

NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Numbers on the table, but where is the money coming from?

Faith Based Development agencies say EU position on financial support fails to relieve climate change burden on developing countries

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Brussels- EU Heads of State came together in Brussels today to try to pick up the pieces after talks collapsed amongst Finance Ministers EU last week on how to assist developing countries tackle climate change.

EU Heads of State stepped ahead of many other rich countries by recognising potential levels of financing needed to help developing countries adapt to climate change and to develop more sustainably. It is also positive that the European Council acknowledges that new innovative climate finance mechanisms on international level can play a role to provide predictable funding. APRODEV, Caritas and CIDSE, three large faith-based development networks, point out, however, that the devil is in the detail, and the reality is that the EU is still evading its responsibilities and placing an undue burden on developing countries.

EU Heads of State agreed that € 22-50 billion of public financing will be needed every year. This is far below the more than the €110 billion of public financing estimated by civil society. Furthermore, developing countries are expected to pay for part of this € 22-50 billion, and there is no concrete commitment on how much the EU would contribute to this figure. The European Council also made no guarantees that money will be new and additional to already made aid commitments. This means that there is a big risk of diverting aid money promised to sectors such as health and education to make up developed countries' contribution.

Secretary General of CIDSE, Bernd Nilles said: “This would be unethical and unjust. The poor communities we work with have done the least to cause climate change but they are the ones shouldering the burden of the impacts. We will not reach an effective agreement on climate change if the EU and other developed countries do not acknowledge their moral and historical responsibilities”.

General Secretary of APRODEV, Rob van Drimmelen, said: “Repackaging aid money as climate finance is not only dishonest – it risks undermining both climate and development goals. Furthermore, the upfront finance package mentioned is not a binding commitment, Member States are not obliged to contribute, this is very weak.”

Secretary General of Caritas Europa, Marius Wanders said: “While awareness of European citizens of climate change has increased very rapidly, EU leaders have been acting without a sense of urgency. The economic downturn cannot be an excuse for evading their responsibilities towards future generations, and towards the poor in developing countries”.

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