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Adjournment debate, Westminster Hall Tuesday 23 October:

Post-2015 development agenda

Post 2015 – meeting the challenges

In 2015 the international community is charged with establishing the framework for global development to follow the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)¹. The UN General Secretary has appointed David Cameron, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia co-chairs² of his High Level Panel (HLP) which will report in May 2013 on the new development agenda.

The Rio Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012 agreed to set up a process to establish sustainable development goals (SDGs). An Open Working Group (OWG) drawn from 30 countries is to be announced in the near future.

It is important that these two processes lead to a coherent post-2015 development framework which addresses the global challenges. At the same time in 2015, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change is charged with agreeing the new global climate agreement. We need a global framework which is adaptable to different national and local situations but which promotes sustainable and equitable development and a low carbon future for all.

The role for WWF

WWF is in a coalition of development and environment groups, *Beyond 2015* seeking to influence the new development agenda. WWF is asking for recognition of the importance of the environment in addressing poverty reduction and sustainable development, both in the UK and globally. Frequently it is the poorest communities who rely most on their natural resources such as timber, fish and clean freshwater. If these resources are damaged or destroyed, long term health, wellbeing, and livelihoods will be put at risk. So WWF is working to ensure environmental protection, management and enhancement underpin the new agenda alongside upholding human rights and promoting equity.

Principles which should be embedded in the agenda, no matter what challenges are being addressed:

- it should be universal, applicable to all countries not just developing nations;
- it should be holistic – embracing social, environmental and economic dimensions;
- it should be climate change proof;
- it should promote equity and safeguard human rights.

¹ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

² <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/beyond2015.shtml>



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The Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB, OM
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Processes:

- the international post-2015 processes must not divert from effort to achieve the MDGs;
- the High Level Panel and the Open Working Group on SDGs need to work together;
- engaging all nations in the process so that the framework is relevant across the globe;
- ensure transparency and effective stakeholder involvement, including civil society and businesses, and responding to needs, demands and proposals from stakeholders.

What is needed now from the UK?

1. The UK Government has committed to embedding sustainable development across policy by
 - Including the value of natural capital in the UK accounts, a commitment in the Natural Environment White Paper 2011³;
 - Developing a series of sustainable development indicators ⁴;
 We need to ensure these influence decision making and help build a green economy.
2. There is a global crisis in natural resources; therefore the UK and other developed nations need to address how their own consumption and production patterns affect the global environment. Already business is taking this on board, for example Unilever states that ‘future success depends upon being able to decouple our growth from our environmental footprint, while at the same time increasing our positive social impacts.’⁵
3. Financial support is required for a transition to a low carbon ‘green’ economy both within the UK and overseas. The commitment to spend 0.7% of GNI on international development is welcome but substantial funds are needed to help poorer nations; by for example redirecting subsidies from underpinning fossil fuel exploration and use, and by taxing fuels for aviation and shipping. In the UK the incentives and regulation for green energy, technology and industry need to be clear and fixed.
4. The UK can play a valuable role in shaping the future global development pathway both directly and through the European Union. The Prime Minister as co-chair of the HLP has a key influencing role. Together with DFID, Defra and the FCO, he needs to work for a post 2015 global framework which puts people and the planet onto a sustainable path. The science shows that urgent action is needed to address the interlinked economic, social and environmental crises; the UK can show leadership by taking effective action.
5. Businesses have come together to ask for regulation on Corporate Sustainability Reporting (CSR), arguing that sustainability criteria are as central to investment decisions as economic criteria⁶. Although the Government has confirmed that mandatory Greenhouse gas reporting will be required from 2013, it has yet to respond to the Rio statement on CSR (para 47)⁷. One opportunity for the Government to act on CSR would be through the current BIS review *The Future of Narrative Reporting*⁸.

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³ <http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf>

⁴ http://sd.defra.gov.uk/new-sd-indicators/?utm_source=email&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=A78,V5ZD,3REKMY,2KHL8,1

⁵ <http://www.unilever.com/sustainable-living/ourapproach/oursustainabilitystrategy/>

⁶ <http://www.aviva.com/data/media-uploads/news/File/Towards%20a%20convention%20on%20corporate%20sustainability%20reporting%20at%20Rio+20.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.theiirc.org/2012/07/03/paragraph-47-of-the-outcome-document/>

⁸ <http://bis.gov.uk/Consultations/the-future-of-narrative-reporting-a-consultation>