

Minutes from meeting in the Council for Development Policy 28 November 2017

Present:

- Members:
- Professor Emeritus Georg Sørensen, University of Aarhus (Chair)
 - Vice Secretary-General Tania Dethlefsen, The Danish Family Planning Association (vice chair)
 - Director Jan Laustsen, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council (except agenda item 3, 4, 9)
 - Head of Projects Tine Bork, SMEdenmark
 - 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 Birgitte Qvist-Sørensen, DanChurchAid
 - Director Mads Bugge Madsen, The LO/FTF Council (agenda item 6-9)
 - Written comments from Director Thomas Bustrup, Confederation of Danish Industries, to agenda item 7
- MFA:
- Martin Bille Hermann, State Secretary for Development Policy
 - Morten Jespersen, Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation
 - Nicolaj A. Hejberg Petersen, Head of Department for Technical Quality Support
 - Lotte Machon, Head of Department for Development policy and Finance
 - Mette Brink Madsen, Administrative Officer, Department for Technical Quality Support
- Agenda item 1: Ambassador Mikael H. Winther, Deputy Head of Mission Refika Hayta and Special Adviser Peter Bøgh Jensen, Embassy Dhaka
Deputy Head of Mission Dorte Chortsen, Embassy Yangon
- Agenda item 3: Ambassador Mette Thygesen and Special Adviser Jonas Helth Lønborg, Embassy Addis Ababa
- Agenda item 4: Ambassador Erik Vilstrup Lorenzen and Special Adviser Vibeke Gram Mortensen, Embassy Rome
- Agenda item 5: Head of Department Stephan Schönemann, Chief Adviser Line Brøgger and Chief Adviser Thomas Nikolaj Hansen, Department for Humanitarian action, migration and civil society
- [Agenda item 6: Head of Department Ole Thonke and Chief Adviser Tine Anbæk, Department for Growth and Employment
- Agenda item 7: Head of Department Ole Thonke, Chief Adviser Lisbeth Jespersen and Special Adviser Dorrit Skaarup Jensen, Department for Growth and Employment
- Agenda item 8: Ambassador Johnny Flentø, Embassy Maputo
- Agenda item 10: Ambassador Mikael H. Winther, Deputy Head of Mission Refika Hayta and Special Adviser Peter Bøgh Jensen, Embassy Dhaka

Agenda item no. 1.a: Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda item no. 1.b: Evaluation of the Council's visit to Myanmar and Bangladesh

(Embassy in Yangon & Embassy in Dhaka)

The Council expressed its appreciation for the well-planned and well-executed visit in Myanmar and Bangladesh. The members found it very positive that it had been introduced to both development and humanitarian activities as well as to activities within the humanitarian development nexus. The visit had given the Council members a thorough introduction to the current refugee crisis and the Council found it extremely relevant to have been able to observe the situation and talk to partners on both sides of the border. It had definitely given the members a more nuanced impression of the conflict and the fact that there were no easy solutions. Furthermore, the Council found that the current situation had given the members an insight in how to deal with development in conflict affected areas, which could prove very useful in future programme assessments. The members also pointed to the fact that they had gained increased insight in the political work behind the development initiatives and commended the embassies for sharing this openly.

The embassies were pleased to learn that the Council were very satisfied with the visit and that the members found that they had gained thorough insight in the complex current situation. Regarding the dual visit, it was positive that it had been possible to demonstrate the coordinated Danish efforts related to the conflict from both sides of the border. Furthermore, it had been interesting to show the efforts within the humanitarian-development nexus as well the role of political dialogue in the current situation. The Embassies further underlined the usefulness of visits from Danish delegations. It was positive to be able to demonstrate to development partners from government level to end users that Danish stakeholders such as the Council were interested in the development initiatives.

Agenda item no. 3: Africa Programme for Peace, Phase IV, 2018-2021

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 200 million

(Embassy Addis Ababa)

Summary:

The fourth phase of the Africa Programme for Peace 2018-2021 supports key African institution's capacity to promote peace, security and good governance across the continent. Thus, the programme will provide support to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) through the African Union and two sub-regional organisations in Danish priority regions, i.e. the Sabel (ECOWAS) and the Horn of Africa (IGAD) along with support to selected think tanks. The new phase of the programme will build on the results and relationships from previous phases, while at the same time adjusting the focus in light of recent conflict trends. With an increasing number of low-intensity conflicts and conflicts emanating from elections,

issues of constitutional term limits and discontent over poor governance, the new phase will focus more on AGA (conflict prevention, diplomacy and mediation, and electoral assistance) than previous phases.

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

The Council found the programme focused, consistent and well prepared and appreciated the mixture of continuity from previous phases with adjustments according to current contextual trends. The Council agreed with the analysis and assessment of the current situation on which the programme document was founded and appreciated the focus on African solutions to African challenges.

The Council asked about the African ownership of the peace and security agenda, not least amongst African member states. While strong institutions were crucial for ensuring peace and stability on the continent, the political will amongst African member states was all-important. In addition, the Council noted the importance of regional organisations to ensure national implementation, and expressed some concerns about the geospatial independence and capacity of IGAD to intervene efficiently in conflicts on the Horn of Africa. The Council appreciated the increased focus of the programme, although it was reluctant to see the Danish support to KAIPTC phased out.

The Council commented on the current African situation related to peace and stability and appreciated the programme's strengthened focus on support to the African Governance Architecture in light of the increased tension caused by unconstitutional reforms and lack of transparent electoral processes. The Council also noted with concern the shrinking space of civil society organisations, and noted that this should be considered a risk factor going forward in the programme.

Regarding the proposed support to electoral assistance, the Council asked for an assessment of the AU and RECs capabilities to deliver objective assessments of elections due to recent discrepancies between reports from AU and EU observation missions. At the same time, the Council asked how it would be ensured that the interventions – whether electoral observation or mediation – of AU and RECs complemented each other rather than overlapped.

The Council appreciated the engagements of the Embassy on crosscutting issues, especially women, peace and security and work related to UN Security Council resolution 1325 and asked how the Embassy intended to follow this work, given that there were no specific indicators. Finally, the Council was in full agreement with the fact that the think tank component remained within the programme despite the recommendations from the appraisal, but asked for clarification of the logic behind the component.

The Embassy shared a number of the concerns raised by the Council, including the capacity of some of the implementing organisations and the need for strong member state buy-in, which would be included in the Embassy's monitoring of the programme. The Embassy noted that

there were positive signs of improved ownership in several institutions, as illustrated in the on-going reforms and Member States' recent payments of dues. The Embassy highlighted the role of think tanks in providing analysis and insights on which the organisations could base their decisions – not least taking into consideration the weak analytical capacity in several institutions. The Embassy also shared the concerns regarding shrinking space for civil societies and the need for thorough follow-up with organisations to implement the cross-cutting issues of the programme. As part of the programme, the Embassy would support the institutions in developing stronger indicators for activities relating to women, peace and security.

The Chair concluded that the Council supported the proposed Africa Programme for Peace and underlined the importance of the regional organisations in ensuring national implementation. It was recommended to keep focus on the weak capacity of IGAD, the shrinking space for civil society and the implications for stability across the Continent, and finally gender aspects. Lastly, the Chair noted his appreciation for the programme having been adapted to the changing nature of conflicts across the continent.

Agenda item no. 4: Danish Organisation Strategy for the World Food Programme, WFP

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

(Embassy Rome)

Summary:

The organisation strategy for the cooperation between Denmark and WFP defines Danish priorities regarding WFP's work and outlines the basis for the Danish cooperation with and financial support to WFP. It builds on the "Strategic Partnership Framework Agreement 2016-2019" between Denmark and WFP signed in May 2016. For many years, WFP has been a key partner in Danish humanitarian assistance. The organisation contributes directly to the implementation of the priorities of Danish humanitarian and development cooperation by providing access to food for people in poor and fragile countries and situations. Denmark's relations with WFP are guided by the Sustainable Development Goals when providing food assistance to those left furthest behind in humanitarian situations. The organisation strategy has three priority areas: 1) Achieving SDG 2 (access to food) and SDG 17 (partnerships), 2) The use of cash based transfers in food assistance, and 3) Organisational effectiveness.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the strategy for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation
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The Council found the organisation strategy very relevant and important and noted the record high demand for food assistance. At the same time, the Council highlighted some observation points regarding the future cooperation. Having just returned from a field visit to Bangladesh, the Council had first-hand experience of WFP's actions in the field and the urgent need for rapid response at scale. The Council remarked that WFP was an impressive organisation and underlined the relevance of food assistance and the organisation itself.

The Council addressed the dilemma of dual mandate organisations and the relevance of pursuing assisting countries in achieving the SDG 2 – Ending Hunger/ Access to Food – with long or

short-term measures. The Council also agreed to the importance of supporting the implementation of Agenda 2030 through partnerships, however, the dimension of local partnerships and the Danish commitment to localised response could be better advocated by Denmark. The Council found that WFP's support to capacity building of governments to reach the SDGs (SDG 17.9) should be focused on building countries' own capacity to end hunger. However, the organisation's reform and adaptation to the Agenda 2030 should be implemented in respect of the organisation's ability to carry out its core tasks.

The Council noted that as a leading organisation on cash based transfers WFP had a unique obligation to ensure that the work on cash would be focused on sharing learning, for example in the Cash Learning Partnership, and the Council would like to see benchmarking of this. Regarding anti-corruption in the area of cash, the Council underlined that there were obvious risks of fraud and corruption when working with cash based transfers, and the Council further underlined that it was important that WFP also shared learning and experiences within this area. The Council referred to the last report (2016) from the WFP Inspectorate General, which stressed the need for a more effective implementation of the overall risk framework in the daily work of WFP. The Council encouraged the Embassy to pay attention to implementation of the risk framework and establishment of the new oversight office in its dialogue with WFP.

As WFP was a major provider of cash and food in humanitarian situations, the Council warned against the risk of WFP distorting markets and encouraged evaluating the effect of food or cash being introduced in a given market. The Council also addressed the un-met needs for food assistance that repeatedly occur.

The Council asked questions related to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and underlined that WFP would have to find the right role - maybe WFP was not an obvious choice for longer term solutions to food insecurity, but WFP should also apply longer-term considerations when planning a response and preferably in collaboration with relevant partners. The importance of WFP's large humanitarian response capacity was key. Finally, the Council also touched upon the idea of introducing family planning measures when distributing food assistance.

The Embassy responded that the repeated funding gaps, which are found in many humanitarian organisations, with the words of Antonio Guterres, served to remind us of our joint humanitarian obligations and commitments. WFP addressed the gap in a variety of manners from ending programmes, reducing rations, diminishing voucher or transfer values or only providing assistance to the most needing for example small children, elderly, disabled and pregnant/breast-feeding women. The Embassy described the donor situation and noted that the Nordic countries were important providers of un-earmarked funding and that the WFP in 2017 had been receiving increased funding from the US Government.

Regarding partnerships, the Embassy had explored engagement with the Danish private sector and had been met with a lot of interest among Danish food producers to work in collaboration with WFP on finding better solutions to humanitarian products. The Embassy had noted the awareness among Danish food producers that WFP was not interested in buying food in Denmark, as the organisation preferred buying as locally and economically as possible. Denmark was, however, the 14th largest provider of goods and services to WFP. Finally, the Embassy noted

the encouragement to engage more in advocacy in WFP on localised response and sharing of learning on cash based transfers.

The Chair concluded that the Council supported the organisation strategy while recommending to continue focusing on the organisation's reform and adaptation to the Agenda 2030, the risks and possibilities of cash based transfers, attention to choice of partners and the localisation agenda, the on-going work with the private sector and the important role of the organisation as a "market" factor on food markets locally and globally. Finally, while the Council agreed that the core of WFP was emergency response, the organisation could also be more engaged in the humanitarian-development nexus.

Agenda item no. 5: Support to the Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy, DIPD, 2018-2020

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 90 million

(Department for Humanitarian action, migration and civil society, HMC)

Summary:

The Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy (DIPD) was established by law in May 2010 as an independent institution with the overall vision to contribute to the development of effective political parties and well-functioning multiparty systems in developing countries. DIPD complements Danish democracy support with this particular focus, and delivers on its vision through two overall modalities: 1) Party partnerships between Danish parties and parties in developing countries; and 2) Multiparty platforms focusing on enhancing crosscutting political dialogue. As a multi-party platform building on experience and inspiration from Denmark, DIPD facilitates capacity development of political parties in areas of representation and accountability involving Danish parties and peer-to-peer learning. DIPD promotes youth and women's engagement in politics and facilitates the building of multi-party platforms. In the coming phase (2018-20), DIPD envisages engagement in 14 developing countries with 12 projects. The institute has had two previous cooperation agreements with the MFA, each amounting to DKK 75 million over 3 year periods and an extra grant of 3 million DKK stretching the latest grant period by six months. The current budget is DKK 90 million for a three-year period (2018-20).

<p>The Council for Development Policy recommended the grant for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation while raising some critical remarks.</p>

The Council acknowledged the relevance of working with political parties complementary to Danish democracy support but questioned whether the country engagements had been sufficiently focused and whether engagements were adequately planned and implemented in synergy with other Danish democracy engagements in order to achieve the desired impact. The Council noted that many of the party engagements took place in non-priority countries and further referred to the complex political contexts and risks inherent in this type of engagement which were difficult to fully grasp and mitigate when not permanently present in the particular countries. Several council members stressed that the programme document painted a somewhat rosy picture and did not adequately reflect the challenges involved in engaging with parties and democracy support in developing countries. The Council recommended that DIPD acknowledged the

risks inherent in this type of engagement in a more realistic manner in order to be able to better mitigate risks and achieve the best possible results. The Council further stressed the importance of working closely together with Danish civil society partners within the same field of expertise.

Some Council members further questioned the underlying elements of what they defined as democracy export and the intervention logic between described activities and objectives, in this regard, it was noted that it seemed difficult to demonstrate impact. Some Council members found that the added value of the Secretariat was unclear based on the description in the programme document and asked whether the costs of the Secretariat were too high.

With reference to the principle of separation of powers, members of the Council questioned the design of the institutional set-up contained in the law about the establishment of DIPD, where the recipients of funds (the Danish political parties) were also holding the majority of seats in the Board. Further, they asked whether the relevant checks and balances were in place between DIPD and the MFA, headed by a Minister and politician.

The HMC department explained that DIPD needed to consolidate engagements and ensure adequately planning, monitoring of results and risk mitigation. In this respect, HMC welcomed DIPD's plan to increase the resources of the Secretariat with two staffs, including a Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser, which would also ease the administrative burden on the political parties. HMC explained that the administrative costs included salaries for staff and other project related expenses and that the proposed level of administrative costs was necessary in order to ensure adequate planning and monitoring of results and prevent mismanagement of funds. HMC would closely monitor DIPD's follow up on recommendations in the Desk Appraisal based on two status reports from DIPD – the first one in the end of March 2018 and the second one in the end of 2018. Further, HMC would initiate a capacity assessment of DIPD in the end of 2018 in order to assess e.g., whether the desired strengthening of the Secretariat had been achieved in order to ensure delivery of sustainable results. The MFA emphasised that the relevant checks and balances vis-a-vis DIPD was in place. The grant to DIPD was managed in accordance with the same administrative and financial guidelines as likeminded organisations, including regular consultations, reviews and financial monitoring visits.

With regard to synergy with Danish democracy support, HMC found it relevant that DIPD was engaged in Danida priority countries to the extent possible and highlighted that DIPD did that to a certain extent, especially with regard to projects initiated and implemented by the Secretariat. As an example, HMC highlighted that the Danish Embassy in Burkina Faso had recently approached DIPD regarding a possible collaboration with political parties from Burkina based on local requests. HMC acknowledged that DIPD also to a certain degree based country engagements on demands from political parties and “windows of opportunity” in other developing countries, complementing efforts implemented by other donors.

HMC fully agreed that the support provided by DIPD would not in itself trigger the next wave of democracy but argued that it would most likely better enable the political parties and the electorate to take advantage of new waves of systemic change and direct it towards democracy.

In conclusion, the Chair recommended the grant for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation while raising some critical points. The Chair emphasised that DIPD's particular focus on political parties and multi-party systems was a relevant supplement to Danish democracy support while questioning the inherent elements of democracy export in DIPD's approach. The Council questioned whether there was enough focus on synergy with other Danish efforts. The Chair further acknowledged that the administrative costs of the Secretariat were considered necessary in order to improve planning and monitoring of results and welcomed the planned status reports on implementation of appraisal recommendations and a capacity assessment of the Secretariat in 2018 in order to assess whether the desired strengthening of the Secretariat had been achieved.

Agenda item no. 6: Core support to World Resources Institute

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 75 million

(Department for Growth and Employment, VBE)

Summary:

The objective of giving Danish core support to the World Resources Institute (WRI) is to contribute to progress in delivering on the Paris Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) through strong analytical work and knowledge based solutions leading to results on the ground. WRI is a global research organisation at the nexus of environment, economic opportunity and well-being. The institute conducts independent research and draws on the latest technology to go beyond research and create practical applicable solutions for change. WRI actively uses research to influence government policies, business strategies, and civil society action and engages with a strong network of partners to deliver results on the ground. By providing core support, Denmark can influence the strategic direction of WRIs work ensuring strong continued synergies with Danish priorities as expressed through "The World 2030".

The Council for Development Policy recommended the core support to WRI for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.
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The Council commended the suggested support to WRI and recognised the institute as a strong and highly relevant partner for Denmark. While recognising that the institute was renowned for its strong analytical work and global networking capacities, the Council asked for further details on WRI's comparative advantages to avoid overlap with the work of other organisations. The Council noted that sometimes WRI was considered a NGO instead of a think tank. The Council questioned the basic assumption that knowledge changes people's behaviour and the Council asked questions about Danish research capacity and whether there could be a link to the development research supported under Danida. The Council found the choice of core support interesting and asked about the advantages of this kind of support compared to earmarked funding to WRI. Finally, it was recommended being aware of the risk that WRI was growing too fast and thereby was in the risk of becoming too bureaucratic.

Regarding the comparative advantages of WRI, the VBE department explained the institute's track record of delivering tangible results on the ground, based on the institute's strong analytical

work and transformed into practical applicable solutions backed by effective advocacy influencing policies of governments and businesses through strong networks. WRI's valuable contributions to the process leading up to the Paris Agreement and to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals were highlighted as examples of the institute's strong platform and global networking capacities. Finally, the communality of strategic priorities, at global as well as at bilateral level in many of Denmark's priority countries, was underlined.

In response to the question on the choice of core support raised by some members, VBE pointed to the privileged dialogue and strong strategic influence build into this modality, which had long been the preference for Denmark's support to organisations working on global agendas. In the specific case of WRI, this gave Denmark a strong hand in influencing WRI's five year Strategic Plan as well as the annual work plans. The soft earmarking of DKK 6 million for cooperation with Danish knowledge institutions was aimed at contributing to dynamic knowledge curves, but the practical ramifications were still in the design phase. The core support was multiannual and harmonised with the duration of the next Strategic Plan of the institute (2018-2022), although the actual grants foreseen in the Financial Act were annual as was often the case for support to international institutions and multilateral organisation.

The Chair concluded that the Council welcomed the suggested support to WRI, which was recognised as a strong and efficient institute. The Council had noted that the choice of core funding would give Denmark clear strategic influence. Furthermore, it was recognised that WRI, because of its active approach to working through strong networks, was able to transform knowledge, set agendas and change behaviour leading to results on the ground.

Agenda item no. 7: Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030, 2018-2022

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

DKK 225 million

(Department for Growth and Employment, VBE)

Summary:

P4G is a new action oriented initiative focusing on global green growth and following up on SDG 17 on multi-stakeholder partnerships. It is powering breakthrough partnerships with government, business and community leaders to speed up the delivery on the commitments of the Paris Agreement on climate change and on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. P4G will focus on in key economic systems where opportunities and impacts are greatest: energy, water, land-use and agriculture, cities and the circular economy. Frontrunner countries including Chile, Denmark, Ethiopia, Kenya, Korea, Mexico and Vietnam, stand behind the initiative. The partner countries will establish independent platforms to coordinate national interests in the P4G and ensure that partnerships deliver results at scale.

<p>The Council for Development Policy recommended the P4G initiative for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation while also raising some concerns and providing recommendations for improvement.</p>

The Council welcomed in general the initiative. It asked for further clarifications regarding learnings from the 3GF initiative and how these were reflected in the design of the P4G. The Council found that there was a need for clarifying the theory of change and how the new concept would contribute to delivering on the SDG's. A strong focus on partnerships was noted and the Council asked for examples of how public-private partnerships could contribute and commented that these partnerships may not always be the right instrument to achieve the established objectives including an enabling environment. The Council found it positive that the engagement of civil society was well reflected in the paper, as civil society could be constructive both as implementing partners and dialogue partners in order to ensure local ownership. One Council member questioned that the initiative - along with other similar initiatives - did not include partnerships in the area of health and education as there was a need for public private partnerships in order to reach the ambitious targets on SDG 3 and 4 and Denmark had extensive experience in these sectors.

Some Council members commended the focus on start-up processes and national platforms. It was welcomed that the Danish national platform was embedded in State of Green. Some members asked how to ensure Danish ownership to P4G, while others mentioned the importance of the international alliance given that Denmark so far was the only donor of the initiative. The Council asked whether efforts had been undertaken to convince other partners to support the initiative financially. Finally, some members asked whether the initiative was restricted to the partnering countries.

The Council asked for a clarification of the management and governance structure, as there seemed to be an unbalance in the resources allocated to the international coordination Hub and the Partnership Fund. The Council underlined the risk that P4G could become too bureaucratic. Some members noted that there could be a risk that P4G would resemble Danida Market Development Partnerships and it was recommended to focus on communicating the differences.

Furthermore, the Council noted the diversity of the partner countries and underlined the challenge of shared learning between such different countries. Moreover, it was recommended to include more developing countries in the future. The Council underlined the importance of measuring results and in this regard expressed concern about the realism of measuring results after only 3 years. Finally, the Council further underlined the importance of addressing gender, human rights and responsible business conduct.

The VBE department clarified that the P4G was based on both an assessment of 3GF by an external consultant and on an inclusive process with domestic as well as international partners. The P4G was build on the main learnings, including integrating the SDG's, stronger focus on concrete partnerships and results and building an international alliance. VBE explained that delivering on the SDGs was the end goal of the initiative and that public-private partnership was a recognised method of contributing. The P4G initiative would not be able to solve all challenges around the SDGs, but was indeed capable of delivering solutions requested by many countries. Furthermore, many Danish and international businesses had requested an instrument capable of creating high-level dialogue leading to unlocking framework conditions and facilitation of the necessary partnerships.

VBE explained the role of the International Hub in Washington including the advisory role on developing and scaling concrete partnerships. The fund-management was only a smaller part of the tasks of the Hub. The national platform in State of Green would coordinate the Danish stakeholders while the MFA would closely monitor the initiative, promote gradual adjustments and administer the grant. Furthermore, VBE explained that the choice of P4G partner countries was based on the 3GF countries, but P4G was not a “closed club” and new partner countries would be expected to join, including other donor countries. Finally, VBE stated that given the innovative character of P4G, not all issues could be clarified beforehand. Therefore, an inception review was planned to adjust the initiative after 6 months.

The chair concluded that the Council was supportive of the initiative and that satisfactory explanations had been provided. The Council found that P4G should focus on impact on the SDG’s rather than partnerships and avoid heavy and potential bureaucratic management and governance set-up. The Council had expressed concerns about the risk of a Danish biased initiative with the strong focus on national interests. The Council recommended VBE to follow the initiative closely. The Council welcomed that work was already in progress to ensure additional financing from other donor countries. Finally, the Council appreciated the honest identification of barriers for success, as well as the possible opportunities.

Agenda item no. 8: Status of phasing out in Mozambique

For discussion

(Embassy Maputo)

The Council took note of the information on the phasing out of development cooperation in Mozambique.

The Council expressed its appreciation of the very informative note. The Council expressed concerns regarding the current situation in Mozambique and the challenges related to protecting the results achieved over the past 40 years in a situation where Denmark’s development cooperation was being phased out. More specifically, the Council asked whether the results achieved over the years in the Tete province would be lost. The Council also wondered if the current situation could have been predicted and how other donors were reacting. Acknowledging the political decision of phasing out, the Council found that focus ought to be on ensuring that the exit would be as constructive as possible. In this aspect, the Council asked whether there were relevant lessons to be learned and whether it would be possible to adjust the timing of the exit to allow for further dialogue or even cooperation with other donors on the use of remaining funds and the possible continuation of the Danish supported programmes.

The Embassy shared that the Mozambican authorities at first had found it difficult to accept that Denmark was phasing out its development cooperation. However, in the end, they had not only accepted the decision; but also taken full ownership of the formulation and implementation process. The Embassy stressed that so far, the dialogue with and cooperation extended from key ministries had been excellent.

The Embassy explained that the situation obviously would affect some of the expected results. The government did not possess any means to pay salary to publicly employed staff, including those trained through the Danish supported programmes in the Tete province such as midwives, nurses, nutritionists etc. However, the foundation that had been built over the past many years would remain in place e.g., the 2,000 to 3,000 nurses that have been trained in the Tete province would still be there. The same applied for the government accounting system that Denmark has helped develop and the about 1,200 staff that had been trained in using it and so would the improved capacity to manage traffic in the harbour. There was also no doubt that nutrition would remain on the agenda after Denmark had helped put it there. Hence, although the programmes would not continue in the same way, they had delivered strong results that would remain. It was difficult to say whether the situation could have been predicted. None of the parties were open about the situation and it was not until beginning 2015 that we realised that there was a war going on.

The Embassy shared that in a situation where other donors were being careful and many were reducing their activity-level it was very difficult to get other donors to pick-up from where Denmark was phasing out. In general, there was little support for the Paris Agenda. The EU had shown interest in the rural credit programme but had no interest in taking over the nutrition programme. It had also been difficult to mobilise support to the harbour traffic programme. In this regard, the Embassy found that it would be good if there could be more flexibility on the date for final disbursement.

The Council was informed that the Embassy would officially close on December 8. Referring to the comments of the earlier External Grant Committee on the need for top management support throughout the phasing out process, the Embassy found that there had been strong top management support throughout the entire process. Regarding lessons learned of relevance to other countries, the Embassy found that it probably would be better – if possible - to communicate up front before the last programme cycle that the next programme would also be the last. In this regard, the Head of the KFU department underlined that experiences and lessons learned from previous phasing out had been used actively in the planning of the phase out from Mozambique.

The Chair concluded that the Council was encouraged by hearing that the results of the Danish support would remain and could be a foundation to build on for Mozambique. The Council was pessimistic about the current situation. Finally, the Council supported that efforts must now focus on getting the best out of the situation due to the difficult situation in Mozambique.

Agenda item no. 9: AOB.

In advance of the meeting, the Council had received a note regarding IWGIA's progress in relation to review recommendations from 2016. This update had been requested by the External Grant Committee in relation to the approval of the grant to IWGIA in 2016. There were no comments to the note.

The Chair recommended the Council members to think about possible topics for thematic discussions at the meetings during spring 2018, as it was the expectation that the meeting agendas during the first half of 2018 would allow more time for such thematic discussions. Possible themes could be forward to the Chair and Vice Chair.

Agenda item no. 10: Expansion of country programme in Bangladesh in response to the current refugee crisis

For discussion

DKK 33 million
(Embassy Dhaka)

Summary:

In order to support the response to the Rohingya Refugee Crisis and its adverse implications to the local community, the country frame for Bangladesh has been increased with DKK 33 million. The funds will be distributed across the existing three thematic programmes on agriculture, climate change as well as governance and rights with a focus on supporting host communities.

The Council took note of the expansion of the country programme in response to the current refugee crisis.
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The Council was wholeheartedly supportive and found that the additional funds were needed and that the intervention areas were important and crucial given the present situation. However, the Council raised concerns regarding the involved partners' capacity for absorbing the additional funds and recommended the Embassy to be aware of this issue. Regarding support to the one-stop crisis centre the Council expressed concern about the role of the police and how women reporting violence were ensured protection.

Regarding the partners' capacity for absorbing the funds, the Embassy underlined that a dialogue is taking place and that focus will be on areas and on partners who have the ability to increase the activity level. The interventions would be designed in a flexible manner so that adjustments could easily be made depending on the situation and the development on the ground. Regarding the one stop crisis centre, the Embassy recognised the concerns raised, but stated that capacity building of the police was not part of the Danish supported programme as such interventions would require other types of resources. However, the police was subject to public exposure including criticism.