

4 December 2018

Dear EU Heads of State and Government,

Re. EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027

We are writing to you in advance of the European Council on 13-14 December in order to **outline our recommendations on EU external action in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**, specifically on Heading VI (Neighbourhood and the World). We are civil society organisations active in the fields of sustainable development, human rights, democracy, peacebuilding, social and environmental justice and humanitarian aid. We are supported collectively by hundreds of member organisations in your countries and by hundreds of thousands of people across Europe and beyond.

The next **MFF must respond to the multiple challenges facing people and the planet**, deliver on the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ensure that no one is left behind. The EU's contribution to addressing these global challenges, protecting and promoting human rights and democracy, and to fighting inequalities enjoys unprecedented support from EU citizens and needs to be further strengthened. Thus, **development co-operation, climate action, human rights and democracy, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding must remain top priorities for Heading VI.**

Heading VI, as proposed by the Commission, aims for simplification in the next MFF, by merging 12 instruments into a new Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). While we are aware that there are still divergent views amongst Member States on the proposed NDICI Regulation, we urge you to agree on a timeline which would ensure that the **European Council conclusions on the next MFF can be adopted by May 2019** so that the EU's role as a leading global actor can be maintained after 2020.

Furthermore, in relation to Heading VI, we urge you to reconsider our following recommendations in your conclusions:

1. To **maintain the level of resources for Heading VI at no less than 10% of the overall MFF** and to ensure that the incorporation of the European Development Fund in the EU budget does not lead to a decrease of funding for the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries;
2. To reiterate the EU's long-standing commitment to contribute **0.7% of GNI to official development assistance (ODA)**;

3. To restate the commitment made in the February 2013 European Council conclusions on MFF 2014-2020 (EUCO 37/13) to spend **at least 90% of the external action heading as ODA** and to apply it to Heading VI.

Civil society is an integral partner to the EU in its efforts to fulfil its external action objectives. As such, we encourage you to be bold and visionary to ensure the EU and its Member States are collectively able to build a better world and to translate policy commitments into action.

We hope that you can take our recommendations on board in your discussions at the European Council and we look forward to engaging with you on these and other issues as the negotiations on the next MFF progress.

Yours sincerely,



Johannes Trimmel  
President  
CONCORD



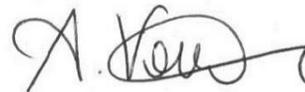
Sonya Reines-Djivanides  
Executive Director  
EPLO



Kathrin Schick  
Director  
VOICE



Wendel Trio  
Director  
Climate Action Now Europe



Antonia Vornier  
Director (ad interim)  
Eurodad

cc.

Mr Donald Tusk, President of the European Council

Mr Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

Ms Federica Mogherini, High Representative Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission

Mr Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources

Mr Neven Mimica, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development

Mr Christos Stylianides, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management

Mr Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations

Mr Dimitris Avramopoulos, Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship

Mr Miguel Arias Cañete, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy

Mr Julian King, Commissioner for Security Union



CONCORD is the European NGO confederation for Relief and Development. With the support of our 51 members, our confederation, representing over 2,600 NGOs, is the main interlocutor with the EU institutions on development policy. Since 2003, we work towards a world where people enjoy their right to live free of poverty and exploitation as well as their right to enjoy wellbeing and equality.



The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) is the independent civil society platform of European NGOs, networks of NGOs and think tanks which are committed to peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict. EPLO aims to influence the EU so that it promotes and implements measures which lead to sustainable peace between states and within states and peoples, and which transform and resolve conflicts non-violently.



VOICE (Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies) is a network representing 86 European NGOs active in humanitarian aid worldwide. VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union on emergency aid and disaster risk reduction and it promotes the values of humanitarian NGOs.



Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe is Europe's leading NGO coalition fighting dangerous climate change. With over 150 member organisations from 35 European countries, representing over 1.700 NGOs and more than 40 million citizens, CAN Europe promotes sustainable climate, energy and development policies throughout Europe.



Eurodad (the European Network on Debt and Development) is a network of 47 civil society organisations from 20 European countries. Eurodad works for transformative yet specific changes to global and European policies, institutions, rules and structures to ensure a democratically controlled, environmentally sustainable financial and economic system that works to eradicate poverty and ensure human rights for all.