

Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness Ownership Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability

I. Statement of Resolve

1. We, Ministers of developed and developing countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions, meeting in Paris on 2 March 2005, resolve to take far-reaching and monitorable actions to reform the ways we deliver and manage aid as we look ahead to the UN five-year review of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) later this year. As in Monterrey, we recognise that while the volumes of aid and other development resources must increase to achieve these goals, aid effectiveness must increase significantly as well to support partner country efforts to strengthen governance and improve development performance. This will be all the more important if existing and new bilateral and multilateral initiatives lead to significant further increases in aid.

2. At this High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, we followed up on the Declaration adopted at the High-Level Forum on Harmonisation in Rome (February 2003) and the core principles put forward at the Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development Results (February 2004) because we believe they will increase the impact aid has in reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating achievement of the MDGs.

Scale up for more effective aid

3. We reaffirm the commitments made at Rome to harmonise and align aid delivery. We are encouraged that many donors and partner countries are making aid effectiveness a high priority, and we reaffirm our commitment to accelerate progress in implementation, especially in the following areas:

- i. Strengthening partner countries' national development strategies and associated operational frameworks (e.g., planning, budget, and performance assessment frameworks).
- ii. Increasing alignment of aid with partner countries' priorities, systems and procedures and helping to strengthen their capacities.
- iii. Enhancing donors' and partner countries' respective accountability to their citizens and parliaments for their development policies, strategies and performance.
- iv. Eliminating duplication of efforts and rationalising donor activities to make them as cost-effective as possible.
- v. Reforming and simplifying donor policies and procedures to encourage collaborative behaviour and progressive alignment with partner countries' priorities, systems and procedures.
- vi. Defining measures and standards of performance and accountability of partner country systems in public financial management, procurement, fiduciary safeguards and environmental assessments, in line with broadly accepted good practices and their quick and widespread application.

4. We commit ourselves to taking concrete and effective action to address the remaining challenges, including:

- i. Weaknesses in partner countries' institutional capacities to develop and implement results-driven national development strategies.
- ii. Failure to provide more predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows to committed partner countries.
- iii. Insufficient delegation of authority to donors' field staff, and inadequate attention to incentives for effective development partnerships between donors and partner countries.
- iv. Insufficient integration of global programmes and initiatives into partner countries' broader development agendas, including in critical areas such as HIV/AIDS.
- v. Corruption and lack of transparency, which erode public support, impede effective resource mobilisation and allocation and divert resources away from activities that are vital for poverty reduction and sustainable economic development. Where corruption exists, it inhibits donors from relying on partner country systems.

5. We acknowledge that enhancing the effectiveness of aid is feasible and necessary across all aid modalities. In determining the most effective modalities of aid delivery, we will be guided by development strategies and priorities established by partner countries. Individually and collectively, we will choose and design appropriate and complementary modalities so as to maximise their combined effectiveness.

6. In following up the Declaration, we will intensify our efforts to provide and use development assistance, including the increased flows as promised at Monterrey, in ways that rationalise the often excessive fragmentation of donor activities at the country and sector levels.

Adapt and apply to differing country situations

7. Enhancing the effectiveness of aid is also necessary in challenging and complex situations, such as the tsunami disaster that struck countries of the Indian Ocean rim on 26 December 2004. In such situations, worldwide humanitarian and development assistance must be harmonised within the growth and poverty reduction agendas of partner countries. In fragile states, as we support state-building and delivery of basic services, we will ensure that the principles of harmonisation, alignment and managing for results are adapted to environments of weak governance and capacity. Overall, we will give increased attention to such complex situations as we work toward greater aid effectiveness.

8. We accept that the reforms suggested in this Declaration will require continued high-level political support, peer pressure and coordinated actions at the global, regional and country levels. We commit to accelerate the pace of change by implementing, in a spirit of mutual accountability, the Partnership Commitments presented in Section II and to measure progress against 12 specific indicators that we have agreed today and that are set out in Section III of this Declaration.

9. As a further spur to progress, we will set targets for the year 2010. These targets, which will involve action by both donors and partner countries, are designed to track and

encourage progress at the global level among the countries and agencies that have agreed to this Declaration. They are not intended to prejudice or substitute for any targets that individual partner countries may wish to set. We have agreed today to set five preliminary targets against indicators as shown in Section III. We agree to review these preliminary targets and to adopt targets against the remaining indicators as shown in Section III before the UNGA Summit in September 2005; and we ask the partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC to prepare for this urgently¹. Meanwhile, we welcome initiatives by partner countries and donors to establish their own targets for 1 In accordance with paragraph 9 of the Declaration, the partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC (Working Party on Aid Effectiveness) comprising OECD/DAC members, partner countries and multilateral institutions, met twice, on 30-31 May 2005 and on 7-8 July 2005 to adopt, and review where appropriate, the targets for the twelve Indicators of Progress. At these meetings an agreement was reached on the targets presented under Section III of the present Declaration. This agreement is subject to reservations by one donor on (a) the methodology for assessing the quality of locally-managed procurement systems (relating to targets 2b and 5b) and (b) the acceptable quality of public financial management reform programmes (relating to target 5a.ii). Further discussions are underway to address these issues. The targets, including the reservation, have been notified to the Chairs of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations in a letter of 9 September 2005 by Mr. Richard Manning, Chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). improved aid effectiveness within the framework of the agreed Partnership Commitments and Indicators of Progress. For example, a number of partner countries have presented action plans, and a large number of donors have announced important new commitments. We invite all participants who wish to provide information on such initiatives to submit it by 4 April 2005 for subsequent publication.

10. Because demonstrating real progress at country level is critical, under the leadership of the partner country we will periodically assess, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, our mutual progress at country level in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness. In doing so, we will make use of appropriate country level mechanisms.

11. At the international level, we call on the partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC to broaden partner country participation and, by the end of 2005, to propose arrangements for the medium term monitoring of the commitments in this Declaration. In the meantime, we ask the partnership to co-ordinate the international monitoring of the Indicators of Progress included in Section III; to refine targets as necessary; to provide appropriate guidance to establish baselines; and to enable consistent aggregation of information across a range of countries to be summed up in a periodic report. We will also use existing peer review mechanisms and regional reviews to support progress in this agenda. We will, in addition, explore independent cross-country monitoring and evaluation processes – which should be applied without imposing additional burdens on partners – to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how increased aid effectiveness contributes to meeting development objectives.

12. Consistent with the focus on implementation, we plan to meet again in 2008 in a developing country and conduct two rounds of monitoring before then to review progress in implementing this Declaration.

II. Partnership Commitments

13. Developed in a spirit of mutual accountability, these Partnership Commitments are based on the lessons of experience. We recognise that commitments need to be interpreted in the light of the specific situation of each partner country.

OWNERSHIP

Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and co-ordinate development actions

14. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Exercise leadership in developing and implementing their national development strategies² through broad consultative processes.
- ✚ Translate these national development strategies into prioritised results-oriented operational programmes as expressed in medium-term expenditure frameworks and annual budgets (**Indicator 1**).
- ✚ Take the lead in co-ordinating aid at all levels in conjunction with other development resources in dialogue with donors and encouraging the participation of civil society and the private sector.

15. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Respect partner country leadership and help strengthen their capacity to exercise it.

The term 'national development strategies' includes poverty reduction and similar overarching strategies as well as sector and thematic strategies.

ALIGNMENT

Donors base their overall support on partner countries' national development strategies, institutions and procedures **Donors align with partners' strategies**

16. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Base their overall support — country strategies, policy dialogues and development co-operation programmes — on partners' national development strategies and periodic reviews of progress in implementing these strategies³ (**Indicator 3**).
- ✚ Draw conditions, whenever possible, from a partner's national development strategy or its annual review of progress in implementing this strategy. Other conditions would be included only when a sound justification exists and would be undertaken transparently and in close consultation with other donors and stakeholders.
- ✚ Link funding to a single framework of conditions and/or a manageable set of indicators derived from the national development strategy. This does not mean

that all donors have identical conditions, but that each donor's conditions should be derived from a common streamlined framework aimed at achieving lasting results.

Donors use strengthened country systems

17. Using a country's own institutions and systems, where these provide assurance that aid will be used for agreed purposes, increases aid effectiveness by strengthening the partner country's sustainable capacity to develop, implement and account for its policies to its citizens and parliament. Country systems and procedures typically include, but are not restricted to, national arrangements and procedures for public financial management, accounting, auditing, procurement, results frameworks and monitoring.

18. Diagnostic reviews are an important — and growing — source of information to governments and donors on the state of country systems in partner countries. Partner countries and donors have a shared interest in being able to monitor progress over time in improving country systems. They are assisted by performance assessment frameworks, and an associated set of reform measures, that build on the information set out in diagnostic reviews and related analytical work.

19. **Partner countries** and **donors** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Work together to establish mutually agreed frameworks that provide reliable assessments of performance, transparency and accountability of country systems (**Indicator 2**).
- ✚ Integrate diagnostic reviews and performance assessment frameworks within country-led strategies for capacity development.

20. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Carry out diagnostic reviews that provide reliable assessments of country systems and procedures.
- ✚ On the basis of such diagnostic reviews, undertake reforms that may be necessary to ensure that national systems, institutions and procedures for managing aid and other development resources are effective, accountable and transparent.
- ✚ Undertake reforms, such as public management reform, that may be necessary to launch and fuel sustainable capacity development processes.

21. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Use country systems and procedures to the maximum extent possible. Where use of country systems is not feasible, establish additional safeguards and measures in ways that strengthen rather than undermine country systems and procedures (**Indicator 5**).

This includes for example the Annual Progress Review of the Poverty Reduction Strategies (APR).

- ✚ Avoid, to the maximum extent possible, creating dedicated structures for day-to-day management and implementation of aid-financed projects and programmes (**Indicator 6**).

- ✚ Adopt harmonised performance assessment frameworks for country systems so as to avoid presenting partner countries with an excessive number of potentially conflicting targets.

Partner countries strengthen development capacity with support from donors

22. The capacity to plan, manage, implement, and account for results of policies and programmes, is critical for achieving development objectives — from analysis and dialogue through implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Capacity development is the responsibility of partner countries with donors playing a support role. It needs not only to be based on sound technical analysis, but also to be responsive to the broader social, political and economic environment, including the need to strengthen human resources.

23. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Integrate specific capacity strengthening objectives in national development strategies and pursue their implementation through country-led capacity development strategies where needed.

24. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Align their analytic and financial support with partners' capacity development objectives and strategies, make effective use of existing capacities and harmonise support for capacity development accordingly

(Indicator 4). Strengthen public financial management capacity

25. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Intensify efforts to mobilise domestic resources, strengthen fiscal sustainability, and create an enabling environment for public and private investments.
- ✚ Publish timely, transparent and reliable reporting on budget execution.
- ✚ Take leadership of the public financial management reform process.

26. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Provide reliable indicative commitments of aid over a multi-year framework and disburse aid in a timely and predictable fashion according to agreed schedules (**Indicator 7**).
- ✚ Rely to the maximum extent possible on transparent partner government budget and accounting mechanisms (**Indicator 5**).

27. **Partner countries** and **donors** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Implement harmonised diagnostic reviews and performance assessment frameworks in public financial management.

Strengthen national procurement systems

28. **Partner countries** and **donors** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Use mutually agreed standards and processes⁴ to carry out diagnostics, develop sustainable reforms and monitor implementation.

- ✚ Commit sufficient resources to support and sustain medium and long-term procurement reforms and capacity development.
- ✚ Share feedback at the country level on recommended approaches so they can be improved over time.

Such as the processes developed by the joint OECD-DAC – World Bank Round Table on Strengthening Procurement Capacities in Developing Countries.

29. **Partner countries** commit to take leadership and implement the procurement reform process.

30. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Progressively rely on partner country systems for procurement when the country has implemented mutually agreed standards and processes (**Indicator 5**).
- ✚ Adopt harmonised approaches when national systems do not meet mutually agreed levels of performance or donors do not use them.

Untie aid: getting better value for money

31. Untying aid generally increases aid effectiveness by reducing transaction costs for partner countries and improving country ownership and alignment. **DAC Donors** will continue to make progress on untying as encouraged by the 2001 DAC Recommendation on Untying Official Development Assistance to the Least Developed Countries (**Indicator 8**).

HARMONISATION

Donors' actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective

Donors implement common arrangements and simplify procedures

32. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Implement the donor action plans that they have developed as part of the follow-up to the Rome High- Level Forum.
- ✚ Implement, where feasible, common arrangements at country level for planning, funding (e.g. joint financial arrangements), disbursement, monitoring, evaluating and reporting to government on donor activities and aid flows. Increased use of programme-based aid modalities can contribute to this effort (**Indicator 9**)
- ✚ Work together to reduce the number of separate, duplicative, missions to the field and diagnostic reviews (**Indicator 10**); and promote joint training to share lessons learnt and build a community of practice.

Complementarity: more effective division of labour

33. Excessive fragmentation of aid at global, country or sector level impairs aid effectiveness. A pragmatic approach to the division of labour and burden sharing increases complementarity and can reduce transaction costs.

34. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Provide clear views on donors' comparative advantage and on how to achieve donor complementarity at country or sector level.

35. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Make full use of their respective comparative advantage at sector or country level by delegating, where appropriate, authority to lead donors for the execution of programmes, activities and tasks.
- ✚ Work together to harmonise separate procedures.

Incentives for collaborative behaviour

36. **Donors** and **partner countries** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Reform procedures and strengthen incentives—including for recruitment, appraisal and training—for management and staff to work towards harmonisation, alignment and results.

Delivering effective aid in fragile states⁵

37. The long-term vision for international engagement in fragile states is to build legitimate, effective and resilient state and other country institutions. While the guiding principles of effective aid apply equally to fragile states, they need to be adapted to environments of weak ownership and capacity and to immediate needs for basic service delivery.

38. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Make progress towards building institutions and establishing governance structures that deliver effective governance, public safety, security, and equitable access to basic social services for their citizens.
- ✚ Engage in dialogue with donors on developing simple planning tools, such as the transitional results matrix, where national development strategies are not yet in place.
- ✚ Encourage broad participation of a range of national actors in setting development priorities.

39. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Harmonise their activities. Harmonisation is all the more crucial in the absence of strong government leadership. It should focus on upstream analysis, joint assessments, joint strategies, co-ordination of political engagement; and practical initiatives such as the establishment of joint donor offices.
- ✚ Align to the maximum extent possible behind central government-led strategies or, if that is not possible, donors should make maximum use of country, regional, sector or non-government systems.
- ✚ Avoid activities that undermine national institution building, such as bypassing national budget processes or setting high salaries for local staff.
- ✚ Use an appropriate mix of aid instruments, including support for recurrent financing, particularly for countries in promising but high-risk transitions.

Promoting a harmonised approach to environmental assessments

40. Donors have achieved considerable progress in harmonisation around environmental impact assessment (EIA) including relevant health and social issues at the project level.

This progress needs to be deepened, including on addressing implications of global environmental issues such as climate change, desertification and loss of biodiversity.

41. **Donors** and **partner countries** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Strengthen the application of EIAs and deepen common procedures for projects, including consultations with stakeholders; and develop and apply common approaches for “strategic environmental assessment” at the sector and national levels.
- ✚ Continue to develop the specialised technical and policy capacity necessary for environmental analysis and for enforcement of legislation.

42. Similar harmonisation efforts are also needed on other cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality and other thematic issues including those financed by dedicated funds.

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Managing resources and improving decision-making for results

43. Managing for results means managing and implementing aid in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses information to improve decision-making.

The following section draws on the draft Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States, which emerged from the Senior Level Forum on Development Effectiveness in Fragile States (London, January 2005).

44. **Partner countries** commit to:

- ✚ Strengthen the linkages between national development strategies and annual and multi-annual budget processes.

Endeavour to establish results-oriented reporting and assessment frameworks that monitor progress against key dimensions of the national and sector development strategies; and that these frameworks should track a manageable number of indicators for which data are cost-effectively available (**Indicator 11**).

45. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Link country programming and resources to results and align them with effective partner country performance assessment frameworks, refraining from requesting the introduction of performance indicators that are not consistent with partners’ national development strategies.

- ✚ Work with partner countries to rely, as far as possible, on partner countries’ results-oriented reporting

and monitoring frameworks.

- ✚ Harmonise their monitoring and reporting requirements, and, until they can rely more extensively on partner countries’ statistical, monitoring and evaluation systems, with partner countries to the maximum extent possible on joint formats for periodic reporting.

46. **Partner countries** and **donors** jointly commit to:

- ✚ Work together in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and demand for results based management.

MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Donors and partners are accountable for development results

47. A major priority for partner countries and donors is to enhance mutual accountability and transparency in the use of development resources. This also helps strengthen public support for national policies and development assistance.

48. **Partner countries** commit to:

Strengthen as appropriate the parliamentary role in national development strategies and/or budgets.

- ✚ Reinforce participatory approaches by systematically involving a broad range of development partners when formulating and assessing progress in implementing national development strategies.

49. **Donors** commit to:

- ✚ Provide timely, transparent and comprehensive information on aid flows so as to enable partner authorities to present comprehensive budget reports to their legislatures and citizens.

50. **Partner countries** and **donors** commit to:

Jointly assess through existing and increasingly objective country level mechanisms mutual progress in implementing agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, including the Partnership Commitments. (**Indicator 12**).

Important Note: In accordance with paragraph 9 of the Declaration, the partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC (Working Party on Aid Effectiveness) comprising OECD/DAC members, partner countries and multilateral institutions, met twice, on 30-31 May 2005 and on 7-8 July 2005 to adopt, and review where appropriate, the targets for the twelve Indicators of Progress. At these meetings an agreement was reached on the targets presented under Section III of the present Declaration. This agreement is subject to reservations by one donor on (a) the methodology for assessing the quality of locally-managed procurement systems (relating to targets 2b and 5b) and (b) the acceptable quality of public financial management reform programmes (relating to target 5a.ii). Further discussions are underway to address these issues. The targets, including the reservation, have been notified to the Chairs of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations in a letter of 9 September 2005 by Mr. Richard Manning, Chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

***Note on Indicator 5:** Scores for Indicator 5 are determined by the methodology used to measure quality of procurement and public financial management systems under Indicator 2 above.

Appendix A:

Methodological Notes on the Indicators of Progress

The Indicators of Progress provides a framework in which to make operational the responsibilities and accountabilities that are framed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. This framework draws selectively from the Partnership Commitments presented in Section II of this Declaration.

Purpose — The Indicators of Progress provide a framework in which to make operational the responsibilities and accountabilities that are framed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. They measure principally **collective behaviour at the country level**.

Country level vs. global level — The indicators are to be **measured at the country level** in close collaboration between partner countries and donors. Values of country level indicators can then be statistically aggregated at the **regional or global level**. This global aggregation would be done both for the country panel mentioned below, for purposes of statistical comparability, and more broadly for all partner countries for which relevant data are available.

Donor / Partner country performance — The indicators of progress also provide a **benchmark against which individual donor agencies or partner countries can measure their performance** at the country, regional, or global level. In measuring individual donor performance, the indicators should be applied with flexibility in the recognition that donors have different institutional mandates.

Targets — The targets are set at the global level. Progress against these targets is to be measured by aggregating data measured at the country level. In addition to global targets, partner countries and donors in a given country might agree on country-level targets.

Baseline — A baseline will be established for 2005 in a panel of self-selected countries. The partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC (Working Party on Aid Effectiveness) is asked to establish this panel.

Definitions and criteria — The partnership of donors and partner countries hosted by the DAC (Working Party on Aid Effectiveness) is asked to provide specific guidance on definitions, scope of application, criteria and methodologies to assure that results can be aggregated across countries and across time.

Note on Indicator 9 — Programme based approaches are defined in Volume 2 of Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery (OECD, 2005) in Box 3.1 as a way of engaging in development cooperation based on the principles of co-ordinated support for a locally owned programme of development, such as a national development strategy, a sector programme, a thematic programme or a programme of a specific organisation. Programme based approaches share the following features: (a) leadership by the host country or organisation; (b) a single comprehensive programme and budget framework; (c) a formalised process for donor co-ordination and harmonisation of donor procedures for reporting, budgeting, financial management and procurement; (d) Efforts to increase the use of local systems for programme design and implementation, financial management, monitoring and evaluation. For the purpose of indicator 9 performance will be measured separately across the aid modalities that contribute to programme-based approaches.

Appendix B:

List of Participating Countries and Organisations

Participating Countries

Albania Australia Austria
Bangladesh Belgium Benin
Bolivia Botswana [Brazil]*
Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia
Cameroon Canada China
Congo D.R. Czech Republic Denmark
Dominican Republic Egypt Ethiopia
European Commission Fiji Finland
France Gambia, The Germany
Ghana Greece Guatemala
Guinea Honduras Iceland
Indonesia Ireland Italy
Jamaica Japan Jordan
Kenya Korea Kuwait
Kyrgyz Republic Lao PDR Luxembourg
Madagascar Malawi Malaysia
Mali Mauritania Mexico
Mongolia Morocco Mozambique
Nepal Netherlands New Zealand
Nicaragua Niger Norway
Pakistan Papua New Guinea Philippines
Poland Portugal Romania
Russian Federation Rwanda Saudi Arabia
Senegal Serbia and Montenegro Slovak Republic
Solomon Islands South Africa Spain
Sri Lanka Sweden Switzerland
Tajikistan Tanzania Thailand
Timor-Leste Tunisia Turkey
Uganda United Kingdom United States of America
Vanuatu Vietnam Yemen
Zambia.

*** To be confirmed.**

More countries than listed here have endorsed the Paris Declaration. For a full and up to date list please consult www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclaration/members.