

Minutes from meeting in the Council for Development Policy
on 27 May 2021

- Members: Professor Anne Mette Kjær, University of Aarhus (Chair)
International Director Jarl Krausing, CONCITO (Vice Chair)
General Secretary Birgitte Qvist-Sørensen, DanChurchAid
Executive Director Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen, CARE Denmark
Senior Researcher Lars Engberg-Pedersen, Danish Institute for International Studies
Head of International Department Jens Kvorning, SMEdenmark
Head of Department Kenneth Lindhardt Madsen, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council
International Director Marie Engberg Helmstedt, The Danish Youth Council
- MFA: State Secretary for Development Lotte Machon
Head of Department Nanna Hvidt, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
Special Advisor Anne Marie Sloth Carlsen, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
Chief Advisor Henning Nøhr, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
Advisor Britt Balschmidt Tramm, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK
- Agenda item 1: State Secretary for Development Policy Lotte Machon
- Agenda item 2: Head of Department Mette Thygesen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD
Chief Advisor Thomas Thomsen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD
- Agenda item 3: Ambassador Karin Poulsen, Addis Ababa
Special Advisor Alexander Skommer Larsen
Special Advisor Søren Knudsen Møller
- Agenda item 4: Ambassador Karin Poulsen, Addis Ababa
Special Advisor Jens Skov-Spilling, Addis Ababa
Commercial Advisor Sebastian Rodas Medeiros, Addis Ababa
Intern David Le Coq, Addis Ababa
Director Ole Emmik Sørensen, Danish Energy Agency
Team Leader Cecilie Buch Thomsen, Danish Energy Agency
- Agenda item 5: Head of Department Mette Thygesen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD
Chief Advisor Peter Bøgh Jensen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD
- Agenda item 6: Head of Department Mette Thygesen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD
Chief Advisor Peter Bøgh Jensen, Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, HCD

Agenda item 7: Head of Department Marianne Kress, Department for Migration, Stabilization and Fragility, MNS
Chief Advisor Jane Werngren Rosales, Department for Migration, Stabilization and Fragility, MNS
Deputy Head of Department Pernille Mortensen, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MUS
Chief Advisor Niklas Borker Bjerre, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MUS

Agenda Item No. 1: Announcements

The State Secretary for Development Policy briefly informed about the state of affairs with regard to Rwanda, Palestine, Mali, Ethiopia, the new strategy for development policy, and the prospects for the Council to travel abroad.

Concerning Rwanda and the recent visit by the two ministers the State Secretary informed that there was nothing much to add. The two MoUs signed were publicly available and technical missions would be fielded shortly. The issue of human rights had been raised by Denmark and it had been noted that there were shared interests also in regard to green development and gender equality. Responding to a question from the Council about its involvement, the State Secretary informed that this would happen in the case of the launch of a large enough country programme, but developments were nowhere near such a development.

In regard to the situation in Palestine, Denmark had responded to UNWRA's appeal with a grant of DKK 10 million. As for Mali, the international community worked closely together. A summit was expected soon. A situation might arise where Denmark would again have to suspend some of the assistance that related to the military. Concerning Ethiopia, the Ambassador would brief the Council of the situation under Agenda Item 4.

The negotiations in regard to the new development strategy were progressing well and a result were to be expected within a few weeks. The bottom line for participating was commitment to the 0.7 target and agreeing to keep the negotiations in the negotiating room. So far, all parties except Nye Borgerlige were taking part.

Finally, the State Secretary informed that the prospects for travelling were improving. MFA would look into the options as soon the situation opened further. The State Secretary's hope was that the Council would hopefully be able to travel in early 2022.

The Chair thanked the State Secretary for the information and remarked that as regards the recent visit to Rwanda, the Council would follow events with a view to whether the collaboration would have an impact on development aid.

Agenda Item No. 2: Thematic discussion: Humanitarian and emergency aid

For information and discussion

Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement, (HCE)

The Chair introduced the item as one in a series of thematic discussions about large allocations that are not presented to the Council.

The Chief Advisor from the Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE) briefed the Council on Danish humanitarian assistance. The Chief Advisor presented an overview of global humanitarian needs and challenges, noting that the number of people affected by humanitarian needs had reached an all-time high of 235.4 million in 2021, leading to global humanitarian financing requirements amounting to 36.05 billion USD. While the impact of natural disasters and diseases were significant, the needs were first and foremost driven by armed conflicts increasing in numbers, scale and duration, thereby increasing vulnerability to other crisis triggers, including in particular climate-related threats. At the same time, humanitarian assistance was confronted with growing challenges, including with respect to

financing and declining respect for international humanitarian law as reflected in an increasing number of attacks targeting civilians, health facilities, schools and humanitarian staff. In this situation, Danish humanitarian assistance remained fully based on the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence and focused on meeting the needs among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including refugees and internally displaced people along with affected local communities. In this, there was also a particular focus on protection needs related to gender and age, as reflected in Denmark's current lead of the *Call to Action for Protection against Gender-based Violence in Emergencies*. Here, Denmark placed a particular emphasis on supporting a lasting reduction in vulnerability, not least with respect to food security and displacement, for which reasons coherent efforts reaching across the nexus between humanitarian assistance, development cooperation and peace-building efforts were recognized as being of central importance in situations of protracted fragility, conflict and displacement. The Chief Advisor concluded his briefing by stating that these principles guided the allocation of the Danish humanitarian budget amounting to 2.7 billion DKK through humanitarian partners, including the UN, other international organisations and Danish civil society organisations.

The Council welcomed the presentation. In the ensuing discussion, the Council highlighted a number of key priorities, including the continuing need to strengthen the efficiency and the localisation agenda of UN agencies in the response to crisis and vulnerability. The Council also highlighted the need to recognize women as resources in responding to crisis and building resilience, the need to respond to the particular challenges arising from the linkages between fragility, conflict and climate change that result in displacement and food insecurity, the importance of a longer-term engagement in particular crises, and the need for a continued focus on innovation in humanitarian assistance and on building coherence across the nexus with development cooperation and peace-building efforts. It was suggested to have an annual discussion in the Council of the cooperation with international humanitarian organisations as well as the list of countries with prioritised crises. Finally, the Council expressed concern about the shifting balance between bilateral and multilateral assistance in Danish assistance in general, noting that continued learning from long-term bilateral development programmes was a precondition for a successful nexus approach in situations of fragility.

The Chair of the Council expressed strong appreciation for the thematic briefing and requested to be briefed on an annual basis to facilitate the Council's insight into the application of the nexus approach as well as the geographic and thematic priorities in the humanitarian field.

Agenda Item No. 3: Management response to mid-term review of the Africa Programme for Peace, IV

For information and discussion

The Embassy in Addis Ababa

Summary:

The Mid-Term Review of the Africa Programme for Peace phase IV (APP IV) (2018-2021) resulted in a number of recommendations for the Embassy to consider for the continued implementation of the programme. The overall recommendations focus on engaging an external Monitoring and Evaluation team to strengthen the Embassy's APP-team, as well as to extend the ongoing engagements under the APP-programme until the end of 2023; both of which the Embassy will implement. The Embassy will also follow the recommendations to continue the support to AU and IGAD through Joint Financing Arrangements, as well as the recommendation to upgrade the engagement with ECOWAS by reviewing the work plan and deploying a Peace & Security Advisor to RDE

Abuja as well as a Technical Assistant to ECOWAS secretariat. The Embassy will also follow the recommendation to seek greater engagement with relevant units in the MFA and Danish embassies across Africa. In light of the current APP-team set up and staff resources available, the Embassy will prioritize implementing the recommendations related to the strengthening of the existing engagements; hence the recommendations aiming to expand the scope, work plans or focus areas of the current engagements will not be a priority for the embassy in the further implementation of the Programme.

Upon the Council's request, the Ambassador introduced the agenda item with a short briefing on the Africa Programme for Peace (APP). The Ambassador noted that the APP had been implemented since the establishment of the Embassy in Addis in 2004, and was currently in its fourth phase. The APP was Denmark's support and entry point to the multilateral African organisations, notably the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Economic Community of West African States, (ECOWAS). As a result of the support to these organisations, Denmark had a unique opportunity to access and influence core bodies in these organisations, especially the AU. These were by no means easy development partners to work with, especially considering their vast geographical coverage and compared to bilateral partners. Nevertheless, they were crucial partners if one wanted to liaise and build political relations with the multilateral Africa. The latter was especially important ahead of Denmark's campaign for a seat in the UN Security Council 2025-26.

The Mid-Term Review of the APP had made a number of recommendations. These were reflected in the Embassy's Management Response. From the Ambassador's point of view, one of the most important recommendations concerned the engagement of an external Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) team. The team would assist the partners and the Embassy in strengthening the results focus of the programme as well as the strategic communication efforts towards the public in Africa and in Denmark about the support to the multilateral African organisations and the results achieved. An EU tender process had been undertaken, and the M&E team had begun their work. The review had also recommended a no-cost extension of the current phase of the APP until the end of 2023.

The Council noted that the Management Response had been difficult to read and comment on given its technical nature and the use of abbreviations. It was questioned whether the technical details were addressed at the expense of a broader political analysis which would be crucial for engaging with these institutions. The Council welcomed the Embassy's decision to work through Joint Financing Arrangements – as recommended by the review – rather than using bilateral support, in order to make it easy for the partners to administer. The Council also noted that the recommendations from the mid-term review that the embassy had decided *not* to follow were often explained with a lack of sufficient resources, which the Council found concerning given that the recommendations of the Review supposedly seeks to ensure a high-quality cooperation.

With regard to the Danish support to the AU, members of the Council asked about the focus on governance, the effectiveness of the African Peer Review Mechanism, as well as the risk of institutional overlaps within the organization.

The Ambassador replied that the political analysis *was* part of the mid-term review, but that this was not reflected in the Management Response due to the format of such responses. The Em-

bassy would work to establish a taskforce to ensure coordination between the Ministry in Copenhagen and Danish embassies in Africa, to which end the Embassy had also organized briefings with think tanks supported through the APP on selected topics. The lack of resources was a well-known circumstance, which made prioritization all the more important, as also reflected in the Management Response. The engagement of the external M&E team was expected to add extra resources to the APP-team and strengthen the overall programme management. The Ambassador underlined that the support for these organisations made a difference in supporting the institutional capacity and activities of the various departments, and in providing Denmark with access, influence and a strong profile on the continent.

With the regard to the governance issues, the Development Counsellor explained in further detail about Denmark's support to the African Union's work on governance and democracy, the workings of the African Peer Review Mechanism as well as the organizational reform process which the African Union Commission was currently undergoing.

The Council thanked the Ambassador for the presentation and looked forward to engaging with the Embassy on the development of APP phase V.

Agenda Item No. 4: Enhanced Danish-Ethiopian Energy Partnership

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 60 million

The Embassy in Addis Ababa

Summary:

In 2017 Ethiopia and Denmark commenced a partnership programme on energy aiming at creating attractive framework conditions for developing wind energy projects in Ethiopia. As the energy mix in Ethiopia develops with more variable renewable energy, an increased level of planning and modelling on how the system will evolve is needed. Therefore, a strategic sector cooperation programme on this was launched in 2020. This fruitful cooperation has motivated the government of Ethiopia to seek an enhancement of the partnership through the Enhanced Danish-Ethiopian Energy Partnership, DEEP. The continued support is in line with Danish priorities following the Paris Agreement and the SDGs to provide support and facilitate increased investments in areas related to climate change mitigation and sustainable energy, which is where Denmark has strong expertise and experience. There is an urgent need for increasing the awareness and informed decision making for the development of the energy system and identifying how wind energy can support the ambitious Ethiopian targets which is a Danish key-competence. In order to support the Ethiopian Government in this transition, DEEP will focus on the following areas:

- Creating choice awareness in the energy sector development, through long-term planning and modelling*
- Promoting and creating and enabling environment and transparent framework for lowering the cost of onshore wind power development*
- Integration of variable renewable energy for a flexible and reliable energy system*

The Council for Development Policy acknowledged that the Enhanced Danish-Ethiopian Energy Partnership, DEEP, was a well written and well thought through programme, the feasibility of which was underlined by the fact that it was demand based and that it built on existing collaboration.

However, the Council expressed concern about the timing of the programme in the current situation of instability, lack of security, displacements, human rights abuses and pending hunger particularly in Tigray, but also in other parts of Ethiopia.

The Council for Development Policy therefore recommended the programme for approval for the Minister for Development Cooperation but urged consideration to how the situation evolved and its potential impact on the

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Embassy in Addis Ababa and the Danish Energy Agency.

At the request of the Council the meeting was initiated with a briefing on the political situation in Ethiopia from the Ambassador.

The Chair then opened the floor for remarks from the Council on the Enhanced Danish-Ethiopian Energy Partnership (DEEP). The Council found the programme document well written and thorough in its description of programme design and implementation. It was seen as positive that the proposed programme would build upon the existing programmes and sector partnership with Ethiopia. However, the Council noted that the programme document had been developed before the recent worsening of the political crisis in Ethiopia, and therefore did not address the current situation thoroughly.

The Council expressed concerns about how the current political crisis in Ethiopia could impact programme implementation and asked a number of questions about the focus of the programme.

The Council questioned whether a national grid approach was appropriate for the Ethiopian context and whether it was achievable by 2025. The Council also questioned the sole focus on wind. With Ethiopia's ambition of 100% access to electricity for its population in 2025, alternatives to on-grid power generation sources would be needed e.g. mini-grids and other types of renewable energy sources, such as biogas, i.e. an energy source which could also help address many other problems facing Ethiopia including adaptation. Without decentralized solutions, the Council was also of the opinion that it would be difficult to reach the most remote areas and vulnerable populations and furthermore expressed concern that access to the grid could become a political issue in the current situation.

Members of the Council also asked whether renewable energy transition would depend upon long-term foreign aid or be economically cost-effective. Furthermore, the Council asked several other questions: Why the approach was placement of Danish technical advisors in Ethiopia rather than creating a tender, where both Danish and international consultants could bid? How the local business environment would benefit from the programme, e.g., if new jobs would be generated? What are the implications for local populations of new renewable infrastructure? Whether the current political situation would affect Ethiopia's ambitious climate goals? And finally, whether a programme of this nature would provide Denmark with any leverage?

The Ambassador thanked the Council for the support for the programme document and for the relevant questions and comments. There had for decades been political instability in Ethiopia, thus also during programme design and the presentation in the Programme Committee. She highlighted the flexibility built into the programme. No geographical regions had yet been selected and implementation decisions would be made on an ongoing basis. An inception phase would allow for possible adjustments, adding to the DDD and adaptive management of the programme. Furthermore, it was underlined that no money would be directly transferred to the Ethiopian Government, as the Danish contribution would be provided solely as capacity building.

The Ambassador emphasised that access to energy for all in remote and vulnerable areas was a priority for the Ethiopian partners, mirroring the Danish focus on SDG6 and SDG7. The programme would not stand alone. Denmark was providing emergency relief in Tigray, engaged in critical political dialogue with the Ethiopian Government and was broadly present through the Country Programme and various climate initiatives. The DEEP-programme would have linkages to and synergies with other Danish development instruments such as DSIF's Assela wind-farm. This would add to the development of an energy sector attractive for private investments. Finally, it was highlighted that DEEP was a government-to-government programme with the significant benefits of peer to peer collaboration building trust between the Danish and Ethiopian partners. In the current programmes, this type of cooperation had created significant results.

The Director from the Danish Energy Agency (DEA), emphasized their international experience with sector partnerships in many different political and capacity related contexts. This programme was important, as Ethiopia was expecting a fivefold increase in energy demand. Energy investments were long-term investments, and the importance of making the right investments was underlined. Therefore, the DEA focused on creating choice awareness for Ethiopian decision-makers by scenario planning and forecasting to enable prediction and modelling of future energy systems. The aim was to create the most efficient, cost-effective and stable system for Ethiopia. Wind could play a part together with other energy sources and off-grid solutions.

With regard to job generation, the Embassy's Special Advisor informed that some direct effect could be expected e.g. through the cooperation with Ethiopian universities to improve the general education as well as research within energy. An important indirect effect of the increased energy supply was expected on businesses and job creation. Looking more broadly at the joint support to the Ethiopian Power Sector Reform by Denmark and the other international partners – which Denmark was central in coordinating – the off-grid solutions like solar power development could create additional jobs locally.

Noting the Council's concerns over current developments in Ethiopia, and how that mirrored the dilemmas often facing development cooperation in fragile environments, the State Secretary for Development pointed to the possibility of the Council offering a two-tiered recommendation to the Minister for Development Cooperation. In the first part, the Council could recommend the DEEP programme for approval. In the second, the Council could express its concerns about the political situation and the timing of the commitment or even recommend to make the commitment conditional of certain developments.

The Council expressed support for a two-tiered recommendation and asked that the Council's concerns be taken into account when making the recommendation to the Minister, but not as a conditionality.

The Chair of the Council thanked for the relevant comments, questions and replies. In general, the Chair noted that the Council was supportive of DEEP, which was both demand driven and built on existing efforts. However, the current political crisis in Ethiopia was an issue of concern. The Council would look at formulating the concerns in a way that was not conditional. An exit strategy lined to continued risk assessment might be needed. The Chair concluded that the Council's recommendation to the Minister for Development Cooperation would be two-tiered. The Council would recommend the Danish-Ethiopian Energy Partnership Programme for the Minister's approval, but the Council would also express concern over signing a contract in the current political situation in Ethiopia and how this situation would impact programme implementation which could call for consideration of the appropriate timing for initiation of the programme.

Agenda Item No. 5: Support to the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) 2021-2024

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 160 million

Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE)

Summary:

The purpose of the development engagement with DIHR (2021-2025) is to continue to support Denmark's longstanding efforts to promote and protect human rights in developing countries. The Council acknowledged the importance of continued support to DIHR's efforts to contribute to a world where everyone is guaranteed full respect of their human rights.

The Council for Development Policy recommended Support to the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) – A World where everyone is guaranteed full respect of their human rights - for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Due to incapacity because of personal reasons one member left the meeting during this agenda item.

The Council expressed its support for the suggested support to DIHR at a time where human rights are under serious pressure at global scale, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. The council noted, however, that the context analysis presented in the Development Engagement Document (DED) was generic and could have been clearer in terms of presentation of the problems to be addressed, the political context as well as in relation to the situation in the 12 countries where DIHR would work.

The ambition of reaching out to the South was commendable yet it was uncertain how this would be done in practice. The Council noted that a limited amount of funds were spent at country level, but questioned the establishment of country offices with posted staff at the country level. Establishing local partnerships could be another and more cost-effective way. Or, as it was suggested, by the Council, DIHR could enter into partnerships with Danish NGOs

already working on human rights issues at country level. It was important that DIHR's work was seen as complementary to other Danish efforts to promote human rights.

The Council noted that the results framework was fairly generic. One indicator stated that "State actors in four countries have become capable of ensuring an integrated implementation of human rights and sustainable development goals". It was not easy to understand what was meant by integrated implementation of human rights and SDGs. Also, the selection of four indicators appeared somewhat arbitrary. Why not three or five? Also, the Council asked about the analysis of where DIHR has comparative advantage relative to Danish representations, about the history and arguments for choice of countries in which to work, and about how the choices of themes and of countries are linked.

Members of the Council concurred that focus on digital technology was highly relevant and topical but wondered whether regulation of tech-giants was within the capacity of DIHR. Members of the Council also emphasised the importance of DIHR's work with human rights and business as private companies were increasingly engaged in due diligence in global value chains and DIHR had a unique expertise in this area. The Institute's pragmatic partnership approach was praised. Finally, members of the Council welcomed the Institute's ambition of working with the youth and recommended that a youth strategy be developed.

The Head of the Department for Humanitarian Action Civil Society and Engagement (HCE) thanked the Council for comprehensive and substantial remarks. She highlighted that the partnership with DIHR had gone through a transformation for the past three years since the review in 2018. Recognising shortcomings of the documentation, she highlighted that the new partnership with DIHR was in fact a major achievement. For the first time, the partnership would be based on a clear theory of change and a strong results framework. Getting to this point had not been an easy process, neither for the MFA nor for DIHR. Moving forward, the new partnership would provide an excellent basis for informed annual consultations and on-going strategic dialogue between the MFA and DIHR. Finally, she welcomed the suggestion by the Council of DIHR and NGOs working more closely together in country contexts.

The Chair thanked the Head of HCE for her response and recognised that a new modality was being used. A DED was not a bad format, yet the context analysis in annex 1 was also somewhat abstract.

The Chair concluded that the Council recommended the development engagement entitled "Support to DIHR – A World where everyone is guaranteed full respect of their human rights" for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 6: Support to the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD)

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 120 million

Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE)

Summary:

The purpose of the development engagement with DIPD (2021-2025) is to continue to support Denmark's longstanding efforts to widen and deepen broad based participation in political processes in developing countries in particular for the youth and for women.

The Council for Development Policy recommended Support to the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) – Promoting vivid and well-functioning multiparty democracies - for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation while raising a number of concerns as to whether the context analysis and the goals were sufficiently specific and operational.

The Council acknowledged the importance and relevance of supporting efforts to create vivid and well-functioning democracies, including political parties, in developing countries. The Council noted that DIPD was established by law in 2010.

The Council found that it was unclear from the project document who was learning from whom and why and generally warned against an approach of “besser wissen” i.e. Danish politicians telling politicians in other countries and contexts what they should do. The Council found the goals set out in the Development Engagement Document (DED) broad, generic, and to an extent overlapping.

The Council also expressed concern as to the time and capacity of Danish politicians and political parties to carry out projects in developing countries and asked about the qualification of trainers and instructors. A capable secretariat with solid knowledge of development issues and country contexts was pivotal to i.a. ensure proper peer-to-peer learning based on equal exchange. The Council furthermore asked whether the approach of DIPD was appropriate given today’s standards of local ownership, localisation and equal opportunities. In addition, the Council asked whether the activities focus on Danish politicians learning from their peers.

Members of the Council welcomed the establishment of a grant committee, but also suggested that it was perhaps time to rethink the whole construct of DIPD. One possibility could be to establish an exchange together with a number of other countries for political parties in developing countries to draw support from.

Members of the Council also questioned the basis of the context analysis. The scope was vast, the content ambiguous. References to waves of popular protests were potentially subject to wishful democratic thinking as it was not certain that the former were linked to the latter in a causal way, in other words that protests are always for democracy. They could be about poverty or lack of food.

Members of the Council enquired about the choice of partner countries. Could DIPD choose any country to its liking or was it subject to an obligation to align with Danish priority countries. Nepal was a case in point. Further it was important to involve grass-roots as well as rank-and-file members and not only parliamentarians in the specific activities. Members of the Council asked about resources spent in Denmark, including at the secretariat. It was not easy to read out of the budget, yet it appeared to be some 25%. Finally, members of the Council asked about open access standards and transparency for DIPD. This was important given standards for equality. It was noted that minutes from DIPD’s board meetings were not publicly available on its website.

The Head of the Department for Humanitarian Action Civil Society and Engagement (HCE) thanked the Council for its pertinent and comprehensive comments and reiterated that the

grant was based on a legal obligation. This being said, DIPD was subject to the aid management guidelines like everybody else. A fine balance had to be struck. The purpose of the grant was to promote vivid and vibrant multiparty democracies with popular support. The distinction between movements and parties became increasingly fluid in developing countries as well as in developed ones. The role of the parties are to provide links between the executive and the civil society and thereby make the former more responsive.

The Head of HCE said that approximately five million DKK or 1/6 of the budget were set aside up front for indirect costs incurred by the secretariat. On top of that came salaries for programme officers supporting activities for the political parties.

The Chief Advisor of HCE informed that DIPD met regularly with sister organisations in Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and the UK.

The Chair concluded that the Council recommended the development engagement entitled “Support to DIPD- Promoting vivid and well-functioning multiparty democracies” for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation albeit with the concerns and reservations set out above.

Agenda Item No. 7: Danish contribution to COVAX AMC and UNICEF Supply Division

For information and discussion

Department for Migration, Stabilization and Fragility (MNS)

Department for Humanitarian Action, Civil Society and Engagement (HCE)

Summary:

COVAX – or COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access - is a global mechanism established in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure swift and equal access to COVID-19 vaccines to all. COVAX is coordinated by The Vaccine Alliance (GAVI), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) and the World Health Organization (WHO). COVAX has 191 participating states of which 92 are low and middle-income countries not able to finance vaccine plans themselves and 99 self-financing countries. For the 92 low and middle-income countries, COVAX constitutes one of very few mechanisms to access COVID-19 vaccines. COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) finances procurement of vaccine doses for those countries, and the ambition is to deliver 1.7 billion vaccine doses for low and middle-income countries in 2021. In addition, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Supply Division plays a critical role in securing effective and sufficient supplies (personal protective equipment needles, cold storage etc.), which are needed to undertake large-scale vaccination campaigns in developing countries.

The Council thanked for the information provided and agreed that support for global access to vaccines was a very important endeavour in which Denmark should participate. The Council also agreed that the chosen mechanisms for support i.e. through COVAX and UNICEF Supply Division were both relevant and adequate.

Members of the Council did however, express concern that the funds for Danish contributions to COVAX AMC were allocated from the overall development cooperation budget, as this would reduce the amounts available for other development programmes. COVID-19 required additional funds to address the devastating effects of the pandemic, both with regard to other health related challenges and in terms of economic setbacks of vulnerable economies in Africa, in particular.

Members of the Council questioned the level of the Danish support for global access to vaccines, which was found rather limited compared to other countries and considering the magnitude of the crisis. Members of the Council also mentioned production and distribution capacity as a challenge and its relevance in terms of trade policies.

The Head of the Department for Migration, Stabilization and Fragility (MNS) added that the Prime Minister on 24 May announced that Denmark would donate 3 million vaccine doses, but it was undecided through which mechanism. The implementation of the vaccination plans was a challenge in many developing countries because of weak health systems. UNICEF's support therefore played a key role to ensure effective roll-out. Regarding production of vaccines, the Council was informed that the EU is discussing a Team Europe Initiative on vaccine production in Africa and that talks are ongoing in the World Trade Organization, WTO, on patent rights.

The State Secretary for Development noted the Council's comments and views and reminded that Denmark was one of only a handful of countries contributing 0.7 percent to development cooperation. She clarified that the funds for COVAX and UNICEF were allocated from reserves and were not redirected from other programmes.

The Chair of the Council thanked for the information.

Agenda Item No. 8: AOB

No subjects were raised.