

CONFERENCE ON EU AND GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS

Implementing sustainable business through aid and trade

AMSTERDAM, 7 DECEMBER 2015, CONCLUSIONS BY THE HOST

1. Sustainable development is a cornerstone of the EU's internal and external policies. And sustainable business is a driving force behind it. Today we concluded that all European stakeholders will join forces to put policy into practice.
2. Stimulating sustainability in global value chains should be central to the external policies of the EU, and to its trade and development agenda in particular. This is in line with the G7 Leaders' Declaration of June 2015, which highlights responsible supply chains for sustainable development.
3. The EU has the potential, the power and the instruments to stimulate sustainability. Today we identified a way forward:
 - a. With its new 'Trade for All' strategy, the Commission is making this goal part and parcel of present and future trade policy. That's a start. We call upon the Commission, EU member states and all stakeholders to focus on implementation and make sustainability commitments in trade and investment agreements work.
 - b. The EU has an array of development cooperation instruments at its disposal. Today we concluded that these instruments, like private sector development, need to be used more extensively to help create sustainable global value chains. The public and private sectors and civil society must work together to address the environmental, social and human rights risks and aim for inclusive development and decent jobs, which are crucial to achieving the Global Goals.
 - c. One and one is three; policy coherence between trade and aid will boost effectiveness and merits a central role in the new aid for trade strategy. Making global value chains more sustainable connects European citizens with citizens at the other end of the chain. Our commitment to making consumption and production

more sustainable is part of EU action on the Global Goals and forges links between internal and external sustainable development policies.

- d. Business and human rights is a silver thread in EU's external policies and a pillar of responsible business conduct.
 - e. Stimulating responsible business conduct or corporate social responsibility is at the heart of sustainable global supply chains. The EU needs to create incentives and provide clarity on what it expects from the private sector and other stakeholders based on a concrete agenda for action.
4. Today we discussed multi-stakeholder approaches in a range of sectors, including textiles, gold, banking, agricultural commodities and palm oil. We came to the conclusion that multi-stakeholder approaches ensure long-term commitment and support. They are a way forward for the EU in making global value chains sustainable and boosting its trade and development policies. We welcome, for example, the EU Garment Initiative.
5. Let's continue this dialogue with our global partners. Let's create a level playing field by ensuring that sustainable global value chains are no longer the exception, but the norm. Let's lead by example.