



**MISSION PERMANENTE DE LA SUISSE  
AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES**

Seul le texte prononcé fait foi

**Examen global approfondi à mi-parcours  
de la mise en oeuvre du Programme d'action en faveur des pays les moins  
avancés pour la décennie 2001-2010**

**Réunion de haut niveau**

**Déclaration de  
S.E. l'Ambassadeur Walter Fust  
Directeur Général  
Direction du Développement et de la Coopération Suisse**

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**Mid-term comprehensive global review  
of the implementation of the Programme of Action  
for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010**

**High-Level Meeting**

**Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Walter Fust  
Director General  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation**

**New York, 18 September 2006**

Madam President,

Allow me first to express Switzerland's gratitude to the least developed countries for the major efforts they have made to prepare this mid-term global review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action, both at the national and at the regional level – efforts which culminated in the Ministerial Conference held in Cotonou.

When our Parliament established the legal basis for the Swiss development cooperation in 1976, it defined assistance to the world's poorest countries as its principal aim. For thirty years, this aim has remained at the heart of our activities, and we have consistently tried to improve the quality and impact of these activities and increase funding for them. For example, the funds allocated to the LDCs rose from 243 million US dollars in 2001 to 388 million dollars in 2005.

I do not wish to dwell here on what Switzerland has done to date to contribute to implementing the goals of the Brussels Programme of Action, because you will find an assessment of Switzerland's contribution in a brief document available in this room. Instead, I wish to share a few thoughts with you about some of the conditions that we believe are essential to increase the pace of development in the least developed countries.

The governments of LDCs have a crucial role to play. As the international community is giving an increasing attention to the implementation of the Paris Agenda on alignment and harmonization of aid, the primordial responsibility for integrating the key elements of the Brussels Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals in national poverty reduction strategies remains with the governments of LDCs, who also have to ensure that these strategies are the overarching reference for all their development partners, both internal and external. We are fully aware of the fact that many governments of LDCs have been expressing their considerable need for capacity building for a long time, and we acknowledge that much remains to be done. This is why we are trying to improve the performance of our bilateral assistance in this field; we also encourage our multilateral partners to substantially increase their involvement in this sector – in particular UN agencies, who have a real comparative advantage here.

Moreover, we feel that it is essential that the governments of LDCs succeed in instituting equitable and transparent fiscal policies, capable of ensuring a better redistribution of resources. In this respect, it is quite often possible to increase the tax base and to make taxes more progressive in order to ensure that those citizens and enterprises who already benefit from globalization contribute in an equitable way to national solidarity. Moreover, by concentrating efforts to achieve sound management of these resources – any country's most precious source of revenue – it should be possible to have a positive impact in all other sectors of governance. The essential principle of good governance also requires strong support for national capacity strengthening – an area in which we are prepared to increase our involvement.

In a related area, Switzerland observes with some concern that the monitoring system for the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action within the United Nations is very bureaucratic. Moreover, it leads to an administrative burden on LDCs and donor countries, which we do not find very constructive. Furthermore, the particular situation of LDCs has led to a whole series of specific recommendations within the framework of other conferences, e.g. the Monterrey Conference and the Johannesburg Summit. It might be useful to try and ensure a simplified and coherent form of monitoring by asking the secretariat to reconcile the various components of this very complex normative framework. This would, however, require a substantial improvement in cooperation between the relevant administrative units of the United Nations — in particular the Office of the High Representative, the Financing for Development Office, the DESA Division for Sustainable Development, the UNCTAD and the UNDP. As for the national level, the mechanism to monitor national poverty reduction strategies seems to be sufficient to ensure monitoring of the Brussels Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals, at least in the countries where such a strategies exists.

Today, if we want to reach the goals of the Brussels Programme of Action by the given deadline, it seems more evident than ever that greater and more coordinated efforts are needed among all development partners. This includes developing as well as industrialized countries, governments and civil society, bilateral and multilateral organizations, development banks, the public and private sectors.

As Switzerland already stated in Brussels, we are convinced that efficiency in giving LDCs the support they need can only be attained if broad consensus — and a better division of labour — are achieved among international financial institutions, UN agencies and bilateral cooperation agencies. Facilitation of such a consensus was our aim when we very explicitly supported the creation in New York of the position of a High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, believing that this location would allow the Representative to develop more functional links in this field between the United Nations and the Bretton Wood institutions. We acknowledge the recent efforts made in this respect, but we are convinced that much more could be undertaken and achieved.

Switzerland remains as ready as ever to join this collective effort; we wish to affirm once again and unequivocally our primary commitment to the least developed countries and the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action.

Thank you, Madam President.