



Brussels, 20 July 2009

Dear,

On behalf of the United Nations in Brussels, I congratulate you on your election to the European Parliament and to the Committee on Culture and Education. I wish you every success in your important endeavours.

The United Nations team in Brussels spans a wide range of humanitarian and development mandates. Our strong presence here reflects the vital importance of the European Union to the United Nations across its three pillars – peace and security, human rights, and humanitarian and development work - and the vibrancy of the partnership between our institutions. We are united around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to halve world poverty by 2015 and share a deep commitment to human rights for all.

In the spirit of the close partnership that exists, we take this early opportunity to ask for your support on issues where European leadership is vital.

Today's economic crisis no doubt affects your constituents deeply. Developing countries, including those in Europe's neighbourhood, are hit by the same factors but with significantly less capacity and resources to respond. In 2009 alone, an estimated 90 million more people will fall into poverty and achievement of the MDGs is clearly at stake. In our interconnected world, problems in one country easily cross borders and regions. For Europe, investing in the recovery of poorer countries is a moral imperative that is also in its own interest.

The EU has demonstrated its global leadership in many important spheres. The commitment through its Treaties to take an integrated approach to external relations, security, economic and development policy – the so-called Policy Coherence for Development - is particularly progressive. EU member states led the world in establishing firm timetables to meet the long-established UN target of 0.7% of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA), an important step though more needs to be done. Europe has made impressive strides in improving its own aid delivery with the European Consensus on Development, Humanitarian Consensus and Code of Conduct on a Division of Labour.

Europe's actions have direct implications for the world. The United Nations calls upon your support on the following issues

Shape EU policies in ways that reduce world poverty:

- 1. Put global sustainable human development at the centre of Europe's crisis response, identifying opportunities in Europe's own recovery plans to help the developing world;*
- 2. Secure an international trade regime that promotes growth for all, completing a development-oriented Doha trade round, tackling subsidies and supporting aid for trade;*

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3. *Sustain Europe's global leadership on the environment, seizing the crisis as an opportunity to pioneer green economic approaches and promote decent work as a route out of poverty;*
4. *Keep gender concerns, including the need to combat violence against women and girls, at the fore of European policy;*

Secure adequate funding for the MDGs and climate change:

5. *Meet existing European ODA commitments and secure predictable funding for health, social protection, education and food security as well as adequate funding for humanitarian action; invest in women and children so the effects of today's crisis are not carried by future generations;*
6. *Additionally, secure significant resources for recovery programmes of third countries affected by the crisis, in the form of grants;*
7. *Pioneer new financing mechanisms to address the challenges of climate change, especially the adaptation needs of least developed countries;*

Advocate international best practice:

8. *In embarking on policy initiatives, make international UN standards a starting point, thereby lending EU policies broad legitimacy and stimulating globally-accepted solutions;*
9. *Strengthen the effectiveness of Europe's external action by advocating much-needed bridges between humanitarian relief and development, and between security and development interventions;*
10. *Sustain Europe's support to building national capacities of countries to lead their own development processes, including strengthening democratic institutions and civil society.*

At this time of global challenges, the United Nations needs Europe's support more than ever. The UN team in Brussels constitutes a substantial pool of expertise that we hope you will feel free to draw upon, as a number of your predecessors did. I also take this early opportunity to inform you of a planned reception on the evening of Monday, 28th September to which you will be most cordially invited.

The UN team looks forward to supporting you in your vital parliamentary duties.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Antonio Vigilante'.

Antonio Vigilante
UN Director