The Danish Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark invited colleagues and key stakeholders to a high-level dialogue seminar on priorities for a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). The seminar was co-hosted by the European Commission and took place at the Albert Borschette Conference Centre in Brussels on 3 June 2013. Participation on the day numbered over 80 persons staying throughout the day and representing an almost equal share of three principal categories:

i. European Institutions (notably DG DEVCO and EEAS)
ii. Member States
iii. Civil Society Organisations

The programme and process of the seminar was designed to optimise active involvement of participants and provide a coherent flow through the day. Participant expectations were identified during an introductory section followed by three segments and an optional “master class-session” providing participants with the historical background and theoretical foundations of HRBA. The two morning panels discussed progress to date on translating HRBA commitments into programming in the context of EU development cooperation. Building on the conclusions from the morning sessions, the high-level panellist reflected on why HRBA is key to fight poverty, promote human rights, and ensure sustainable development.

Firstly, two directors from the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the European Commission (DG DEVCO) were interviewed by moderator Verner Kristiansen followed by a discussion with participants. Secondly, a total of three representatives from two EU member states and a civil society umbrella organisation answered questions on experiences with implementation of HRBA and European perspectives. Thirdly, an afternoon high-level session provided participants with an opportunity to discuss HRBA perspectives with Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs, EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis and Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark Christian Friis Bach.

Discussions on the day reflected considerable commitment to HRBA and a widely shared understanding among panellists and participants that the relevant HRBA policies are in place, but the key challenge is to translating the political commitment into implementation at programming level. Representatives of EU institutions highlighted a planned EU HRBA Toolbox that will guide implementation at sector level as a top priority for moving forward. Participants pointed to the following five priorities for taking a HRBA to EU development programming:

1. Connect EU human rights country strategies to the process of development programming
2. Ensure coherence and synergy between existing HRBA and human rights and development instruments and tools from member states in developing the EU HRBA Toolbox
3. Ensure effective participation of civil society in development programming processes
4. Take a context-specific and pragmatic approach to the promotion of human rights and use national, regional and international human rights commitments to establish common ground

5. Build capacity of right-holders to claim rights and duty-bearers to deliver on human rights obligations – across all sector programmes and not only in the human rights and governance sector

6. Use the HRBA principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination and transparency as a means to ensure ownership to this agenda from partner countries.

Forward-looking perspectives emerging from the lively seminar discussions included:

- **Ensuring a human rights perspective in the Post-MDG framework** – of key importance not least in light of the prominence of rights in the recent High-Level Panel report. EU contribution to anchoring of HRBA in the Post-MDG framework would be helpful in avoiding notions of HRBA as conditionality imposition.

- **EU HRBA Toolkit** – it may be worth considering some sort of joint process of providing input and ideas for the compilation process and discussion of draft versions before the expected presentation in December 2013 – bearing in mind that the Toolkit is an EU document.

- **Keeping up momentum** – the evidenced commitment to HRBA programming sector by sector would be worth following in on-going dialogue between member states, EEAS and DEVCO, including in the context of CODEV. It may also be worth considering early announcement of a follow-up seminar at an appropriate time during the second half of 2013 to keep momentum at high level.
**Programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00-11:10</td>
<td><strong>HRBA: New opportunities for development cooperation:</strong> Charlotte Slente, Ambassador, Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark welcomes participants and outlines the purpose of the seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:10-11:20</td>
<td><strong>Overview</strong> – Moderator Verner Kristiansen identifies expectations of participants and provides an overview of today’s programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11:20-12:00 | **Session I: How to translate our political commitment to HRBA into programming results in EU development cooperation?** Participants discuss challenges, opportunities and priorities for HRBA in EU development cooperation on the basis of short introductions by:  
  - Véronique Arnault, Director of Human Rights & Democracy Directorate, European External Action Service  
  - Kristian Schmidt, Director, Human and Society Development, DG DEVCO, European Commission |
| 12.00-12.20 | **Coffee break** |
| 12:20-13.30 | **Session II: Implementing HRBA in practice** Perspectives from Member States and civil society introduce a second plenary discussion of HRBA priorities for EU development cooperation:  
  - Charlotte Slente, Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark  
  - Marita Steinke, Head of Unit for Human Rights, Gender and Culture, BMZ, Germany  
  - Joanna Maycock, President, Concord Europe  
  **Closing Remarks:** Charlotte Slente, Ambassador, Under-Secretary for Global Development and Cooperation summarises the outcome of discussions so far on HRBA priorities for EU development cooperation |
| 13.30-14.30 | **Lunch (informal)** |
| 14.30-15.30 | **HRBA Master Class** – optional session inviting participants to join Tomas Martin and Marie Louise Muff, the Danish Institute for Human Rights in an informal discussion on the historical background and theoretical foundations of HRBA. |
HIGH-LEVEL SESSION

15.30-15.40  Welcome and introductory statement by Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, Christian Friis Bach

15:40-15:50  How can HRBA help meet our Agenda for Change objectives? Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs

15:50-16:00  Realizing HRBA through the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy by EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis

16:00-16:30  Plenary discussion with seminar participants and panelists:
- Commissioner for Development, Andris Piebalgs
- EUSR for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis
- Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, Christian Friis Bach

16:30  Closing remarks by Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, Christian Friis Bach