



UKaid
from the Department for
International Development

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DFID

Department for
International
Development

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10th July 2010

Dear Nick,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June, setting out BOND's views on EU institutional reforms and the European Union (EU) position for the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Review Summit. Like you, I found the BOND International Development Parliamentary Reception on 9 June a successful event and a good opportunity to debate important issues with my Parliamentary colleagues and representatives from your network. Thank you also for your kind words of congratulations on my appointment. I am thrilled with it and look forward to the challenges ahead.

As you are well aware, the UK has lobbied hard for a strong development voice in the new post-Lisbon set-up. Recent developments are moving in this direction: The High Representative's proposal shifts development programming for €10 billion annually from the Commission to the European External Action Service (EEAS), with Commissioner Piebalgs providing 'direct guidance and supervision'. The European Parliament has now suggested that the Development Commissioner should be 'responsible' for programming done by the EEAS. I see this as a key improvement.

As you rightly point out in your letter, even with a broad agreement on the EEAS, we still have to make sure the EU continues delivering on development, especially in the current economic climate. We will wish to see a strong, coherent and effective counterpart in the EU delivering aid with an impact and value for money.

For instance, we want to see a senior person in the EEAS responsible for development supported by adequate development policy expertise. We also propose that a development coordination mechanism between

the Commission and EEAS is set-up to de-conflict and overcome bottlenecks early on. We also expect the Development Commissioner to be accountable to the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors, on development alongside the High Representative.

I also read with interest your position paper "Towards the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Review Summit 2010". With only five years to go, 2010 is nothing short of a make or break year for the MDGs. We hope to agree an action-oriented agenda for achieving the MDGs by 2015 in New York.

I am pleased that European Leaders endorsed an ambitious EU position for the MDGs Summit and showed their commitment to make it a success. I particularly welcome their decision to discuss ODA delivery at European Council level on an annual basis. This is an unprecedented step towards improving accountability on aid volumes at the highest possible level.

I agree it would be good to meet representatives from BOND and the broader UK NGO community working on EU development issues in future. Please ask your officials to contact my Diary Manager Jennifer McLaughlin on 020 7023 1278 or by email: Jennifer-McLaughlin@dfid.gov.uk to arrange a convenient date and time.

*With best wishes,
Yours
Stephen*

STEPHEN O'BRIEN
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State