General Assembly Second Committee  
16 October 2013  

Item 17: Macroeconomic policy questions and  
Item 18: Follow-up to the Intl Conference on Financing for Development  

Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States  

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Mr Chairman,  

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.  

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and Montenegro*, and the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina align themselves with this statement.  

In his opening statement to the HLD on Financing for Development held only last week, the President of the General Assembly Ambassador John Ashe said that "the HLD takes place at a time when three significant UN intergovernmental processes, that relating to sustainable development, the post-2015 Development Agenda and financing for development, are about to converge. To get us to these milestones, financing – more specifically, financing for development is the elixir – the lifeblood, if you like – that we need."  

We agree that it is important to look at these processes in an integrated fashion also in light of the fact that the challenges we face are diverse and often daunting, and the means limited. In the same vein we also attach the highest priority to ensuring policy coherence, not only between the follow up to Rio+20, the post-2015 development agenda, and the Financing for Development process, but also with many other processes including such as those relating to democracy, rule of law, human rights, gender equality, empowerment of women, population and development.  

Mr. Chairman,  

At the September MDG Special Event, the international community reiterated its commitment to undertake all efforts towards achieving the MDGs. Here, the focus should be on the most off-track MDGs with particular attention to certain groups of countries, such as LDCs, landlocked economies and SIDS. The EU and its  

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
Member States remain committed to delivering on our commitments and are focused on helping achieve the MDGs.

The September MDG Special Event called for a coherent approach towards a single post-2015 framework and set of Goals culminating in a Summit in September 2015 for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. It also reaffirmed the importance of mobilising and using effectively all resources, public and private, domestic and international.

We continue to believe that the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration provide a broad policy framework upon which to base our future discussions on financing. The key element of that framework – a comprehensive approach with shared responsibilities – remains as relevant today as it was more than a decade ago. In this context we look forward to engaging with partners in informal consultations with a view to taking a final decision on the need for a follow-up financing for development conference by 2013.

The EU and its Member States have been monitoring all of their Monterrey commitments – and more – on an annual basis since 2003. The last EU Accountability Report on Financing for Development, released this July, revealed that good progress had been made towards meeting most of the EU's ambitious commitments. For example, over the last 10 years the EU and its Member States committed almost 45 billion euro per year to development aid – more than half of the assistance reported by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The EU remains the largest trading partner of developing countries and the market most open to them, and the EU accounted for 71% of global debt relief over the period 2000-2011.

However, this framework needs to be adapted to new circumstances – the distribution of global wealth, the increased interdependence, the balance across different financing sources, the role of emerging donors, all have changed considerably over the last decade. We have also seen the multiplication of international financing processes and instruments, such as those associated with climate or biodiversity finance. We support the work of the intergovernmental committee of experts on sustainable development financing in proposing options for a sustainable development financing strategy and for a more effective mobilization and use of existing resources. We stand ready to contribute to the reflection on an integrated financial strategy framework for sustainable development in view of the post-2015 development agenda.

As one element of a comprehensive approach, innovative financing can complement other resources and has been widely recognized for its contribution to development. We are committed to working on innovative mechanisms for raising and utilising resources to ensure predictable financing for sustainable development and to achieve the MDGs and other internationally agreed development objectives.

In our view, looking beyond 2015, it will be important to preserve the policy framework of Monterrey and Doha, while adapting it to new challenges and circumstances. This framework should be policy-focused – because good policy matters as much as money; comprehensive – it should cover all financing sources, whether domestic, international, private or public, innovative financing mechanisms, as well as tackling illicit flows, such as tax evasion; it should be integrated – to make the most out of synergies between different policy goals; flexible and focused on effective implementation at the country-level; and it should be based on mutual accountability in order to reflect shared responsibilities.

Effective use of all resources is crucial and this is why we view positively a comprehensive monitoring system. Here, it is important to recall that the Monterrey Consensus initiated the global international effectiveness discussions, which are now led by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation created in Busan in 2011. The Busan effectiveness principles provide an important element to complement the post-2015 discussions.
Mr Chairman,

Concerning the sub-items under item 17, dealing with Macroeconomic Policy Questions, we remain of the view that trade, international financial system, commodities and external debt issues are very much intertwined with Financing for Development, which is a separate agenda item. We continue to believe that all these issues, which were placed on the General Assembly agenda following the Conference in Monterrey, are best addressed under the umbrella of the Monterrey Consensus. This need for coherence and avoidance of duplication is very much recognised in the Secretary General’s report submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 65/145 and we fully support it. In this regard we continue to believe that it would be pragmatic to have an omnibus resolution addressing all these issues in a holistic fashion.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding the financial and economic outlook, the recovery from the crisis continues, albeit too slowly. Economic activity is gaining momentum across several advanced economies, although in emerging markets the pace of growth is less robust than was anticipated.

We continue to support all efforts to promote strong, sustainable and balanced growth, resist protectionism and to strengthen the universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system of the WTO. The EU will also pursue its efforts to achieve progress on the Doha Development Agenda in time for the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference that will take place in Bali in December 2013, including with a focus on the conclusions of an Agreement on Trade Facilitation and agreeing on a specific package for LDCs.

The EU offers developing countries a wide range of instruments to better harness the potential of trade for inclusive growth and sustainable development, notably the Generalised System of Preferences, Aid for Trade and the conclusion of regional and bilateral trade agreements.

Mr Chairman,

The financial crisis has accelerated the speed of reforms to improve global economic governance and the functioning of the international financial architecture. The EU welcomes the recent decisions to strengthen regulation, supervision and monitoring of the financial system. We support the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reform agreement aimed at strengthening the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Fund, recognizing also the growing role of emerging market and developing countries in the global economy. Ratification of the 2010 Reform is our priority.

Mr Chairman,

A key focus should remain on strengthening growth and creating jobs whilst maintaining fiscal sustainability and in this context we strongly support the top priority given by the G20 to these themes. This includes implementing structural reforms and conducting policies that ensure fiscal sustainability and financial stability. We encourage all G20 members to fully implement the commitments of the “St. Petersburg Action Plan” for strong, sustainable and balanced growth.

These are global efforts and in all these areas we consider that increased multilateral discussion and cooperation with all relevant stakeholders will play an important role in improving economic performance and sustainable development.

Thank you.