

Press Release

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Accra aid conference: need to redouble our efforts to meet jointly agreed targets on alignment by 2010

At the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra/Ghana 2 -4 September 2008, participants of the Roundtable on Alignment noted that progress towards greater alignment has been limited and called to step up efforts to support partner countries' policies and use their systems and procedures.

Alignment is a key principle of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), which was signed by over 100 ministers and representatives of development agencies. During the Accra Roundtable, panellists took stock of the limited progress towards agreed targets for 2010. The Roundtable concluded that there is an urgent need to accelerate on the delivery of the Paris Declaration commitments.

- Donors need to reduce conditionality, shifting away from unilaterally imposed policy conditions towards accountability on results, stronger dialogue between partners and medium term assessments of performance.
- Alignment requires reforms. Donors must make greater use of country systems to support their on-going strengthening. Partners need to continue their efforts to reform their systems. When these are of quality, they must be used.
- Aid must be made more predictable through multi-annual commitments on a rolling basis and delivery modalities, like budget support.
- Donors and partner countries must address the legal and administrative constraints limiting their capacity to meet the 2010 targets. The political support needed for these reforms calls for discussions on alignment to be opened up to all relevant stakeholders, such as Civil Society and national Parliaments.

Debapriya Bhattacharya, Ambassador of Bangladesh to the WTO and UN, called for a change in the political attitudes of the donors to development aid: "As long as the donor community continues to see foreign aid as a tool for its foreign policy, full alignment with partner country priorities can not take place."

Stefano Manservigi, Director General for Development at the European Commission, emphasized the 'importance of reducing the coefficient of mistrust which is preventing full alignment. It is the mistrust that prevents aid effectiveness.'

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