness indicators assessed in 86 developing countries, with more than 100 development partners, at country level. It is vital to use these findings as accountability tool and to inspire substantive dialogue and exchange in each member country, and I hope that you can help us with this.

- The Global Partnership is a multi-stakeholder body for such dialogue at global level, and we work closely with the European Commission and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which are both members of the GPEDC Steering Committee. We are also planning to evaluate and review the Global Partnership to ensure it stays ahead of the curve and helps to continue energising policy change and action.

- Switzerland is committed to the Global Partnership as a strong partner in this agenda, to modernise its narrative on effectiveness to drive forward the SDGs. We also have an interest in this because we would like to advance the discussion on connecting the dots around data issues. Therefore, we will host the next UN World Data Forum in Berne, Switzerland in October 2020 to this effect. Only if we can count on a solid database, we can ensure that no one is left behind.

The GPEDC commends the European Union for its “joint programming” and appreciates the leadership of the Commission on the political front. I greatly welcome this hearing as a critical step towards an updated resolution on development effectiveness, which will be a critical milestone in the run up to the next big political moment on development effectiveness, the third High-Level Meeting, tentatively planned for 2022.

Thank you very much.