



# Security and Official Development Assistance

Paris, 7-8 décembre 2005

## Synthesis

### **The evolution of the context**

Following September 11 and the reorganization of American foreign policy around security, official development assistance has become a priority on both the internal and international agenda. The European Union is faced with the link made by the American government between security and development, which does not tie in with its traditional issues. To subscribe to this agenda without particular thought is undoubtedly a mistake. It is not enough for Europe to be simply reactive, although it is easier to oppose than to build; it must become proactive and construct its own agenda. With regard to the globalization process and the objective of international stability, Europe must view itself as a leader, rather than as an administrator.

However, it is not a question of acting without the United States. Strategies must be inclusive, defending and implementing multilateralism. Despite the United States' tendency to use international institutions to suit its own political agenda, when multilateralism works, the United States has no choice but to accept it. In spite of the current crisis in the European Union, building a European external agenda based on cooperation policies, rather than on foreign policy, could be a means of breaking the deadlock.

There are too many gaps in the understanding of the new development stakeholders and especially the strategic role of emerging countries. Because debate on development tends to be limited to a north-north framework, when in practice development is increasingly south-south, it is of vital importance to understand the behavior of emerging countries, with the ambiguities inherent in this concept: defining their national development trajectories and identifying the consequences of their choices on global governance in order to determine their role and their strategy in the international game. Today, understanding of this multipolarity is far too limited. The strategies of emerging countries are difficult to interpret, probably because they are not yet fully established. There is consequently room here to introduce dialogue and to influence it, an opening that should be exploited as quickly as possible. Their intervention in the poorest countries, through assistance and trade, should make them fully-fledged members of the DAC. Work is required here, but there is no guarantee that these countries would agree to comply with the rules of the DAC.

Other strategic motors exist for development stakeholders, beyond security in the strict sense of the word. The issue of energy security, and especially of oil, is predominant in both developed and emerging countries (competition over resources) as well as poorer countries (the cost of resources). This dimension can easily be extended to all localized primary resources.

In this context, Europe must succeed in speaking with one voice, accepting the common destiny that drives it, while at the same time fully enjoying its diversity. It must therefore link the different visions of its members and communicate its achievements and successes. It must display a clear, strong and rallying strategy. The diversity of approaches within Europe should be seen as an asset rather than an obstacle in defining the European vision of development.

In this sense, the creation of a European consensus on development and the adoption of a European strategy for Africa can be considered encouraging initiatives.

## **The balance between security and development**

September 11 abruptly ended the illusion of the dividends resulting from the end of the cold war: human security, which stirred action during the 1990s, was replaced by just plain security. The relationship between security and development was still unclear, but it gradually became a key element of the mainstream. Consequently, during the summit on development held last September, the United Nations Secretary General outlined a link between security and development by comparing the Sachs report with the report by the High-Level Panel on Threats.

The reference to security may converge with the objectives of the development community in that anti-terrorism strategies are increasingly taking into account criteria for good governance. Linking official development assistance with security issues also allows Northern countries to justify the planned increase in aid, in the face of often skeptical national public opinion.

Europe is the greatest beneficiary of security in the world. How can the dividends of this be transferred to developing countries? How do investments and development contribute to security?

While Europe is capable of deciphering the American rationale, it lacks hindsight and perspective to build its own rationale, its own approach to the issue: it must develop a structured policy on security and send out a clear message. What is Europe's motivation for aid today? How does Europe currently link security and development? How has the introduction of security modified the strategies and actions of European donors?

In order to move forward, multilateral discussions rely on groups of countries sharing the same visions. It would therefore be more effective for Europe to speak with one voice, even on such complex issues. Here, Europe must also define its strategy: should it be a model, an example or simply a stakeholder?

The peace-building commission currently under discussion at the United Nations will contribute to the definition of this balance between security and development. Discussions are slow, positions unclear and significant reluctance exists, concerning both the creation of a new structure and the establishment of a fund that should complement rather than duplicate structures already existing. It will undoubtedly be necessary to step up European work on this issue.

### **Strengthening States and institutions**

Upstream from this problem is the issue of allocating aid and the growing importance of good governance as a criteria for allocation and efficiency. Resources are limited and the keys for sharing these resources are inevitably highly flawed. The evolution towards allocating aid based on economic performances and the quality of institutions raises the question of the position of fragile States in the international aid system. Aid, in fact, tends to be allocated in a preferential way towards the most successful recipients (as, for example, within the framework of the Millennium Challenge Account), whereas the most pressing needs are not necessarily found in these countries and, in certain post-crisis situations, aid can be highly effective.

If the goal is truly increasing stability and reducing poverty, it is essential to work with the least successful countries. But how can this be done? These situations are explained by the long term and by multiple factors whose integration is complex: the specific nature of these situations requires a high level of adaptability and diverse means and tools.

How can decisions be made as to who is capable of assuming leadership and conducting development processes in the most difficult countries? What kind of appropriation is then feasible? How is it possible to work with countries that are not the least receptive to international injunctions? What should be done when the post-conflict strategies are not working, as is the case in Ethiopia?

Relying on regional areas is undoubtedly part of the solution, which implies working with emerging countries. Decentralization is also an important dimension that must be considered. Is it really the role of donors to rebuild States?

### **About the procedure**

This informal high-level meeting between decision-makers, scientists and academics was well received by all those present. It met three requirements:

1. discussion on the best way to approach and design our policies as European;
2. exchanging and sharing knowledge and ideas between politicians, who do not often have the opportunity of turning their attention to fundamental issues, and scientists, who are not always able to question decision-makers, contrary to what happens on the other side of the Atlantic;
3. informal debates (Chatham House rules).

The diversity of disciplinary fields represented – an important dimension in this approach – made it possible to broaden discussions. One challenge facing researchers will be to conceive of intermediary results for their work that are accessible to participants who are too far from academic circles and relevant to political thinking.

Other meetings should be organized around a similar model, maintaining the diversity of participants and the informal nature of discussions. Several themes ran through debates: the role of emerging countries in global governance, energy supply in development strategies, migratory issues, and development policies, etc.

This process could contribute to simplifying Europe's involvement as the number one world donor in the establishment of the international development agenda, since the objective for Europe is to move away from a 'technical coordination' agenda to one of political participation. It would therefore have to be better structured in order to strengthen the strategy initiated here and make it even more constructive. It would make it possible to better represent the common values of Europe, far from the Manichaeism of a world presented as being divided between good and evil, in favor of a vision more open to the diversity of cultures and development methods, the only way of meeting the expectations of all developing countries. Creating a network of European think-tanks could help this process.