

ITUC OnLine

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Civil Society in Accra calls for urgent action on aid

Brussels, 2 September 2008 (ITUC OnLine): As a major international conference on the effectiveness of aid starts today in Accra, civil society has warned of the urgent need for action. Over 600 representatives from 325 civil society organisations (CSOs) and 88 countries have met in a parallel forum to debate what actions must be taken to reform aid and to finalise their recommendations to the Third High level Forum on Aid effectiveness. In a statement released yesterday, (http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/Final_CSO_Statement_Accra010908.pdf) civil society called on officials present in Accra to respond with urgency. Clear time-bound commitments to deliver real results for people on the ground, geared towards the eradication of poverty, inequality and social exclusion and the realisation of decent work, are essential according to the civil society organisations.

Among other things, the Accra Agenda for Action that governments will adopt must at a minimum commit to broadening the definition of ownership so that citizens, civil society organisations and elected officials are central to the aid process at all levels; setting time-bound and monitorable targets to ensure that 80% of aid is committed for at least 3-5 years by 2010; Reduce the burden of conditionality by 2010 so that aid agreements are based on mutually agreed objectives; Set a more ambitious target to make all technical assistance demand-led by 2010; Commit to end tied aid by 2010; Commit donors and recipients to making the aid system more accountable by developing and implementing new standards for transparency by 2009 which ensure that accurate, timely, accessible and comparable information about aid is pro-actively communicated to the public; Commit to improving the monitoring of aid effectiveness by adapting existing "Paris indicators" adopted in 2005 and by integrating new indicators from the Accra Agenda for Action by 2009; Support independent and citizen-led monitoring and evaluation systems; and Agree to an inclusive evaluation process to assess the impact of the 2005 "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness" on poverty reduction, gender equality, human rights and environmental sustainability.

The ITUC, is working with other civil society organisations to ensure that democracy, the creation of decent jobs, gender equality and a range of other key concerns are fully integrated into future aid strategies.

"Decent work must be at the heart of the development paradigm" said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder, adding that "the creation of decent work urgently needs to become an explicit objective of aid and development policies".

For more information, see previous online : <http://www.ituc-csi.org/spip.php?article2365> and <http://www.betteraid.org/> and <http://www.accrahf.net/>

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