



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council conclusions on policy coherence for development

***FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Development) Council meeting
Brussels, 12 December 2013***

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1 The Council confirms its political engagement to Policy Coherence for Development (PCD), reaffirms all its existing PCD commitments and recalls the Treaty obligation to take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies which are likely to affect developing countries, as well as to pursue these objectives in the overall framework of the Union's external action.
2. The Council welcomes the fourth biennial EU PCD report,¹ taking stock of progress made and providing information on the efforts of the EU and its Member States to promote PCD in policy and in practice. The Council also welcomes the increased political engagement and institutional capacity to enhance PCD in some Member States and in the European Parliament and highlights the importance of disseminating and discussing the report within the EU institutions and in the Member States beyond the development community.
3. The Council notes the progress made by the Commission and the EEAS in taking forward the recommendations contained in the Council Conclusions on Policy Coherence for Development of 14 May 2012, in particular in terms of promoting independent assessments and strengthening PCD at country level, inter alia through a reinforced role for EU Delegations. Nevertheless, further progress is needed.
4. The Council recalls that the role of EU Delegations is essential in providing feedback on issues relating to PCD and encourages the Commission and the EEAS to continue their efforts and report further on PCD processes and initiatives at country level. This includes a strengthened dialogue with local stakeholders regarding the impact of EU policies. Designating PCD focal points in EU Delegations could be useful in this regard.

¹ 15646/13

P R E S S

5. The Council notes that, in the context of EU external action, close cooperation between the EEAS, the European Commission and EU Member States is necessary to strengthen PCD.
6. The Council recognises that there is a need for regular political PCD discussions on related thematic issues at all levels in all relevant formations of the Council, including at Ministerial level. The Council also notes that continued efforts and political will are needed to anchor PCD more strongly in areas beyond external action and in on-going debates on global issues and challenges, including the discussions on a post-2015 framework, with a view to mainstreaming PCD in policy formulation and development processes beyond 2015. The EU can play a prominent role in promoting PCD in this regard. To this end, the Council calls on the Commission, the EEAS, the European Parliament and incoming Presidencies of the Council of the EU to strive towards broad engagement on PCD across policy areas and institutions in order to create a common and forward-looking understanding of challenges and possibilities for PCD.
7. The Council also believes that further progress is needed on several issues covered in the 2012 Council Conclusions on issues such as measuring PCD and on promoting a more evidence-based approach, including through the quantification of the costs of incoherencies for selected cases, and underlines that further work is needed to move towards a more focused, operational and results-oriented approach to PCD. Specific attention is required regarding the quality of targets and indicators. The EU's impact assessments, sustainable impact assessments and evaluations can play an important role in ensuring ex-ante mainstreaming of PCD and in assessing results. The Council calls for strengthening the development dimension of these tools in the context of the review of their respective guidelines.
8. In this context, the Council encourages the Commission and the EEAS to further develop the PCD knowledge base, through increased research efforts on PCD, including through continued work with the OECD on relevant methodologies and indicators, and through thematic PCD case or country studies as well as independent evaluations and assessments.
9. The Council reiterates its decision to focus in the immediate future on five PCD challenges: trade and finance, climate change, food security, migration and security. In that context, the Council calls on the Commission and the EEAS to develop, in cooperation with Member States, an overview of forthcoming policy proposals and initiatives relevant to PCD on the basis of the annual Commission's work programmes to be shared with the relevant Council bodies starting in early 2014 and onwards.
10. The Council also encourages the Commission and the EEAS to develop a longer-term programme that would focus on areas where the EU can act as an agent of change and where concrete results can be achieved on the basis of clear political objectives. The new PCD work programme should also take into account, as appropriate, issues emerging from the post-2015 framework.
11. The Council looks forward to receiving in 2015 the fifth biennial report on PCD."