



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 7.2.2014*

*C(2014) 669 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Bundesrat for its Opinion concerning the proposal for a decision on the European Year of Development 2015 {COM(2013) 509 final}.*

*In 2015, the International Community has the unique opportunity to agree on a new development agenda – an agenda that responds to the present development challenges in adequate ways. In order to make the importance of this year more visible on the European level, the European Commission announced that 2015 will be the European Year for Development.*

*The European Year of Development 2015 will basically be a communication instrument. The main focus will be addressing the broadest EU audience possible to inform on the current debate on development policies, to increase interest in policy formulation and to raise awareness in an increasingly inter-dependent world.*

*The basis for all communication activities within the European Year of Development 2015 are the recent Communications on ‘Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change’ {COM(2011) 637 final} and ‘A decent life for all, ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future’ {COM(2013) 92 final}.*

*The European Year of Development 2015 being based on these comprehensive and forward looking development policy concepts, the content of all communication during that special year will also pursue a broad and forward looking approach. This refers to the main topics to be tackled as well as to the range of stakeholders to be included. The discussion on the post-2015 development agenda and the follow up of Rio+20 will be an essential part of such a strategy.*

*The European Year of Development 2015 will allow the dissemination of the content of the recent Communications, which goes beyond development policies in a traditional sense. The two Communications contribute indeed to a paradigm shift in EU development policies.*

*Mr Stephan WEIL  
President of the Bundesrat  
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*The Agenda for Change is very clear on the fact that poverty eradication is not possible without inclusive and sustainable growth, respect for Human Rights and Good Governance. Moreover, the Communication 'A Decent Life for All' underlines that the fundamental goals to eradicate poverty and to promote sustainable development are inseparably linked and that this demands integrated and concrete action in the field of development policy.*

*As mentioned by the Bundesrat and as shown by previous European Years, it is of utmost importance that all activities are designed in a decentralised manner to bring them as close as possible to EU citizens. That is why the proposal for a decision on the European Year of Development 2015 suggests an active and encompassing participation of a wide range of stakeholders. It will be particularly important to respond to the different information needs in individual Member States.*

*To decentralise activities and therefore to get closer to EU citizens, the Commission proposed national work programmes at the level of the Member States. Within these national work programmes each Member State will be recommended to coordinate between national, regional and local level to ensure an efficient division of work. The proposed deadline for the submission of the individual national work programmes might, as the discussions with the European Parliament and the Council are still on-going, be postponed. The financial support will be granted from one single budget line.*

*Besides the support through national work programmes the Commission also foresees a broad participation of civil society throughout the year. Inter alia, the Commission incorporates the European Year of Development 2015 under the 'Development education and awareness raising' (DEAR) initiative.*

*The Commission remains committed to the promotion of universal ratification and implementation of the four International Labour Organisation (ILO) Core labour standards, including to Convention No 182 concerning Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. The Commission's participation to the III Global Conference on Child Labour in Brasilia of 8-10 October 2013 has demonstrated this engagement. At this occasion ILO reported on the progress achieved since 2000, showing that the global number of child labourers has declined by one third<sup>1</sup>.*

*However ILO members have committed with the Brasilia declaration to accelerate the efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2016. To achieve this objective a holistic and integrated approach is paramount aiming at tackling poverty, vulnerability and inequality. As mentioned in the "Decent Life for All" as part of the post 2015 agenda, increasing access to public services such as health and education, providing adequate nutrition and social protection would benefit families and children.*

*The Commission is particularly concerned by the impact of trade on child labour: the complexity of the issue should be considered together with the fact that only a minor part of the worst forms of child labour is associated with international trade and that trade has a positive role to play with other policies and instruments to promote development and growth. The Commission actively supports the uptake of Corporate Social Responsibility practice, synergies with the private sector are increasing in EU Development policies, recognising the need to promote and support effective action throughout the supply chain, as part of the Brasilia engagements for a sustained eradication of the worst forms of child labour.*

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<sup>1</sup> ILO report "Making Progress against Child Labour" Sept 2013

[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed\\_norm/ipecc/documents/publication/wcms/221513.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed_norm/ipecc/documents/publication/wcms/221513.pdf)

*The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns raised by the Bundesrat and looks forward to continuing this political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*