

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3989/08
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to the Council

Subject: The Council's development priorities during the French Presidency

In its conclusions of 20 June 2008 the European Council stated that 2008 should mark a turning point in the collective efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

Although it is always useful to restate policy goals, the challenge facing the French Presidency is to move from words to action. Developing countries and the international community alike are looking for an authoritative response to concerns about issues such as EPAs, the world food crisis, the decrease in European official development assistance (ODA) and the possibility of the MDGs not being achieved by 2015.

The Council and the French Presidency will be expected to deliver on these issues over the coming months at the G8 meeting in Tokyo, the Accra Summit on development aid effectiveness, the UN high-level meeting on the MDGs, the European Development Days and the international conference on financing for development.

The French Presidency has yet to set out its development priorities. In this connection, concerns must be raised about the emphasis placed on migration-related issues when development is being discussed.

Can the Council say what its priorities will be for the next six months and how it intends to address the legitimate concerns of developing countries? What goals will it pursue under the French Presidency?

More specifically, what priorities will the French Presidency set with a view to making up for lost time in the official development assistance field so that the Member States may abide by their ODA commitments for 2010 and their MDG commitments for 2015?