POLICY FORUM ON DEVELOPMENT (PFD)
Multi-stakeholder regional meeting Latin America
Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, 7-8 July 2016

Introduction and welcome

On 7/8 July 2016, the second meeting of the Political Forum on Development (PFD) in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) took place in Antigua, Guatemala, and was the first regional multi-stakeholder meeting. It was attended by around 80 representatives of CSOs (CSOs), including NGOs, cooperatives, unions, feminists/women's organisations, the private sector and LAs from around Latin America, who met with representatives of the European Union (EU).

Over the two days of the regional meeting, participants had the chance to discuss Agenda 2030, especially with regard to the challenges associated with its implementation and the need to improve conditions to create an enabling environment for achieving its objectives in the region.

To this end, the participants exchanged opinions and different viewpoints from various sectors regarding roadmaps, the renewal of the LAC regional representation and Task Team, multi-stakeholder approaches and finally, identified a number of conclusions and recommendations raised during the meeting.

The welcome session, chaired by Michel Laloge, Head of the LAs Sector at the European Commission's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, also featured contributions from Miguel Ángel Encinas, from *Cooperación Española*; Rafael Hidalgo, Mayor of Azua, Dominican Republic and President of the Federation of Dominican Municipalities (*Federación Dominicana de Municipios/FEDOMU*) and the Latin American Federation of Municipalities, Associations and Cities (Federación Latinoamericana de Municipios, Asociaciones y Ciudades/*FLACMA*); Ignacio Ayala, Director of the Training Centre of *Cooperación Española* in Guatemala; and Jorge Balbis, Executive Secretary of the Latin American Association of Organisations Promoting Development (*Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción al Desarrollo/ALOP*), and Co-President of the PFD, representing CSOs.

Preliminary observations gave rise to some fundamental proposals regarding the overall implementation of Agenda 2030, specifically in the region of Latin America, and the importance of all sectors and stakeholders in society participating in order to foster an enabling environment for combating the challenges of the Agenda.

Initial discussions also addressed the relationship between organised civil society (in all sectors) and the state, co-responsibility, the defence of human rights, gender equality, poverty, the environment and, above all, achieving the SDGs. The importance of European Union support in the region was also reiterated.

The debates which took place during the meeting are summarised below.

If you wish, you can consult the agenda, the presentations and reference documents here.

Session 2. Challenges for the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Latin America.

This session was moderated by Etiel Moraga, Education Secretary of the Workers' United Centre of Chile (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores/CUT*). This session addressed the challenge faced by the region in implementing Agenda 2030, the need to apply specific methods to achieve the SDGs and the importance of EU support, which should benefit the states and all the various sectors of society.

Session 2.1. Presentation and debate.

The first panel of speakers on the first day was made up of Michel Laloge, Antonio de Prado, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and Santiago Martin Gallo Avalos, from the National Confederation of Municipalities (*Confederación Nacional de Municipios/CNM*) in Brazil. Michel Laloge spoke about the current process of reviewing the European Consensus on Development and Cooperation and with this in mind invited people to take part in a public consultation in order to collect opinions and suggestions from all partners. He also stated how the EU, as part of Agenda 2030, was making an even greater contribution to strengthening cooperation with CSOs and LAs in order to support member states in mobilising their own resources to achieve sustainable development. The EU believes that CSOs and LAs are key to achieving the commitments pledged. The panel members discussed EU support provided to continue the process of dialogue with participating organisations, and the application of policies and programmes necessary for achieving the SDGs. Likewise, the challenges brought about by climate change were addressed, as well as the need to build a framework to promote sustainable development in the private sector, civil society, trade unions, NGOs and the state. Many other topics, such as inequality, violence against women, the need to apply equal rights at work, social security, access to credit, the right to retirement, sexual and reproductive health rights, political participation, the independence of the state from religious involvement andelectoral systems, featured in the debate. To this end, it was argued that more focus should be placed on anti-discrimination policies which combat gaping inequality, as well as improving statistical capacity to support the creation of public policies and resources to ensure the sustainability of the feminist movement. Finally, the need to fully involve all stakeholders in the country, especially local government bodies, in defining, implementing and monitoring development programmes was raised. Participants agreed that it is essential to take advantage of the EU support and insisted that the EU must be a mediator between organised civil society and the state.

Session 2.2. Working groups: pooling and discussion of contributions.

The working groups focused on analysing the challenges and possibilities for the implementation of Agenda 2030 at a regional level. This allowed participants to exchange views, debate, share experiences and make practical contributions. Two open questions were used to initiate discussions: What are the key positive and negative factors which either help or hinder the implementation of Agenda 2030 at a national level? and Have any common trends been identified? For this task, 3 working groups were formed: 1) Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico; 2) the Andean countries and 3) the Southern Cone countries. Regarding the key positive factors which assist the implementation of Agenda 2030, the working groups agreed that it is important to share experiences on implementing the SDGs; recognise and involve multiple relevant stakeholders; make it possible to pool efforts on a national, regional and local level and enable the construction of cooperation and communication networks on the Agenda. Other positive factors raised by the various groups included: facilitating national multi-stakeholder dialogue to plan public policies (to create new ways of carrying out advocacy on a regional level) and finally, the possibility of creating institutional frameworks to implement the Agenda. On the negative factors, the working groups concurred that there is a lack of awareness and communication on the SDGs and the impact of Agenda 2030. Equally, specific problems were identified, such as the lack of systems and skills for monitoring, inspecting, evaluating and training, forums for debate, insufficient communication

networks and insufficient technical and financial resources to implement the Agenda. Other negative factors, more rooted in the specific context, are the growing problems of inequality in the region, threats towards human rights defenders, legal insecurity and the sluggishness of states to take Agenda 2030 on-board which, in turn, leads to a lack of interaction between national, regional and local institutions in implementing the Agenda. Furthermore, participants highlighted the fact that governments are not harmonising Agenda 2030 with the legislative agenda, municipalities are still not addressing the SDGs and the private sector is not discussing the Agenda in terms of social and financial responsibility. With regard to common trends, participants noted the support from the EU, which should encourage further efforts of local governments on the implementation of Agenda 2030. This should involve a multi-stakeholder approach with mechanisms for promoting dialogue and a detailed agenda. They also pointed out that common strategies should be created, with interaction across various sectors, strengthening democracy and improving channels of access, dissemination, communication and interaction with the Agenda. *You may consult presentations of the reference topic here.*

Session 3. EU Roadmaps for Civil Society

This session was moderated by Juan Enrique Nicolás Adán, from the European Commission, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development Roadmaps support team. He explained the objective and the importance of applying roadmaps as part of the EU's engagement with civil society and spoke about the current state of play and the added value of roadmaps. He explained that this approach could be traced back to 2012 and a Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions called "The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with civil society in external relations", advocating a enabling environment for CSOs and their cooperation with partner governments, with a view to improving the ability of public authorities to constructively collaborate with civil society. The goal is to create in each country a framework shared with the EU in order to improve the impact, coherence and visibility of the EU's actions (EU Delegations and Member States) in supporting civil society. Nicolás Adán also explained that the priority levels are focused on 1) fostering an enabling environment for civil society, 2) promoting the participation of civil society in national policies; and, 3) developing the capacities of CSOs. With regard to the guiding principles of the process, he spoke about the coordination within the EU delegation, with member states and other donors, and the involvement of local CSOs. Speaking about the current state of play and the added value of roadmaps in LAC, he pointed out that the process had enabled their application in 26 countries overall, of which 20 countries had finalised and adopted them. In three countries a process of drafting or adoption is underway, one country is on "stand-by" and two countries are not yet planning to apply any roadmaps. The added value of the process arises from the fact that: 1) roadmaps help to improve the quality of dialogue with CSOs; 2) roadmaps improve mutual understanding, and cooperation between member states; and 3) roadmaps help to involve CSOs throughout the entire (political and technical) cooperation cycle with the EU. Equally, in terms of content, the added value of the roadmaps lies in: 1) improving the traditional approach guided by the current cooperation instruments and, 2) the development of content for the EU's engagement with civil society.

The panel aimed to gather experience of roadmaps in LAC and was made up of: Laura Becerra, Executive Director of *Equipo Pueblo A.C.* (ADOC) in Mexico, and Josefina Huamán, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Centres of Investigation, Social Promotion and Development (*Asociación Nacional de Centros de Investigación, Promoción Social y Desarrollo/ANC*), in Peru. The main topics addressed were: the added value of roadmaps; experience taken from the creation of 100 roadmaps and the need to involve a wider range of CSOs in order to promote dialogue with a broader reach. Roadmaps are creating positive foundations in many countries and are leading to opportunities in the region such as a strengthening of south-south cooperation, triangular cooperation models and the participation of civil society in subregional and international processes, as well as putting greater effort into their political dimension.

Session 3.1. Working groups: pooling and discussion of contributions

, Three working groups were formed: 1) countries with unfavourable conditions, moderated by Susana Eróstegui, from the National Union of Institutions for Social Action (Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social*/UNITAS*), Bolivia; 2) high and upper-middle income countries from which EU cooperation is being withdrawn, led by Francis Valverde from the Chilean Association of NGOs (*Asociación Chilena de ONG*); and 3) low and lower-middle income countries, moderated by Irving Larios from the Federation of NGOs (*Federación de Organismos No Gubernamentales/FONG*), Nicaragua. The working groups had the chance to discuss the lessons learned from using roadmaps and then to contribute to formulating proposals for using them on a national level. The open questions, were: how can we optimise the contribution of civil society in the roadmap process from now on? and, in the medium term, what could the positive impact of roadmaps be in the EU engagement with civil society? The recommendations included the need to extend the coverage to more CSOs, for the EU to invest human, technical and financial resources to ensure the continuation of the roadmaps, to create political conditions based on defending the fundamental principles of human rights and establish mechanisms of participation. Equally, it was suggested that the roadmaps should be included in the EU Agenda and that CSOs should be recognised as development stakeholders, that roadmaps should enable the formulation and implementation of public policies aimed at mitigating and eliminating inequality, and that cooperation should not be based solely on economic indicators for countries with unfavourable conditions. With this in mind, it was recommended that inequality should be measured and that, in that regard, GDP should not be the most salient factor for deciding where to channel EU support in the region. Furthermore, permanent dialogue should be maintained between the EU and civil society, providing access to information for the various CSOs and strengthening their capacity to act and make proposals, including the opportunity to participate in EU dialogues and negotiations with its member states. Recommendations were also made to involve the private sector more often so that it becomes part of the solution and the mechanisms which are advocated by the roadmaps. Finally, the need to establish channels allowing for the participation of grassroots and social movements was highlighted, as well as the importance of making this participation visible. *You may consult presentations of the reference topic here*.

Session 3.2. **European Commission Support Programmes for Social Organisations and LAs.**

Antonio Fernández de Velasco from the Civil Society and LAs Unit, DG International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, made a presentation on the current situation of EU funding and cooperation with civil society and LAs. and the framework partnership agreements recently signed. One aspect which was raised was the added value of partnerships; framework agreements are one of the new methods used to and they reflect a change from projects to funded programmes where CSOs and LAs are no longer seen as service providers but as stakeholders in development.. Among the beneficiaries of framework agreements are 23 CSOs (10 globally, 13 on a regional level), including all kinds of organisations, such as cooperatives, feminist groups, faith organisations, disabled groups, political foundations, farming and fair-trade organisations, etc.

Session 4. An enabling environment for implementing Agenda 2030 at regional level

This session was moderated by Susana Eróstegui, Executive Director of UNITAS, Bolivia, who spoke from a regional perspective highlighting the importance of differentiating between the context and the process, and - as development stakeholders - the need to have an active role in public debates. With this in mind, it is crucial to improve the conditions that promote social justice, full enjoyment and fair employment, gender equality, etc. Although the role of CSOs and LAs has grown considerably since the Paris Declaration (2005), when aid or cooperation agreements were limited to states, both LAs and CSOs need to strengthen their capacities in line with the most important issues affecting the region.

The panel of presenters was made up of Liliana Miranda; Carlos Gadsden Carrasco (FLACMA), Mexico; Manuel Mariño, Regional Director of Cooperatives of the Americas; Anders Meyer, Vice-President of Legal

Affairs, National Association of Business Owners of Colombia y Antonio Amâncio Vale, Secretary of International Relations at CUT, Brazil.

The themes addressed focused on creating an enabling environment for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and a case study on Peru was then presented,. In terms of outcomes, LAs highlighted the low level of awareness of the SDGs and the need to take steps to ensure that local governments know how to take action. Trade unions currently have political influence and visibility, but different sectors need to be more involved and should interact fully in all the spaces of dialogue available. The cooperative sector pointed out that there is no single economic model and that a delineation of the role of all stakeholders is required. The work of cooperatives should be supported and promoted in order to strengthen and improve their business viability and ability to create jobs and increase revenue. Another aspect highlighted was the progress made in legislation regarding women in the cooperative movement at all levels and, in particular, in management and leadership positions. From the experience of ANDI/Colombia, the private business sector has taken the SDGs into account and considered how to integrate them into its operations. The CUT argued that to create conditions for building a favourable environment for implementing Agenda 2030 it is essential to take concrete action, since this cannot be done without dialogue, democracy and a proper awareness of the rights of women and the rights to health, culture, etc. To this end, it is important to promote conditions for working together and strengthen the relationship between the state and society.

Session 4.1. Working groups: assessment of the favourable conditions for the implementation of Agenda 2030 at a regional level and suggestions for improvements

Working groups were formed in order to discuss what constituted favourable conditions for the implementation of Agenda 2030. The working groups were divided into two sub-groups: LAs on one side and CSOs on the other. The groups were asked the question: What is needed (on a national level) to create favourable conditions for the implementation of Agenda 2030? They were also requested to come up with some practical and realistic proposals for promoting such conditions. The groups replied that it is important to reinforce the democratic process; improve the capacities of CSOs for the implementation, continuation and monitoring of SDGs and the entirety of Agenda 2030; improve social dialogue to strengthen democracy; ensure observance of human rights, especially political rights; extend and apply participation mechanisms for CSOs; respect the autonomy of municipalities; create institutionalised networks and spaces for dialogue between local and central governments. The proposals made by the groups included: institutionalising or improving the spaces for civil society and creating a system of interactive participation; breaking down indicators by gender; promoting the SDGs in the EU roadmaps so that they can be instruments for implementing them with the participation of civil society; creating and spreading civil society networks based on the SDGs in order to interact with other stakeholders in the institutionalisation of the process; promoting decentralisation so that LAs can implement Agenda 2030; ensuring political dialogue, access to information, and processes of transparency and accountability; setting out how the implementation of Agenda 2030 will be funded and discussing fiscal policies.

Session 4.2. The renewal of regional representation of LAC and the Task Team of the Political Forum on Development (information session)

The renewal of the PFD and Task Team membership which will take place over the next two months was presented. The work of the Task Team and the importance of electing representatives, both from LAs and CSOs was explained. Over the coming months, the European Commission will contact each of the members of the PFD with a brief questionnaire asking them to confirm whether or not they would like to renew their participation.

Session 5. Multi-stakeholder approaches for the implementation of Agenda 2030

This panel discussion was made up of presentations from various sectors on multi-stakeholder approaches for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and also offered a draft PFD document on the issue. The session was moderated by Lucy Garrido, from the Mercosur Feminist Organisation, Uruguay, and the panel was made up of: Miguel Santibáñez, Secretary-Coordinator of the Organisation of National Associations and Regional Networks of NGOs in Latin America, Chile; Giulia Massobrio, Head of the Cooperation Department at the Confederation of Unions of the Workers of the Americas ; Rafael Hidalgo, Mayor of Azua and President of FEDOMU and FLACMA, Dominican Republic and Jorge Balbis. Contributions from this panel included recommendations that these spaces of dialogue should not just be regional, but should be more overarching in nature since Agenda 2030 takes a global approach. The experience of the Dominican Republic with the Pascal Programme, funded by the EU, was given as an example of support for civil society and LAs. As a result, the EU has been requested that the experience of this programme be replicated by governments within the framework of activities of FLACMA. Other aspects addressed were: determining what examples exist for the application of Agenda 2030 in order to reproduce the radical change the agenda demands with a more transparent state able to foster participation. They highlighted the fact that Agenda 2030 should not be seen as a simple reference document, but that the pledges in it should be delivered on and that it should be possible to incorporate a multi-sector approach in its planning and implementation. Jorge Balbis presented the PFD document on multi-stakeholder approaches and spoke of the intention to reflect on the regional issues from a global perspective. The objective, by consolidating the joint work of different member organisations of the PFD, is to influence the various sectors of the EU. The document comes from the viewpoint of CSOs and LAs, and that the content of the document is open for contributions. This document will be discussed again at the meeting of the Task Team in October 2016 and the deadline for receiving contributions is 15 September.

Session 5.1. Outcomes of the debate

1) it is important to include the topic of women's rights and/or gender equality in the fulfilment of the 17 SDGs and it is necessary to define what is meant by civil society; 2) the document needs to be revised since it lacks practical proposals, especially in terms of environmental aspects and political systems, etc.; 3) the possibility of creating links between the monitoring system and experience on a local level should be determined in order to expand the participation and reach of different social organisations; 4) there should be a way of measuring social participation as there are currently no indicators for participation, 5) multi-sector approaches do not just mean a simple addition of sectors - they should be better integrated within existing approaches to the SDGsIt is important not to lose sight of the development goals themselves.

Session 6. Latin America and the global approach to implementing Agenda 2030

The central theme of this session was the situation of Latin America in relation to two specific issues: "Habitat III" and the "Second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation". This session was moderated by Sergio Arredondo, General Secretary of the National Conference of Municipalities of Mexico. The panellists were: Luis Estrada, of the Institute for Economic and Social Development in Central America, Guatemala; Iván Borcoski, Executive Secretary of the Chilean Association of Municipalities; Mónica Novillo, *Coordinadora de la Mujer*, Bolivia and Ana Tallada, *Latindad*, a partnership of CSOs for effective development, Peru. The points raised included the following: 1) Habitat III highlights the need to discuss housing; 2) we should be focusing much more on the root causes as well as the implications of the growing levels of inequality; 3) we should take advantage of both meetings to have an impact and make practical proposals. Other topics were also raised, including the need for greater coherence between development and commercial policies with northern countries, an analysis of the effect of extraction industries and the behaviour of multinationals and governments and finally, a promotion of a more in-depth discussion on land which is not restricted to its value as a commodity but rather explores it from a legal viewpoint.

Session 7. Close

The Forum was drawn to a close following a session discussing the main conclusions and recommendations from the meeting (attached document). The session was closed with the presence of the Ambassador of Spain in Guatemala, Alfonso Manuel Portabales Vásquez, accompanied by Michel Laloge, from the European Commission; Fernando Mirando Torres, Mayor of Tepeji del Río and representative of FENAMM, Mexico; Molvina Zeballo Manzur, President of ALOP, Peru; and Ignacio Ayala, Director of the Training Centre at Cooperación Española in La Antigua, Guatemala. The panellists thanked all the sectors and stakeholders which participated in the PFD multi-stakeholder meeting in Antigua (Guatemala), the support provided by *Cooperación Española* and its training centre, and the EU for offering this space for development in the Latin American region.

You can also consult the agenda, the presentations and reference documents here.