Minutes from meeting in the Council for Development Policy 1 October 2019

Present:

Members:	Professor Emeritus Georg Sørensen, University of Aarhus (Chair) International Director Gunvor Bjerglund Thomsen, The Danish Youth Council (Vice Chair) Head of Projects Tine Bork, SMEdenmark Director Jan Laustsen, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council Senior Researcher Lars Engberg-Pedersen, Danish Institute for International Studies Associate Professor Michael Wendelboe Hansen, Copenhagen Business School Partner Marina Buch Kristensen, Nordic Consulting Group General Secretary Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen, CARE Danmark General Secretary Birgitte Qvist-Sørensen, DanChurchAid Director Mads Bugge Madsen, The LO/FTF Council Director Thomas Bustrup, Confederation of Danish Industries (agenda item 6-8)
MFA:	State Secretary for Development Policy Trine Rask Thygesen Head of Department Mikael Hemniti Winther, Technical Quality Support Deputy Head of Department Signe Skovbakke Winding Albjerg, Africa, Policy and Development Adviser Mette Brink Madsen, Department for Technical Quality Support
Agenda item 2:	Head of Department Henriette Ellermann-Kingombe and Head of Section Bo Jul Jeppesen, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change
Agenda item 3:	Head of Department Henriette Ellermann-Kingombe and Chief Adviser Morten Houmann Blomqvist, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change
Agenda item 4:	Head of Department Henriette Ellermann-Kingombe, Chief Adviser Niels Richter and Head of Section Martin Hybel Havelykke, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change
Agenda item 5:	Deputy head of Department Signe Skovbakke Winding Albjerg and Head of Section Klara Therese Christensen, Department for Africa, Policy and Development
Agenda item 6:	Head of Department Ole Thonke and Special Adviser Dorrit Skaarup Jensen, Department for Sustainable Growth and Employment
Agenda item 7:	Ambassador Steen Sonne Andersen, Deputy Head of Mission Albert Bruun Birnbaum, Special Adviser Anne Bjarnested Simonsen and Special Adviser Lærke Damsø-Jørgensen, Embassy Ouagadougou

Agenda item no. 1: Announcements

One Council member asked whether it would be possible to present alternatives to specific project proposals when presenting projects to the Council.

The State Secretary for Development Policy responded that ideas on how and when to present programmes and projects to the Council were being considered within the ongoing work of Doing Development Differently. The concept of Doing Development Differently included reflections on how to be more holistic and adaptive when designing programmes as well as involving the Council at an earlier stage in the programming phase. Hopefully, such a strategic discussion could give a better understanding of the alternatives within a specific sector. A discussion of the ideas of Doing Development Differently was scheduled for the Council meeting in November.

Furthermore, the State Secretary briefly informed the Council that the Finance Act proposal would be published shortly, which would give an indication of the strategic direction of Danish development cooperation in the coming years.

Agenda item no. 2: Contribution to IRENA for the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative 2.0
For discussion and recommendation to the Minister
DKK 50.0 million
(Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change, MKL)

Summary:
The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) is the principal agency on renewable energy in the international sustainable energy and climate architecture. The Danish contribution of DKK 50.0 million is provided to the SIDS Lighthouses Initiative (LHI), which supports the sustainable energy transition of small island developing states (SIDS). Only activities in ODA-eligible SIDS can be supported by the Danish contribution. The initiative consists of four components 1) knowledge creation and sharing, 2) technical assistance and capacity development, 3) project facilitation, and 4) strengthening partnerships and collaboration. The overall objective of the initiative is to bring the overall renewable energy capacity in SIDS to 5 GW. IRENA, and particularly the LHI, has substantial support from SIDS and is considered the primary partner by SIDS to achieve their 100 per cent renewable energy ambitions.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the IRENA SIDS LHI contribution for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

In its introduction, the Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change (MKL) emphasised the scope of the initiative and the results of first period. The initiative would work to improve the systemic barriers to renewable energy integration in SIDS and address the diverse issues each state faces. A secondment would be included in the programme to ensure a link to Danish expertise. The initiative was primarily support to countries adversely affected by climate change and less focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Council asked how it would be ensured that the contribution only supported ODA-eligible countries. As the SIDS in question were relatively small emitters of CO_2 and greenhouse gases, the Council asked whether it would have been better to support projects aimed at bigger emitters. The Council recommended strengthening the project's focus on green transition, and further recommended focusing on the justification of why development funding was used for climate projects such as this.

The Council asked why IRENA had been chosen as a partner and what separated the initiative from other programmes and organisations in the renewable energy space, e.g. within the UN and the World Bank. Some Council members were particularly interested in whether the contribution risked fragmenting the renewable energy architecture.

The Council called for a stronger link to the SDGs as well as the SDG targets. The Council further called to linkages to other SDGs, particularly how the initiative's components addressed gender equality and poverty reduction. In this regard, some Council members recognised the positive effects of reduced energy prices on poverty reduction and gender equality. However, there was a lack of clarity on how the projects' components were targeted at these issues.

The Council raised the issue of how the initiative would overcome vested interests, such as the fossil fuel industry and beneficiaries of existing regulatory systems, e.g. fossil fuel subsidies, and called for further analysis of this.

While the Council welcomed the support to countries adversely affected by climate change, the Council found it useful to get better insight into the balance between adaptation and mitigation efforts and the expected results of the initiative in these areas. The Council welcomed the inclusion of a Danish secondment as part of the contribution. Given Denmark's increased cooperation with IRENA, some Council members recommended the development of an organisational strategy.

Responding to the issues raised, MKL explained that IRENA was in a unique position as the lead on the green energy transition globally, not exclusively for developing countries. Particularly, the SIDS LHI was viewed as the primary platform by SIDS for the implementation of their 100 per cent renewable energy ambition. Unlike other programmes in the World Bank or the UN, SIDS had better possibilities to influence the direction of the initiative, which led to increased co-ownership and co-responsibility. To monitor the implementation, Denmark would engage actively in Assembly and Council meetings through Denmark's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi.

MKL further explained that the Danish contribution would only apply to ODA-eligible countries and that the focus was primarily on mitigation efforts linked to SIDS' Nationally Determined Contributions. Adaptation angles were mainly in the form of security of supply and the resilience of the energy grid in situations of natural disasters, e.g. storms and hurricanes. Lastly, gender equality was mainstreamed in IRENA's programmes and the initiative sought to leverage positive effects in other sectors, e.g. transport.

The Chairman concluded that the Council could support the initiative, though a number of questions had been raised, e.g. expected results, the organisational set-up, the risk of fragmentation, links to other SDGs, vested interests and adaptation issues. The questions had been adequately answered and the Chairman found that the Council could recommend the programme to approval by the Minister.

<u>Agenda item no. 3: Support for Global Water Security and Sanitation Partnership multi donor trust fund 2019-22</u>

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister
DKK 70.0 million
(Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change, MKL)

Summary:
As much as 40 percent of the global population is affected by water scarcity, 4.5 billion lack safely managed sanitation and 9 out of 10 natural disasters are water related. The Global Water Security and Sanitation Partnership (GWSP) is a World Bank multi-donor trust fund that builds on 40 years of experience from two merged water and sanitation trust funds. GWSP provides complementary technical assistance and analytics influencing the World Bank's USD 29 billion water-related water portfolio as well as assists governments and other partners in building institutional capacity and shapes the global knowledge debate on water. This is achieved across countries and sectors by focusing on the following five priority themes: sustainability, social inclusion, institutions, financing, and resilience.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the support to the Global Water Security and Sanitation Partnership for approval by the Minister for Development Corporation.

MKL briefly introduced the justification for the proposed support to the GWSP by emphasising the relevance for supporting water and sanitation as a crosscutting issue to achieve all SDGs and to address climate change. Further, it was explained how the GWSP provides technical assistance and diagnostics complementing World Bank lending at country-level while also injecting innovation as a global think-tank. Finally, it was explained that Denmark would use its contribution to influence the work of GWSP, for example by encouraging broader collaborations with stakeholders beyond the World Bank.

The Council found the support to water and sanitation relevant and acknowledged that GWSP was a relevant trust fund to support. The assistance to a World Bank trust fund was perceived as solid and relevant, though it was also noted that Denmark already supported several trust funds within the Bank and that such global trust funds risked adopting a one-size-fits-all approach making adaptation to country-specific contexts challenging. The Council welcomed the planned engagement of the Danish water-related resource base.

The Council asked whether the contribution to the GWSP was an indication of a broader Danish engagement in water and sanitation again, including new bilateral country programming. In this regard, the Council called for more information on the advantages and disadvantages of working through multilateral organisations versus bilateral initiatives. The Council further questioned how synergies would be achieved without bilateral initiatives. In continuation of this, the Council also raised the question whether Denmark had adequate expertise within the field of water and sanitation as most bilateral water and sanitation programmes had been phased out and as the Ministry had limited technical advisory capacity. The Council called for a clarification of whether the support to GWSP was a continuation of previous support or whether it was a new commitment.

The Council asked how the GWSP would engage civil society stakeholders and further recommended an increased involvement of the Danish water-related resource base. The Council noted that while the programme contained a focus on gender and social inclusion, the focus on youth could be strengthened. It was further encouraged that the Ministry would be actively engaged in the GWSP Council, though the Council questioned whether the Ministry had the resources and capacity to be so. Finally, the Council found it positive that a Danish secondment was included in the programme.

MKL responded that it was still an open question whether Denmark would engage broader in water and sanitation, and add new bilateral commitments in the sector. It was emphasised that though Denmark was a relatively small donor, it had proven that it was possible to influence large funds and organisations. Furthermore, Denmark would be able to draw on the planned secondment to the GWSP, the water sector counsellors based at embassies and expertise from the Danish water-related resource base. Regarding engagement of youth and civil society, it was responded that one of the key pillars of the GWSP was to focus on inclusiveness but that it would be relevant to investigate further, how the GWSP was targeting youth. Finally, it was clarified that Denmark had supported the previous Trust Funds but that the presented contribution would be the first to the GWSP.

Summing up, the Chair emphasised that the proposed support to the GWSP was relevant and well received, and that the Council would recommend the contribution to the Minister's approval. Further, the Chairman noted that the Council also had discussed synergies between Danish support to multilateral and bilateral programmes on water and sanitation – a discussion, which could be elaborated further on another occasion. Lastly, the Chairman also emphasised that engagement of youth and civil society in the multi-donor trust fund had been raised together with the issue of securing sufficient resources to influence the GWSP.

Agenda item no. 4: Organisation Strategy for the World Bank Group, 2019-2023

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

(Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Climate Change, MKL)

Summary:

The new organisation strategy outlines Denmark's engagement with the World Bank Group (WBG/the Bank) from 2019 to 2023. It sets up Danish priorities for the WBG's performance within the overall framework established by the WBG's own strategy. In addition, it outlines specific areas that Denmark will prioritise in the work with the Bank and with like-minded countries within and outside the Nordic-Baltic constituency.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the organisation strategy for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

MKL informed the Council that the discussion regarding the organisation strategy had been postponed due to the Danish parliamentary election process. During the opening remarks, MKL underlined the WBG's systemic role and that Denmark would continue to focus on the quality of the WBG's work with special emphasis on SDG 1, 5, 7, 8, 10, 13 and 17. MKL reported that World Bank President, Malpass, so far had continued the strategic direction of his predecessor, including on issues such as climate and gender. However, MKL added that the WBG could improve its ability to work with external partners, including the private sector, civil society, NGOs and other multilateral institutions.

The Council acknowledged the informative nature of the organisation strategy, however, the Council found that it was almost too positive in its description of the WBG and the Council found that the strategy could have used more space to problematize the challenges faced by the World Bank Group, e.g. emerging economies' comparatively limited influence in the institution.

The Council noted that the rise of political tensions in the global political economy, including the ambition of increasing influence from emerging economies, were not reflected in full. Other dilemmas and conflicts highlighted by the Council were the tensions between developing countries' growth ambitions versus some developed countries' ambitious climate targets. Although the Council acknowledged that President Malpass evidently prioritised the existing strategic direction of the WBG over the views of the Trump administration, Malpass and the WBG did manoeuvre in a world characterised by trade wars, increasing focus on national interests and consequently decreasing appetite for global integration. A further challenge noted by the Council was the weak links between the WBG as a knowledge institution and as a bank. The excellent knowledge production was not always used in WBG supported activities.

The Council raised the question of the overall Danish vision for the WBG given that a substantial portion of the aid budget was channelled to the WBG directly or indirectly through WBG managed trust funds. The Council asked whether the Danish support could contribute to increased indebtedness of countries receiving WBG loans. Moreover, the Council addressed the four Danish priority areas and suggested to include a focus on the social sectors as emphasised by the WBG in the Human Capital Project in view of the declining international ODA directed to these sectors. Regarding the priority areas, the Council supported the emphasis on gender equality, but noted that the WBG approach to this issue might differ from the Danish.

The Council found that the WBG often was difficult to work with for CSOs and the strategy could have stated more clearly that the WBG should improve its inclusion of civil society and CSOs, especially during the design phase. Given the Bank's considerable influence and size of programmes, the Council found that there was a tendency for the WBG be to somewhat self-contained in its work. Civil society and NGOs were often present at the very front line in the field, especially in the so-called Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus and Fragile, Conflict and Violence contexts, and should ideally be included in the work of the Bank. The Council noted that the strategy could have touched upon the lack of flexibility and agility in relation to changing conditions in local environments, which was partly due to the mere size of the Bank's operations, but also limited inclusion of other voices in the work of the Bank.

Although improvements concerning the collaboration with UN institutions were noted in the strategy, the Council nevertheless saw room for improvement. The Council also found that more attention could have been paid to economic diplomacy and the possibilities for involving Danish enterprises in the work of the WBG. In this respect, there was a need to follow procurement financed by the Bank but carried out by governments of developing countries and to strike a better balance between quality and price in the Bank's guidelines. Anti-corruption should continue to be a key priority of Denmark even beyond what was reflected in the strategy. The Council also underscored the need to pay attention to the rising public debt in many developing countries and to support inclusive outcomes of growth, generating good jobs for the majority of the population.

Even if the Bank's mandate was somewhat apolitical, the Council suggested paying more attention to SDG 16 regarding peace, justice and strong institutions. In view of the fundamental importance attached to human development, also by the Bank itself, it was considered important to continue with strong support to health and education, including for young people. The Council asked how a small country like Denmark and a constituency with a modest voting power was able to gain influence and 'punch above its weight'. Finally, the Council asked whether the strategy could be seen as a more general trend to prioritise multilateral channels over bilateral ones.

Regarding SDG 16, anti-corruption, youth, health and education, MKL responded that these remained important areas for Denmark as well as the Nordic-Baltic constituency. However, since the ambition with the organisation strategy had been to highlight key priorities through a format suited for focusing on depth over width, these areas were maybe not reflected in full throughout the strategy. MKL was also aware of the need for the WBG to be able to work with more flexibility. MKL would therefore work with its constituency to incentivise the Bank to make room for more cooperation with and inclusion of civil society, CSOs and the private sector. These points would be strengthened in a final version of the strategy.

Denmark was a trusted and influential shareholder in the Bank due to its ability to focus on and promote emerging issues, its consistent performance in funding IDA since its inception as well as in responding with additional funding to emergencies and other issues that could not be accommodated immediately in the Bank's budget. Denmark was wielding its influence through its constituency where especially the Nordic partners had a strong standing of being influential in the Bank, the negotiations of IDA replenishment, the recent capital increases in IBRD and IFC as well as through numerous contacts with the WBG both at the political and staff level. Regarding global political tensions and the desired influence of emerging economies, MKL responded that Denmark continued to be mindful of the need of keeping rising powers engaged and committed in institutions such as the WBG, and hence to accommodate these expectations.

The State Secretary for Development Policy underlined that the recent capital increase and upcoming Danish contributions to the IDA19 replenishment did not reflect a strategic shift away from bilateral channels. However, there was a need to explore how multilaterals could be used better at the country level.

Summing up, the Chair found that the WBG was an important organisation despite its limited ability to respond to political issues. The Council had discussed various dilemmas faced by the institution, e.g. the multi-bilateral aspects, the nature of growth supported by the Bank and the current anti-globalisation trends as well as the inclusion of civil society and CSO. While noting that a number of issues related to inclusion of civil society and the private sector would be strengthened in a final version of the strategy, the Chair concluded that the organisation strategy could be recommended for approval by the Minister.

Agenda item no. 5: Support to Global Financing Facility (GFF)
For discussion and recommendation to the Minister
DKK 75.0 million
(Department for Africa, Policy and Development, APD)

Summary:
The Global Financing Facility (GFF) project document outlines Denmark's engagement with the GFF for 2019-2021, where Denmark will increase its funding with additional DKK 75 mill over the three years. The Danish engagement is specifically focused on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Sub-Saharan Africa, where Denmark's strong voice and long experience will be used to support implementation of SRHR in relevant countries, where needs are immense.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the support to the Global Financing Facility for approval by the Minister for Development Corporation.

In its introduction, the Department for Africa, Policy and Development (APD) presented the strategy for Denmark's engagement with the GFF. Denmark had increased its funding from DKK 25 million in 2017 to DKK 100 million over the three-year period 2019-2021. Denmark was considered an attractive donor due to its expertise and longstanding engagement on the SRHR-agenda, especially in East Africa. The Danish engagement was focused specifically on leveraging SRHR initiatives within the GFF, drawing on the experience from East Africa to leverage the agenda in new GFF-countries, including in West Africa, where needs were high. The Danish support was amplified by a Danish SRHR-expert to the GFF secretariat. From a Danish perspective, the GFF was seen as a relevant partner due to its holistic approach and catalytic model leveraging for instance IDA finance, where governments were put in the driver's seat but also held accountable for their investment in health. Moreover, the global scepticism towards SRHR made the case for Danish engagement harder but all the more important. While the US was not funding the GFF directly, many of the other health actors in GFF-countries were highly dependent on US aid as were the recipient countries.

The Council was generally satisfied with the programme document and the Danish focus on SRHR, which seemed timely and relevant in light of the current global political climate. The holistic focus of the GFF on early childhood health was also complimented. However, questions were raised on the idea behind the financing model of the GFF, including concerns regarding whether the funding directed towards health spending resulted in the deprivation of other sectors. Furthermore, the risk of a one-size-fits-all approach was noted.

In relation to coordination and involvement of other actors, the Council highlighted the importance of including civil society, including in the design phase of the investment case, i.e. Marie Stopes. Regarding the SRHR focus, the Council found this crucial and necessary, while also expressing several concerns. The Council found that it was hard to track whether the more sensitive and controversial parts of SRHR were being implemented and supported across all settings. Furthermore, it was noted that the World Bank had a somewhat instrumentalised view on female empowerment as a tool for economic growth, which somewhat contradicted the rights-based remise of SRHR. The Council further asked for a clarification of the 'soft earmarking' to SRHR and the purpose of this. Lastly, the Council raised concerns about the Global Gag Rule and the increasingly hostile global environment that put pressure on NGO-alliances, asking how Denmark planned to mitigate this risk in its engagement with the GFF.

APD explained that the uniqueness of the financing model was its ability to put the government in the driver's seat by involving the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and other key actors, and through a thorough analysis of the country enabling the government to invest in the most efficient way possible. It was therefore a matter of problem analysis and commitment rather than a specific financial set-up that defined the GFF-model. While increased health spending could result in deterioration of other sectors, it was deemed important to hold the governments accountable for their commitments to spend 15 per cent of GDP on health - a standard that was far from being met in many GFF-countries.

While there had been no review of the GFF yet, SRHR was part of all investment cases so far, and there was a high demand for the GFF model with an expansion to 36 countries with a planned further expansion to 50 countries. Moreover, there were signs that investments in health had increased. It was therefore an important role for Denmark to ensure that the GFF was integrated with existing structures in more stable countries where Denmark and other donors had been engaged for decades in the improvement of the health sector. Moreover, continuous support and engagement from the World Bank was needed for successful implementation, a realisation that had resulted in allocation of more staff to the GFF country platforms.

On the issue of coordination, APD informed the Council that the Investor's Group had allocated seats for different CSOs, but it was acknowledged by the GFF that further CSO engagement was needed. Therefore, CSO platforms had been established in several programme countries, and this needed close monitoring, not least because of the - at times - limited appetite for CSO engagement from national governments.

Responding to the SRHR-related questions, APD agreed that the intensified pressure on SRHR made it more difficult but all the more important to engage with the GFF. The fight over SRHR had moved from being exclusively at the political level and had now manifested at programmatic level, requiring Danish engagement together with likeminded actors. Denmark would continue to push the GFF to offer and implement the entire SRHR package, including for adolescents who were often prevented access. Regarding the 'soft earmarking', it was clarified that this was a way to highlight the focus and engagement of Denmark in the GFF. 'Hard earmarking' was not possible within the GFF, nor would it be fruitful considering the limited size of the Danish contribution.

The Chair concluded that the Council could support the continued Danish engagement with the GFF and recommend it for approval by the Minister. The Council had noted a number of challenges at organisational, programmatic, and contextual level, both on the donor and recipient side – issues, which Denmark ought to do its best to address in its engagement with the GFF.

Agenda item no. 6: Support to the P4G Initiative

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister
DKK 40.0 million
(Department for Sustainable Growth and Employment, BVB)

Summary:
P4G is in its second year of operation. Twelve partner countries and six leading international think tanks and development organisations have signed up to P4G; institutional and operational systems are in place and functional; 38 partnerships have received funding and the host of the P4G Summit 2020 is identified. An Inception Review concluded that the concept is relevant and several partnership projects have the potential to mobilise stakeholders within the targeted SDG areas. The Inception Review recommended a revision of the Theory of Change and the Results Framework, and proposed to allocate additional DKK 40 million to the Partnership Fund.

The Council for Development Policy took note of the status after the inception review and recommended the allocation of additional DKK 40 million to the Partnership Fund for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

The Council appreciated the Inception Review including the close follow up on specific recommendations as well as the revision of the Theory of Change and the Results Framework. The Council noted that progress had been made within the P4G initiative.

Some Council members found that the initiative was still too complex and expressed concern about the added value of P4G whereas other Council members were positive and argued that partnerships involving governments, businesses, and civil society organisations were important vehicles to achieve the SDGs and the Paris Agreement objectives. The Council asked for clarification of the role of the National Platforms and the P4G facilitation concept. The Council agreed that proof of concept including documentation of impact would take time and noted that the initiative was still in its infancy, which called for patience.

The Council found it positive that the Netherlands had signed up to P4G, but expressed concern about Denmark and the Netherlands being the only donors in the future. The Council asked whether efforts had been undertaken to convince other partners to support the initiative financially. Some Council members asked whether new requests for additional Danish funding within the programme period were foreseen and whether a Danish strategy for phasing out was considered at this stage.

The Council appreciated that the partnership projects remained in the centre of the P4G initiative. The Council found the demand-driven approach positive, but noted the challenge related to more than 400 applications annually and only around 20 applicants annually getting funding. This called for improved management of expectations through sharpening the criteria for funding. One Council member being part of a P4G funded partnership confirmed that the individual stakeholders had gained from joining the P4G initiative. The Council underlined the importance of addressing responsible business conduct and recommended seeking inspiration from the Danida Market Development Partnerships Programme. Other Council members addressed the unbalance in the resources allocated to the P4G Hub and the Partnership Fund and recommended to carry out a capacity analysis of the hosting organisation, World Resources Institute. Finally, some members asked for more background for proposing an allocation of additional DKK 40 million to the Partnership Fund.

The BVB department expressed gratitude to the Inception Review, which had helped strengthening the P4G initiative. It did not address all issues, but key elements had improved substantially as an outcome of the exercise including the refinement of the Theory of Change and the Results Framework.

BVB explained the benefit of P4G by referring to a successful Acceleration Workshop in the margin of UNGA. An essential part of the support from P4G to partnerships - in this case Africa GreenCo - was acceleration or facilitation of support, which basically meant that the P4G Hub provided access to networks, partnership name recognition & legitimacy and created links to key investors and funders. Other programmes might offer similar support, but P4G was different and added value in the way that partnership representatives co-created with relevant political, commercial and financial players. Concrete problems and barriers were identified and solutions to meet challenges were developed jointly.

BVB explained that the role of the National Platforms differed from one partner country to another. Some Platforms were established and functioning well whereas others were more loose networks. Strengthening of the National Platforms had the attention of the P4G Hub, for example through posting of staff in partner countries.

BVB confirmed that the Netherlands were a trusted and committed donor and added that dialogue with new potential donors were ongoing. Outreach to private and philanthropic funds could potentially be part of the future funding strategy. Requesting additional Danish funding or phasing out were not envisaged at this stage. As Denmark had started P4G, there was a commitment to take the initiative forward in cooperation with partners.

BVB gave the background for allocating additional DKK 40 million to the Partnership Fund. The new funding should result in deeper and faster impact of promising partnership projects and accommodate additional P4G partner countries. To balance the resources allocated to the P4G Hub, the full amount should go into the Partnership Fund. The split between the P4G Hub and the Partnership Fund remained flexible, taking into account that new donors would come on board in future.

Finally, BVB confirmed that P4G was deemed successful at this early stage. The initiative was progressing according to plans and the commitment of the Republic of Korea to host the P4G Summit 2020 demonstrated the international nature of the initiative.

Summing up, the Chair found that the P4G initiative had progressed, but noted that scepticism about the concept remained an issue. The Council had been provided with arguments for a programme on track and examples demonstrated that the potential for achieving success through public-private partnerships existed. The Council had expressed concerns about the speed at which new funders were identified and on-boarded and the Council recommended BVB to follow this part of the initiative closely. Finally, the Chair concluded that the Council could support the proposal to allocate additional DKK 40 million to the Partnership Fund.

Agenda item no. 7: Follow-up after mid-term review: Burkina Faso Country Programme
For discussion
(Embassy Ouagadougou)

The Council for Development Policy took note of the status after the mid-term review.

The Embassy briefed the Council on the outcome of the Mid-Term Review of the 2016 – 2020 Country Programme for Burkina Faso. The Embassy welcomed the review, which showed that the Country Programme was relevant and was being implemented in a timely manner. The Embassy also welcomed the findings and recommendations of the review mission, with the only exception being the proposed reallocations of unspent funds, where the Embassy favoured supporting the upcoming 2020-elections over an extension of the Lines of Credit, which would mean a de facto extension of the Country Programme into 2021.

The Embassy also emphasised the changing and increasingly difficult context in which the Country Programme was being implemented. The country was under massive external and internal pressures, both politically where the expectations of the population after the democratic transition were high, and in terms of the security situation, which had deteriorated markedly since 2016 and where armed terrorist groups now controlled large swathes of land in the north and the east. At present, the number of IDPs numbered almost 300,000 and more than 2000 schools were closed. As a consequence of the changing context, the Embassy highlighted the importance of discussing how a future programme could be targeted to address interlinked challenges such as fragility, conflict prevention, and climate change.

The Council found the short update on the context helpful, and agreed with the need to have a specific focus on fragility and conflict prevention in the formulation of the next Country Programme. On the security situation, the Council asked whether a collaboration with the EU or other bilateral or multilateral partners could be feasible. The Council underlined that the re-allocation of funds to the governance sector, as proposed by the mid-term review, was considered prudent.

The Council found the knowledge and trust built under the water-programme valuable, and an essential reason not to phase out this component in the next country programme. The Council also asked to which extent urban job creation was addressed under the agricultural programme. The Council agreed with the importance of performing a yearly monitoring and evaluation of the entire programme, as suggested by the mid-term review, to ensure a crosscutting understanding of the results obtained. Burkina Faso was an important priority country, and it was important to show the results and the change that Denmark has helped achieve. The Council also asked how the regional collaboration could be strengthened. The Council noted that it would be central to include conflict prevention and climate change adaptation in a future country programme.

The Embassy explained that the worsened security situation did not signify that the state was absent. Instead, it had forced the Government to divert more resources to security and defence, potentially to the detriment of the social sectors. At the same time, due to its peaceful history, Burkina Faso had no prior experience of handling armed groups opposing the state and terrorising the local population.

The modality of General Budget Support (GBS), which had been used in the first part of the Country Programme to help co-finance the new Government's reform agenda, was also discussed. While no new GBS operation was planned, the Embassy had good experience with the use of Sector Budget Support to the Water Sector, which had yielded good results, and it was expected to continue with this modality in the next Country Programme. In addition, the Embassy emphasised the fact that water was often a key driver of conflict and that part of the Danish approach – also going forward – was to tie investments in access to water with targeted conflict prevention measures. In addition, the Embassy stressed that the current agricultural programme addressed both urban and rural job creation. The Embassy agreed with the need for future interventions focused on integrating climate change, resilience and conflict prevention in a future country programme. In this regard, future agriculture and water interventions could address the nexus between conflict and climate challenges. The Embassy was indeed exploring possibilities for partnership and coordination with other key partners in the country, such as the EU, the World Bank and the UN.

Summing up, the Chair underlined that the Council acknowledged the challenges of working in a complex and deteriorating security situation; the situation might get even worse before it would get better. In this regard, the Council welcomed the willingness of the Embassy to integrate fragility, conflict prevention and climate change in the development of the next Country Programme. The Council appreciated that the Embassy was in the process of examining how each of the sector programmes could be adapted to the new context. During the formulation of a future country programme, it would be necessary to reflect on whether the government of Burkina Faso could still be a robust partner.

Agenda item no. 8: AOB.

The Head of Department for Technical Quality Support reminded the Council that letters asking for nominations to the Council had been distributed. In that regard, he underlined that the rules of procedure for the Council for Development Policy included paragraphs on how members were appointed to the Council as well as limitations as to how many times a member could be reappointed.