

Development



Nirj Deva MEP
Development Spokesman

Since the beginning of the new mandate in 2009, Nirj Deva has continued in his role as both Conservative Spokesman and ECR Coordinator on the Development Committee. He has been joined by Emma McClarkin who is an active substitute member of the committee. Together they have worked to ensure that we fulfil our 2009 European manifesto commitments with regards to EU development policy.

The Conservative development team see poverty reduction through wealth creation as the main objective of development policy. At the same time we also acknowledge the importance of cultivating the productive capacity of developing countries along with economic growth driven by a healthy and

educated workforce. Underlying these premises is the commitment of Conservative MEPs to continue to work towards ensuring that all EU aid is delivered in an effective, efficient and transparent manner and is focused on outcomes rather than on inputs alone.

We believe that all development policies should be guided by innovation, creativity and an enterprising spirit that emphasises personal responsibility and initiative. Economic growth is the most important means of raising incomes, creating wealth and reducing poverty in the developing world. Conservatives in the European Parliament believe that these insights should guide all development policies so as to create the most favourable conditions for sustainable social and environmental development.

The European Union is the world's largest trading bloc. As such, its trade policies have a significant impact on global development, as does its handling of the substantial quantities of aid it dispenses. Trade will do more to eliminate poverty than anything else. Conservative MEPs will ensure that promoting world trade and securing a new, pro-development WTO agreement will remain a high priority on the EU's agenda.

However, governments do not conduct trade, companies and businesses do. So as well as pressing for a trade deal and granting access to EU markets, the EU must take further steps to encourage developing countries to engage in

trade by helping them create the conditions in which business and enterprise can flourish – for example, it is imperative that we focus on helping developing countries create formal independent judiciaries so that property rights can be thoroughly enforced. Nirj Deva is leading the way on this issue in the European Parliament and is currently the standing Rapporteur to a Report entitled “The role of property rights and wealth creation in eradicating poverty and fostering sustainable development”.

Conservatives in the European Parliament are working to ensure that the free international exchange of commodities, labour and capital – which have made Europe so prosperous – work in the economic and social development interests of developing countries. However, the challenges go much deeper and include ineffective institutions, weak macroeconomic policy-making systems, poor infrastructure, complex regulations and a lack of skills. We believe that it is necessary to combine the opportunities offered by the world markets with domestic investment and institution building strategies which can stimulate domestic entrepreneurs that will help



Nirj at an ICC meeting

overcome these challenges. Conservative MEPs believe in doing so, the conditions for open markets – peace, the rule of law, non corrupt administration, stable fiscal and monetary policies, as well as infrastructure, health and education services – should be supported by the policies and actions of EU development aid so that aid will eventually enable these countries to sustain themselves.

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals

We are continually working to make policy decisions that will help us reach the eight Millennium Development Goals, the international targets agreed by the United Nations to halve world poverty by 2015. Whilst we acknowledge that some progress has been made over the past decade, we believe that a great deal remains to be done. Around 1.5 million people still live in extreme poverty and one sixth of the world's population is undernourished. In 2010, Member States adopted an ambitious position in support of the MDGs, including the reaffirmation of the collective target of devoting 0.7% of GNI to ODA by 2015 – an objective that all Conservative MEPs are fully committed to.



Nirj with Bill Gates during an exchange of views on the Financing of Aid

Policy Coherence and Aid Effectiveness

Today we live in an interdependent global economy and aid alone cannot end poverty and create growth. We are committed to a global partnership based on mutual accountability between the developed and developing worlds. Conservative MEPs believe in the importance of developing better coordination, transparency and a greater focus on results. That also means improving policy coherence – a donor's aid to boost a developing country's ability to engage in trade does not make sense if the donor then blocks imports from that country through trade barriers or trade-distorting subsidies.



Nirj with David Cameron

Emma McClarkin has recently been involved with the drafting of a report on increasing the impact of EU development aid. The report recognised that although development aid is essential, it is not a panacea and that it must tackle the roots of poverty rather than the symptoms, and primarily must act as a catalyst for the future growth of developing countries. It launched a debate on how the EU can best support developing countries in leveraging new opportunities to reduce poverty through aid effectiveness, capacity building, economic growth, promoting the private sector, combating food insecurity and climate change.

Future Commitments

Conservative MEPs are actively involved in the debate surrounding the future of EU development aid and in particular on the future of the European Development Fund (EDF). We will continue to oppose any attempts to increase the EDF or to budgetise the EDF and we believe that any future changes should be entirely results led. We believe that we can achieve greater support for our development work if we can firstly demonstrate the effectiveness of the EDF rather than automatically increasing the EDF budget.

We also believe that the upcoming Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan should not only seek to build on the existing agreements, but should seek better coordination, more efficiency and better results.

We will continue to promote the development of wealth creation through the promotion of entrepreneurship, the establishment of property rights and the development of independent judiciaries. ●●