

EU NEWS

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EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Civil Society Participation: Follow-up to the Commission Communication on non-state actors

Since the Commission published its Communication on the Participation of Non-State Actors in EC Development Policy on 7 November 2002, NGO networks have been working together to respond to this Communication and to share their position with Commission officials, Member States, and MEPs (a meeting with MEP Richard Howitt took place on 17 February). Discussions are underway to produce a common position paper, as a complement to the Reflection Document on the Role of Civil Society in EU Development Policy already issued in June 2002.

The next steps for the EU institutions are twofold: first, the General Affairs and External Relations Council will adopt its conclusions on the Communication during its meeting on 19 May. Second, the Parliament is also writing its response to the Communication, to be adopted in July. MEP Richard Howitt will be sponsoring a **mini-hearing** during the next meeting of the **Parliamentary Committee on Development and Cooperation on 18 March** on this subject, with speakers both from the Commission and from NGOs.

On the NGO side, **CORDAID** and **CONCORD** will be holding a **seminar on 27 March** in Brussels on relations between NGOs and the Commission, with representatives from the EU institutions and NGOs. Tentative topics include the nature of NGO-Commission relations, including co-financing and policy dialogue, and new avenues for consultation and dialogue.

For more information, contact [Karine Sohet \(k.sohet@aprodev.net\)](mailto:k.sohet@aprodev.net) or [Denise Auclair \(eupolicy@cidse.org\)](mailto:Denise.Auclair@eupolicy.cidse.org).

Communicable Diseases in Developing Countries: Commission progress report shows mixed results

On 26 February, the Commission issued a report showing mixed results on the progress made in the last 2 years in the implementation of its Programme for Action on HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in the context of poverty reduction, adopted in February 2001. The Programme entailed a series of prevention-oriented actions to increase the impact of existing interventions, increase the affordability of key pharmaceuticals and encourage research & development to tackle these diseases at the national, regional and global level.

Increasing Impact of Existing Actions: The Commission reports that progress has been limited, as the number of people affected and dying from these diseases is still increasing, and few have access to effective medicines. Despite international consensus on the urgent need to tackle this problem, there remains a lack of large-scale collective action both at national and global level. However, according to the Commission, the Action Programme has enabled it to draw more attention to these diseases and the need to work in a co-ordinated way towards the same objectives (notably at the G-8, EU-US Summits, EU/African Union forum, and WTO). The report

states that the EU approach emphasises the need to match all ongoing international efforts in health, education, as well as trade and research, and the importance of increasing spending on social structures.

Affordability and Trade: According to the report, access to medicines appears more encouraging, as the Commission esteems that its strategy on differentiated pricing schemes to facilitate access to affordable medicines by poor countries has gained broad support and is applied by some manufacturers. The Commission has proposed a regulation to ensure that reduced-price medicines reach their destination and are not simply re-imported into the EU. In WTO negotiations, the EU has pushed for the acceptance of compulsory licensing, recognising that intellectual property protection concerns should not outweigh public health priorities. The Commission states that despite US opposition and issues of insufficient pharmaceutical sector manufacturing capacities, it will continue to work for rapid agreement on a multilateral, sustainable solution.

Research and Development: The EU 6th Research Framework Programme has allocated significantly increased resources to basic, pre-clinical and clinical research in HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB. €200 million will be invested in an integrated European programme for research against the three diseases, the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Programme (EDCPT), which joins the efforts of Member States and developing countries in a research partnership. Another €200 million will be invested in more basic research.

The Commission contributed €120 million to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria in 2002.

Full text available at:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0093en01.pdf

EU SECTORAL POLICIES

WTO negotiations on agricultural trade: Hearing in Geneva

On 19-21 February, some 90 participants from 30 countries in Europe, North America, Asia, Africa and Latin America gathered in Geneva to review and discuss the draft modalities text put forward by Stuart Harbinson, Chair of the WTO Committee. The meeting was entitled *Farmers, Food and Trade - A Hearing on the Draft of the WTO Agriculture Agreement* and was co-organised by CIDSE and APRODEV together with several other organisations in North and South.

At the end of the meeting, participants adopted a statement that rejects the Harbinson draft modalities text as an acceptable basis for negotiation. The statement was presented, on the 24th of February, at two simultaneous press conferences in Brussels and Geneva.

A 3 pages report of the Geneva meeting and of the Brussels press conference is available in annex.

At the DG Trade Civil Society Meeting on 5 March, DG Agriculture announced that Mr Harbinson was intending to prepare a new draft for mid-March but that he recognizes that the gaps were so important between negotiators from different groups that it would be very difficult to agree on a text before 31 March as it was decided in Doha.

UE-ACP Trade negotiations: progress made so far and respective positions

The first ACP-EU joint Ministerial Trade Committee meeting since the start of the negotiations took place on 1 March in St Lucia.

An ACP press release highlights the fact that the slow pace of the negotiations and the persistent differences in the points of view of both sides on the objectives and contents of the EPAs incite some ACP countries to question the advisability of launching the second phase of the negotiations. ACP apprehension is also relating to the fact that trade preferences of the ACP group are seriously endangered by successive attacks from third parties that the European Union does not seem prepared to resist (Sugar Protocol and preferences on the EU tuna market).

At the last Agriculture Committee meeting of the WTO, ACP states made a joint statement (presented by the ambassador of Botswana) on the fact that the preferences must be safeguarded.

According to the ACP press release, the WTO Development Agenda adopted in Doha seems less and less a priority while the developed countries are reserving their attention instead for Market Access from which the ACP cannot benefit substantially at their current stage of competitiveness, especially in the face of subsidies and various non-tariff barriers in favour of a number of goods and services from rich countries.

Information on the state of the negotiations was collected at the DG Trade Civil Society Dialogue on 4 March:

The Commission reported on the St Lucia Joint Ministerial meeting which in their view has resulted in considerable progress on agreement on objectives and principles of EPAs. Disagreement remains on resources, debt relief and maintenance of the aquifer of Cotonou. Mr Feustel, representing DG Trade, emphasised that EPAs must be an instrument for development, and focus should be on how to make EPAs work. Flexibility remains the key issue to negotiate tailored EPAs which take into account specific needs of ACP countries. Article 24 of the WTO agreement provides for sufficient flexibility and compatibility with WTO will not be the prime concern for the Commission in negotiating EPAs.

The Commission wants to start negotiating in regional groups by July/August 2003, arguing that decision have to be taken according to specific needs which can only be identified at regional level. ECOWAS and CEMAC have already officially agreed to form an EPA and CARRICOM is on its way. For Eastern and Southern Africa the situation is far more complicated due to their many overlapping membership in different regional bodies.

In order to strengthen the EU-Delegations role in NSA dialogue, DG Trade plans to run information and training sessions for delegations and will identify key delegations in each region. Given the development and poverty alleviation objective of EPAs, gender impacts will be taken into account and specific input on gender issues from CS is welcome.

EC briefing papers on market access, rules, procedures and toolbox (kit for regional negotiations) are posted on DG Trade website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/whats_new/index_en.htm

More information on DG Trade and ACP secretariat websites:

<http://www.acpsec.org/>

Sustainable Impact Assessment process: in 1999, the EC commissioned a programme of impact assessment studies on the future EU trade relations with third countries including ACP countries.

At the occasion of a seminar on impact assessments organised on the initiative of DG Trade on 6 and 7 February, a group of NGOs including APRODEV produced a statement starting with: *'after three years, there is still little evidence that it is influencing EU trade negotiating positions. Nor is there any evidence of SIAs leading*

to the formulation of trade-related EU policies and measures that could help to mitigate the negative impacts of trade liberalisation, or to spread its positive effects more equitably and sustainably – particularly by addressing the impacts on vulnerable groups and women. NGOs make a series of recommendations to address the past and present failures of the SIA process including the pro-liberalisation bias, the limited scenario analysis, the lack of consultation of stakeholders on the scenarios, the fact that the SIAs are not integrated in the policy-making process, the fact that reforms concern mainly the trading partners and there is no self-analysis on the side of the EU, the lack of mechanisms for concrete implementation of SIAs' recommendations. The statement ends with: *'Without action to support its rhetoric, the Commission's SIA programme will be viewed as little more than an expensive exercise to justify its own position. If these weaknesses are not addressed, there is a danger that the programme will lose the support of civil society.'*

WWF has taken the lead on that issue on the side of NGOs and cooperates closely with development NGOs in the follow-up to the seminar. At the seminar, APRODEV advocated for the integration of gender issues in the SIA process and the EC promised to take that issue fully into account in the future of the process.

More info on *EPAWatch*:

<http://www.epawatch.net/general/text.php?itemID=111&menuID=5> or on the website of the SIA consultants working on ACP: www.sia-acp.org

EU HUMANITARIAN AID POLICY

Recent funding decisions of ECHO

Ethiopia: a new allocation of **€5 million** will enable the ICRC to purchase and distribute 15,750 tonnes of essential food commodities (maize, beans, vegetable oil and wheat) to vulnerable families in the north-eastern region of Ethiopia (Afar and Somali region), where the ICRC, with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS), is already distributing food to some 100,000 pastoralists and farmers affected by drought and local conflicts. The food will also go to the lowland regions of Oromia (Hararghe), the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State and Tigray. This contribution to the ICRC will bring the total Commission emergency aid response to the present crisis in Ethiopia to €102 million, or the equivalent to 275 000 metric tonnes of food for 2003 alone. Bilaterally, Member States are providing additional food and humanitarian aid worth €46 million, thus bringing the total EU response to €148 million.

Somalia: a humanitarian aid package worth **€5 million** to help tackle some of the severe humanitarian needs in Somalia, resulting from prolonged conflict, drought and floods. This latest decision is targeted at those sectors where needs are greatest, namely health, water and sanitation, and food security. ECHO's implementing partners in Somalia include UN agencies, the Red Cross family and established non-governmental organisations.

Tanzania: ECHO's Global Plan for 2003, amounting **€24 million**, will benefit about 520,000 refugees in fourteen camps in western Tanzania under UNHCR protection. The funds will go to finance food aid, logistics, water and sanitation, as well as nutrition, health, shelter and protection. Health support will be maintained in the camps, with a focus on preventing the main causes of child mortality. An essential part of the refugee programme is the provision of shelter and protection. Support for child education will also be maintained, as well as protection of vulnerable groups through gender and child-related projects.

Burundi: **€15 million** ECHO aid for Burundi will be targeted at the most vulnerable groups of people, primarily displaced persons and their host communities, refugees, returnees, and women and children. The humanitarian situation in Burundi could

deteriorate at any time. To ensure the most rapid and effective response, an emergency response capacity will be set up to monitor such emergencies as temporary population movements, epidemics and nutritional crises. The possibility of a mass repatriation from Tanzania will be closely monitored so that additional resources can be mobilised if need be. The priority objectives of this aid plan are health and nutrition, food security and sanitation and drinking water.

Angola: the 8 million funding decision gives priority to areas of the country which have become newly accessible since April last year, and other areas which are still to be opened up, particularly the eastern provinces of Angola. The focus will be mainly on emergency health and nutrition, emergency relief, protection and logistics. For the first time, ECHO will include emergency HIV/AIDS awareness activities in all interventions.

EU RELATIONS WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

EU-ACP: the Cotonou Agreement will come into force on 1st April

After a long process of ratification, the Cotonou agreement that was signed on 20 June 2000, will finally enter into force on 1st April. The agreement has been signed for a period of 20 years, the first financial envelop (9th EDF) covering the period 2000-2005, has a budget of 13.5 billion including 1.3 bn for regional programmes and 2.2 bn for a new investment facility. Most of the rest of the budget is distributed among the 77 ACP countries to finance their national indicative programmes under Country Strategy papers approved by both sides.

EU cooperation with Asia and Latin America, NGO paper

A group of NGOs and networks has prepared a joint NGO paper on the ALA regulation with the aim to put poverty eradication and sustainable development at the heart of the EU's cooperation with Asia and Latin America.

The paper is available at: http://www.eurostep.org/strategy/ala/ALA_review.html

Zimbabwe: the Council has renewed the sanctions

The sanctions comprise an embargo on arms and equipment that could be used for internal repression in Zimbabwe, a visaban on a list of persons from the Zimbabwean ruling class, and a freeze of their assets within the EU.

At the same time the procedures for obtaining derogation to the visaban have been reviewed. The Council may decide on a derogation, solicited by a Member States, with qualified majority. Following this decision, the Council formally confirmed it did not object to attendance by Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe to attend the Africa-France Summit in Paris on 20 and 21 February.

This lack of coherence in EU sanctions has been strongly criticised by the European Parliament in a resolution adopted two weeks ago.

More recently, the Greek presidency of the EU issued a statement expressing concerns about arbitrary arrest, inhuman treatment and torture of members of the opposition and civil society organizations in Zimbabwe.

Unfortunately, after the failure of the Greek presidency's efforts to convince Zimbabwean government to be represented in Lisbon by its Foreign Minister, the EU decided to postpone the Lisbon EU-Africa Summit, initially scheduled for the beginning of April, to an indefinite date.

Sudan: ECOS' statement on recent Government's attacks and benchmarks for the dialogue between the EU and the government

ECOS, the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan which includes a number of members of our three networks recently produced a statement denouncing the present attacks against civilians perpetuated by the Government of Sudan to open a road to oil in South Sudan. ECOS also prepared a series of benchmarks that should underline the EU dialogue with the Government of Sudan. We present here a few extracts from ECOS' statement:

In January, prospects for peace in Sudan suffered a heavy blow when Government controlled armed forces took the offensive and expanded their control over the oil rich areas of Western Upper Nile in South Sudan. A large area, traditionally held by the SPLA, was depopulated by force, to secure the construction of the road to the oil fields of Adok. Many villages were destroyed and civilians killed or displaced, adding to the two million dead and already 4 million internally displaced people in Sudan.

Lundin Petroleum (Sweden), OMV (Austria) and Petronas (Malaysia) need the all-weather road to exploit their oil fields.

The attacks came three months after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/SPLA.....

*Oil remains a major incentive for war as the Government of Sudan perpetuates a preference of oil over peace. European governments fail to recognize the importance of the oil issue. **The EU plays a very active and constructive role to achieve peace in Sudan. At the same time, European oil companies are allowed to determine for themselves whether they undermine peace or not.** The European governments, especially Sweden and Switzerland, fail to ensure that the commercial interests of Lundin Petroleum and OMV do not de facto frustrate peace.*

Full text of the statement and of the 'Benchmarks for EU-GOS political dialogue' are available on request from k.sohet@aprodev.net or on ECOS' website: <http://www.ecosonline.org>

Iraq: joint EU position after an extraordinary Summit

ON 17 February, EU Member states agreed on conclusions which reaffirm basic principles such as the primary responsibility of the Security Council for dealing with Iraqi disarmament, full support for the ongoing work of the UN inspectors and the recognition that the military build-up in the region has been essential in obtaining the return of the inspectors: *'We are committed to the United Nations remaining at the centre of the international order. We recognise that the primary responsibility for dealing with Iraqi disarmament lies with the Security Council. We pledge our full support to the Council in discharging its responsibilities.*

The Union's objective for Iraq remains full and effective disarmament in accordance with the relevant UNSC resolutions, in particular resolution 1441. We want to achieve this peacefully. It is clear that this is what the people of Europe want.'

With regard to the decisive question of the use of force, the conclusions states that *'War is not inevitable. Force should be used only as a last resort. It is for the Iraqi regime to end this crisis by complying with the demands of the Security Council.'*

This little substantive stance does not come as a surprise. The EU does not have a joint view on whether military action towards Iraq is the solution. Still the Greek Presidency managed to condense in these conclusions the principles of a substantive EU foreign policy, that remain valid also in difficult circumstances. So for as little as it is a minimal consensus, some basic elements of a joint EU foreign and security policy became apparent.

(Sources: EU Council website and EPLO news)

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

New organigramme of Europeaid

Europeaid, also called AIDCO internally, has recently been restructured. The Direction F is renamed as 'Non geographic operations and link between relief rehabilitation and development'. Unit F1 is now headed by Mr Kremer and renamed as 'Coordination' instead of 'Innovation'. Two other changes in the Direction F: Mr Ten Bloemendal previously head of Unit F4 becomes head of Unit E4 (Latin America, multisector) and is replaced by Mr Puyol Pinuela and Mr Hecker, previously head of Unit F6 (Finance and contracts) is replaced by Mr Melendro Arnaiz.

Calls for proposals for thematic budget lines to be expected in 2003

Uprooted people in Colombia: most of the funds have been used to finance UN agencies and 10 submitted projects have been selected for financing. A call for proposals will be published and it will apparently be possible to re-submit 2002 NGO projects proposals for financing in 2003. The head of delegation has recently changed in Colombia and it seems that the new person, Mr Bertolini is interesting to meet NGOs working in the Country.

Fight against poverty diseases: HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB: a call will be published later this year (maybe April or May) in the same way as last year (concept notes first) but this time it seems that it will not be obligatory to work in consortium. The call will be enlarged to TB and malaria. Last year it was limited to HIV/AIDS only because the new regulation integrating the three diseases was not yet adopted.

Reproductive Health: the EC is waiting for the final adoption of the new regulation before publishing the call. It is apparently the intention of the EC to publish a unique call for financing years 2002 and 2003 (total budget of €27.9 million). The Parliament adopted its report on the regulation on 17 February and asks for a total budget of €73.95 million to be allocated to the line between 2003 and 2006. The EP rejected amendments aimed at combating abortion and adopted amendments to the text that ask for a reduction not only of the mortality rate but also the morbidity rate in childbirth. The regulation should also include HIV/AIDS prevention and diagnosis and should also address the issues of sexual violence and child and forced marriages.

Environment and Tropical Forests: a call for proposals will be published this year and will cover two financial years (2003-2004).

Human rights and Democracy: it seems that the EC is not intending to publish a call in 2003 and will use the projects submitted under the last call for the year 2003. A call would however be published at the end of 2003 for projects to be financed in 2004. EIHDR Unit has updated its strategy 2002-2004 and decided to add a further two countries to the list of 29 focus countries for 2003: **China** and **Angola**. With regard to **Angola** the EU will offer "to assist efforts by the Government of Angola to strengthen democratic institutions and practices so as to allow the holding of free and fair legislative and presidential elections and to ensure respect for human rights, the rule of law and independent civil society". In addition, activities in support of conflict prevention and resolution, including resolving land tenure disputes should be considered for support. The microproject facility is expected to be available in all focus country Delegations that have been deconcentrated in 2003. The update also emphasises the need to ensure the effective mainstreaming of the rights of women and children in all EIDHR supported activities.

More information on EuropeAid website:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/eidhr/index_en.htm

Preparation of the seminar on co-financing and first meeting of the new EC-NGO Funding Group

A small task force has been created to prepare a high level seminar on the future of the EC cofinancing scheme that should take place in the beginning of June. The idea of having such a seminar was initiated by Mr Bouratsis last June and was directly taken over by the Development Finance Group of the CLONG now transformed into the EU NGO Funding Group of CONCORD. APRODEV and CIDSE are now both full and official members of the new group and actively participate in the task force for the seminar.

Preparation is progressing and suggestions will be made to the EU NGO Funding Group and to Mr Bouratsis in March. The on-going survey on the size of EU NGOs and their access to the EC cofinancing system organized by the national platforms is part of that preparation and will help NGOs in preparing sound proposals on the future of the cofinancing instruments. Statistics from last years calls for proposals are also subject to thorough analysis to extract as much information as possible on on-going trends.

The seminar should look both at short term very practical and technical issues on ways to improve the immediate management and use of the line and at longer term issues that will have an influence on the cofinancing scheme in the coming years (deconcentration, enlargement, rationalisation of budget lines, new financial perspectives, balance of EU aid to different regions and countries, evolving role of EU NGOs and participation of civil society in the South,..).

Besides the preparation of the seminar, the agenda of the first EU NGO funding Group meeting will look at the role, mandate and functioning of the Group and at a series of issues including the communication on NSA, the EU development budget and Euritas project. It will also be the occasion to exchange information on the different thematic budget lines and to discuss current co-financing problems with Mr Bouratsis and his colleagues.

OTHER NEWS FROM THE EU

Civil Society message to the Convention plenary meeting on 27-28 February

At the occasion of the plenary session of the Convention on the Future of Europe taking place on 27 and 28 February, the Civil Society Contact Group sent a letter to the members of the Convention to convey its overarching concerns on the first 16 Articles presented to the Convention (*see also EU News 2 for a presentation of the 16 articles*). In summary, the letter says:

- We believe that the *acquis* of the present treaties must be preserved.
- We wish to underline that the **principles of “integration” and “coherence”** must be considered as essential to achieve result with regard to social, environmental and development goals. We urge inclusion of these principles on a par with those proposed in article 8 as governing Union competences.
- Similarly, the **principles of transparency and accountability** must be included as determining the way the Union seeks to achieve its objectives and exercise its competences.
- Therefore we strongly urge the **fullest possible reflection of social, environmental and human rights objectives** in article 3, and to seek a higher level of complementarity between its internal and external dimensions.

- The concept of **sustainable development** must be consistently based on the economic, environmental and social dimensions.
- The first titles must reflect a stronger and more coherent manifestation of the Union's aspirations with regard to **equality women and men, and non-discrimination** on the basis of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, and disability, age or sexual orientation.
- **Union citizenship** should be based not only on nationality but also on residence in order to guarantee equal rights.

The Civil Society Contact Group was set up a year ago by the social, environmental, human rights and development NGOs at European level to seek effective civil society input into the Convention. [The contact person for Development NGOs is Simon Stocker, Secretary General of Eurostep.](#)

[See also in CIDSE News below, the announcement of a Trocaire's paper on the future of EU Development Policy.](#)

Official website of the Convention:

<http://european-convention.eu.int/bienvenue.asp?lang=EN>

NEWS FROM THE NETWORKS

Participation in CONCORD governing bodies and working groups

The 9 members of the board of CONCORD were elected at the first General Assembly at the end of January and both CIDSE and APRODEV candidates, Bart Bode (Broederlijk Delen) and Carol Rask (DanChurchAid) were elected.

In addition to Bart and Carol, two members of CIDSE are present in the board, Justin Kilcullen from Trocaire, representing the Irish platform and Frans Polman, CORDAID representing the Dutch platform and president of CONCORD.

The first Board meeting took place on 26 February and was first and foremost designed to start the process of establishing internal procedures, ways of working and not least finalise the election of the remaining Board posts of Vice-president, Treasurer and Secretary

Justin Kilcullen and Carol Rask have both been elected vice-presidents of CONCORD while Bart Bode was elected secretary of the board.

Justin Kilcullen will chair the Forward Thinking Strategy Group and Carol Rask will be responsible of following the EU NGO Funding group work and will probably attend its first meeting.

Regarding our participation in the working groups:

CIDSE and APRODEV will be formally represented in the EU Funding Group by Maria Winnubst and Karine Sohet respectively.

CIDSE and APRODEV are members of the Cotonou Monitoring Group and of the European Trade Network, two existing thematic groups that will continue their work under the umbrella of CONCORD. CIDSE is the convenor of the European Trade Network and is also member of the Group on Funding for Global Development (Monterrey issues).

The other thematic Groups (Food Security, Humanitarian aid and Enlargement) and the Forward Thinking Strategy Group have not yet been formally set up. A Food Security group already exists under EuronAid, it will be enlarged to integrate other CONCORD members. The working group on Enlargement will be based on the *Trialog* project steering committee.

One of the issues discussed by Caritas Europa's Board on 27/28 February, was how to relate the work of Caritas Europa and its Member Organisations to the work of CONCORD as it develops, for example in relation to enlargement. It was agreed that Caritas Europa's Commission for International Cooperation (CIC) will discuss this at its next meeting on 11/12 March, especially the issue of which Working Groups Caritas Europa will participate in.

NEWS FROM APRODEV

Calendar of meetings:

The Policy and Advocacy Group will meet on 12 and 13 March and will discuss next year work programme and on-going policy activities.

The Co-financing officers group will meet on 19 March just after the meeting of the EU NGO Funding group of CONCORD.

The Gender Reference Group will meet on 2 and 3 April.

The Executive Committee will meet on 7 and 8 May and the Annual Meeting of Aprodev is scheduled between 2 and 4 June in the UK.

The Advocacy group on Palestine and Isarel will meet on 13 March in Brussels.

Hungarian InterChurchAid and APRODEV organise a workshop on “**policy dialogue and cofinancing mechanisms related to development policy**” in Budapest in June.

NEWS FROM CIDSE

Future of EU Development Policy: CIDSE member agency Trócaire has issued a briefing paper entitled "Addressing Europe's Global Responsibilities: Development Co-operation and the European Convention". The paper includes the historical context of EU development co-operation, explains the principles and the realities of EU development policy today, and answers the question, "Why should development policy remain at the EU level, and what form should that policy take?" Available upon request from Denise Auclair (eupolicy@cidse.org).

Corporate Social Responsibility: CIDSE, along with Caritas Europa, is participating in the EU Multi-stakeholder Forum on CSR, organized by the Commission. Two roundtables on Improving knowledge about CSR and on Fostering CSR among Small and Medium Enterprises, were held on 12 and 24 February, respectively. The first roundtable on Development aspects and on Transparency of CSR practices and tools are scheduled for 17 March and 7 April, respectively.

NEWS FROM CARITAS EUROPA

The Emergency Task Force will meet on 18 and 19 March.

The IEC Africa will meet on 26 March.

Tony Hardiment's two year secondment to Caritas Europa from CAFOD will finish at the end of March. The process for recruiting his replacement is now in its advanced stages and the outcome will be announced shortly.