

**Minutes from meetings in the Council for Development Policy
on 11 February 2021**

- Members: Professor Anne Mette Kjær, University of Aarhus (Chair)
International Director Jarl Krausing, CONCITO (Vice Chair)
General Secretary Birgitte Qvist-Sørensen, DanChurchAid
General Secretary Rasmus Stuhr Jakobsen, CARE Denmark
Senior Researcher Lars Engberg-Pedersen, Danish Institute for International Studies
Head of International Department Jens Kvorning, SMEdenmark
Vice President Bente Sorgenfrey, Danish Trade Union Confederation
Private Advisor Morten Lisborg, Migration Management Advice
Head of Department Kenneth Lindhardt Madsen, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council
Director for Global Development and Sustainability Marie Gad, Confederation of Danish Industries
International Director Marie Engberg Helmstedt, The Danish Youth Council
- MFA: State Secretary for Development Policy Trine Rask Thygesen
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
Chief Advisor Søren Davidsen, 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 Trine Rask Thygesen
Ambassador Nicolaj A. Hejberg Petersen, Kampala
Ambassador Karin Poulsen, Addis Ababa
Ambassador John Nielsen, Yangon
- Agenda item 2: Head of Department Henriette Ellermann-Kigombe, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MUS
Head of Section Peter Ellehøj, Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MUS
- Agenda item 3: Head of Department Signe Skovbakke Winding Albjerg, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Tobias von Platen-Hallermund, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Mads-Emil Stærk, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Head of Department Asser Berling Rasmussen, Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities

Head of Section Tanne Nørgaard Jensen, Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities

Agenda item 4: Minister for Development Cooperation Flemming Møller Mortensen

Head of Department Lotte Machon, Department for Africa, Policy & Development, APD

Agenda item 5: Head of Department Signe Skovbakke Winding Albjerg, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Jens Fugl, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Mads-Emil Stærk, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Agenda item 6: Deputy Head of Department, Henning Nøhr, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK

Head of Department Signe Skovbakke Winding Albjerg, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Tobias von Platen-Hallermund, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Chief Advisor Mads-Emil Stærk, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Agenda Item No. 1: Announcements

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Ambassadors from Uganda, Ethiopia and Myanmar who would brief the Council on the situation in their respective countries.

Ambassador Nicolaj Hejberg Petersen, Kampala, briefly informed about the situation in Uganda following the recent election where President Museveni won 59% of the vote and Bobi Wine of the National Unity Platform won 36%. There was an update on a number of concerning issues during the election campaign incl. disproportionate use of force and the status of media and civil society freedoms. There was also an update on issues facing the Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) - managed for 10 years by Denmark on behalf of seven donors including the EU - and the dialogue the Danish Embassy was having with Government of Uganda to solve the issues.

Ambassador Karin Poulsen, Addis Ababa, briefly informed about the situation in Ethiopia, which continues to be serious with 4.5 million people in Tigray (of a population of 6 million) in need of humanitarian assistance, 60.000 in Sudan and many internally displaced. There were many human rights violations and massive destruction. Many parties carried a responsibility for the conflict including the military and militias. The picture was complex, it was not the Government against everybody else. There was also a fight about the narrative. The Government maintained that this was a national concern, that the needs for humanitarian assistance were being cared for and that Eritrean troops were not present in Tigray. The heads of UNHCR and WFP visited recently as did the EU envoy. The narrative of the UN organizations – which had not yet been given the permissions to operate in Tigray - was considered too positive. The EU was clearer on demanding access and an independent investigation of human rights violations. Elections were set for 5 June. The EU will be sending observers, which had been welcomed by the Government. Responding to questions from members of the Council, the Ambassador responded that there is support for Abiy in Addis, as many are tired of ethnic conflicts. An additional aspect, however was the alleged involvement of Eritrean troops which the Prime Minister denies. However, there are reports of rape and lootings. If that hits Addis, the story may change. And yes, there had been reprisals in Tigray. Companies had been closed and people had not been able to board airplanes and an ethnic profiling seemed to be taking place.

Ambassador John Nielsen, Yangon, briefly informed about the situation in Myanmar where the military coup had been well-prepared following the election in November 2020. In three hours the President, Aung San Suu Kyi, parliamentarians, CSO-representatives, monks, journalists etc. were rounded-up and the internet shut down. Why was this necessary with the military in a controlling position, having veto-power against constitutional changes, not subject to parliamentary control or civil justice? The framework for understanding the coup is the more than 30 years old standoff between Aung San Suu Kyi and the military. The military was shocked by the NLD's landslide victory which destroyed the aspirations of the Commander in Chiefs of becoming the next president. When he tried to negotiate it with Aung San Suu Kyi he was neglected. The coup leaders have introduced a one-year state of emergency and the holding of elections. Charges against ASSK would de facto write her out of politics and ban the NLD. Further, their intentions were to change the electoral system from first past the post to proportional representation. The reaction from the general public had been very strong with demonstrations almost non-stop, banging of pots and pans and a civil disobedience campaign. Internationally, the reaction from the Security Council had been unusual with China giving in to expressing deep concern at the state of emergency imposed and the arbitrary detention of a number of people including ASSK.

China could be the key to resolving, balancing their interests at home to keep civil unrest down and interest to gain access to the Indian Ocean. Difficult to see the way out. Important for the EU, UK, and US to coordinate and ensure smart sanctions to target the military and not the poor which happened in the past. The UN Special Envoy was still waiting to enter Myanmar.

The Chair thanked the Ambassadors for taking the time to brief the Council on events in three important development priority countries.

Agenda Item No. 2: Follow-up on Mid-term Review: Anti-Corruption Programme 2019-2022

For information

Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy, MUS

Summary:

The Mid-term Review of the Anti-Corruption Programme (ACP) found that the strategic objective is met through the continued relevance of the selected Partners and their scope. However, the initial intention that the ACP would give Denmark a stronger and more visible global anti-corruption engagement has not materialised yet. The choice of the partners and the way they are working continues to reflect well the original 'three cluster' design. Whilst the partners are generally performing well, the MTR found that the ACP would be more relevant and more valuable if it functioned as the global component of a more integrated MFA approach to reducing corruption as an obstacle to development.

The Council emphasized that the fight against corruption was an important element of development policy. However, the Council expressed concern that the level of ambition held in the original programme document and expressed at the 2018 conference had not fully materialized, and asked for the reasons behind this, and whether MFA would review the strategic priority given to anti-corruption.

Members of the Council further asked what could be done to address the point made in the MTR about a more integrated MFA approach between the multilateral, bilateral and civil society anti-corruption measures. It was noted that the MFA did not intend to create a task force on the matter, but rather build on the existing Anti-Corruption Focal Point network. Members of the Council encouraged the MFA to use the upcoming global attention on the anti-corruption UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) as an entry point.

Members of the Council observed that the issue of corruption had many facets and while corruption in itself was a clear obstacle to development also at the level of private sector engagement in the form of “facilitation payments”, it was also a symptom of lack of adequate governance systems, accountability and transparency. In this respect, members of the Council emphasized that the civil society can play a very important role.

Members of the Council furthermore asked how MFA engaged in looking at the linkage between the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), the OECD and the issue of taxation and highlighted the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) as a partner producing good results. Finally, members of the Council encouraged stronger Nordic coordination since the Minister for Development Cooperation was also Minister for Nordic Cooperation.

The Head of Department for Multilateral Cooperation and Policy (MUS) thanked for the good comments and explained that one reason the high ambitions had not been fully met was that the programme initiated in autumn 2019 had quickly been impeded by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another reason was that the original ambitions required more resources than could be allocated. The MTR was timely for providing support to reviewing the strategic priority of anti-corruption in the formulation of the new strategy for development cooperation. As pointed out, anti-corruption measures were to a large extent an issue of governance and touched on many sectoral issues. As such there was scope for furthering a more holistic and integrated approach to corruption through stronger linkage between the ACP and priority areas as e.g. climate and fragility.

The linkages with civil society (CSOs) and the private sector were an integrated part of the ACP and the support for civil society, investigative journalism, and resource transparency. As part of the more integrated approach to anti-corruption - and linking to the new strategy - there could well be further support to the role of civil society in this area. Regarding the private sector, the support for collective action through the Maritime Anti-Corruption Network (MACN) was a success story. The Danish support had enabled better handling at ports, reducing corrupt practices and showing visible, material gains for stakeholders.

EITI also had a good reputation and did indeed have a cooperation with the OECD. In the Danish development policy context, the area of taxation was a separate issue and still too early to ascertain in the context of the new strategy. Regarding Nordic coordination the Head of MUS informed that they were indeed in contact with the other Nordic countries to consider possible joint areas, including in the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on corruption. Finally, she stressed that the MFA would prioritise more visibility of the anti-corruption programme in the coming years.

The State Secretary for Development confirmed that the issue of how to deal with taxation was still under consideration. The fact that Denmark no longer provided budget support implied that the relations with finance ministries had been weakened. This raised questions about how to approach the issue of anti-corruption and taxation at the bilateral level. The State Secretary would welcome a conversation with the Council on this issue.

The Chair closed the meeting by commending the efforts already made to follow-up on the MTR and looked forward to seeing how the anti-corruption programme would fit the new development cooperation strategy.

Agenda Item No. 3: Danish Organisation Strategy for the Green Climate Fund

For discussion and recommendation to the Minister

Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Summary:

In 2010, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established by 194 Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as part of the Convention's financial mechanism. The Fund provides support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change, taking into account the needs of those developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The GCF Board has so far approved 159 projects with a total value of USD 23,3 billion, where GCF funds constitute USD 7,3 billion. The approved projects are anticipated to lead to 408 million people with

increased resilience towards climate change and 1,2 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent avoided. As the largest global fund dedicated to help fight climate change, GCF is strongly positioned in the climate finance architecture and the Fund has a crucial role in serving the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. This organisation strategy provides strategic considerations and priorities for Denmark's engagement with the GCF. The Danish priorities in GCF for the period 2021-23 consist of the following: i) maximizing impacts of GCF investments; ii) efficiency in the Board; iii) country ownership; and iv) safeguards and gender mainstreaming. The Danish proposed contribution to GCF is DKK 800 million covering a period of three years and making Denmark the 14th largest contributor to the Fund.

The Council for Development Policy recommended the Danish Organisation Strategy for the Green Climate Fund for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

The Council recognized the critical political role GCF played in the international climate finance landscape and beyond and expressed strong support for Danish engagement with the GCF as described in the organisation strategy. The Council broadly agreed with the proposed Danish priorities and found the strategy well written and with a clear description on the challenges of the Fund and how Denmark through various means would seek influence in the GCF Board. The Council acknowledged that GCF had matured as an organization but emphasized the need for the GCF Board to become more efficient and ensure faster programming and disbursement. At the same time it was regarded as important that the Fund achieved strong country ownership and involvement with the civil society and youth as well as alignment with the Nationally Determined Contributions of recipient countries.

Recognizing the challenges facing the Fund, the Council underlined the need for improving dialogue between developed and developing countries both within and outside the GCF Board and the need for political dialogue at the country level in order to ensure ownership, the lack of which is often seen as a challenge. It was noted that the Danish priorities may be of secondary importance if the dialogue between developed and developing countries was not improved. Thus, the MFA was encouraged to put efforts into improving this dialogue. The Council also underlined the need for the GCF to focus more on adaptation especially to the most vulnerable countries. In this regard, the challenging nature of adaptation was highlighted due to the need for coordination between many ministries at the country level.

Members of the Council asked how the GCF cooperates with other multilateral climate finance institutions and how the Fund seeks stronger engagement with the private sector including to simplify project application procedures and accreditation to the Fund. The need for the GCF to improve access to funds was underlined.

Further, it was noted that human rights and a gender sensitive approach was critical for the work of the Fund and that the specific role that women and girls could play in climate programmes should be emphasized in the strategy along with a more differentiated description of vulnerable groups. Lastly, Members of the Council wished to know how the organisation strategy considered the MFA Doing Development Differently (DDD) approach, the role of the Private Sector Group, and the basis for the level of the proposed amount of the Danish contribution to GCF of USD 800 million.

The Head of the Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK) thanked the Council for the support for the strategy and all the relevant questions and comments. GCF was still a

relatively new organization and despite several policy gaps and challenges to ensure a sufficient level of disbursements, the Fund was becoming increasingly efficient even in the midst of COVID-19. The Head of GDK underlined that Denmark was seeking to address several of the concerns raised by the Council in relation to improved efficiency and access, and support to adaptation to the most vulnerable. The Head of GDK agreed with the need for ensuring stronger country ownership as well as enhanced engagement with both CSOs and the private sector, and encouraged a strengthened collaboration with relevant Danish CSOs and private sector around GCF. Regarding the question of the level of the Danish contribution, the Head of GDK mentioned that GCF was a critical element of Denmark's ambition to promote climate diplomacy and take lead on climate action internationally.

The Head of International Relations in the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities confirmed the critical role of GCF in the global climate finance landscape and its mandate to serve the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The GCF provided a strong platform for advancing dialogue and build trust between Parties to the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement and represented a forum for promoting strategic interests that coincided with the Danish priorities in the UNFCCC negotiations. Regarding DDD, it was among other things emphasized that relevant programmes were screened in collaboration with Danish embassies.

The Chair of the Council thanked the members for good and relevant comments and questions, which in general were supportive of the strengthened Danish engagement with GCF. The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council could recommend the Danish Organisation Strategy for the Green Climate Fund for approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 4: New Strategy for the Danish Development Cooperation with the participation of the Minister for Development Cooperation

The Chair welcomed the Minister for Development Cooperation. The Minister was pleased to meet the members of the Council following a fruitful meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair a few weeks earlier, expressed his interest in the Council's expertise and his intent in working with the Council in the future with particular emphasis on the coming new strategy for development cooperation.

The Minister presented his priorities for a new strategy and noted that the current strategy is founded on a broad political agreement and expressed his intention to create similar broad political backing to the new strategy. He further highlighted that he intended keeping the level of ODA of at least 0.7 pct. of GDI. The Minister centred his priorities around three thematic areas: 1) climate and the green agenda; 2) fragility, conflict and instability and inclusive responses in support of refugees, internally displaced, irregular migrants and host communities; and 3) democracy and human rights. The Minister noted that poverty reduction, reduction of inequalities, and a focus on Africa were crosscutting issues for all three thematic areas and highlighted that strong partnerships at home and abroad were essential to achieving sustainable results.

The process towards the new strategy for development cooperation had just been initiated, and while the exact timing of the negotiations were to be agreed among the spokespersons for development policy, the Minister was hoping to reach an agreement in due time ahead of the new strategic partnership agreements.

The Minister thanked the Council for their commitment and their expertise and opened the floor by encouraging comments and perspectives from members of the Council.

The Council thanked the Minister for taking the time to discuss the direction of a new strategy for development cooperation and for being receptive to the Council's recommendations and expertise. Members of the Council then offered the Minister their views in relation to the priorities of the new strategy, the modalities for delivering it, the geographic scope and the level of ambition.

Members of the Council generally welcomed the focus on climate and the green agenda and recommended that the issue of food security be reflected in the new strategy. Further, it was noted that the areas of decent job creation in the green sector, capacity building among social partners, social safety nets, biodiversity and health were important areas to bring into a new strategy and areas of Danish expertise.

Members of the Council welcomed the focus on women and youth and highlighted the potential of focusing women's economic opportunities as means of creating economic growth and furthering gender equality and that young people were important agents of change in all arenas including as advocates for education, democracy, and human rights. It was recommended that youth and women were not only mainstreamed in the Danish priorities but also individual focus areas.

Members of the Council expressed concern with a too strong focus on Africa with particular reference to both trade opportunities and value-based interests in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, given the long-term nature of development, members of the Council advised to avoid frequent country shifts in Denmark's development cooperation. Members of the Council furthermore underlined that development funds were primarily intended for countries in the South, and that Danish interests were secondary in that regard.

Members of the Council acknowledged the Minister's reference to Decade of Action and stressed that from an economic perspective reaching the SDGs would require flexibility, innovation, and access to risk finance. Members therefore recommended the new strategy to include references to blended finance and partnerships between civil society organisations, the private and public sectors.

Members of the Council stressed that partnerships were important for the success of the strategy both in terms of strengthening public engagement through Danish civil society organisations and in terms of raising blended finance, but also in terms of bilateral partnerships. With regard to the latter, members of the Council highlighted that long-term bilateral cooperation was central and that partnerships should be founded on reciprocal ownership and interests to generate results. With regard to the Minister's second priority, the Council further emphasised that refugees, displaced persons and migrants were mostly located in developing countries and that both long- and short-term partnerships with host communities were needed.

Members of the Council finally noted the need for a match between the level of ambition and the resources available in the Ministry to deliver. The recent evaluation of the climate adaptation

cooperation had unfortunately confirmed the shortage in that regard. A solid programme underpinned by capacity would be preferable to a strategy with undeliverable high ambitions.

The Minister appreciated the relevant and competent remarks from the Council and looked forward to future discussions with the Council.

Continuation of Agenda Item No. 4: New Strategy for the Danish Development Cooperation

The Chair opened the floor for a general discussion among the Council's members about the new strategy for the Danish development cooperation.

The substantive discussion mainly focussed on the issue of blended finance as means to generate different types of financing for development. Members of the Council discussed drawbacks and benefits of blended finance including in relation to mobilising private funding for the poorest countries and poverty reduction and whether it could benefit both small-scale farmers and larger projects such as major infrastructure projects. Members of the Council noted the need for documenting the added value of blended finance as well as the need for better instruments to enable organisations, partners and the private sector to raise and utilise blended finance in development projects.

Regarding the process, the Council asked the Head of Department for Africa Policy and Development, APD, about the coming process for the strategy.

The Head of APD thanked the Council for their remarks and reflections. She clarified that the level of abstraction would be rather high as the strategy was meant to set the direction for the development cooperation. With regard to the process, she noted that the coming process would include consultations with several organisations as well as the spokespersons for development in Parliament ahead of the political discussions. She noted that it was a political process and that there would therefore not be a draft for stakeholders to comment on. She expressed on behalf of the Minister that he would be interested in returning to the Council at a later stage to discuss the process. Finally, she mentioned that the political discussions were to be concluded tentatively before summer.

Agenda Item No. 5: The Auditor General's Report on the Danish Climate Assistance

For discussion

Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, GDK

Summary:

The Auditor General's Report on the Danish Climate Assistance was released in January 2021. The overall purpose of the report was to assess if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities (MCEU) had ensured transparency in Danish Climate Assistance, and the targeting of the assistance to ensure results and impact. The report looked at three areas: 1) did the MFA support transparency in the allocation of resources for climate purposes, 2) did the MFA and MCEU ensure that the support was targeted to meet objectives, and 3) did the MFA and MCEU monitor results and impact and ensure learning from experience.

The overall conclusion of the assessment is the MFA and MCEU (i) only to a certain extent have ensured transparency in the climate assistance to developing countries and (ii) only to an extent have followed up and monitored on results. Consequently, the two ministries have an incomplete baseline for assessing if the climate assistance contributes to climate adaptation and mitigation objectives in developing countries in the most effective and efficient way.

The Council found the report useful for discussing how Denmark implements its green development policy. The Council broadly agreed with the Auditor General's findings and recommendations with regard to transparency, including the need to strengthen the accuracy of the tracking of the climate assistance in the areas identified in the report to ensure accountability both vis-à-vis the Danish public and developing countries. The Council saw transparency as important for ensuring credibility and trust, in particular in relation to the Global South on the fulfilment of international climate finance commitments. The Council noted that the most important finding of the Auditor General was the need to strengthen the focus on results, and to ensure that the MFA and MEUC monitor and learn from the activities.

Members of the Council, however, questioned the usefulness of investing significant additional resources in a very comprehensive and accurate tracking system for the climate assistance given that interventions impact a range of issues. Mainstreaming was pointed to as a perhaps more fruitful approach. The need for a more holistic approach to reaching several goals at the same time was also emphasised. Members of the Council suggested that this could also be an opportunity for Denmark to work with other OECD countries to improve overall tracking and reporting on the Rio markers which were currently applied very differently by the Member States. The Council asked about MFA's initial thoughts concerning follow-up from the Auditor General's report.

The Head of the Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK) noted that overall MFA found the recommendations by the Auditor General both timely and useful. There was a political wish to strengthen climate and environment in the new development cooperation strategy, and the report provided a number of useful suggestions for how Denmark could support this increased political focus on climate in the aid management guidelines and procedures, including in the systems for monitoring and reporting of climate related results. She thanked the Council for highlighting the need to find a good balance between attempting a very accurate measurement of climate content of the projects and the resources required and the usefulness of the information gained. Finding the right balance would be one of the main challenges in the follow-up work. MFA would strengthen the granularity and accuracy of the measurement of the climate content of the big thematic programmes in partner countries and the partnership agreement with civil society organizations. This was needed to improve accountability towards Danish and global constituencies. However, the main priority would be on strengthening climate in the programming process from conception to closure, and to ensure that climate project documents explicitly describe the climate aspects in order to ensure better monitoring and learning. The strengthening of the systems for monitoring of results and impacts was already ongoing. It was a broader exercise that covered the entire development assistance portfolio.

The Head of GDK complemented by explaining that it would be part of the follow-up to work with other donor countries in the context of OECD DAC to improve the Rio markers and

strengthen common reporting standards and practices related to climate assistance. Such common standards were essential for transparency and ensuring comparability between countries and across time.

The Chair of the Council thanked the members and GDK for a constructive and very useful discussion which was informative about how MFA and MCEU have followed up on the audit.

Agenda Item No. 6: Evaluation of Danish Support for Climate Change Adaptation in Developing Countries

For discussion

Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, ELK

Summary:

The evaluation of Danish support to climate change adaptation (2008-2018) was commissioned by the Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and conducted from October 2019 to December 2020. The evaluation found that Danish support to climate change adaptation enhanced the resilience of poor and vulnerable people in developing countries and that Danish engagement with the global landscape demonstrated influence on the multilateral interventions to which it contributed. The evaluation, however, also found a need for improvement in terms of ensuring a stronger strategic focus on climate change adaptation, stronger internal learning and experience exchange, the need to work more consistently with climate change mainstreaming throughout the programming cycle, and scope for a more comprehensive approach to adaptation in Danish funded development engagements including in the Climate Envelope. The evaluation was discussed by the Council because Denmark's support to climate change adaptation is of key strategic importance. The discussion of the evaluation thus constituted one of the Council's regular thematic discussions.

The Council welcomed the evaluation and its conclusions, and found the recommendations relevant and useful and with important links to the Auditor General's Report on the Danish Climate Assistance discussed earlier. The Council also appreciated the timing of the evaluation in relation to the preparation of a new strategy for development cooperation in 2021 and underlined the importance of including the recommendations of the evaluation in this strategy process.

Members of the Council were pleased to note the positive findings on impacts from community-led adaptation interventions with a strong focus on improving the resilience of the most vulnerable groups and highlighted that the successes were found where adaptation efforts were adapted to national planning and to national strategies. Further to this, other positive findings were noted especially from cooperation with civil society organisations and use of a programmatic approach facilitated through bilateral engagements that also took into consideration national adaptation plans and priorities.

Members of the Council, however, also noted with concern several findings mainly related to the insufficient human resources and lack of expertise around climate change adaptation as a context-specific issue both in Copenhagen and at embassies and the need for improving internal learning mechanisms. Further, the lack of a long-term strategic approach to climate change adaptation and clarity on what climate change adaptation was and was not led to the absence of clear priorities on how Denmark planned to work with climate change adaptation and in which sectors.

Members of the Council asked about the rationale behind the financial allocation between mitigation and adaptation and underlined the importance of increasing the allocation of Danish

climate finance to adaptation as climate change already had significant adverse impacts on the most vulnerable countries in the world. Members of the Council also wished to know more about how MFA was working on mainstreaming of climate change adaptation.

The Head of the Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (GDK) thanked the Council for the relevant observations and comments and agreed that the timing of the evaluation was ideal in relation to the preparation of the new strategy for development cooperation. This strategy process would contribute to a more focused approach to climate change adaptation and preparation of relevant guidance material to departments and embassies. The Head of GDK welcomed the positive findings of the evaluation both at the bilateral level and through multilateral engagement where Denmark have demonstrated influence on the international organisations to which it contributed. Several of the recommendations from the evaluation had already been addressed through initiatives as part of the Danish Government's long-term strategy for global climate action: A Green and Sustainable World (2020) and through the establishment of the new Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate. Moving forward GDK will aim to apply a programmatic approach to climate change adaptation in a more consistent manner, and where the various financial instruments come in to play.

The Deputy Head of Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality (ELK) emphasized that a large part of the population in developing countries were already highly vulnerable to climate change and that there was a need for increased action on climate change adaptation. The Deputy Head of ELK agreed that there is strong evidence for using community-led adaptation interventions and that there was great potential for linking nature-based solutions to this kind of interventions.

The Chair of the Council thanked the members for relevant comments and questions and confirmed the excellent timing of the evaluation to inform the preparation of the new strategy for development cooperation.

Agenda Item No. 7: AOB

The Head of Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality (ELK) informed the Council about the concept of the upcoming OECD-DAC Peer Review which will include a meeting with the Council for Development Policy.