

Report on the Post-Busan Follow-Up Workshop

Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Italy, 27-31 October 2014

*Improving aid effectiveness through the new Global partnership
Theme: what is happening at country/agency level*

Background

The rationale for this workshop, as stated in its concept note (see Annex A), was to organise a follow-up meeting to consider progress in achieving commitments to improve effectiveness of development cooperation agreed under the then newly endorsed Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) in Busan, Korea, in December 2011 and in light of the outcome of the First High Level review meeting after Busan hosted by Mexico in April 2014.

My proposal to organise a workshop for this purpose was approved by the Rockefeller Foundation which hosted the workshop at its Bellagio Center from 27 to 31 October 2014. Considering space limitations at the Center, invitations were sent to selected representatives of developing countries and development cooperation agencies who had taken part in discussing aid effectiveness issues prior to and since the launching of the GPEDC. Candidates have first-hand experience of these issues and ready access to senior policy and decision making levels in their respective governments/agencies.

Acceptance was received initially from more than the maximum allowed of 23 participants but cancellations and withdrawals subsequently followed due to a variety of reasons including officials missions coinciding with workshop dates, restructuring in some agencies, and (in one case) personal emergencies. Some of these were last minute notices which made it difficult to find suitable replacements. The net result was confirmation of 17 participants who actually attended, plus three progress report contributions from some who had to withdraw, making for a total of 20 contributions discussed at the three-day workshop. Annex B gives a list of participants.

Workshop agenda

The agenda invited participants to address three questions:

1. *What progress has been made in improving effectiveness of aid and other forms of development cooperation since the Busan High Level Forum?*
2. *What was the feedback/reaction to the outcome of the Mexico High Level Meeting in terms of supporting country efforts to improve such effectiveness?, and*
3. *What recommendations would participants make to the leadership of the GPEDC to address outstanding issues and accelerate future progress?*

Day 1 was devoted to reviewing country and agency progress reports. Day 2 was set aside to get feedback on the Mexico meeting. Day 3 was assigned to team work to formulate recommendations for GPEDC future directions and actions. Annex C gives the detailed agenda. The agenda programme was designed to maximise participants' interactions and involvement as session moderators, panel members and/or rapporteurs. Chatham House rules were adopted to encourage open discussion.

Day 1 Deliberations

a. Framing workshop discussions

The first two plenary sessions provided an overall framework for workshop discussions. The opening session identified key areas of progress since Busan and remaining challenges. Progress included the refinement of global monitoring indicators and publication of the first progress report; GPEDC leadership and steering committee meetings to decide on future work and organise the first post-Busan high level meeting in collaboration with Mexico as the host; launching of the Mexico meeting which was attended by more than 1500 delegates representing all key stakeholders and including many top level officials which reaffirmed Busan principles and commitments; continued active involvement of the UN, especially UNDP as one of the founding members of the GPEDC; and endorsement of the Mexico communique' and its annex of voluntary initiatives. These were significant achievements showing the dedication of the GPEDC leadership and its steering committee as well as continued interest of the international community in the development cooperation agenda.

Notwithstanding its contributions, the Mexico meeting agenda was overcrowded in terms of topics and did not give sufficient attention to issues of priority to developing countries; its annex of voluntary initiatives (while welcome) fell

short of making time-bound commitments or targets and were difficult to monitor. Some delegates considered the outcome disappointing and regarded it as a “watered-down” version of Busan without adding much value.

The main challenges facing the GPEDC include:

- How to address Post 2015 Development Agenda?
- How to engage better with China, India and Brazil?
- How to strengthen collaboration with UN agencies?
- How to redress the imbalance between recipient countries and aid providers in commitments?
- Do global indicators need more refining?
- Do current rotation practices of leadership/Steering Committee ensure continuity? and
- Does GPEDC have adequate capacity to cope?

In addition, the question remained whether the international development community has made sufficient progress to be on target in dealing with “unfinished agenda items” including, for example, aid fragmentation, transparency, aid orphans, capacity development, and aid harmonisation, before switching to other issues.

The session led by ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum stressed that GPEDC’s should position itself for the transition to post-2015 development agenda and mainstream it into future activities. It referred to the intergovernmental expert committee on sustainable development financing, which made recommendations on financing for development issues in preparation for the conference on the subject to be held in July 2015 in Ethiopia.

Development cooperation can be a driving force for policy integration across economic, social and environmental areas. In this respect, DCF and GPEDC agendas are coherent, and work is underway to develop a joint action plan. DCF and GPEDC can (and should) work together to do more at the country level especially in monitoring and accountability. There is a need to avoid parallel processes, undertake more joint analytic work, and identify more clearly the division of labour based on the comparative advantages of each side.

Against this background, participants turned to reviewing progress reports presented by developing countries and their development partners.

b. Highlights of developing countries’ progress reports

Presentations of progress reports by representatives of Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Pacific Islands, Indonesia, Mexico, Timor Leste, and Uganda pointed to continued reforms of policies and systems to meet Paris, Accra and Busan commitments. A few examples of these actions (which do not fully reflect what has transpired) include¹:

- Capacity assessment and improved processes for aid utilisation, developing results frameworks jointly with development partners, improving aid transparency in aid flows and in public procurement (Bangladesh),
- Establishing sector platforms to improve aid alignment and harmonisation, preparations to launch development partner performance , promoting public-private sector dialogue, and strengthening cooperation with emerging economies (Cameroon),
- Signed compact for 2012-2022 committing development partners to align their assistance to national development priorities, more active engagement with CSOs as development partner in budget formulation and monitoring, launched development partner performance assessment framework in 2011, initiated gender sensitive budgeting (Ghana),
- Established poverty reduction framework for 2012-2017, gender budget tracking mechanism, some but slow improvement in public financial management systems, increase in untied aid (Mali),
- Embracing an inclusive approach involving government, CSOs, parliament and formulation of national action plan with 26 indicators to track progress by each stakeholder, continued use of well established mutual accountability system involving more than 19 development partners, parliament scrutiny of budget, updating national action plan in light of Mexico meeting (Mozambique),
- Strengthened regional cooperation framework as central to complementing country efforts, conducting government and development partners’ driven peer review of country systems, reporting by 17 development partners according to Pacific indicators based on Paris and Busan commitments including predictability, coordinated missions and programme based approaches, stronger political leadership of countries in the region encouraging more involvement of CS)s (Pacific Islands),

¹ For a full account of these actions, those interested should contact participants directly to obtain a copy of their reports

- More focus on knowledge sharing where Indonesia has developed much experience, actual sharing of experience with 59 countries on poverty reduction, community development in decentralised contexts, and in disaster reconstruction (Indonesia),
- Improved transparency and more actions on institutional reform, established mechanisms for easier access to Mexico's development experience, and more attention to improving information on development cooperation (Mexico),
- Established portal for aid data based on IATI leading to improved transparency, continued work to improve country systems, undertook own fragility assessment as member of g7+, shared knowledge on natural resource management, and provided aid to Guinea Bissau on election process (Timor Leste),
- Improved public financial country systems, 60% of aid going through budget, more space for CSOs to contribute to budget debate, gender sensitive budget in place, more information on aid provided by development partners but still partial (Uganda), and
- More emphasis on the use of mutual accountability framework to encourage development partners to support national development priorities although the first reviews have yet to be made, continued dialogue to define how to involve CSOs more actively in development issues, modest improvement in role of private sector as development partner (Zambia).

Examples of the challenges cited by participants include the following:

- Limited use of country systems despite reforms carried out,
- Limited aid alignment and harmonisation of development partners' assistance,
- Continued aid volatility,
- Limited or no progress involving the private sector and/or CSOs as development partners,
- Recent setbacks in aid predictability due to irregularity of country-level dialogue with development partners,
- Limited use of mutual accountability frameworks due at times to weakened political leadership,
- Slow progress in untying of aid,
- Inadequate data base capturing aid information,
- Making progress to deal with "unfinished business" remains a challenge,
- Eruption and/or continuation of armed conflict in a few countries derailed efforts to improve aid management and in cases caused suspension of aid,
- Reluctance of some development partners to support monitoring mechanisms,
- Lack of knowledge hubs at country level to facilitate greater knowledge sharing,
- Inadequate progress in "aid on budget", and
- Reluctance of some development partners to provide sufficient information for aid monitoring.

The foregoing illustrations of actions and challenges cannot represent the overall performance of developing countries, some of which have made big strides while others continue efforts at a slower pace. But a few themes emerge which are consistent with the findings of the GPEDC first progress report (2014):

First, developing countries continue to reform development and aid policies and plans and are doing so increasingly in consultation with development partners.

Second, mutual accountability and aid management information systems appear to have become high priorities together with aid transparency issues.

Third, country compacts signed with development partners represent a concrete means of anchoring a framework for regular consultations and joint monitoring of performance.

Fourth, the leading challenges include the "unfinished business", reluctance of development partners to use reformed country systems and share more aid information necessary for aid monitoring and better management.

Fifth, there is a slow gradual movement toward embracing Busan commitments and mainstreaming them in national development plans.

c. Highlights of development partners' progress reports

- The European Union did a study on Member States and EU institutions in implementing Busan commitments, which was submitted at the Mexico High Level meeting. The study concluded that tangible progress has been

made in improving transparency and reducing fragmentation through joint programming in 40 partner countries. In addition, actions have been taken to support greater use of country-led coordination arrangements, establish more inclusive partnerships, and promote private sector role and innovative financing. Joint measures were taken with partner countries to maximise the contribution of CSOs through enabling environment frameworks and support gender equality. The EU and member States maintained their support of fragile states as a priority and continued to lead in the use of partner countries' public financial management systems².

Among the challenges faced to meet Busan commitments, the study referred to the importance of political will on both sides, need to introduce necessary legislative changes in Member Countries which take time, limited technical capacities to accelerate progress in the use of local country systems through better dialogue with partner countries, and complexity of actions required to achieve further improvement in aid predictability.

- Portugal's progress report states that Portugal is committed to use country systems as the default approach, and is making more use of local systems by promoting local and regional procurement and avoiding parallel implementation structures. Portuguese partners are mainly fragile or LDC countries which are receiving Portuguese support to build the capacity of their ministries of finance, national banks, and courts of Auditors. Portugal provides medium term spending plans (3-4 years) in bilateral programmes, participates in various mechanisms to enhance predictability and transparency of aid, and is fully committed to aid untying to LDCs.
- The USAID progress report, prepared for this workshop, highlighted the key role of US political leadership at the highest levels in introducing reforms to embrace aid effectiveness principles as agreed in Paris, Accra and Busan. These are changing the way of doing aid business by the United States and include procurement measures and procedures to increase the use of local country systems, improving management systems, rebuilding policy capacity, strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and closer ties with business and academia. The US co-chairs the Effective Institutions Platform (EIP) and co-leads the pillar dealing with Use of Country Systems.

Time-bound commitments include setting targets for increasing local procurement, simplified regulations on origin, and nationality of goods and services purchased with foreign assistance, and increasing transparency of US aid flows. The US will also continue to make indicative forward spending information on a country-by-country basis.

- The Swiss Development Cooperation Agency (SDC) progress report, prepared for this workshop, pointed out that SDC issued a guidance to help country offices to implement the Busan commitments, emphasising the implementation of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, Results & Mutual Accountability, Climate Change Finance and Public-Private Cooperation as well as addressing in particular the unfinished business from Paris and Accra.

Switzerland is co-chairing with Bangladesh the Building Block on Results and Mutual Accountability, and is co-chair of INCAF and playing a leading role in implementing the New Deal in South Sudan. It is also active in efforts to strengthen complementarity between DCF and the GPEDC and has indicated its interest in having a seat in the steering committee.

Day 2 Deliberations

Day 2 was devoted to reviewing progress in addressing the theme topics underlined at the Mexico High Level Meeting:

- Mobilising domestic resources for development received perhaps the top priority in Mexico. It covers a very broad range of issues including tax reforms, rationalising government expenditures, dealing with corruption, discussing the impact of foreign subsidies on partner countries' priorities, improving competitiveness and managing natural resources. While support from development partners is both required and consistent with Busan commitments, the main burden of undertaking these reforms falls on developing countries and underlines persistent imbalance in commitments between developing countries and their development partners.

A key question is how to leverage aid to mobilise domestic resources. There are areas for joint actions such as, for example, fighting corruption, role of multinationals in natural resource exploitation (including transfer pricing, natural resource local processing, etc), and promoting tourism, in which development partners can play a significant role. Meanwhile, there are cases when there is lack of

² See The Busan Commitments: an analysis of EU Progress and Performance, European Commission, Brussels 2013

coherence between development partners' policies and those of developing countries as in agricultural subsidies. How can the GPEDC contribute in resolving this incoherence?

- Roles of middle income countries, private sector, and parliament. These are three important issues which deserved more time than allocated. However, discussions underlined many points. The definition of a “middle income country” has to be reviewed as the current definition (countries with GNI from US\$1,000 to 12,600) is too broad to be of practical value in categorising countries and in influencing aid allocation decisions. The development experience of these countries has been widely recognised and is in increasing demand, calling for strengthening knowledge hubs and facilitating sharing modalities.

Discussion of the role of private sector focused on how to improve the enabling environment, reinforce the dialogue between public and private entities, benefit from successful initiatives of middle income countries and provide more space for private enterprises and associations to play their role as development partners. The promotion of “responsible business behaviour” was demonstrated with the example of Denmark’s initiative to support Danish companies in transferring technology to developing countries. The role of private sector in development is a two-sided coin, calling on governments to reform policies and procedures to facilitate private involvement in development activities, while requiring private business to comply with laws and regulations and abide by the principles of the UN Global Compact.

The role of parliament as development actor remains under-fulfilled. Empowering parliaments to carry out their responsibilities of oversight, review of development policies and priorities, scrutinise budgets and address corruption issues require changes in constitutions to deal with imbalances in governance power structure and/or a change of mindset and behaviour by all stakeholders, particularly the executive branch of government. It also requires strengthening parliament’s technical and financial capacities to play its role of representing citizens. IPU’s assessment of the current status is that not much has been happening since Busan and the “glass remains half full”. The question therefore is what can/should the GPEDC do to help achieve more progress?

- South-south (SSC) and triangular cooperation: This familiar issue posed no controversy. SCC has been increasing rapidly as a result of better modalities and a wider range of development experiences. The sharing of southern experiences is being supported through triangular cooperation as more development partners engage in it. At the same time, more work needs to be done to improve monitoring and evaluation of SSC outcomes and, through such mechanisms, help improve SSC practices. The increase of SSC initiatives calls for addressing coordination issues at the country among SSC partners especially regarding large infrastructure projects to avoid duplication and reduce transaction costs – issues traditionally addressed in the context of north-south cooperation. Regional platforms are playing a positive role in dealing with these issues and in sharing various experiences.

These reports (supporting the findings of the First GPEDC Monitoring Report) show continued progress in meeting some of Busan’s commitments and must be acknowledged as reflecting serious efforts by developing countries and development partners. The key question is whether such pace of progress (varied as it has been) is sufficient to give aid the catalytic role everyone expects it to play in lifting the poor out of the poverty trap and helping countries reach and maintain a path to sustainable development. The evidence suggests that we have much more to do before we can make such a claim.

Day 3 Deliberations

The third day of the workshop focused on team work to reflect on the outcome of the past two days and formulate recommendations for the GPEDC leadership to consider in handling challenges. There was also a power point presentation by Jon Lomoy circulated in advance, in which he referred to Mexico’s success in reaffirming Busan spirit and commitments, GPEDC’s uniqueness as a multi-stakeholder forum, and a contributor to the post 2015 Development agenda. The GPEDC has an “installed capacity” for monitoring and is an umbrella broker spurring actions on the ground.

He also conveyed messages from the recent DAC senior level meeting which stressed that Paris and Busan commitments are essential to the effectiveness of development cooperation. To achieve more progress, political actions are required by the GPEDC leaders and steering committee and its members at large. The top priorities of the Joint Support Team are to accelerate country level implementation and strengthen the monitoring framework.

The following are participants' recommendations, prepared by a four-member drafting team:

We acknowledge the important work and commitment that previous and current co-chairs and Steering Committee (SC) members have shown towards taking forward the commitments outlined in the 2011 Busan Partnership agreement. Our recommendations are presented in the spirit of contributing to your leadership.

*The **four main messages** from our discussions are:*

- 1. GPEDC should focus more specifically on effective development cooperation (EDC) and use EDC as the lens to determine whether and how issues are addressed.*
- 2. GPEDC should clearly articulate its comparative advantage in any area or issue that it addresses within the framework.*
- 3. GPEDC should focus its work on being a partnership to promote effective development cooperation for the post-2015 sustainable development framework. The GPEDC should intensify collaboration with the UN Development Cooperation Forum (UNDCF) in line with the Action Plan being developed.*
- 4. GPEDC urgently needs to create a "missing middle" of activity and information flow, which links up action at country and global levels. GPEDC capacity to capture the evidence and information available is currently very inadequate.*

We strongly believe that the focus should revert to effective development cooperation and Busan commitments. The current focus on effective development rather than effective development cooperation might lead to a broader agenda, shifting away from Busan Commitments, and particularly the "unfinished business" of aid effectiveness. It is important to get back to basics; to address the reasons why this entire discussion commenced in the first place.

In order to deliver more effectively on what we have agreed in Busan, it is important to address several challenges both at the governance level and implementation level. The GPEDC leadership should interpret the Busan Partnership agreement to address persisting imbalances between Development Partners and Partner Countries.

Recommendations regarding the Governance of the GPEDC:

We need to address the missing middle between political and technical levels. Why is development cooperation important and how can we promote its effectiveness? These messages need to be linked better to ongoing activities on the ground, so that they are both relevant and evidence based.

Keep it "global light", but ensure better links to Regions and Countries; and create a web-based platform to promote lessons learned and continued dialogue. This can be addressed by a better resourced Joint Secretariat focused on getting evidence from the ground and channelling information to the political level.

The Partner Country Caucus Group provided an important function in allowing partner countries to bring consolidated views to the WP-EFF; a similar platform in relation to the GPEDC Steering Committee should be considered.

The Joint Support Team should have a regional level presence (perhaps through a "hub" structure from UNDP regional offices) and establish standard operations procedures for communications between country – regional – global levels. Regional and constituency based platforms need to be strengthened.

Recommendations regarding implementing Busan:

A line of work could be created to develop baselines on current activities of development cooperation in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 17 (which relates to the Global Partnership).

At the political level, the GPEDC Steering Committee needs to provide more and better space for constituencies to come together. How can this best be done and how can issues be identified around which constituencies will want to come together?

The GPEDC needs to focus more on what is changing at the country level. There is plenty of evidence, but it is currently not well captured or analysed as mentioned earlier. The Steering Committee could provide space to discuss the evidence and actions presented by different representatives (e.g. from Building Blocks and/or Voluntary Initiatives).

The key issues for Partner Countries remain:

Transparency and mutual accountability (including aid-on-budget)

Policy coherence

Use of country systems

Alignment with partner countries' priorities, and

Aid fragmentation

Building Blocks, Voluntary initiatives as well as regional platforms are not being made use of as platforms for dialogue of GPEDC issues identified nor in terms of bringing evidence to discussions at the Steering Committee; the same goes for some of the constituency groupings and regional platforms.

The Busan monitoring process is the hallmark of GPEDC's comparative advantage. It is urgent to finalise and strengthen this monitoring framework in order to provide a robust and credible process, and establish a baseline of monitoring what is happening at country level first, against which to assess future progress.

Recommendations regarding the Mexico meeting theme topics:

Domestic Resource Mobilisation (DRM)

It is necessary to focus on the interface between effective development cooperation (EDC) and DRM; this includes:

Building capacity in administration and for policy-making on DRM; sharing approaches and knowledge across countries;

Work towards a political commitment to increase resources to strengthen the capacity for tax systems at country level, as well as strengthening capacities, including those of fragile states, to engage internationally on the issue (e.g. in tax treaty negotiations); and

Coherent approach within DRM policy: focus on illicit flows, corruption, Multinationals and tax avoidance issues. There needs to be evidence on what works best as well as sustained political commitment;

Private Sector Role

Need to focus on the interface between EDC and private sector and allow more debate around what each constituency can bring to this issue;

Need to learn more about what is happening with building blocks (Partner for Prosperity) and invite them to take forward further dialogue on this issue;

Need to bear in mind that fragile states see development cooperation as being effective in this area if it supports and enables private sector investment;

Need to invite greater private sector participation in the GPEDC, identify relevant private sector stakeholders and focus on champions;

Need to look at existing private sector initiatives launched at the Climate Summit and elsewhere. These demonstrate where private sector and development actors' priorities merge on sustainable development objectives;

Development partners need to consider how best they can work with their domestic private sector to support effective development cooperation;

Partner countries and their development partners also need to look at how to encourage private sector contributions to EDC; and

Trade Unions and CSOs also need to be clear on their contribution in this area.

South-South Cooperation (SSC):

Revisit the Busan Partnership agreement and focus on implementation. What are the "differential commitments" that this constituency has signed up to?

Focus on trust building and build up more joint work through triangular cooperation;

Welcome outputs of the DCF core group of SSC partners as a trust building exercise that has the potential to generate momentum for Southern partner led initiatives on releasing reports;

Need more data on what is happening in relation to SSC; using existing platforms for South-South partners to discuss their overall narrative and approach; and

Recognize the great diversity of SSC modalities and the fact that many recipient countries are also providers. Promote learning at the technical level and at the country level

Role of Parliament

Promote parliamentarians' participation across the board, by making available more resources from GPEDC partners for strengthening their role in monitoring and accountability; and

Give more attention to this topic by bringing it to the Ministerial level (including a focus on the voice of citizens)

Concluding remarks by the workshop organiser

These recommendations reflect the views of participants who have first-hand knowledge of what is happening on the ground and who are fully aware of both the accomplishments and the challenges facing the GPEDC.

The challenges may be classified under two main headings:

- a. Structural issues including those of more adequate capacity to deliver (filling the missing middle); continuity of leadership and establishing a longer-term vision; putting partner countries back on the driver's seat; reaching out to regions and building blocks; inclusiveness by finding ways to engage emerging economies as partners and founding members; strengthening links with the UN based on comparative advantages; and setting up more solid links between country level actions and global monitoring and assessment of outcomes.
- b. Substantive issues including greater focus on the "unfinished business agenda"; setting future GPEDC agendas compatible with developing countries priorities; refocusing GPEDC activities on development cooperation and limiting the broader development effectiveness issues to include only those for which it has a comparative advantage (avoiding to become a "Jack of all trades, master of nothing"); redressing persistent imbalances in commitments between partner countries and development partners; formulating firm time-bound targets to meet Busan commitments while welcoming voluntary initiatives; and incorporating the post-2015 development agenda as a mainstreaming theme in future GPEDC actions.

There is little doubt that the GPEDC holds great promise as an active contributor to sustainable development due to its unique advantages. But focus on its fundamental mandate and inclusiveness/participation of all stakeholders who endorsed Busan are the order of the day.

Prepared and revised by

*Talaat Abdel-Malek
17th November 2015*

ANNEX A
Bellagio Post-Busan Workshop
Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, Italy
27-31 October 2014

Workshop Concept Note³

Brief Background

Discussions to improve aid effectiveness have been going on for decades both at OECD and the United Nations as well as in regional and bilateral meetings. Two landmark events in particular triggered the launching of more organised/periodic meetings under the auspices of the OECD/DAC since 2003. The first landmark event was the UN Summit on Development Financing in 2000, and the second was its Monterrey Conference in 2002 at which the Millennium Development Goals were launched. Most recently, informal consultations in preparation for the Third International Conference on Development Financing due in July 2015 resulted in a draft resolution reaffirming the “relevance of holistic financing for the development agenda”, stresses the need “to reinforce coherence and coordination to avoid duplication of efforts” and ensure a “single, comprehensive, holistic, forward-looking approach addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development”, and reaffirms the special role of international financial and trade institutions “and in particular the major institutional stakeholders involved in the financing for development follow-up process”.⁴

UN meetings and consultations have focused on how developing countries could be assisted to finance increasingly demanding and urgent development plans at a time when poverty was still on the rise and most of these countries continued to suffer from substantially inadequate local resources to meet financing requirements. Official Development Assistance (ODA) was given special attention as a source not only of development finance but technical assistance as well. UN conference delegates were reminded of the pledge made some 30 years earlier by most developed countries to allocate a 0.7% of their annual GDP to increase their contributions to ODA. Few countries, led by Scandinavian countries, have achieved this level and a few are making efforts to increase their contributions but the gap remains wide.

OECD/DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness

Partly in response to the two UN summits referred to above and to other developments, OECD/DAC set up a Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF) to serve as the principal international platform for discussing how to make more progress in achieving higher level of aid effectiveness. We will not get into much detail here as most workshop participants are familiar with and actively participated in WP-EFF deliberations and outcomes. The following paragraphs highlight key issues and the progress achieved during the past 10-11 years.

The Paris Principles of Aid effectiveness constituted the main reference framework which guided and shaped discussions since 2005; these remained relevant in negotiating the Busan Outcome Document and launching of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). The 2006 survey gathered a substantial body of field data and helped establish a baseline against which subsequent survey results were assessed. Box 1 gives a summary of the 2008 survey conclusions.

Survey findings indicated that there was much to do if the 2010 targets were to be met. Improvements in country systems had not led to tangible increase in their use by aid providers, and only modest progress was noted in adopting the “managing for results” principle and instituting mutual accountability mechanisms. Overall, “if a grade was to be assigned to performance to-date, perhaps a mere “pass” grade for effort rather than results would be fair, with partner countries as a whole faring slightly better than their development partners”⁵.

Broadening the Agenda

The Accra High Level Forum in 2008 called for an expanded WP-EFF (increasing members from 54 to 80), which decided at its first meeting in early April 2009 to develop a work plan to accelerate the pace of progress toward greater aid effectiveness. Members were aware that time pressures were on, as there was less than three years to go before reporting the results at the Fourth High Level Forum in Busan in November/December 2011.

³ An informal note prepared by Talaat Abdel-Malek as a background to discussions.

⁴ See UN, 611201 Draft Resolution – Financing for Development, 11 June 2104.pdf

⁵ For more details of survey results, See OECD, Aid Effectiveness – a Progress Report on Implementing the Paris declaration, 2009; and B. Wood *et al*, Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration: Synthesis Report, Copenhagen, July 2008.

Box 1

- Progress was being made in some respects but not in others, and varied by partner country and development partner
- More satisfactory progress required political leadership which did not seem to have been sufficient yet
- Future progress meant a change in behaviour by both sides and such change required a shift in underlying incentives
- Progress also called for involvement of more stakeholders beyond government and development partners officials
- Notwithstanding the benefits from the two surveys, there was a need to improve the systems of monitoring and evaluation

The WP-EFF was also mandated to adopt a broader “development cooperation” agenda, going beyond but not ignoring aid issues. Discussions were shaped by three considerations: recognition that aid served mainly as a catalyst rather than the major source of development financing and technical assistance; time and resource constraints were a factor not to be ignored; and WP-EFF had to avoid overstepping its mandate boundaries and focus on issues where tangible progress could be achieved.

The end result was an agreed focus through the newly formed cluster groups on: ownership & accountability; strengthening and using country systems; transparent and responsible aid; assessing progress in achieving set goals; and managing for development results. Two task teams dealt with the health sector as a tracer of progress, and with south-south cooperation issues.

Of the many initiatives taken, three are worth mentioning. First, “facilitation teams” were formed to assist interested partner countries and their development partners to agree on concrete action plans to achieve progress especially in politically sensitive areas. A number of countries joined this initiative though end results varied as these depended on implementation of agreed actions by both sides. The second initiative was the “global partnership on country systems”, championed by Ghana and the United States WP-EFF members, which took advantage of Ghana’s achievements in reforming its systems and provided assistance to both Mali and Malawi in developing their reform plans.

A third initiative took the form of “building blocks” (BBs), each designed to show how progress was being made toward greater aid effectiveness through coordinated actions by a partner country and its development partners and their commitments to continue to work together for that purpose. More than 35 BBs were established and reported progress during the Busan Forum.

Two more developments occurred following Accra. A number of fragile and post-conflict states got together and formed the g7+ group to coordinate their actions and exchange experiences in coping with fragility issues. Brokered by the International Dialogue on peace building and state building, the Dili Declaration was issued in 2010. This constituted the first concrete framework articulating the principles for good international engagement in fragile states. Meanwhile, the Partner Country Contact Group (PCCG) was formed as a consultation platform to exchange views among members and express their priorities and concerns at WP-EFF meetings. A major outcome was the PCCG position paper used as a major reference in negotiating the Busan Outcome Document.

Negotiating the Global Partnership Agreement

WP-EFF deliberations culminated in an agreement on how to conduct negotiations for Busan. A negotiating team was formed of 18 Sherpas (including the WP-EFF chair) representing various stakeholders, to build on the considerable volume of preparatory work done through plenary and executive committee meetings. The team met in Paris three times between 27 October and 18 November and subsequently went into continuous sessions on arrival in Busan from 28 November to early 1st December. These sessions had to deal with a few remaining “sticky issues” which threatened the prospects of reaching consensus on the Busan Declaration. The most “sticky” of these consisted of the use of country systems; CSOs enabling environment; fragile states; and special demands by China, India and Brazil as a condition to join the Global Partnership.

One by one, each issue was “settled” through compromises to accommodate the concerns of different stakeholders and an acceptable draft document was finally endorsed, except for the demands of the three leading emerging economies which kept insisting on one revision after another. These were finally incorporated in the Document which was ready to be introduced for endorsement at the Busan final session later in the final day of the meetings.

Many lessons were learned during negotiations which were discussed elsewhere. Three lessons in particular stand out. First, despite prevailing goodwill among WP-EFF delegates who endorsed earlier drafts prior to the Sherpas' meetings, disagreements emerged as negotiations sought firm commitments to specific draft texts which often required the concurrence of the principals (ministers and heads of agencies) back home. Second, the initial "ambitious" draft (a key goal which guided WP-EFF efforts throughout) was gradually watered down through necessary compromises to avoid breakdowns and outright rejection of the document. Nevertheless, the final Outcome Document still represented a breakthrough that made possible the endorsement of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). Third, the endorsed Document was essentially political and its implementation required continued strong political will and support.

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

The Outcome Document states that *the GPEDC "is the most inclusive development cooperation accord reached; it recognizes a set of common goals, shared principles and differentiated commitments and responsibilities; reminds stakeholders who endorsed Paris and Accra to fulfill commitments made; acknowledges the role of CSOs as independent development actors and stresses the role of parliament as an oversight of the development process; calls for actions to improve transparency and medium-term predictability to meets developing countries' needs and to reduce fragmentation; welcomes the New Deal developed by the International Dialogue on Peace-building and State-building; underlines the importance of mobilizing domestic resources in financing development, reforming state and non-state institutions, and the responsibility of development cooperation providers to support such actions; acknowledges the role of south-south and triangular cooperation and commits stakeholders to strengthen the sharing of knowledge; and also acknowledges the role of the private sector in advancing innovation and creating wealth and jobs"*. The Document should be consulted to review the full Statement.

Following Document endorsement, the WP-EFF was convened to propose working arrangements for the GPEDC including the refinement of global indicators for monitoring and accountability of meeting commitments. A Post-Busan Interim Group (PBIG) was set up to address these issues and the results were presented at the final WP-EFF plenary meeting in late June 2012 and approved.

GPEDC Working Arrangements

PBIG addressed the organisational structure of the Partnership in light of the directive that it be "Global Light and Country Focused". GPEDC's core functions were to maintain and strengthen political momentum for more effective development cooperation; ensure accountability for implementing Busan commitments; facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing of lessons learnt; and support implementation of Busan commitments at the country level.

Its structure would consist of a ministerial meeting, supported by a steering committee and a joint OECD-UNDP support team. Ministerial meetings would be held once every two years; the Steering Committee would prepare the agenda and follow up on ministerial directives; and the overall structure would be co-chaired by three ministers representing recipient countries, leading ODA providers and emerging economies (the latter declined to name a candidate and endorsed Indonesia to fill the vacant seat).

As for monitoring indicators, these were to focus on behaviour change; be relevant to a broad range of country contexts and actors; stress global political attention to ensure implementation and measurable actions and efforts; support accountability and be cost-effective. A set of ten indicator "areas" was agreed and further technical work led to the issuance of the final list of indicators and targets as shown in Annex Box 1. The GPEDC became operational on 1st July 2012 while the technical team continued to finalise the specific of global monitoring.

First Ministerial (High Level) Meeting - Mexico

Mexico offered to host the first ministerial meeting which took place in April 2014 in Mexico City, with an estimated 1500 delegates in attendance. Several Steering Committee meetings were held during the preceding 15 months to prepare for the High Level Meeting. Considerable discussions finally led to setting the agenda based on four priority themes: domestic resource mobilisation, private sector role, inclusive development (roles of CSOs and other actors), and knowledge sharing.

The final agenda comprised five plenary sessions addressing progress since Busan; domestic resource mobilisation; south-south and triangular cooperation; role of middle income countries; and business as a partner in development. Thirty-six "focus sessions" were scheduled which dealt with virtually the whole range of development cooperation issues ranging from multi-stakeholder approaches and partnership on climate finance to good governance and transparency and the post-2015 agenda. The organising committee, led by the Mexican Hosts, ensured high level political participation in various sessions which left little time for discussion and involvement by most delegates with very few exceptions.

The Mexico Communique⁶ highlighted the progress made since Busan and re-affirmed Busan commitments and the principle of shared vision/objectives and differentiated commitments of various stakeholders to reassure emerging economies and other south-south cooperation providers of respecting the pledges made in Busan to accommodate their demands.

An annex to the Communique⁷ listed more than 38 voluntary initiatives taken by countries and organisations to showcase different forms of development cooperation being practiced. More initiatives are expected to be added to the list. Examples of initiatives cited include Africa Action Plan on Development Effectiveness, EU Joint Programming to Manage Diversity, CSO Enabling Environment Framework, Country Dialogues for Strengthening Local Systems, and Network of Southern Think Tanks.

At the conclusion of the meetings, the three co-chairs stepped down. The new co-chairs are Ministers from the Netherlands, Mexico and Malawi. Some Steering Committee members stepped down and new members appointed. The 23 committee members represent recipients of development cooperation (5), recipients and providers (2), providers (3), Arab Funds (1), private sector (1), parliamentarians (1), local governments (1), civil society (2), private foundations (1), multilateral banks (1), UNDP/UNDG (1), and OECD/DAC (1), in addition to the three co-chairs.

First GPEDC Monitoring Report

A total of 46 developing countries took part in the monitoring survey conducted in 2013 which reported its results at the Mexico Ministerial meeting. Data for six of the ten indicators was obtained from these countries and global sources were used to obtain information for the remaining four indicators. Several bilateral and multilateral agencies participated in data collection. The 2014 Progress Report stated that:

“Globally, the results are mixed. Longstanding efforts to change the way development cooperation is delivered in paying off, but much more needs to be done to transform cooperation practices and ensure country ownership of all development efforts, as well as transparency and accountability among development partners.”⁶

The Report’s executive summary sums up key results as follows: country ownership continues to strengthen; inclusiveness – the core of the Busan Partnership agreement – is translating into stronger recognition and engagement of non-state development actors in national systems and accountability processes; the drive for transparency is starting to show results – but these need to be geared towards countries’ needs; and the shift towards developing country-led monitoring is feasible.

In the words of the Report, overall, “the glass is half full”⁷. Without undermining the progress reported, this is a very similar conclusion to those stated in earlier OECD surveys.

Outstanding Issues/Challenges

It is well recognised that reforms in any field take time, usually longer than originally anticipated. Reform processes become even more complex in development cooperation due to the large number of stakeholders involved, nationally, bilaterally, regionally and internationally; deeply-entrenched practices and vested interests in maintaining the *status quo*; intermittent political will and commitment to push ahead with reform measures; absence of legally binding agreements requiring actions within given time frames; and absence or weakness of incentives to change behaviour necessary to modify policies and practices.

The challenges facing the Global Partnership are many. Most have been recognised earlier on but those who endorsed the accord felt confident that the new more inclusive agreement and political commitments made were sufficient drivers to accelerate progress along a broad front. This has obviously not happened yet on the scale rightly expected then.

There is no doubt that convening the well organised Mexico meeting, and the participation by over 1500 delegates (many of whom very senior and political leaders), has revived the Busan spirit and given a new impetus to push for more significant progress. But there is also the risk that this positive energy would steadily wear out.

It is in this context that the workshop idea was conceived last October, to be held six months after the Mexico meeting – a period long enough for reflection and reassessment. Our workshop has three specific objectives, all of which will attempt to identify GPEDC challenges and what might be done to address them. first, the workshop invites participants (a) to report country-level/agency-level and country-based/agency-based assessment of progress - guided by Paris, Accra and Busan commitments – and identify reasons behind progress or lack thereof; (b) to reflect on the outcome of the Mexico meetings from a country/agency perspective (how does such outcome facilitate or affect progress toward

⁶ GPEDC, Making Development Co-operation More Effective, 2014 Progress Report, OECD/UNDP 2014. For more details about survey findings, refer to the full Report.

⁷ *Ibid*, page 33

more effectiveness); and (c) to propose concrete actions by GPEDC to deal with these challenges and establish itself as a truly global partnership.

Our discussions should be guided by the broader issues incorporated in the post 2015 Development Agenda which has captured the additional challenges not fully noted in the earlier MDGs.

Annex Box 1: Global Indicators and Targets for 2015

INDICATORS	TARGETS FOR 2015
1. Development co-operation is focused on results that meet developing countries' priorities	
Extent of use of country results frameworks by co-operation providers	<i>All providers</i> of development co-operation use country results frameworks
2. Civil society operates within an environment which maximises its engagement in and contribution to development	
A subset of measures from the Enabling Environment Index	<i>Continued progress over time</i>
3. Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development	
Measure of the quality of public-private dialogue	<i>Continued progress over time</i>
4. Transparency: information on development co-operation is publicly available	
	<i>Implement the common standard – All development co-operation providers are on track to implement a common, open standard for electronic publication of timely, comprehensive and forward-looking information on development co-operation</i>
5. Development co-operation is more predictable	
(a) annual: proportion of development cooperation funding disbursed within the fiscal year within which it was scheduled by co-operation providers; and	<i>Halve the gap – halve the proportion of aid not disbursed within the fiscal year for which it was scheduled (Baseline year 2010)</i>
(b) medium-term: proportion of development cooperation funding covered by indicative forward spending plans provided at country level	<i>Halve the gap – halve the proportion of development cooperation funding not covered by indicative forward spending plans provided at country level</i>
6. Aid is on budgets which are subject to parliamentary scrutiny	
% of development cooperation funding scheduled for disbursement that is recorded in the annual budgets approved by the legislatures of developing countries	<i>Halve the gap – halve the proportion of development cooperation flows to the government sector not reported on government's budget(s) (with at least 85% reported on budget) (Baseline year 2010)</i>
7. Mutual accountability among development co-operation actors is strengthened through inclusive reviews	
% of countries that undertake inclusive mutual assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments	<i>All developing countries have inclusive mutual assessment reviews in place (Baseline year 2010)</i>
8. Gender equality and women's empowerment	
% of countries with systems that track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	<i>All developing countries</i> have systems that track and make public resource allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment
9. Effective institutions: developing countries' systems are strengthened and used	
(a) Quality of developing country PFM systems; and	<i>Half of developing countries move up at least one measure (i.e. 0.5 points) on the PFM/CPIA scale of performance (Baseline year 2010)</i>
(b) Use of country PFM and procurement systems	<i>Reduce the gap. [use the same logic as in Paris – close the gap by two-thirds where CPIA score is >=5; or by one-third where between 3.5 and 4.5] (Baseline year 2010)</i>
10. Aid is untied	
% of aid that is fully untied	<i>Continued progress over time (Baseline year 2010)</i>

Source: Guidance to the Monitoring Framework of the global Partnership, Global Partnership for Development Cooperation Effectiveness, 1st March 2013, page 5

ANNEX B
The Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center
"Improving Aid Effectiveness through the New Global Partnership"
27 - 31 October 2014

Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek

former chair of Working Party on Aid Effectiveness
former Chair OECD/DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness
Sidney BC , V8L3X8, Canada
malek00@gmail.com

Ms. Mary-Anne Addo

Director
Ministry of Employment & Labour Relations
Research, Statistics & Information Management
ACCRA North , N/A, Ghana
m.a_addo@yahoo.com

Ms. Mahmuda Begum

Additional Secretary and National Project Director,
Aid Effectiveness
Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance
Dhaka , 1207, Bangladesh
mahmuda_faba@yahoo.com

Mr. Thomas Beloe

Governance, Climate Change Finance and
Development Effectiveness, UNDP
Asia Pacific Regional Centre
Bangkok , 10310, Thailand
thomas.beloe@undp.org

Mr. Gerardo Bracho

Senior Policy Advisor, OECD
Development Cooperation Directorate
Paris , 75006, France
gerardo.bracho@oecd.org

Mr. Martin Chungong

Secretary General
Inter-Parliamentary Union
Grand-Saconnex , 1218, Switzerland
mch@mail.ipu.org

Mr. Ferdinand Severin Fokou

Studies Ingenieur, Ministry of Economy, Planning and
Regional Development, Department of North-South
cooperation and multilateral Organisations
Yaoundé Centre , +237, Cameroon
foksop@yahoo.fr

Mr. Navid Hanif

Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and
Coordination United Nations Department of Economic
and Social Affairs
New York NY , 10017, United States
hanif@un.org

Ms. Hanifa Ibrahimo

Head of Department
Ministry of Planning and Development
Aid Coordination Unit
maputo, 1101, Mozambique
hanifa.ibrahimo@gmail.com

Mr. Jinkyu Jeong (cancelled)

Deputy Director General, Development Cooperation
Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Seoul, Republic of Korea
jkjeong05@gmail.com

Ms. Ellen Kelly

Policy Officer, Aid \$ Development Effectiveness,
European Commission,
Bruxelles , 1000, Belgium
ellen.kelly@ec.europa.eu

Mr. Lawrence Kiiza

Director, Ministry Of Finance, Planning And
Economic Development
Kampala , 8147, KLA., Uganda
kiiza01@gmail.com

Mr. Benny Kusumo

Senior Policy Advisor
Ministry of National Development Planning, Office of
Deputy Minister for Development Funding
Jakarta Selatan DKI Jakarta , 12840, Indonesia
bennysk@bappenas.go.id

Mr. Jon Lomoy

Director, OECD Development Cooperation Directorate
Paris, 75016, France
jon.lomoy@oecd.org

Ms. Ana Paula Lopes Fernandes

Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Portugal
Delegation to the OECD
Paris , 75112, France
ana.fernandes@ocde-portugal.com

Mr. M. Modibo M. Makalou

Head, Office Of The President
Development And Cooperation Initiative
Koulouba , BP10, Mali
mmakalou@mdc.pr.ml

Mr. Habib Ur Rehman Mayar

Senior Policy Specialist
g7+ Secretariat, Dili , 88000, Timor-Leste,
Habiburrehman.mayar@gmail.com

Field

Field

Field

Mr. Alfred Schuster

Development Cooperation Adviser
Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Strategic Partnerships & Coordination
Suva , 1000, Fiji
alfreds@forumsec.org

Ms. Claudia Vasquez (cancelled)

Advisor To General Director
Apc Colombia
Bogota , 0090, Colombia

claudia.vasquez.marazzani@gmail.com in addition,

In addition, candidates from Switzerland, USA and Zambia cancelled their participation but provided written progress reports as stated in the text.

Field

ANNEX C
Bellagio Workshop on

Improving Aid Effectiveness through the New Global Partnership

Theme: What is happening at the country level?

27-31 October 2014
Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center, ITALY
Workshop Objectives & Agenda

Workshop Objectives

This is a discussion-driven interactive workshop designed to:

- (a) *Review progress in improving effectiveness of aid and other forms of development cooperation since the Busan High Level Forum, and*
- (b) *Identify issues for further attention by the Global Partnership and propose recommendations, through the exchange of country-level experiences, to help accelerate future progress.*

Workshop discussions will also review the outcome/deliverables of the First Global Partnership Ministerial meeting (Mexico, April 2014), addressing the following five themes of the meeting and taking note of the post 2015 development agenda:

- 1. Progress since Busan**
- 2. Domestic resource mobilisation**
- 3. Development cooperation with middle-income countries**
- 4. Business as a partner in development**
- 5. South-south and Triangular cooperation & knowledge sharing**

Workshop Agenda

Monday 27 October

13.00 – 14.00

19.30 – 20.30

Arrival at the Center and welcome by workshop organiser

Lunch

Dinner

Tuesday 28 October

08.00 – 09.00

09.00 – 10.10

10.10 – 11.00

11.00 – 11.30

11.30 – 13.00

Breakfast

Opening Session: Talaat Abdel-Malek: introducing the agenda – how far have we come since Busan? Highlights of progress since Busan – key outcomes of the First Ministerial meeting: what deliverables?

Navid Hanif, Director, ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum:
Development cooperation for a transformative global agenda: from the MDGs to SDGs and sustainable development for all

Coffee/Tea Break

Progress Reports from Partner Countries: Martin Chungong, Moderator:
7-8 minute presentations highlighting outcomes of country-level interventions to implement Busan commitments, followed by brief comments/discussions. Reporting countries: **Bangladesh, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Pacific Islands**

13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.30 – 16.30	Progress Reports from Partner Countries & Development Partners: Mary-Anne Addo, Moderator: 7-8 minute presentations highlighting <u>outcomes</u> of actions taken to implement Busan commitments), followed by brief comments/discussions. Reporting countries/agencies: Indonesia, Timor Leste, Mexico, Uganda, Portugal, EU, USA
16.30 – 17.00	Summary of the day’s discussions: Thomas Beloe, Rapporteur
19.00 – 19.30	Cocktail
19.30 – 20.30	Dinner
<u>Wednesday 29 October</u>	
08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
09.00 – 10.30	Progress in Domestic Resource Mobilisation: Anna Fernandes, Moderator, A 3-member panel: Habib Mayar, Lawrence Kiiza, Kelly Ellen, to lead discussions of progress and identify issues ahead
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/Tea Break
11.00 – 13.00	Roles of Middle-income Countries, Private Sector and Parliaments: Talaat Abdel-Malek, Moderator, A 3-member panel: Gerardo Bracho, Martin Chungong, and Ferdinand Fokou, to lead discussions of progress and identify issues ahead.
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.30 – 16.30	Progress in South-South (SSC) and Triangular Cooperation & Knowledge Sharing: Navid Hanif, Moderator, A 4-member panel: Modibo Makalou, Thomas Beloe, Alfred Schuster, Benny Kusumo to lead discussions of progress and identify issues ahead
16.30 – 17.00	Summary of the day’s discussions: Mahmuda Begum, Rapporteur
19.00-m 19.30	Cocktail
19.30 – 20.30	Dinner
<u>Thursday 30 October</u>	
08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
09.00 – 10.30	Team Work: Gerardo Bracho, Moderator, Three teams each to develop recommendations to the Global Partnership leadership to accelerate progress in implementing Busan commitments (including those made in Paris and Accra) – presenting and discussing recommendations.
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee/Tea Break
11.00 – 13.00	Team Work: Habib Mayar, Moderator: Three teams each to develop recommendations to the Global Partnership leadership to address priority issues in resource mobilisation, private sector role, and SSC, focusing on how these contribute to improving development cooperation outcomes – presenting and discussing recommendations

13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.30 – 16.00	Jon Lomoy, Director, Development Cooperation Directorate, OECD/DAC, gives an update on future plans and responds to participants’ recommendations - followed by Q&A period.
16.00 – 16.30	Summary of the day: Alfred Schuster, Rapporteur
16.30 – 17.00	Closing Comments by Talaat Abdel-Malek - End of Workshop
19.00 – 19.30	Cocktail
19.30 – 20.30	Dinner
<u>Friday 31 October</u>	
06.00 on	Self-service Breakfast
	Departure of Participants

Important note on logistics:

- On arrival day, lunch and dinner will be provided
- Breakfast will be available from 08:00 to 09:00
 - Lunch will be served at 13:00 sharp (ending at 14:00)
 - Cocktail will be available from 19:00 to 19:30
 - Dinner will be served at 19:30 sharp (ending at 20:30)
 - Coffee break will always be available during the day
 - On departure day, self-service continental breakfast will be available since 6 a.m.

* * * * *

Personal Cover Note

It gives me special pleasure to introduce the outcome of a recent three-day post-Busan workshop, hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation at its Bellagio Centre. The workshop reviewed the accomplishments and challenges facing the GPEDC at this juncture. Workshop participants are “old hands” who have been active in aid effectiveness debates and actions for several years.

Workshop recommendations are intended to strengthen the GPEDC role as an inclusive and transparent international partnership aiming to enhance development cooperation contributions to sustainable development and embrace the post 2015 development agenda.

The views of workshop participants echo those of a much larger constituency, judging by comments which delegates at the Mexico High Level Forum shared with me during this well attended and generously hosted event.

The timing of the launching of the GPEDC could not have been better. It was rightly regarded as a potentially powerful “game changer”. Its overall architecture remains both relevant and crucial, but requires capacity reinforcement to enable it to perform with greater impact. I therefore wish to underline the importance of engaging in some “soul searching” by its capable and committed leadership and steering committee before setting a longer term strategy and course of actions.

The challenges facing GPEDC are “opportunities in disguise” awaiting GPEDC actions to translate them into contributions to sustainable development on the ground.

I take this opportunity to applaud the efforts of the Joint Support Team, and of members of the DCD Secretariat with whom I had the pleasure of working closely for many years leading to the launching of the GPEDC.

Please accept my warm personal regards and best wishes for the holiday season and the New Year.

Talaat Abdel-Malek

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Abdel-Malek', with a stylized flourish at the end.

5 December 2014