

LUNDI 11 JANVIER 2010

BRUXELLES

COMMISSION DU DEVELOPPEMENT

AUDITION DE M. ANDRIS PIEBALGS

COMMISSAIRE DESIGNE

DEVELOPPEMENT

1-002

PRÉSIDENCE DE MME EVA JOLY

(La réunion est ouverte à 16h40)

1-003

La Présidente. – Bon après-midi chers collègues, bon après-midi Monsieur Piebalgs. Soyez le bienvenu au Parlement européen. Je vous présente à tous mes meilleurs vœux pour une excellente année 2010.

Nous connaissons tous le but de cette réunion, qui est l'audition de M. Piebalgs en vue d'évaluer ses aptitudes pour être le membre de la Commission responsable de la coopération au développement, portefeuille qui lui a été attribué par le président Barroso.

Je vous rappelle que, conformément aux lignes directrices pour l'approbation de la Commission, compte tenu de l'annexe XVII du règlement, le Parlement évalue les commissaires désignés sur la base de leur compétence générale, de leur engagement européen et de leur indépendance personnelle. Le Parlement évalue aussi la connaissance de leur portefeuille potentiel et leurs capacités de communication.

Je vous rappelle également que, préalablement à l'audition, le commissaire désigné a répondu par écrit à un questionnaire préparatoire. Les réponses écrites ont été distribuées et se trouvent dans votre dossier.

Avant d'entamer nos travaux, je vous rappelle enfin brièvement le déroulement de cette audition.

Nous commençons par une brève déclaration des groupes politiques sur leurs priorités dans le domaine de la coopération au développement. Ensuite, le commissaire désigné est invité à faire une déclaration introductive, qui ne devra pas excéder dix minutes. Cette introduction sera suivie approximativement par 2 h 45 de questions, qui seront ouvertes par un tour de table d'un représentant de chaque groupe politique.

Ce débat se déroulera selon le principe dit "du ping-pong" par créneaux de 3,5 minutes maximum: quarante-cinq secondes pour chaque question, une minute quarante-cinq secondes pour la réponse du commissaire,

trente secondes pour une question de suivi, le cas échéant, et trente secondes pour la réponse finale.

Je vous rappelle que le temps de parole des députés est strictement limité à quarante-cinq secondes. Plus les questions seront brèves, plus il restera de temps pour la réponse du commissaire désigné et pour d'éventuelles questions de suivi.

Je tiens à préciser que les questions de suivi doivent être effectivement liées à la réponse du commissaire désigné et qu'elles ne peuvent pas soulever d'autre sujet.

En tant que présidente de la commission et présidente de la séance, je me réserve le droit de ne pas admettre les questions de suivi qui ne respecteraient pas ces critères.

Nous aurons aussi deux brefs créneaux pour tenir un débat selon le système "catch-the-eye" sur des sujets qui ont été identifiés par les coordinateurs et qui constituent des priorités pour notre commission. Les députés qui désirent intervenir dans ce débat auront entre quinze et vingt secondes pour poser leurs questions, et j'invite le commissaire à être également très bref dans sa réponse.

Je vous informe que, pour les attributions du temps de parole, priorité sera donnée aux membres effectifs et aux membres suppléants de la commission du développement.

Nous avons également prévu quelques créneaux pendant lesquels j'inviterai le commissaire à élaborer ou à préciser sa réponse aux questions des députés qui me seront signalées par les représentants des groupes politiques et auxquelles il n'aurait pas répondu de façon satisfaisante ou complète.

Je vous informe que nous avons invité la commission des affaires étrangères, la commission du commerce international, la délégation à l'Assemblée parlementaire paritaire ACP-UE et la délégation pour les relations avec le parlement panafricain à participer à cette audition.

À la fin de l'audition, j'inviterai le commissaire désigné Piebalgs à faire une brève déclaration finale, s'il le souhaite.

Le débat sera interprété dans toutes les langues. Tous les orateurs peuvent donc utiliser leur propre langue. Par contre, leurs interventions devant faire l'objet d'une interprétation, les orateurs sont priés de ne pas parler trop vite.

Je vous rappelle que le débat sera retransmis en direct par webstreaming sur le site Internet du Parlement et que l'enregistrement vidéo de l'audition restera disponible sur le même site.

En outre, les échanges tenus seront intégralement repris par écrit dans un compte rendu in extenso disponible dans les plus brefs délais.

Ceci étant dit, nous commençons notre audition par la déclaration des groupes politiques.

Je donne la parole, pour une minute trente, à M. Gay Mitchell.

1-004

Gay Mitchell (PPE). – I only have a short period so let me get straight to the point. Welcome, good afternoon, Mr Piebalgs. First of all, I was taken aback that there was no mention in your response to the DCI, which set targets for educational spending and for health spending and for scrutiny. I am worried that was not in your reply. Could you tell us perhaps, when you are responding, why that is?

Secondly, can I say to you that I believe it is really important that the European Union relates to the citizen. Where has the citizen been? Citizens have been at all of the rock concerts and they were at Gleneagles; the leadership given by people in the private sector is very welcome – show people and everybody else. But we need to take leadership of this issue. We all know the figures: 11 million children dying every year. I urge you: please take leadership of this issue. The EU is the biggest donor in the world.

Thirdly, I believe that it is important – and the EPP believes passionately in an ethical development policy stemming from the dignity of the human being – that we put the dignity of the human being at the centre of this.

Two last points that I would ask you to consider: our policy, which has a lot of support here, on land ownership and on encouraging the enterprising spirit. Both of these are ways to free people from poverty: a hand up rather than a hand down.

1-005

Thijs Berman (S&D). – Voor de S&D-Fractie is het ontwikkelingsbeleid van oudsher essentieel. Het gaat om de verantwoordelijkheid die wij nemen als welvarende EU voor de kansen van mensen die de pech hebben in een arm land te wonen. De EU moet voorop lopen in de strijd voor eerlijke handel, de financiering van onderwijs en gezondheidszorg, rechten en kansen van vrouwen en mannen, van minderheden, van mensen met een beperking in arme landen. Armoedebestrijding is meer dan het tegengaan van kindersterfte of het verzekeren

van sociale rechten, het is ook de weg naar duurzame economische voorspoed voor hen en voor ons.

Van de Eurocommissaris voor Ontwikkeling verwacht de S&D-Fractie daarom dat hij zich met alle energie inzet voor blijvende financiering van de hulp, 0,7% van het BBP, voor nieuwe micro-financieringsmethoden, voor efficiëntere hulp en voor een betere coördinatie en rolverdeling.

We willen een EU waarin coherentie van beleid nu eindelijk eens meer wordt dan een vrome obligate wens, vervat in Euro-jargon. Ik bedoel: er mag geen handelsakkoord met Colombia gesloten worden zolang daar nog vakbondsleiders vermoord worden, zo'n akkoord nu zou een beloning voor slecht gedrag zijn. Daarover moet u straks in de clinch met uw collega voor Handel. De schriftelijke antwoorden van u als kandidaat bieden goede startpunten over plattelandontwikkeling, over de financiering van de hulp - u heeft ook het voordeel van uw ruime ervaring - maar uw antwoorden zelden niets over mensenrechten, niets over sociale rechten, over rechten van minderheden. Dat verbaast me, ik wil graag weten waarom u zich daar niet ...

(De spreker wordt afgebroken)

1-006

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Lorsque M. Piebalgs sera investi dans ses nouvelles fonctions, il assumera l'une des tâches les plus nobles qui soit.

Il aura en effet l'occasion de lutter pour les droits, pour les droits de la personne, pour la sécurité, pour l'émancipation de la femme. Il incarnera donc une politique qui vise des finalités. Ce faisant, il n'aura pas besoin de faire des courbettes devant les autres commissaires. Je veux dire par là que nous attendons de vous que vous soyez un commissaire qui ne soit pas à la traîne des autres commissaires, mais qui donne le la dans les politiques de la pauvreté. Parce que la lutte contre la pauvreté, il ne faut pas la soumettre à d'autres politiques; elle a sa propre finalité.

Vous aurez aussi une tâche difficile à assumer. Elle sera difficile parce que vous exercerez votre fonction avec de multiples crises pour toile de fond – crise économique, crise bancaire, crise dans les rapports entre nations, crise climatique –, et toutes les crises sont reliées et corrélées.

Vous aurez besoin de beaucoup d'autorité. Vous aurez besoin de partenaires, vous aurez besoin des ONG, vous aurez besoin de l'opinion publique. Finalement, je dirais que votre tâche consiste aussi à gérer les risques. Je vous propose donc de nous dire de quelle façon vous entendez créer un partenariat solide avec les commissions qui, ici, au Parlement européen, pourront vous aider dans votre tâche.

1-007

Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE). – You arrive at a time of a multidimensional crisis: financial, food, energy and climate crises have badly shaken the world and disproportionately affected developing countries. The

time has come for serious and genuine policy change in order to foster sustainable development in the South.

For the Greens the key issues for your term are: trade to serve development goals, to fight against tax havens and illicit financial flows, a stop to land grabbing and to put agriculture as a priority sector.

And your tasks are not simply to keep an eye on official development aid. Your task is to make Article 208 of the Lisbon Treaty come true, the article that states that European policies should not harm the overall goal of development, namely poverty eradication.

Do you see yourself as the coordinator among your colleagues of trade and external relations, neighbourhood policies, energy, environmental and humanitarian aid? You will represent the whole of the Commission in the meeting with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. How are you going to ensure with regard to these ministers, your colleague Ashton and your colleague De Gucht that development comes first? Can you withstand the pressure of those that put European benefits first?

1-008

Charles Tannock (ECR). – For the ECR Group, as a new group in Parliament, our priority first and foremost is to support policies that reduce poverty whilst obtaining the maximum value for EU taxpayers' money. This should be guided by the principle that we must recognise the human dignity of every single person in the developing world.

Following this, our group will call for aid to be focused more on the countries where it will make the biggest difference. We want to see people in poor countries empowered by giving them more control over how their aid is spent, instead of sometimes funding their corrupt governments. We want an ambitious pro-development global trade deal, because trade and free trade in particular will do more to eliminate poverty than anything else, and finally the ECR believe in giving much greater importance to preventing conflict and resolving conflict because a nation mired in conflict remains vulnerable until the fighting stops, no matter how much aid or trade it receives.

The global downturn has been a catastrophic blow to the world's poorest families, and makes the need for well-delivered aid and focused aid even more urgent. The ECR wants to make it absolutely clear that, as EU taxpayers feel the pinch, maintaining public support for our aid programme will require a much greater focus on performance, results and outcomes, including improvements in transparency, audit and accountability as well as, of course, in human rights and democracy for recipient countries.

Our bargain with EU taxpayers should be this: in return for their contribution of hard-earned money, it must be our duty to spend it effectively and wisely.

1-009

Gabriele Zimmer (GUE/NGL). – Herr Piebalgs, als europäische Linksfraktion erwarten wir von Ihnen, dass Sie als Kommissar konkrete Anstrengungen unternehmen und auch Maßnahmenpakete vorlegen, um die Umsetzung der Millenniums-Entwicklungsziele bis 2015 durchzusetzen.

Sie waren in Ihren Antworten dazu leider nur sehr vage und haben nur darauf verwiesen, dass Ihre Amtszeit als Kommissar dann mit der UN-Konferenz übereinstimmt. Wir sehen die EU hier in einer globalen Vorreiterrolle, und wir verlangen ebenfalls, dass gerade nach Kopenhagen die Bekämpfung des Klimawandels und der Umweltkrise mit dem globalen Kampf gegen Armut und soziale Ausgrenzung verbunden wird. Das ist für uns ein Punkt.

Dann gehen wir als Fraktion davon aus, dass die europäische Entwicklungspolitik nach wie vor einen hohen eigenständigen Wert innerhalb der EU-Politiken behalten soll, und wir erwarten auch von Ihnen, dass Sie sich hier entsprechend durchsetzen. Wir erwarten im Übrigen auch, dass Sie allen Versuchen von Mitgliedstaaten trotzen, die die Entwicklungspolitik den wirtschaftspolitischen Interessen der einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten unterordnen wollen.

Wir erwarten ebenso, dass Sie als Kommissar während der Verhandlungen zu Cotonou und auch zum EIB-Mandat insbesondere die Frage der Förderung von öffentlichen Investitionen in öffentlichen Bereichen und öffentlichen Strukturen mit unterstützen.

1-010

Nicole Sinclaire (EFD). – I have been looking through your CV and have noticed that you have a career where you have worked for the Communist Party of Russia and subsequently the European Union. So you obviously work very well working with undemocratic institutions.

I also noticed that you are a supporter of nuclear energy. Would you also confirm that you support a Member State's ability to provide energy for its own needs in respect of nuclear energy? I completely concur with my colleague, Mr Tannock, with respect to EU aid and its fair distribution, and also to Member States – the ability to use aid in non-Member States as well.

I am also a bit concerned about the advice you may be receiving in your role concerning Mr Linkor. Could you explain his subsequent role in the past, because I believe there have been some problems there? Maybe you would like to elaborate on those matters.

1-011

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Madame la Présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, Mesdames et Messieurs, c'est un grand honneur pour moi d'être ici aujourd'hui afin de vous présenter mes objectifs et intentions en tant que commissaire désigné au développement.

Je suis fier et enthousiaste à l'idée de relever la tâche que le président m'a confiée. Je réalise à quel point les défis

auxquels nous sommes confrontés sont plus nombreux et plus importants que jamais.

Les dernières crises mondiales ont montré une fois de plus à quel point nous vivons dans un monde globalisé et interdépendant. Ceux qui pensent que nous pourrions – ou que nous devrions – nous isoler des effets de la pauvreté qui frappe d'autres parties du monde font fausse route.

Aider les pays en développement à lutter contre la pauvreté et à tirer profit des opportunités offertes par la mondialisation relève de notre responsabilité. Mais c'est aussi dans notre intérêt. Et les politiques de développement constituent précisément le meilleur moyen dont nous disposons pour y parvenir.

¹⁻⁰¹²

The next five years will be a pivotal period for EU development policy. The creation of the post of High Representative and the External Action Service represents a major opportunity, increasing the importance of the EU's delegations across the world and providing a real prospect of reducing the fragmentation with which we implement our aid. At the same time, however, we must be clear on the aim of our development policy, which is poverty eradication in the world's disadvantaged countries and regions. We have to take advantage of the synergies and efficiencies that can result from the new arrangements, without, however, allowing development policy to be seen in a new way as simply a tool to achieve other political goals for the European Union.

This is important not just for the EU but equally for our partners in developing countries. It is essential to maintain our credibility with them. This too was made clear by President Barroso in his nomination letter to me, where he stated his determination 'to maintain the EU's role as a champion of the developing world'.

The next five years will also be pivotal because we need to face the challenge of maintaining momentum worldwide, to increase development support when we are facing crisis on a number of fronts. The focus has to be on more, better and faster aid. Now allow me to highlight some of the main priorities which I will address if confirmed.

Firstly, the success of the Millennium Development Goals. We have just five years to achieve these essential goals before the 2015 Millennium Development Goals review. We have to succeed. I know that this will be difficult, but they are serious promises, not just vague aspirations. The current picture does not permit any complacency; on the contrary. Some progress can be made in Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and in some African countries. But sub-Saharan Africa is lagging far behind; the accumulated effects of the recent crises – food, energy, economic and financial – are even endangering the gains obtained so far.

So my second key objective will be to ensure that we deliver what we have promised. Some Member States are reducing official development assistance budgets as a result of the financial crisis. I know that national budgets are under real stress but, if we do not keep our promises on development aid, how can we expect developing countries to take partnership seriously? If I am confirmed as Development Commissioner, I will do everything I can to urge Member States to keep the promises that they have made. It is in our most basic interests to do so. I shall not hesitate to identify very clearly those Member States that fail to meet their commitments.

My third key priority concerns aid effectiveness. I will work hard to ensure that our development cooperation programmes allow us to respond to the real situations that our partners are facing on the ground. Equally importantly, the European Consensus for Development has started the process of moving from 28 donors – meaning 27 Member States and the Commission – pursuing often overlapping aid policies towards a truly European approach, and from a donor/recipient relationship to real partnerships. We will also continue to work with international organisations, provided they have clear value added and good visibility for the European taxpayer. But much more needs to be done if we want to reach our objectives. Recent studies show that we could gain up to EUR 9 billion of total international aid each year by being more efficient.

I want to give new political momentum to this issue. This is a question of credibility and accountability towards our citizens as much as it is towards our partners in the developing world.

Fourthly, aid effectiveness is also an issue for our partners. There is no point in providing aid and then seeing the country sell its natural resources for generations to come, rather than developing its natural wealth in a measured manner which will lead to industries, development and jobs. The quest for jobs and growth is as relevant to developing countries as it is for the European Union. If confirmed, one of the themes I will focus on during the next Commission is ensuring that wherever possible the aid that we grant is used in a manner which will provide long-term economic development.

My fifth key priority concerns policy coherence for development. I will work hard to make sure that all the EU policies really have a development component, whether they are trade, agriculture, fisheries, and many more. I am aware that this will not always be easy, but you can count on my determination.

My sixth priority is my determination to make EU citizens proud of what we do in development aid. We provide about 60% of global official development aid, yet only produce about 22% of the world's GDP. But we should also be proud of the manner in which it is provided. Our development policy is based on our European values, such as solidarity, democracy, respect

for fundamental human rights, the right to education, the right to health. We do not focus on development aid to support our defence or trade objectives, nor to exploit supplies of raw materials. We provide development aid in order to reduce poverty, to help the world's poorest people. This is our unique strength.

Furthermore, I want to continue to focus on the fact that the respect for fundamental human rights, and in particular the rights of women, is an integral part of European development aid policy. We have to make sure that the aid we grant is really effective and leads to poverty alleviation not poverty management. No country can expect to succeed in pulling itself out of poverty when it deprives itself of the effective contribution of half of its population.

I do not have time to cover all the issues I would have liked to have discussed; indeed, this list is far from exhaustive. I trust that I will be able to address further priorities such as climate change, the need to ensure that efforts to help developing nations are in addition to, not instead of, development aid, the benefits of working hand in hand with civil society, to name just a few. But I do hope that these short comments will have underlined my determination to uphold the values which the European Union has developed in its aim to alleviate global poverty.

I would like to end by commenting on the importance I place on developing a real partnership between the Commission and Parliament on development policy; working together in discussing policy in its formative stages just as much as its practical implementation. I count on your support and I hope to profit from the unique experience of the members of this committee.

Personally, I have nothing to hide. I was from the early stages fighting for independence, I was in the government, which was still not a real government with all the powers, and I really believe that I made my modest contribution fighting for independence. You can also judge for yourselves my five years' work as Energy Commissioner. I have nothing to hide. I believe that you know everything about my personality, so I have no skeletons in my cupboard. Thank you very much for your attention.

(Applause)

1-013

La Présidente. – Monsieur Désir Harlem, vous avez la parole.

1-014

Harlem Désir (S&D). – Merci, Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, pour vos premières réponses et en particulier pour la réponse très franche, très personnelle, que vous venez de faire à la fin et qui était nécessaire compte tenu d'une mise en cause qui me semblait particulièrement déplacée à votre rencontre, puisque nous vous connaissons bien.

Sur le sujet sur lequel nous pouvons maintenant vous poser des questions de relance, vous venez de dire à l'instant – c'est très important – que vous considérez que les financements qui doivent aider les pays en développement à faire face aux défis du changement climatique ne devaient pas être en soustraction des autres financements d'aide au développement mais en addition. Vous le savez, nous sommes très nombreux dans ce Parlement à défendre l'idée de nouveaux mécanismes de financement et en particulier d'une taxe sur les...

(La Présidente retire la parole à l'orateur)

1-015

Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE). – On financing for climate change: what is your position on the additionality of climate change finance, and will you work to ensure that the EU's portion of climate change financing will be entirely new and additional to delivery of its existing ODA targets?

1-016

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Je voudrais répondre clairement aux questions. Bien sûr, nous avons promis 0,7 % d'aide en 2015. Nous devons tenir cette promesse. Toutes les discussions sur les changements climatiques ont fait l'objet de promesses par après. Le financement additionnel doit revenir aux pays en développement. Parce que ce ne sont pas les mêmes tâches. En principe on pourrait dire qu'entre changement climatique et pauvreté il y a un lien mais ce n'est pas très direct. Pour la taxe Tobbin, oui je suis en faveur.

1-017

Fiona Hall (ALDE). – It is good to hear you confirm that money for climate change should be additional, but do you think that the Commission's calculation is accurate? Do you not think that we should, maybe, be considering that developing countries need more money, given that we in Europe have found that upfront financing is necessary for energy efficiency, and the Commission has assumed that developing countries can pay for that themselves?

1-018

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Je voudrais revenir à la question du financement du changement climatique. De ce point de vue, Copenhague a été un temple des arrièrepensées. L'Union européenne reste très ambiguë sur la question. Il y a une thèse qui est défendue, c'est celle qui vient d'être exposée par Harlem Désir, et il y en a une autre, exactement à l'opposé, qui est formulée par nombre d'États membres de l'Union européenne.

Je crois qu'il faut mettre fin à cette cacophonie et je vous invite à le faire et à nous faire part des moyens que vous allez mettre en œuvre pour y parvenir.

1-019

Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE). – I completely agree with the idea of additionality, but already we are hearing Member States saying that the money for the fight against climate change will come from ODA funds. What we can do, and what can you do, to prevent that?

1-020

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Taking Ms Hall's question, I think the promise to fight climate change is one we should keep. Definitely there is a need for a lot more money, but we have now foreseen only for three years: 2010, 2011 and 2012. We made rather an ambitious promise, and I think fulfilling it will also be quite a challenge.

And the second, concerning 2020: I believe these are quite substantial amounts of money, and it is also important not only to promise money but also to undertake concrete projects, so it will require quite an effort to use the money.

Turning to Mr Goerens' question,

1-021

Je crois que nous avons fait de bonnes propositions pour le sommet de Copenhague. Nous avons travaillé dur et nous avons préparé une position très cohérente. Je suis aussi quelque part déçu des résultats de Copenhague, mais je crois que nous avons démontré notre force dans la préparation de Copenhague. Maintenant, nous devons continuer à suivre les lignes que nous avons préparées avant Copenhague et continuer à faire preuve d'ambition pour obtenir un accord global sur le changement climatique.

1-022

Well, it is very clear that the heads of state and government, in December, confirmed that they will keep the promise of their commitments, because of the crises these countries are facing.

It was never said or implied that money for climate change will also come from this money. So it is not an issue that some people are talking about. I believe that we should really keep Member States to their promises, and they have promised very clearly these two separate lines. It was never promised – money for climate change was one issue, and the other part was for...

(The Chair cut off the speaker.)

1-023

Filip Kaczmarek (PPE). – Mam pytanie dotyczące instrumentu finansowania współpracy na rzecz rozwoju (DCI). Obecna reforma instytucjonalna Unii Europejskiej wynikająca z traktatu lizbońskiego dała szansę na stworzenie jednolitego prostego systemu wydatkowania środków rozwojowych. Czy nie widzi Pan problemu w tym, że instrument finansowania współpracy na rzecz rozwoju (DCI) jako instrument będzie w kompetencjach Europejskiej Służby Działań Zewnętrznych, co spowoduje pewien dualizm? Czy nie lepiej by było, gdyby jednak komisarz ds. rozwoju kontrolował i Europejski Fundusz Rozwoju (EDF) i instrument finansowania współpracy na rzecz rozwoju (DCI) po to np., aby uniknąć potencjalnych różnic w traktowaniu poszczególnych krajów? Jeżeli nie ma takiego problemu, to jak koordynować te dwa instrumenty, tak aby poszczególne kraje korzystające z naszej pomocy były równo traktowane?

1-024

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think the establishment of the office of High Representative and the External Action Service gives a lot of opportunity for the European Union to be stronger in speaking with one voice in the world.

I believe the Treaty also very clearly places development policy as a Community competence. I, as Commissioner for Development, will be responsible for all development policy planning, independently of the precise office in which the programming is being done. I will have the sole responsibility for policy coherence for development. I will follow the impact assessment in all the issues. This means horizontal development policy whenever the proposal comes from me. Then, taking into account the particular situation now with the funds that we would like to put in the budget but are still in the EDF fund, programming with it will stay with me.

When representing the Commission in the External Affairs Council, I will be well placed to defend development policy goals. So I believe the architecture that we created is still to be improved, but the basic element that preserves development policy as one of the main policies of the European Union is there. Parliament will also always be vigilant that there will not be unnecessary questions. Is the European Union committed to these issues? Yes it is.

1-025

Thijs Berman (S&D). – Poverty often stems from gross violations of the rights of citizens, to the benefit of small clans in power. Rich countries often close their eyes to these violations for their own industrial or political interests.

What is your position on the conditionality of aid? Take Eritrea as an example: will you pressure Eritrea and suspend the planned aid to this country as long as it does not improve its human rights record?

1-026

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think we have improved a lot in the European Union with development aid history. Now we have, for example, in the Cotonou Agreement two articles that exactly address these issues. We have Article 8 with political consultation and Article 96 when we come into consultation where there is a breach of human rights. So we can stop the aid.

But I believe that putting aid conditionality when we propose it will be counter-productive, because we have this architecture. In preparing this spread we go in the political consultation. It is very clear we can demonstrate what we expect from this country, and, if the country agrees, it also accepts that it will be implemented in such a way that it will not have a breach of human rights or democracy, because then we move to Article 96. To connect directly would not be wise. Why would it not be wise? Because at that stage it is also an independent country. You come and impose the conditions: it is not respectful treatment. I know that you would say that it

will be most effective treatment, but what does most effective treatment mean? Most effective is not always the best way forward.

In addition we are supporting NGOs. I believe that this is a very important point – support also for non-state actors. That should be part of development policy. Non-NGOs or not NGOs inside Europe are at work in these countries and at the same time also support civil society in these countries. So there are many ways of addressing this.

Concerning Eritrea, this is a long-standing issue, and we are very clearly demonstrating our position on Eritrea and on human rights and will continue to do this. So we will never be shy, but I still would not go for direct conditionality.

1-027

Thijs Berman (S&D). – Could you give me one example, then, of a developing country which in your analysis deserves more robust language from the European Union?

1-028

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I am just starting my work, so I would say at this stage that all countries are the same to me, and I will treat them all fairly and in the same way if I am approved.

It is very clear to me that the focus should be on the countries that the European Union is already dealing with, like Guinea for example, or Niger, where we can clearly say that democracy is in danger.

It is very much the six countries for which we have used Article 96 that should be the focus of on-going attention, and I will now follow the issues with the Democratic Republic of the Congo which my colleague, Mr De Gucht, is working on.

1-029

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Monsieur le candidat Commissaire, la pauvreté est la cause sous-jacente des conflits. Elle en est à la fois la cause et la conséquence. Étant donné que vous êtes un commissaire qui peut agir directement sur la prévention des conflits, en luttant contre la pauvreté, j'aimerais vous entendre dire comment vous comptez vous y prendre pour mener cette tâche à bonne fin. Ma question est la suivante: est-ce que cela ne vous prédestine pas à occuper une place plus importante, dans la préséance, par rapport à d'autres commissaires, notamment celui du commerce et de l'action humanitaire?

1-030

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – La tentation de répondre "oui" est grande, mais je crois que la réponse correcte est "partenariat": partenariat avec mon collègue chargé du commerce, celui de l'agriculture, celui de la pêche. Je crois que c'est la vraie réponse. Il est clair qu'il est fou de donner de l'argent d'une main pour le reprendre de l'autre, avec une autre politique. Ce n'est pas logique. Parce que le but de tout le travail des politiques de développement, c'est la lutte contre la

pauvreté, l'élimination de la pauvreté. On peut atteindre ce but s'il y a consistance dans tous les domaines des politiques de l'Union européenne.

Je crois que nous nous sommes beaucoup améliorés. Le consensus de 2005 pour la politique de développement a été un grand événement, mais on doit progresser sur cette question. La concurrence entre les politiques de développement est un vieux concept, mais nous avons commencé à l'appliquer seulement après 2005. Cela veut dire qu'il y a beaucoup de choses que nous avons déjà intégrées dans notre politique, mais il y a beaucoup de choses qu'on peut encore améliorer.

Comme je l'ai dit, je veux représenter la Commission au sein du Conseil des affaires extérieures. Là, il y a de grandes chances qu'on dise: "non, non, non". Cela va à l'encontre de notre objectif en matière de politique de développement. Là, j'ai beaucoup d'influence aussi dans le dialogue avec les pays membres, pas seulement avec mes collègues les ministres, qui sont responsables des politiques de développement.

1-031

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Monsieur le candidat Commissaire, il y a actuellement une situation conflictuelle dans le sud du Soudan. Que peut-on faire, en tant qu'Union européenne, pour être un peu moins nuls que nous ne l'avons été au Rwanda ou au Darfour? Je rappelle au passage que, dans le sud du Soudan, il y a déjà eu un conflit au cours duquel 1,5 million de personnes sont mortes dans l'indifférence générale.

1-032

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Oui, nous avons fait beaucoup d'aide humanitaire dans cette région, pas seulement la Commission, mais également les pays membres. Je crois que, pour le Soudan, la meilleure solution consiste à soutenir le travail des Nations unies. C'est un conflit global et l'on doit tous travailler dans la même direction: les Chinois, les États-Unis et les Européens. Ce sont les Nations unies qui pourraient nous réunir pour réussir au Soudan.

1-033

Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE). – Herr Piebalgs, ni talar till min stora glädje om samstämmighet mellan politikområdena, och ni nämnde fiske. EU:s fiskeriatvål främst med länder i tredje världen kostar årligen 150 miljoner euro. Dessa avtal träffas med länder som ofta är utvecklingsländer. Det har lett till överfiske i många fall, och minskad tillgång till livsviktig fisk och möjlighet till försörjning i utvecklingsländer.

Hur ser ni på dessa fiskeriatvål och på rollen för kommissionsledamoten med ansvar för utveckling när det handlar om EU:s fiskeripolitik? Kommer ni att övervaka och delta i arbetet, och se till att fiskeriatvålen är i linje med EU:s utvecklingspolitik? Ser kommissionären fiske som en möjlig ... (*talaren avbryts*)

1-034

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think we have also improved in fisheries. We now have fisheries

partnership agreements. It is not only the name that has changed, but we also provide, through these fisheries partnership agreements, support for developing national fisheries.

At the end of the day, fisheries play an important role for these countries – first of all to supply food inside the country, but also for trade. I believe our long-term policies, with fisheries cooperation agreements, should be for these countries to develop sufficient capacities to fish and to sell on the market.

These fisheries partnership agreements only take over the part that is over the quota and what is really the additional part that could be caught. So we are not trying to take fish that belong to, and can be caught by, Africans themselves. Our policy is basically to see to it that these countries are able to use fishing as a sustainable source of income.

We know that in the European Union in the next five years we will need to prepare fishery-sector reform. It is very clear that as the Development Commissioner I will be monitoring very closely that this policy does not endanger what we are doing in development policy. I know that not everything is perfect in the fisheries sector with this implementation of fisheries partnership agreements, and I will draw the attention of my colleagues to this issue.

I believe that it is the task of the Development Commissioner to indicate where we have problems in the sectors that affect our partner countries...

(The Chair cut off the speaker.)

1-035

Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE). – Ni talade om konditionalitet också i en tidigare fråga. Om man ser på de länder som EU har tecknat avtal med, så har vi Guinea (Conakry), Guinea-Bissau, Mauretanien – en lång rad länder där det har varit statskupp och där det finns väldigt stora problem vad det gäller demokratin.

Ska det finnas något slags kriterium för vilka länder EU ska ha fiskeriavtal med?

1-036

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I had my first introduction to Africa when I was with Louis Michel on the trip to Africa, and he was working very hard to ensure that the fisheries agreement really was concluded with Mauritania in the context of our overall policy.

So we have done that and will continue to do this, so that it is not separate, with fisheries moving one way and development policy another. I was really a living example: I did not know that I would get this designation, but I really saw that it is never separated.

1-037

Charles Tannock (ECR). – I would like to talk about China. Clearly this is a country that conditionality does

not apply to in terms of human rights or democracy, but it is also a massive economy with sufficient resources to fund its own development. It managed to host the Olympic Games in 2008 at a cost of about EUR 25 billion, and it is also now a major donor country and an FDI country in Africa. Yet it still receives EU aid.

India, to its tribute, after the tsunami, rejected EU aid to help it relieve the damage caused by the tsunami.

What would be your policy towards a large country like China, in terms of the EU aid allocated to it? In future should it be a matter of total GDP or GDP per capita, as we have huge giants like India, Brazil and China emerging over the horizon economically?

1-038

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I am definitely very glad that a large part of the Chinese people are moving out of poverty and they have my congratulations that they really have made this achievement.

At the same time there are still a lot of parts of China where people are very poor and definitely our programmes try to address these issues. It is not large-scale programmes any more. We are doing this from the DCI instruments, an economic term review. We will reflect whether it is necessary to do this and we will look at this in preparation for next year's report.

But it is very clear that my policies would be addressed to the least-developed countries. It is very clear that we need to concentrate support on the countries that have most need because only in this way can we really provide big value added.

1-039

Charles Tannock (ECR). – I would also be interested, on the issue alluded to by a previous questioner, in the terms of the chain of command in the new External Action Service. You will have your own desk officers within these EU designated delegations or embassies – whatever you want to call them – presumably under the local hierarchy of the EU Ambassador. Yet they will presumably be answerable to yourself, and the EU Ambassador will be answerable to Baroness Ashton.

Do you see any potential conflict between your development priorities, with which you instruct your officers on the ground, and the political priorities under foreign policy with which Baroness Ashton will be instructing the EU Ambassador in a third country?

1-040

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Partially, we already have this issue today. The heads of the European Commission delegations are subject to RELEX, and development officers are subordinate to the Development Commissioner, so in a way the situation is not particularly new. Also Louis Michel was always working with the previous High Representative, Mr

Solana, on political affairs and involving him, so it is really a matter of working as a team.

I shall name one practical example. Concerning Article 96 application it will be my proposal to the college, in agreement with Catherine Ashton. That means that, concerning development policy, it will be me that is counted responsible towards you before a budget control committee and any other, but it is definitely Catherine Ashton's role to look at the overall architecture.

There will be a lot of decisions in agreement. Sometimes I will be in the lead and sometimes Catherine Ashton will be in the lead but, seeing how she started her work, it will definitely be a very fruitful partnership. I have no doubt that we will manage very well and that there will be no real battles on the ground: the development policy against foreign policy goals. I can confirm that.

1-041

Gabriele Zimmer (GUE/NGL). – Herr Piebalgs! In ihren Beziehungen zu den Entwicklungsländern setzt die Europäische Union beständig auf die Liberalisierung von öffentlichen Dienstleistungen und Infrastruktur.

Ich möchte Ihnen deshalb eine Frage stellen, die ich bereits vor fünf Jahren Ihrem Vorgänger gestellt habe. Welche Position nehmen Sie dazu ein, dass dieser ständige Druck hinsichtlich dieser Dienstleistungen, u.a. des Zugangs zu Wasser, den Zielen der EU, Armut und Unterentwicklung zu bekämpfen, entgegensteht? Herr Michel erklärte damals, diese Dienste sollten nicht dem Druck des Marktes unterliegen. Teilen Sie diese Auffassung?

1-042

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Man muss prüfen, ob liberalisiert wurde oder ob ein staatliches Unternehmen für die Wasserversorgung verantwortlich ist.

Nein, es ist nicht unser Ziel, Staaten vorzuschreiben, das durch Marktwirtschaft oder durch Liberalisierung zu machen. Doch natürlich ist es eine Möglichkeit, auch Privatressourcen einzusetzen, was manchmal hilfreich sein kann. Doch unser Interesse ist immer, dass es genug Wasser gibt, dass es reines Wasser gibt, und das ist unser Ziel für die Entwicklungspolitik. Wir dürfen nicht bestimmen, wie diese Politik aussehen muss, doch das Resultat muss stimmen.

Das ist unser Ziel bei der Befriedigung von Grundbedürfnissen und bei Leistungen der Daseinsfürsorge. Wir haben uns das nie anders vorgestellt. Es ist nicht bloß eine Liberalisierung. Nein, wir haben nie so eine Politik verfolgt. Auch ich werde das nicht machen, weil alle unsere Programme in einem Dialog zwischen den Empfängerstaaten und der Europäischen Kommission oder den EU-Mitgliedstaaten entstanden sind.

1-043

Gabriele Zimmer (GUE/NGL). – Ist Ihnen aber bewusst, dass sowohl der Vertrag von Cotonou, die

EPA-Verhandlungen als auch beispielsweise das Entwicklungsmandat der EIB genau auf diese Zielsetzung Liberalisierung von öffentlichen Diensten, Dienstleistungen und Infrastrukturen abzielen? Wie wollen Sie genau diese vertraglichen Grundlagen verändern, wenn Sie der Meinung sind, dass das nicht Ausdruck der Politik der EU sein kann?

1-044

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Was die EPA betrifft, liegt unser Hauptinteresse in einer Regionalisierung, nicht der Liberalisierung. Wir möchten durch Wirtschaftspartnerschaftsabkommen die regionale Zusammenarbeit stärken, weil die Staaten in Afrika meistens sehr isoliert sind.

Nur gemeinsam können sie einen großen Wirtschaftsraum bilden. Aber die Liberalisierung ist nie das, was wir fordern, und soll nie an erster Stelle stehen. Wir glauben, dass die afrikanischen Staaten viel vom Welthandel profitieren können. Aber wir haben diese Staaten nie unter Druck gesetzt, und wir werden das auch nie tun.

Der Cotonou-Vertrag arbeitet schon. Sie kennen doch die Grundlagen, und die Revision ist nur eine Antwort auf eine Änderung der Welt. Ich werde weiter daran arbeiten, dass diese Entwicklungen des Cotonou-Vertrags und auch die EPA weiter den Interessen von Entwicklungsländern dienen.

1-045

Morten Messerschmidt (EFD). – Jeg synes, at det er lidt foruroligende, så lidt De gør ud af frihandelsaspektet. For mig at se er det at give fri handel langt bedre end at give nogen som helst anden almisse fra EU's side. Derfor vil jeg gerne høre helt konkret, hvad De mener i forhold til, hvad der skal være EU's strategi på frihandelsområdet. Skal vi fortsætte med den multilaterale proces, der jo i øjeblikket er gået ganske meget i stå, eller skal vi agere mere bilateralt og forsøge selv i forhold til andre parter at indgå aftaler? Og et andet spørgsmål: Hvad mener De i forhold til Afrika? Vil De også fokusere mere på Syd-Syd-handelen snarere end den Nord-Syd-akse, der har præget forhandlingerne i de seneste mange år?

1-046

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – It is very clear that there have been no countries that made progress in the world when in isolation. Whenever countries have tried to isolate themselves and supply all their own basic needs this has failed.

So we know that each and every country should participate in global trade. We have had long experience in trade with the developing countries. With some it will be more successful, with some less successful. Look, for example, at countries covered by the CDF. One sees that we need to change something in trade, because roughly 60% of exports are oil or oil products and 22% agriculture, with only 10% manufactured goods.

Basically we can clearly see that there is a need to strengthen these countries' trade possibilities. With these local partnership agreements we would like to encourage countries to work together and to create their own markets so that they really can trade also between themselves, because it is important to develop the potential of trade.

The EPAs are an attempt to strengthen the possibilities for countries to trade, because through trade you create wealth. We have seen that in China's case and in India's case. It is not easy, but we are not trying to impose anything on these countries. We would like to gradually open them and really to encourage the countries to take part in trade.

So I believe that we need to continue this. EPA has been one success with the Caribbean countries. We are moving also into another five partnerships. It is not an easy process, but I am fully confident about continuing with it and, if I fail, then I will come to Parliament and report.

1-047

Morten Messerschmidt (EFD). – Det er netop den linje, jeg er bange for, fordi det er ganske åbenlyst, at de multilaterale forhandlinger i øjeblikket i Doha-runden og andre fora er gået fuldstændig i stykker. Det kan ikke lade sig gøre at fortsætte. Og mens vi i EU tror, at verden står stille, så forhandler Sydkorea, Amerika, Mercosur, Indien og Kina bilateralt med masser af områder rundt omkring i verden. Og imens sidder vi i EU og siger: "Nej, vi skal alle tale sammen!". Men faktum er, at det multilaterale ikke virker, og det er derfor, at jeg spørger, om De vil arbejde for en bilateral linje.

1-048

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – We have seen in the European Union what integration means. It provides immense value. I believe that we have taken a most difficult path but that it is a most productive one. Only with cooperation with regions can you achieve better ways. If you go one by one, it is really picking the raisins from the cake. We would like to have the whole cake intact, and that is why we really need regionalisation. I also dealt with this, for example, in the Gulf Cooperation Council. It would be easy to deal differently with Kuwait and with Saudi Arabia, but, if you do not encourage their cooperation in this way, then there would be conflict, there could...

(The Chair cut off the speaker.)

1-049

Ioan Mircea Pașcu (S&D) Vice-Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. – Yemen is becoming a fertile ground for extremists. Under the circumstances internationally it is becoming essential. I have been informed that there will be a conference before the end of January in London. Are you going to attend, or will only Baroness Ashton go, or will you go together?

1-050

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Yemen is one good example of where we need more cooperation within the European Union. In a way we have found that there are countries that are aid orphans. Yemen was one of the countries that received very minimal aid for different reasons, but it is very clear that we neglected it. While I would not say that we are a main cause, we definitely could have done a better job until now, so Yemen will stay on our radar screen.

As regards the London Conference, I have not made any appointment because, with due respect, although I have been Commissioner for five years, I can have no prejudgement on Parliament's opinion. Parliament will decide and only then can I take any engagements to any conference. Before then I cannot do so, because it is not granted that I will get the job.

1-051

Kader Arif (S&D), commission INTA. – Monsieur le commissaire désigné, concernant le financement de l'assistance liée au commerce et à l'aide au commerce, seriez-vous disposé à présenter au Parlement européen un rapport d'information détaillé et chiffré sur les lignes budgétaires qui lui sont consacrées et à évaluer l'utilisation de ces aides au commerce quant à leur impact sur les programmes de développement?

1-052

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Aid for trade is one of the issues that puzzle me a little. I think even the name is rather tricky because aid for trade basically would mean that we exchange aid for money. This is not the case. It is aid for the support of trade. That is the policy. So the name is a bit misleading.

Secondly, aid for trade is a rather new policy development. We support it through national programme envelopes and through regional policy envelopes. I believe that at this stage it is premature to speak about a special budget line. I will definitely be ready to come to the Committee on International Trade as soon as possible to discuss this issue because I agree that it is extremely important.

We have gradually increased the aid for this type of action. We have now roughly EUR 1 billion. Member States put in EUR 1 billion a year as well. But we need to follow up how to do it in the best possible way so I will not give a definitive answer at this stage. I would just say that it is definitely one of the issues that will be treated very seriously. I think it is a good initiative, but we need to consider how best to continue this initiative so that it really delivers what we expect and these countries are able to participate in the global trading system. That is my goal.

1-053

Kader Arif (S&D). – Question de suivi, alors je change du tout au tout. Une question simple: je voudrais connaître votre position sur l'intégration du FED au budget de l'Union européenne, sachant qu'il s'agit d'une demande répétée du Parlement.

1-054

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Oui, la réponse est très courte, je suis tout à fait d'accord. Je crois qu'on devait déjà le faire il y a quelques années. Il est difficile de comprendre pourquoi c'est dans les fonds spéciaux, parce qu'on doit avoir un contrôle du Parlement.

Deuxième chose, s'il y a de l'argent pour le développement, c'est une ligne budgétaire. Maintenant, il y a le FED, le DCI, il y a beaucoup de choses et c'est toujours créer beaucoup de difficultés. Je crois que la position de la Commission va être très claire, en faveur de la budgétisation du Fonds européen de développement.

1-055

Gay Mitchell (PPE). – In your response to the questionnaire, you mentioned food security. In my opening comments I mentioned land ownership and enterprising spirit. Are you aware that the President of the World Bank has suggested that China might invest in creating industries in the developing world, particularly Africa? What are your views on this? Do you see a role for the European Union perhaps in assisting industry in growing its own food, for example, or generally encouraging the enterprising spirit in the developing world?

1-056

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I have already mentioned the trade figures, particularly between the ACP countries and the EU. These are really worrying figures, because, if it is 10% of manufactured goods, it is clearly not sufficient.

Usually, to create reprocessing you need to do a lot of investment. To help create investment facilities we need really to evaluate how they function, because I would definitely agree – this is part of the answer – really to support investments that create jobs, growth and add value added. It is not just minerals or oil that we should receive from developing countries.

So I believe it is one of the very important tasks. In my intervention I also mentioned that I would look very closely at the support that we give: increase the economic development of these countries – long-term economic development.

So I believe it is one way forward, but it is not the only way forward. We definitely follow this principle. You mentioned food. With the food security programme, we have done a very good job. We really invested exactly as you say. We provided not food for eating, but investment for possibilities for farmers really to grow food, and that is the way we should proceed. So I think it is a good example: the food facility was an excellent example of how we should act further on.

1-057

Gay Mitchell (PPE). – Could I thank the Commissioner-designate for that reply and ask: can I take it from that, as the rapporteur for the Food Security Instrument, that you are open to this idea of encouraging

land ownership, of encouraging the enterprising spirit, of supporting people to be able to feed themselves and to provide for their families?

1-058

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I know that land ownership is a huge challenge and a huge potential. We are trying to support, through the DCI programme, some of the issues related to this, but I believe that we should encourage the countries to really sort these issues out because this could cultivate a lot of wealth and no country has developed economically without any land ownership issues.

In Latvia in the early 1990s we went through a very painful process concerning the restitution of property. For me, who did not have any property, it was very painful indeed. The Prime Minister was greatly criticised and suffered a lot. However, that is what established the basis for further economic development, so you need to decide on this question. Only property rights give the basis for further growth.

1-059

Michael Cashman (S&D). – Commissioner-designate, as we know, human rights across the developing world are increasingly under attack: the rights of women, the rights of children and, recently, examples in Uganda, Malawi and Burundi of the rights of lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

On the revision of the Cotonou Agreement, this committee in Parliament voted, and let me quote: 'to reinforce the principle of non-negotiable human rights clauses and [for] sanctions for failure to respect such clauses *inter alia* with regard to discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation and towards people living with HIV/AIDS'. Do you agree with this principle, and would you sustain it in the negotiations on the revision of Cotonou?

1-060

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I fully agree with this principle. It is not negotiable because I believe these are the values that we have been built on. We cannot go against the values that make us strong.

As an argument, I think it was at the Cairo meeting that I actually came to that conclusion, also with all the development on these principles – perhaps not exactly the precise formulation that you said, but it is very close to this formulation.

For example, there is mention of family in all its rights, in all its forms, so it went very far and I believe that these are the fallback positions that we could go to because these are the principles that have been accepted by the international community, including the countries with whom we negotiated the Cotonou Agreement.

1-061

Michael Cashman (S&D). – Thank you, Commissioner-designate. I welcome that reassurance. What would you say to those in certain *cabinets* within

the Commission who believe that we should not sustain this principle of non-discrimination, certainly in relation to lesbian and gay rights, in the revision of the Cotonou Agreement?

1-062

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – First you need to show them to me and I will try to convince them, because I think it is completely the wrong approach. It is something that we believe in. If you believe in it, you do not trade with it. So I would say there are a couple of things you cannot negotiate. It is as simple as that, because then you lose your own dignity. That is the problem. It is not about the others. It is us, and that is where the issue is. We do not try to sell to anyone, but you cannot go beyond your own beliefs.

1-063

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Ma prochaine question se réfère à la dimension régionale. Qu'il s'agisse de la sécurité, du commerce, de la lutte contre les maladies, de l'approvisionnement en énergie, on ne peut pas faire l'impasse sur la dimension régionale pour aborder ces problèmes. Je rappelle au passage que Louis Michel avait développé une vraie vision en la matière, et notamment dans le rapprochement des divers pays dans les accords de partenariat économique qui, au début, avaient une connotation régionale. On a supprimé la notion de "régional". Ma question est de savoir quels moyens vous allez développer pour faire en sorte que, parmi les vingt-huit acteurs que sont les vingt-sept États membres plus la Commission, la dimension régionale soit bien abordée par le partenaire le plus approprié, qui me semble être, en l'occurrence, la Commission.

(La Présidente retire la parole à l'orateur)

1-064

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Oui, je suis fier de ce qu'il a fait parce que quand j'ai posé la question "Qui fait les négociations en Guinée-Conakry?" c'est le Président du Burkina-Faso avec les mandants des organisations régionales. C'est la même chose aussi pour le Zimbabwe, en Afrique du Sud. Avec les dimensions régionales, c'était plus facile. J'ai, au cours de ma carrière de commissaire pour l'énergie, rencontré les organismes régionaux en Afrique de l'Ouest et je crois qu'ils sont très matures et très préparés sur le plan professionnel.

La chance que nous avons de réussir dans la coopération régionale réside dans l'EPAS. C'est un bon instrument et si nous réussissons à convaincre, la coopération régionale gagnera en qualité. C'est très dur mais on doit réussir. Il faut réussir.

1-065

Charles Goerens (ALDE). – Oui. Les accords de partenariat économique sont conçus pour ouvrir les régions sur le monde, sur le commerce international, ce qui n'exclut pas qu'on puisse être en mesure de promouvoir aussi le commerce à l'intérieur de la région. Comment entendez-vous promouvoir le commerce intrarégional? Je crois que toutes deux constituent les

faces d'une même médaille et qu'elles sont toutes deux indispensables au développement des régions.

1-066

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Je crois qu'on doit se focaliser sur les projets d'infrastructures. On manque d'infrastructures au sein de l'Union européenne. On en manque beaucoup plus en Afrique. S'il n'y a pas d'infrastructures, c'est difficile de faire du commerce. C'est aussi un pilier de notre politique de développement que de réussir à construire des infrastructures pour l'énergie et pour les transports: ça donne une chance.

Deuxièmement, pour réussir un partenariat économique, il faut le même espace économique, ça donne aussi beaucoup de chances. Si nous faisons ceci, nous devons étudier toutes les dimensions pour investir dans les infrastructures ou dans la production active.

1-067

Charles Tannock (ECR). – The ECR believes that the European Development Fund is a fully legitimate part of the EU's development policy and should be incorporated into the EU budget and procedures so that we can resolve the ongoing issue of a lack of scrutiny over the EU's aid to ACP countries.

Do you support the budgetisation of the EDF? What steps will you be taking to try and further integrate it within the EU's budgetary procedures?

1-068

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I fully support this budgetisation of the European Development Fund for a lot of reasons. One is definitely Parliament's scrutiny, but there are a lot of other points.

I will try first of all to explain to our ACP partners that they will not lose from this process. I think one of the dangers that we have in the ACP is the very particular relationships that we build up. And the ACP is built around its relations with us. So I think we first of all really need to convince the partners that it is good also for them and that they will not lose in this process.

The second point is, definitely, working with Member States to convince them that it is a good step and a positive step for the Member States as well. So I believe these are two main areas and you will need to work with partners from the ACP and from the Member States to really convince them that it is the right step that needs to be taken.

1-069

Charles Tannock (ECR). – Before Christmas the Democratic Republic of Congo rejected entry to Commissioner De Gucht, who raised doubts over the transparency of EU aid to that country. How do we deal with such situations, or how will you deal in future, if you are, as it were, barred from entering a country receiving EU aid?

1-070

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – It is a very serious issue if you are refused entry to a country just

because somebody believes that your statement was wrong. I hope that I will not be in that type of situation. I hope that I will not, not because I would not furnish the full truth, but just because it is a very particular situation.

I believe that we need to say what we really believe in and to use the mechanisms that we have under the Cotonou Agreement, so it is Article 8 – political consultation – at this stage. I think we are trying to mobilise all the negotiation force behind us, to help our partners in the Republic of Congo to change this decision. Because I think it is not the right decision to bar somebody for a statement that is well merited – it is not that what he said was really offending the country. It is a rather complex issue.

I hope the Commission will manage to resolve this issue before I come to office, and I hope that during the next five years I will not be in a situation in which I cannot get a visa, because it will completely destroy our relations. And the difficulty when relations are destroyed is that it is not the governments that suffer, it is people who suffer. So we are really trying to be diplomatic but, at the same time, clear in our messages. I do not know if I will be successful in this, but at the same time I will tell the truth completely.

1-071

Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE). – On policy coherence, do you commit yourself to reviewing the common agricultural policy and the fisheries policy under a perspective of development policies? Secondly, can you outline your definition of the whole of the Union approach and how you see its implications for EU development policy?

1-072

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Concerning development, there are two directions that we can take and we will take. Whenever there is a reform, as a Development Commissioner, I will always oblige my services to monitor that impact assessments on development policy are being conducted as prescribed. This is something new that each proposal should imply, and we will check that this is done.

It is also very clear that we have another instrument under which we have promised action in the areas proposed in EU communications such as that on food security, and this will definitely come from an active perspective, stating what needs to be changed to really achieve development policy goals.

We will be active from both sides, from the side which says ‘do not do this because it is harmful’, and from the other side which says ‘do this because it promotes development policy’. I think we are better equipped than ever before.

On the whole of the Union approach I am a bit puzzled. The more that I read, the more puzzled I am. Because, as I understand it, ODA is official development aid that is well-defined. There is a permanent OECD structure –

and nobody says it is doing a bad job – which tries to include in that definition anything new that comes up.

That is why I find this ODA Plus concept a bit puzzling, because there is no ODA Plus. There are different ways of supporting policy reforms in developing countries, but the whole of the Union concept needs to be studied. Is it at all a valid concept? ODA Plus definitely is not a valid concept in my opinion. If I can prove that certain types of expenses qualify as fraud, then I would work with the OECD to include it.

I think the scheme is watertight and there are no miracles occurring – money is not rolling around somewhere and not being accounted for, as far as I have seen. However, as much as I will be involved in this in my job if approved, I would perhaps say yes – this is something that is not ODA. It is something different and we could say it is the whole of the Union approach.

1-073

Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE). – We agree on that. The ODA Plus concept is very questionable, and also the whole of the Union, but how do you see the limitation of priorities of policy coherence for development – now five priorities? The previous Commission said that we needed to adjust the policy coherence priorities more to the political agenda of the Member States. Would you agree to such a process?

1-074

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think this question has been partially answered because I believe we have chosen the areas where active positions should be taken. If I understood your question correctly, this reduction from 12 to 5 does not mean that we are decreasing our activities: it is actually intended to focus more on where a proactive approach should be adopted. At the same time, it does not exclude the possibility of our working in all the other areas.

1-075

Michèle Striffler (PPE). – Suite à la crise alimentaire de 2008, les donateurs et les bénéficiaires ont mis l'accent sur la nécessité de recentrer l'aide sur le secteur agricole. La question de la sécurité alimentaire mondiale est d'une extrême urgence et doit être au premier plan de l'agenda politique international. De plus, il est nécessaire de renforcer la cohérence des politiques pour le développement afin d'assurer la concrétisation du premier objectif du Millénaire pour le développement. Qu'en pensez-vous?

Deuxièmement, dans quelle mesure l'agriculture durable – l'accent étant mis les petites exploitations agricoles et la production locale – est-elle prise en compte dans la révision à mi-parcours des documents de stratégie par pays dans le cadre du dixième FED et de l'instrument de coopération au développement, ainsi que dans les autres programmes de la Commission européenne?

1-076

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Toutes ces questions sont compliquées. Je commence avec les

objectifs du Millénaire. Je crois que le premier objectif est très clair et que nous devons l'atteindre. C'est le pilier de la stratégie de la Commission et il faut continuer à l'appliquer dans tous les domaines et donc dans le domaine international, mais aussi dans notre propre travail.

En ce qui concerne l'agriculture durable, cette question fait partie de notre programme de soutien aux politiques nationales ou régionales. Je ne peux prendre la position ni des petits ni des grands agriculteurs. Tous ont des chances – ou devraient avoir des chances – de réussir. Mais c'est aussi une question de propriété des terrains. C'est une question cruciale parce que chaque travail procure du plaisir tout en offrant, dans le même temps, la possibilité de vivre dans le monde. Nous devons accorder une très grande attention à la politique de l'agriculture et, comme je l'ai dit, avec la *food facility* nous avons trouvé, je crois, une bonne méthode pour soutenir l'agriculture dans les pays en développement.

1-077

Michèle Striffler (PPE). – En ce qui concerne les petites exploitations agricoles, on sait que la place qu'occupent les femmes dans les pays en voie de développement est très, très importante, d'où mon insistance sur les petites exploitations agricoles. Est-ce que vous avez prévu quelque chose de plus précis à leur sujet?

1-078

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Cette question est très détaillée, je crois. Dans notre programme, des choses sont aussi prévues pour les petits agriculteurs parce que le volume des exploitations ne constitue pas un critère, le même programme politique est valable pour les petits comme pour les gros agriculteurs.

1-079

Dominique Baudis (PPE), Vice-président de la commission AFET. – Merci. Monsieur le Commissaire. Depuis la décision de fermer les tunnels souterrains vers la Bande de Gaza, plus d'un million de personnes se retrouvent dans un isolement total. Les approvisionnements ne peuvent plus passer ni par Israël ni par les souterrains du côté égyptien. Pour faire face à cette situation d'urgence et de crise dans laquelle se trouve la Bande de Gaza, quel rôle l'Europe peut-elle jouer pour le développement de ce territoire?

1-080

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Vous avez raison, c'est une question pour ma collègue Mme Jeleva, qui va répondre aux questions demain. Mais, bien sûr, la Commission est déjà le plus grand donateur pour les territoires palestiniens. Nous avons toujours fait beaucoup pour améliorer la situation humanitaire là-bas et, bien sûr, dans le cadre de notre politique de voisinage, nous faisons aussi des programmes. Mais, directement, je suis seulement responsable de la qualité de la mise en œuvre de cette aide. Cela veut dire que j'ai seulement une influence politique en tant que membre de la Commission et en tant que commissaire responsable pour l'AIDCO. C'est ma seule

responsabilité. Je crois que la question des Territoires est cruciale pour la paix. C'est une chose que nous devons aborder dans toute sa complexité mais bien sûr nous ne pouvons pas être lâches alors que la situation humanitaire s'aggrave, et nous devons préparer toute l'aide nécessaire pour ces territoires.

1-081

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE), Vice-président de la commission INTA. – Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, dans votre réponse écrite, vous montrez une grande satisfaction par rapport aux accords de partenariat économique, qui sont quand même aujourd'hui essentiellement des accords de libre-échange, dont les dimensions "développement" ou "intégration régionale" sont parfois largement mises à mal.

Ma question est la suivante: à partir du moment où vous n'avez pas la responsabilité de ces accords de partenariat économique, comment allez-vous tenter de faire valoir l'article 208 auprès de votre collègue commissaire au commerce, au sein du collège de la Commission ou devant le Parlement européen?

1-082

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – J'ai la chance que le commissaire De Gucht, qui est responsable de la politique de développement, va changer de poste et s'occuper du commerce. Cela veut dire qu'il connaît bien les deux aspects de cette politique et il est aussi convaincu que ce volet de développement doit figurer dans les accords de partenariat économique. Je suis donc sûr que nous allons trouver un bon accord.

Et comme toujours, je voudrais souligner un point: toutes les décisions au Collège sont collégiales. Cela veut dire que j'ai toujours la possibilité d'exprimer mon point de vue et aussi d'essayer d'apporter des changements si je ne suis pas d'accord. Cela s'applique également pour l'article 208. Je crois que M. De Gucht va être à même de comprendre cela parce qu'il a l'expérience et il a déjà travaillé avec ces accords de partenariat économique.

Le problème avec les accords de partenariat économique, c'est que les débuts ont été durs. Nous avons fait beaucoup d'erreurs de communication et maintenant, nous en payons le prix. Nous devons expliquer ce qui aurait dû être expliqué auparavant. Mais, en même temps, ces accords apportent beaucoup d'opportunités aux pays africains.

1-083

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE), Vice-président de la commission INTA. – Oui, j'imagine que vous devrez d'ailleurs à ce point de vue-là convaincre d'abord les pays africains, parce que beaucoup, comme vous le savez, sont très réticents à ce que propose l'Union européenne.

Ma question de suivi porte sur la libéralisation financière, qui est aussi présente dans les accords de partenariat économique. Ces accords, souvent, rendent

encore plus vulnérables les économies en développement face aux crises financières.

Que comptez-vous faire de ce point de vue?

1-084

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Nous avons pris une série de mesures pour lutter contre les conséquences de la crise financière. Nous avons fourni un *up-front funding* et nous avons également créé une facilité appelée *vulnerability flex*, dotée d'un demi-milliard d'euros. Nous prenons donc de nombreuses mesures visant à faire face à la crise financière. En même temps, il est clair que le régime doit être assez transparent et assez intéressant pour investir dans les pays. Le problème est qu'il n'y a pas beaucoup d'investissements en Afrique, et l'on doit aussi préparer le cadre pour les efforts financiers.

1-085

La Présidente. – Nous devons poursuivre notre programme. Nous en sommes à présent au stade des questions faisant suite aux réponses que les membres du Parlement ont estimées insuffisantes de la part du commissaire désigné.

Je vais en donner lecture. Il y en a trois. Malheureusement, nous n'avons pas eu le temps de les traduire, je vais donc les lire en anglais.

1-086

The first question is: on the free trade agreement with Colombia, will you respect development goals or give priority to trade interests?

The second question is: can you give more precise details on who is responsible for programming and implementing the DCI?

The third question is: how will you respect Parliament's rights and prerogatives in the preparatory process leading to the review of the DCI?

1-087

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Regarding the first point, any decision in the College is taken by the College. So, for a free trade agreement with Colombia, I will also see if issues of development are reflected enough, because Article 208 obliges me to do this.

On programming and implementation DCI, I will try to explain – it is rather complicated. What is happening today? There is a DCI instrument programmed in the RELEX service. That means it is also what is expected (it still has to be worked out), that it will go with the External Action Service. At the same time, horizontal lines and influence of development: what this should be and how it should be is a question for DG Development. So we are ideological leaders, and they need to translate our thinking into concrete programming.

On implementation, it goes back to me, as I am a commissioner in lieu for AIDCO. So in a way I decide, on the basis of proposals from my services, on what should happen in terms of development aid. What

volume it should be is decided by Parliament and also by the Council, and as I am also responsible for implementation. So I have feedback through the mid-term review or any review of whether we have achieved our goals.

I am sorry, the third was a meeting with the DCI. It is very clear that I am fully accountable to the Parliament. I am available for Parliament seven days on a 24-hour basis. It is an absolute priority. So as soon Parliament calls me I will be here, I will cancel all other obligations and respond on mid-term review and DCI and country by country, as Parliament would like. I think that the most important duty is to be fully transparent and fully accountable to the European Parliament. I have no doubt – and I also followed this with committees when I was Energy Commissioner. I think, in a democracy, there cannot be any other way.

1-088

Chair. – We now have the second session of catch-the-eye with five minutes on the theme of the whole of the Union approach and policy requirements for development.

1-089

Corina Crețu (S&D). – Puteți explicita declarația dumneavoastră privind combaterea fragmentării asistenței oferite de Uniunea Europeană, precizând țintele pe termen scurt până la ieșirea din criză și obiectivele pe termen lung pentru asigurarea coerenței și stabilizarea cooperării pentru dezvoltare? Mulțumesc foarte mult.

1-090

Franziska Keller (Verts/ALE). – When are you going to prepare a list of the kind of policy coherence mechanisms you want to implement, and how do you plan to invite us and civil society to take part in that? How will you involve us?

1-091

Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE). – About policy coherence – you mentioned fisheries and you referred to 'partnership agreements' – do you think it is right to give sectoral support to local fisheries in Africa only if the EU is allowed to fish in their waters?

1-092

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – On Ms Crețu's question: aid effectiveness is a big challenge. I think globally and also inside the EU we have the agenda for action. We have improved on it. Our aid has more accountability. It is also more on time, so it is more predictable. But there are a lot of things that need to be done. So I believe that we will continue this aid effectiveness agenda inside the European Union and globally. We have adopted a guide or handbook and *modus operandi*, also a kind of regulation. It is not exactly a regulation, it is law arrangements on how to strengthen the aid effectiveness agenda. I think it is the biggest challenge that we have inside the European Union concerning development policy.

On mid-term reviews, this is ongoing, so as soon as I am in office – if I am in office – I think this is a main issue, and I cannot invite Parliament: Parliament usually calls the Commission, so I will be there whenever you ask.

With civil society, I will have – immediately after my approval – contact with civil society. It is well organised. I have had very positive feedback about their capacity and their engagements, so there is no secret for me because at the end of the day the Commission takes the decision completely independently. But this does not prevent me from listening to different opinions and sometimes very critical opinions; I followed this strategy as energy commissioner and it was very fruitful. It was not wrong to do it, even if sometimes you get difficult questions.

On sectoral support: I need to discuss this issue with my colleague, because I think a fisheries support agreement is in a way very particular, because I think it is a transitional arrangement, because we have an interest, basically, in these countries having competitive fisheries, because that means that, at the end of the day, we will need to provide less development aid – perhaps none at all.

So we have a lot of interest and, as far as connecting support with this type of agreement is concerned, I am not aware that it is an issue. I would say it is not the case. I hope it is not the case, because it is a completely different issue. One is that we pay for the right to fish. The other issue is completely independent: it is to support the local fisheries. Why should it be linked? I do not see any necessity for linking, but I will check the details because whether you have an agreement or if you do not have agreement should not be a precondition for support, because the payment that we pay to a fisheries partnership is completely different. We have a chance to catch fish and we get jobs for our fishermen.

1-093

Corina Crețu (S&D). – Spuneți că veți face tot ce puteți pentru ca această criză economică să nu pună în pericol bugetul pe care statele membre îl alocă Obiectivelor de Dezvoltare ale Mileniului.

Care sunt totuși, concret, instrumentele prin care intenționați să atrageți atenția și obligați statele membre să-și țină promisiunile și angajamentele față de țările în curs de dezvoltare, față de cele mai sărace state din lume?

1-094

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – The situation is rather favourable because it was only in December that the heads of state and government in their summit in Brussels said – because of the economic crisis and seeing also the impact that the economic crisis has on developing countries – we confirm our commitment for the support.

So I read this in only one way: that we are committed to reaching 0.7% of GNR from the European Union for development aid in 2015. So it is very clear that they are fully aware. I know that when it comes to the ministers

of finance I will still need to remind them of this but I think it gives a very good starting position for a reminder, because it was the confirmation from heads of state and government and it was unanimous.

1-095

Corina Crețu (S&D). – Do you think a new reprioritisation of the MDGs is needed, taking into account the reality that it is not possible to achieve this in the timeframe?

1-096

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I have not participated with my previous duties in the United Nations process, but I believe that one of the big successes was the Millennium Declaration – the Millennium Development Goals. That was a success. Now to start to say it could be done better or whatever would be to take completely the wrong path. We would lose all our attention just to try and make a new consensus, so in my opinion the Millennium Development Goals are a sacred cow.

It is not that they are perfect, but they are a global agreement. We should value them and try to achieve them, and we know that they are right. It is not, in reality, very ambitious: poverty eradication or primary education for kids, or in health, also for women, so it is everything that is needed. The physical implementation – 1% less or 1% more – is not the crucial thing. It is crucial that we follow these goals until 2015 and fulfil them. If in 2015 we have failed, then at least we can say it was our best effort. If we now start to change the goals, we will never achieve them.

1-097

Ivo Vajgl (ALDE). – Ni povsem jasno, gospod Piebalgs, kdaj in kdo pravzaprav daje državi etiketo propadle države, „failed state”. Vsekakor je zaskrbljivo, da je takšnih držav čedalje več in da so vse pravzaprav v tisti sferi, s katerimi boste vi imeli opraviti, če boste komisar. V zadnjem času se pogosto govori o Jemnu, kot enemu kandidatu za to, nekaj drugih je še, ki nam povzročajo skrbi in kjer se pravzaprav psi vojne in nekateri mediji že vnaprej veselijo, da bo tam šlo zares. Če se strinjate s to ugotovitvijo, prosim.....

1-098

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think it is a very tricky question – what we call a failed state. I would say a failed state is one that no longer exists. So that is why I would not use this terminology. I would even be afraid to use the term ‘fragile state’. I would describe it as a state in a fragile condition. We have had a couple of communications from the Commission side on fragility and how to deal with a state in a fragile condition, how to provide budget support or how to act in this situation.

We have some experience to build on but I would not call Yemen a failed state or a fragile state. Yemen is in a completely different situation. We have a real problem. We need to find the way, but Yemen as a country exists and is a reality. We need to find a way to address the issue of terrorism. To be honest, the state of Yemen has

actually reacted. They have carried out operations and they have had some consequences when a couple of embassies have been called.

So I would concentrate on the developments or approach started by my predecessors on the state-in-fragility situation. There are more risks involved. I will have quite a debate with your colleagues in the Committee on Budgetary Control because one of the problems is that the risks are higher and then they will nail me if I take some decisions. So we need to agree – together with the Committee on Budgetary Control – on how we deal with this.

1-099

Ivo Vajgl (ALDE). – Hvala lepa za ta odgovor. Popolnoma je sprejemljiv zame. V tej dvorani smo imeli pred dobrima dvema urama razgovor z gospo Ashton in ona ni sprejela pobude, da bi šefe misij bodoče evropske diplomatske misije ... da bi pri njihovem imenovanju sodeloval tudi Parlament. Ali ste vi bolj pozitivni do Parlamenta?

1-100

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – It is the full responsibility of Baroness Ashton through the Treaty and I think we should follow the Treaty. It is a service that supports her. In her very complicated role I have full support for her because she based her position on the Treaty.

1-101

Bart Staes (Verts/ALE). – Commissaris, ondanks heel veel mooie woorden worden veel ontwikkelingsprojecten van de Europese Unie in de derde wereld uitgevoerd door bedrijven die eigenlijk zijn geregistreerd in belastingparadijzen. Dat zorgt ervoor dat er ontzettend veel kapitaal verdwijnt, dat ontwikkelingslanden daar niet over beschikken. Dat zorgt ook voor kapitaalvlucht en gebrek aan transparantie. Ook de rol van de Europese Investeringsbank is hier in het geding. De Europese Investeringsbank investeert via leningen aan banken die voornamelijk in belastingparadijzen actief zijn. Hoe staat u tegenover die problematiek, hoe zult u in de Commissie dit aanpakken?

1-102

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I think this is a very serious question and I am very glad that in recent times the developed countries have started to address the issue of tax havens.

For me, coming from the new Member States, it was always unclear because we suffered a lot from the tax havens in that time. Why has such a situation been allowed by the international community? So I believe part of the answer is that we, the developed countries, will continue fighting against tax havens.

I checked concerning my constituency: does it perform better? They are trying to make an attempt because of the pressure of the international community and in fact I believe that it is important that we follow it.

What concerns the Commission about public money is that we should do everything possible to ensure that money does not go to the tax havens. It is impossible that we should support tax havens at the same time as we are fighting against them. So it is very clear that it should be a Commission policy line that we avoid tax havens, and that we ignore and we try to eliminate tax havens. It does not help world communities that we have tax havens, so I still believe that fighting tax havens is the responsibility of developed countries more than developing countries.

If we exercise pressure, then they will not function. If we are reluctant, then they will continue to prosper. But from the Commission I will instruct my services as much as possible not to carry out any operation where it is likely that tax havens might be involved.

1-103

Bart Staes (Verts/ALE). – Commissaris, als u zegt dat de ontwikkelde wereld belangrijke inspanningen moet doen, dan denk ik dat de Europese Commissie ook belangrijke inspanningen moet doen. Ik heb verwezen naar de inspanningen die de Europese Investeringsbank doet. Er zijn deze zomer rapporten verschenen waarin de houding van de Europese Investeringsbank sterk wordt aangeklaagd. Ondertussen heeft de Europese Investeringsbank gezegd dat ze de regels wat zou verscherpen. Bent u bereid als commissaris straks contact op te nemen met de verantwoordelijke van de Europese Investeringsbank om na te gaan of dit voldoende is?

1-104

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I had very close contacts with the President of the EIB in my previous job, so I very much value that. I believe that we can go very far in this job. We need consistency to continue and I definitely will do this. I believe in a lot of cases – and I will come back to this – that the EU needs to set a good example in fighting corruption. It is only now that we are punishing the company that bribed officials in developing countries. It has taken 20 or 30 years to do this, so I believe we should be consistent.

1-105

Birgit Schnieber-Jastram (PPE). – Frau Vorsitzende! Herr designierter Kommissar! Ich habe Fragen zum Thema Aktivitäten asiatischer Nationen, insbesondere Chinas in Entwicklungsländern, und würde gerne wissen, wie Sie die Interessen der Europäischen Union in diesem Wettbewerb vertreten wollen. Wie wollen Sie Einfluss und Ressourcen erhalten? Welche Möglichkeiten sehen Sie zur Koordination von europäischer und asiatischer Entwicklungspolitik?

Eine zweite Frage, die, glaube ich, noch gar nicht angesprochen wurde, betrifft die Bildung.

(Die Vorsitzende entzieht der Rednerin das Wort.)

1-106

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Ich glaube, wir dürfen unsere Entwicklungspolitik nicht mit China vergleichen und sie als Wettbewerb sehen.

Doch wir müssen Konsequenzen ziehen. Es ist natürlich wichtig, dass wir bei unseren Prinzipien bleiben, die richtig sind.

Die Bekämpfung der Armut ist unsere Hauptaufgabe. Das bedeutet stabile Staaten mit einer gut entwickelten Wirtschaft, die auch die Grundrechte als Basis haben. Wir müssen China überzeugen, dass das der richtige Weg ist. Das können wir durch die Vereinten Nationen, aber auch in unserem bilateralen Dialog mit China tun. Ich glaube, wir müssen zeigen, dass wir mit unserer Entwicklungspolitik Recht haben.

Zweitens: Natürlich müssen wir Chinas Potential sehen – das ist frisches Geld, auch für die Infrastruktur in Afrika und in anderen Entwicklungsländern. Wir dürfen nicht hochmütig sein, wir müssen darin auch eine Möglichkeit sehen. Mein Vorgänger, Herr Michel, – ich habe das schon mehrmals erwähnt – war in China und hat das probiert, und ich muss da weitermachen. China bietet eine Chance, ist aber gleichzeitig auch ein großes Fragezeichen. Doch das bedeutet nicht, dass wir jetzt mit China im Wettbewerb stehen müssen. Nein, wir müssen nicht das machen, was China heute macht. Doch China hat eine Möglichkeit, das besser zu machen, als es das heute macht.

1-107

Véronique De Keyser (S&D). – Monsieur Piebalgs, nous n'avons pas encore eu l'occasion de vous entendre sur les rapports entre le développement et l'immigration, l'immigration qui est un des secteurs prioritaires de la politique de cohérence.

Ma question est très claire: vous avez évoqué la révision de l'accord de Cotonou; pensez-vous que, sur le plan de l'immigration, il y ait quelque chose à revoir à ce sujet-là dans l'accord de Cotonou et, si tel était le cas, pouvez-vous m'expliquer quoi?

1-108

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Oui, nous essayons, dans le cadre de l'accord de Cotonou, de chercher une nouvelle formule pour l'immigration, afin de parvenir à la réception des immigrés dans leurs pays. C'est-à-dire qu'en cas de *readmission agreement* (je ne connais pas le terme en français) nous essaierons de trouver une formule plus forte concernant cette question. Dans le même temps, je crois que l'immigration est une question assez complexe. C'est la lutte contre la pauvreté qui offrira la possibilité d'une solution sur une plus longue durée. Par ailleurs, on doit aussi offrir quelques pistes d'immigration légale. Je soutiens pleinement l'initiative de M. Kouchner, qui a annoncé que cent afghans (je crois qu'il s'agissait de cent) pourraient arriver légalement en France pour y travailler ou y faire des études. Je crois qu'on doit donner une ouverture à l'immigration légale. Parce que si aucune piste d'immigration légale n'est ouverte, on n'obtient aucune satisfaction et on court le risque d'une immigration illégale. Avec l'accord de Cotonou, nous essayons de trouver une formule plus précise concernant les questions d'immigration dans le cadre de notre relation avec les pays ACP.

1-109

Véronique De Keyser (S&D). – Pouvez-vous me rassurer, Monsieur Piebalgs, sur le fait que ces réadmissions ne conduiraient pas les immigrés dans des pays qui défient les droits de l'homme? Je pense notamment à des réadmissions, vers la Libye, d'immigrants en transit par ce pays.

1-110

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Madame la Présidente, j'aimerais apporter une petite précision sur mon nom: c'est Piebalgs. Je sais que le nom Pieblags existe aussi. Ce n'est pas votre faute s'il existe. Pendant cinq ans, j'ai eu une double personnalité. Je voulais juste préciser mon nom.

En ce qui concerne notre position sur l'immigration, nous essayons toujours de défendre les droits de l'homme et de tenir compte des risques concernant la réadmission. Je ne peux pas évoquer chaque cas mais la politique de l'Union européenne veut que si quelqu'un est forcé de rentrer dans son pays, il ne risque pas de peine dans ce pays. C'est la politique de l'Union européenne et il en a toujours été ainsi.

1-111

Louis Michel (ALDE), coprésident de la délégation ACP. – Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, Monsieur Piebalgs, je dois vous dire qu'après vous avoir entendu – mais moi, j'avais le privilège de vous connaître –, ce qui m'inquiéterait le plus, ce serait que vous ne soyez pas retenu définitivement comme commissaire au développement. En effet, l'exposé introductif que vous avez fait a exprimé des idées extrêmement claires, des principes très forts et des priorités saines, qui garantissent manifestement ce qui, pour moi, est très important: la finalité spécifique du développement.

Je vous poserai une seule question parce que je peux évidemment partager l'ensemble des questions qui ont été posées et, en tout cas, je peux partager quasi à 100% vos positions: est-ce que je pourrais connaître votre position par rapport à l'aide budgétaire, qui est un sujet souvent controversé dans cette assemblée. Tout le monde sait que je suis un chaud partisan de l'aide budgétaire parce que je crois dur comme fer que l'aide budgétaire est au fond l'expression de la confiance que l'on fait à nos partenaires et que, sans cette aide budgétaire, il sera impossible d'aider à la consolidation d'États régaliens qui, pour le moment existent trop peu souvent.

1-112

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Oui, je sais que l'aide budgétaire représente aujourd'hui une part essentielle de notre politique de coopération au développement. J'y suis favorable parce qu'elle renforce l'*ownership*. Et c'est ce que nous recherchons: que l'aide permette aux pays d'atteindre eux-mêmes leurs buts politiques, qu'elle permette aux pays de se renforcer. Mais nous ne distribuons pas l'aide budgétaire aveuglément. Il y a les objectifs du Millénaire. C'est quelque chose de très sage parce que nous faisons du *benchmarking* et que nous pourrions ainsi contrôler l'application de ces aides. Nous accordons aussi

beaucoup d'aides sectorielles, notamment dans les domaines de l'éducation et de la santé. Ce que nous faisons est très sage. Bien sûr que c'est de la politique de développement. On doit trouver un bon indicateur. On pourrait dire: "oui, et si nous faisons quelque chose de différent, quel serait le résultat?" Je crois que les politiques élaborées par la Commission depuis treize ans sont très efficaces même si je reste prêt à répondre à toutes les questions autour des politiques budgétaires. Nous ne perdons pas d'argent. Au contraire, nous en gagnons. Parce que si les pays sont plus sains, qu'ils réussissent mieux, c'est également bon pour nous. C'est une bonne méthode.

Je voudrais dire également ... ce n'est pas une punition. Il y a la possibilité maintenant d'avoir plus d'argent si vous avez bien progressé. C'est une politique d'initiation. Ce n'est pas une politique punitive. C'est une politique qui, je crois, donne beaucoup de chances.

1-113

Louis Michel (ALDE), *coprésident de la délégation ACP*. – Deux questions: une ponctuelle, très rapidement, et une qui concerne un thème qui nous est cher à tous.

Premièrement, seriez-vous d'accord pour que le suivi parlementaire des accords de partenariat économique soit assuré par l'Assemblée parlementaire paritaire? Cette question-là est ponctuelle, précise. Deuxièmement, qu'envisagez-vous pour mettre à contribution le produit des ressources naturelles dans les pays en voie de développement où il y a des ressources naturelles qui sont manifestement trop souvent exploitées par des acteurs qui ne visent absolument pas l'intérêt prioritaire des populations?

1-114

Andris Piebalgs, *Commissaire désigné*. – En ce qui concerne la première question, pour le partenariat économique, on a aussi prévu les commissions parlementaires. C'est dans le texte. Cela veut dire que nous avons prévu les commissions parlementaires mais que, dans le même temps, nous n'avons pas affaibli la coopération de l'Assemblée paritaire. Ce n'est pas le cas. Nous faisons plus de coopération parlementaire, pas moins, dans notre politique.

En ce qui concerne les ressources naturelles, il y a différentes initiatives que nous devons soutenir. Il y a les "extractive industries", "transparency initiatives", de bonnes initiatives à appliquer, par exemple, en Azerbaïdjan et dans d'autres pays. Il faut trouver des méthodes pour soutenir les propositions au niveau international et mettre au point de bonnes méthodes pour utiliser les ressources naturelles.

1-115

Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE). – Thank you, Madam Chair, and congratulations on keeping to the timetable. Commissioner-designate, I think that European policy on development aid is a big story – a success story – that we should be proud of. I am sure you are proud of it, and I am sure Louis behind me was very proud of it. Do you have any idea as to how we can better inform the public

of the Union – who provide the money, of course, through their taxes – on what is going on and make them proud, and more supportive, of what you are going to be doing?

1-116

Andris Piebalgs, *Commissioner-designate*. – This is a rather complex issue. One of the difficulties is that, basically, we have not made good communication for Europe either, because each of us believes that we are doing a good job. I believe that our families believe that we are doing a good job, but at the same time abroad, when it comes to it, we still cannot manage.

The same is also true for development policy. I agree that it is a success story, in the sense that we have made quite a lot of improvements; it could still be better, but it is really targeting one of the biggest challenges of mankind.

We have two methods that, I think, give us some opportunity. One is that we have development days – now during the Belgian Presidency we will have them again, giving us an opportunity to address the media, and secondly we also have public lectures series: the Kapucinski lecture series in a new Member State.

But I believe that the biggest chance for promoting our policy is through the internet. I believe this medium no longer has any national borders, and you could come and really deliver it. So my attention will be strongly on communicating what we are doing in development policy. Where does the people's money go, what have we achieved, and what would have happened if we had not done it?

I believe that a huge challenge which I will face – perhaps one of the biggest challenges – is really to communicate; people should be proud that we spend money on development aid. I think that this could only be achieved if people know that the money is not lost, that there is some value added, that these are good projects, and that the countries are doing better. We need to find a way.

1-117

Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE). – I agree entirely. The internet is a powerful new tool. I wondered whether you would consider twittering. You could be telling your public right now that you are having a very hard time from MEPs. When you are travelling around the world you could twitter to us and tell us what you are doing.

1-118

Andris Piebalgs, *Commissioner-designate*. – To be honest, I am not very friendly with this means. I do blogging at this stage.

I should spend time in getting to understand twittering better in order to answer your question, because blogging on energy has been rather successful, so it was not bad although it demands quite a lot of time. So I will definitely continue blogging. But I need to look at what

twittering is all about as I do not have so much experience in this.

1-119

Maurice Ponga (PPE). – Monsieur le Commissaire désigné, dans la communication sur le futur des relations entre l'Union européenne et les pays et territoires d'outre-mer, la Commission propose que la future association, après 2013, s'inspire des formules appliquées avec succès pour la mise en œuvre de certaines politiques internes de l'Union, et notamment la politique régionale et la stratégie menée à l'égard des régions ultrapériphériques.

D'après vous, quels éléments de ces politiques internes pourrait-il être intéressant de transposer aux PTOM? Cette question me conduit à vous interroger, en outre, sur la manière dont vous allez garantir une gestion efficiente des dossiers des PTOM, qui sont des membres de la famille européenne dans le cadre de la réorganisation de la Commission et de votre DG, et avec l'entrée en vigueur du traité de Lisbonne.

1-120

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Because of these abbreviations, I will answer this question in English, if I may. Overseas territories and countries are easier terminology for me. With two acronyms I sometimes find it difficult to answer. It is part of my job, because this is the role that I have in DG Development – to ensure that we properly address these challenges and then also monitor their implementation.

We will continue to monitor this issue. I know that the budget is not big compared with other parts. I think it was EUR 286 million, so it is not the biggest budget that we have, but I am fully committed to following our obligations towards these countries and territories. This is also our obligation. It stems from the Treaty, and we will continue to support these countries.

I have no more detailed answers because I am still learning the dossier, and OTC countries and territories are something that I need to understand better. But it is part of our policy, and I will continue to do this.

1-121

Thijs Berman (S&D). – Het is heel duidelijk, mijnheer Piebalgs, u loopt niet in zeven sloten tegelijk. Met deze uitdrukking wens ik de vertalers een zeer gelukkig en creatief 2010.

De vraag: toegang tot financiering. Groot probleem in ontwikkelingsbeleid is de toegang tot financiën voor burgers in arme landen. Vooral vrouwen en boeren hebben daar enorm problemen mee. Naar mijn smaak zou de Europese Unie daar een veel krachtiger en ambitieuzer beleid in moeten voeren, om die toegang tot financiering te kunnen verzekeren, niet alleen door micro-financiering, maar ook door verzekeringen en dergelijke. Wat is uw opvatting daarover en wat bent u van plan te gaan doen?

1-122

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Both issues that you mention – the gender issue and the farming issue – are very high on my priority list. Now, with the mid-term review we will have a chance to look at things with a critical eye and see what can be done. In a lot of instruments we have some small projects in these areas and I need to look into how to strengthen these two dimensions. I cannot give you a very precise answer on what exactly we can do, but they are both priority issues.

1-123

Thijs Berman (S&D). – Zolang die financiering door eigen middelen nog niet voldoende geregeld is - en dat duurt nog wel even - zullen we door moeten gaan met bijvoorbeeld de financiering van gezondheidszorg. Wat is uw plan met het *Global Fund for HIV/Aids* e.d. Wat is uw plan met het GAVI-vaccinatiefonds, hoe ziet u daar de toekomst van financiering door en verantwoordelijkheid van de EU?

1-124

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – We continue financing the global fund for fighting AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. I think it is a good thing that we are doing, and we need to continue it. It is our obligation, and we will continue to do this.

There is always the challenge to put on funds more directly, so I know it is always a challenge. But when we can clearly see that there is more value added if we participate in international finance in the funds, we should do this. We should not be shy. We should ask to be well recognised as a donor, and we should see that these funds are fully accountable, so that the policy will continue. But, concerning this global fund for fighting AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, I think I have heard only positive things until now, and I have no intention of reversing this policy.

1-125

Alf Svensson (PPE). – Jag vill ställa en fråga som delvis anknyter till Bermans fråga. I vissa regioner i södra Afrika är uppemot 50 procent av flickorna i *high school* hivpositiva. Många av oss menar säkert att man alltså inte kan tala om stöd till Afrika, bistånd till Afrika om man inte samtidigt engagerar sig i en kamp mot hiv och aids. Vi vet att Sydafrika tidigare har haft en mycket egendomlig inställning – eller fullständigt förvriden inställning – till hiv och aids. Nu har emellertid presidenten, Jacob Zuma, kommit till besinning och intagit en annan hållning.

Jag undrar därför om det inte vore dags för EU att tillmötesgå den inställning som Jacob Zuma nu visar för att hjälpa till att bekämpa den pest som hiv och aids är, och som är mycket mer betungande än vad som vanligtvis framhålls i debatten.

1-126

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I believe that we have achieved some progress in fighting HIV/AIDS. I think our programmes have definitely had a response, sometimes at the expense of the European Court of Auditors, who write damning reports that we spend too much on HIV/AIDS. We have also done a lot

in the prevention of the disease, and I think we are improving all the time. It is not so far from our other screen, but we continue to do this.

We can do this in different areas: one is definitely addressing the issues relating to all the people that have this illness. We can also do a lot on the prevention issue and education. So we are addressing the issues across the scale. But I believe that we need just to continue the policies that have been drawn up. I do not see any need for a sharp turn in this policy. We just need to be focused, as we have been until now. Perhaps some fine tuning is necessary, but nothing more than that.

1-127

Alf Svensson (PPE). – Tack så mycket för svaret. Det finns en del ideella organisationer som gör utomordentligt konkreta insatser i detta arbete. Jag undrar om ni, herr Piebalgs, är benägen eller villig att ge stöd åt denna typ av ideellt inriktade verksamheter?

1-128

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I very much appreciate the work done by the non-governmental sector. I think they are doing a great job in sometimes very difficult conditions. I will monitor this and be ready to increase support for their work, provided that we keep in the financial framework, because these are the rules, and I cannot go beyond them because otherwise our Budget Control Committee will not leave a piece of me alive! They are always very keen on development policy. This is why I think it is the only reason why we are being limited in terms of overall finance. But we very much support the work of these organisations and we will continue to do so.

1-129

Norbert Neuser (S&D). – Sehr geehrter Herr Piebalgs! Ich glaube, es ist kein Nachteil für Europa, wenn wir jetzt mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit einen Entwicklungskommissar bekommen, der vorher für Energie zuständig war. Ich glaube, alle Millenniums-Ziele, die wir angehen, sind ohne eine vernünftige Energieversorgung nicht denkbar.

Vor dem Hintergrund des Klimawandels frage ich deshalb, wie Sie stärker in den Entwicklungsländern alternative und erneuerbare Energie forcieren möchten.

1-130

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Ich habe bereits damit begonnen, als ich noch Energiekommissar war. Für die Entwicklungsländer sind die erneuerbaren Energien von viel größerem Interesse. Warum? Weil sie klein und dezentralisiert sind. Wir haben jetzt eine gute Solartechnologie, das bedeutet nicht nur Photozellen, sondern auch konzentrierte Solarenergiequellen, und auch Windturbinen, die sehr viel machen können.

Ich glaube, wir müssen diese Projekte mehr unterstützen. Denn es gibt keinen Fortschritt ohne Energieversorgung. Es gibt keine Chance für Afrika oder andere Entwicklungsländer. Und fossile Energieträger sind immer teurer. Ein Gaskraftwerk zu bauen, das bedeutet

mehr Abhängigkeit vom Gaspreis. Ich glaube, die erneuerbaren Energien sind die Chance für die Entwicklungsländer. Da möchte ich natürlich so viel wie möglich investieren. Wir haben die Technologie, diese Staaten brauchen diese Energie, und wir müssen in diesen Bereich investieren. Ich glaube, die Energie ist unsere europäische Nische.

Die Chinesen haben viel in neue Straßen investiert. Das haben sie gut gemacht, die Qualität ist gut. Unsere Aufgabe ist es jedoch, für diese Staaten für Energienetze und Energiequellen eine Antwort zu finden.

1-131

Eleni Theocharous (PPE). – Although I would not be surprised if you could answer me in Greek, I will put my question in English. In order to meet the United Nations goal for universal access in 2010 and to assist countries in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere to stop the loss of healthcare workers and other scientists, will you as Commissioner ensure that the Commission will continue to strongly support the Global Fund and the Global Aids Vaccine Initiative and other initiatives which are working to develop, for example, the medical infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa?

1-132

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Well, now with Greek I would not surprise you. I have been to Greece, but Greek sounds Greek to me, so there is no chance! The only chance I have is because I studied physics so I recognise the letters, omega, pi and so on, so sorry no chance for me. Thank you for putting the question in English, because in a way the translation is sometimes difficult, that is why I do not always answer very precisely, because I hear the native language in translation in the earphones, and it is sometimes difficult. It is not just that I am trying to avoid the answer.

Yes, definitely, medical care is one of the basic prerogatives and also the basic tasks of the Commission. There was a question asked: why you are not going for 20% for health. Well, as an obligation input. We put health very high on our priority agenda, and it is very clear that health will always be a focus of attention. We support, for example, not only global funds but also our own programmes. For example, for Africa, we support the so-called Telemedicine project, so that practitioners could call specialists via a global satellite system, really to get advice. So we are trying to do everything to strengthen the health dimension in Africa, because it is one of the challenges from the Millennium Development Goals, and we are bound – these development goals are being achieved. So we will continue our policy in this area, and I can confirm that we will do it.

1-133

Eleni Theocharous (PPE). – What would be your policy for preventing the brain drain from sub-Saharan Africa, and will you support increased resources to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015?

1-134

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – The only way to avoid the brain drain really is to succeed in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, because if countries are not better places to live in, people will try to find a way out, and the ones that are more capable of finding a job will move. That is very clear, so we must succeed in our development policy so as to avoid the brain drain.

Having said this it is not only in developing countries. My own country has the same issue. A lot of young people are leaving to work in other places. My hope is always that the conditions improve, and people do have a tendency to come back, because one's native country is the best place to live if the conditions are right.

We should therefore not be too afraid that some people are going to other countries to live and work, since as long as we are succeeding in development policy we have a chance that they will come back.

1-135

Michael Gahler (PPE), Vorsitzender der Delegation für die Beziehungen zum Panafrikanischen Parlament. – Herr Kommissar! Für meine Delegation ist die Implementierung der EU-Afrikastrategie ein zentraler Punkt der Kooperation mit unseren Kollegen vom panafrikanischen Parlament.

Sie kennen die Probleme bei der Umsetzung dieses ersten Aktionsplans mit seinen acht Partnerschaften, und Ende des Jahres findet ja schon der nächste Gipfel EU-Afrika statt. In welche Richtung möchten Sie diese Implementierung der EU-Afrika-Strategie weiterentwickeln, damit man wenigstens in einigen Bereichen zu konkreten Ergebnissen kommt?

Darf ich davon ausgehen, dass Sie die sehr parlamentsfreundliche Haltung der bisherigen Kommission bei der Einbeziehung in die Implementierung beibehalten werden, das heißt, die Beteiligung an den Gipfeln, unsere Rolle bei den Troika-Sitzungen auf Ministerebene, und auch, dass das panafrikanische Parlament von den 55 Millionen Euro institutioneller Unterstützung für die AU profitieren kann?

1-136

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Sie haben Recht, es aber besteht ein Risiko, dass dem Geld nicht zugestimmt wird. Aber im Prinzip ja. Natürlich werden wir diese panafrikanischen Parlamente weiterhin unterstützen, weil ich glaube, dass das eine sehr gute Initiative ist. Wenn wir Erfolg haben wollen, müssen wir eine parlamentarische Demokratie schaffen.

Welchen Bereichen müssen wir mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken? Ich glaube, die Strategie ist in dem Sinn gut gemacht, dass wir acht strategische Partnerschaften hatten. Das müssen wir weiterverfolgen.

Mir liegt ganz besonders die Energiepartnerschaft am Herzen. Wir hatten schon eine gute Zusammenarbeit mit der Kommission der Afrikanischen Union in diesem

Bereich, wir dürfen aber auch andere Partnerschaften nicht aufgeben.

Ich glaube, jetzt kommt erst eine kritische Analyse, weil wir die Implementierung erst seit zwei Jahren haben. Die größte Schwierigkeit besteht meines Erachtens darin, dass es keine unabhängige Finanzquelle gibt. Wir müssen von verschiedenen Bereichen etwas mitnehmen – und dann ist es immer etwas peinlich zu sagen, wir hatten keinen guten Erfolg.

Soweit ich informiert bin, haben wir einen guten Fortschritt erzielt, und wir müssen daran weiterarbeiten. Für den dritten EU-Afrika-Gipfel können wir vielleicht einige Turmprojekte schaffen – sehr konkret und sehr gezielt – z. B. Energienetze oder Investitionen im Klimaschutz oder in die Wälder. Es gibt wahrscheinlich Möglichkeiten, ein gutes Leistungsprojekt zu haben. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt würde ich aber sagen, dass wir an der Strategie festhalten müssen.

1-137

Michael Gahler (PPE), Vorsitzender der Delegation für die Beziehungen zum Panafrikanischen Parlament. – Sie haben das Problem auch schon angesprochen. Wir fahren mehrgleisig gegenüber Afrika mit Cotonou, mit der EU-Afrika-Strategie. Gegenüber Nordafrika haben wir Nachbarschaftspolitik-Süden und Südafrika ist DCI. Sehen Sie, dass diese verschiedenen Ebenen in der Zukunft zusammengeführt werden, damit auch immer für alle Projekte das Geld da ist und auch die Institutionen kompatibel sind. Sehen Sie da in der Zukunft eine Perspektive?

1-138

Andris Piebalgs, designiertes Kommissionsmitglied. – Ja, das ist eine komplexe Frage, weil AKP in der Tat die Initiative dieser Staaten ist. Nur diese können das ändern. So wird Cotonou weiterbestehen, weil diese Staaten das selbst so entschieden haben.

Aber in allen anderen Bereichen können wir mehr Synergien schaffen. Es wird nicht so einfach sein, für ganz Afrika eine Strategie zu entwickeln. Da sehe ich zu viele Herausforderungen.

1-139

David-Maria Sassoli (S&D). – Gentile Commissario, sono stati affrontati tanti argomenti e io la ringrazio. Lei guiderà un pezzo importante della nostra politica estera, una parte sicuramente rilevante.

Vorrei ora da lei una valutazione squisitamente politica: quali sono le debolezze europee su cui bisogna concentrarsi, anziché alla luce della sua esperienza?

1-140

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – There are quite a lot of weaknesses. I think one of the biggest weaknesses, as I mentioned in my introduction, is that we sometimes have 28 policies – that means 27 Member States plus the Commission. In particular in development aid we have made a couple of steps towards aid effectiveness, but that needs to be continued.

It is a sensitive area, and one we need to make it even better.

When you discuss matters with the Member States they usually agree that we need this, but when it comes to putting it into practice each of them says it is not their priority, so we need to strengthen this commonality element. From the point of view of approach we are the same, but when it comes to implementation we sometimes get too selfish.

The same also applies to international issues. When we come to international negotiations, the weakness is that we are not flexible enough. We are correct enough to have common position agreed by 27 Member States, with Parliament also involved as well as the Commission proposal, but, when it comes to today's multipolar world, things should be more dynamic. We should be able to be more flexible, and I believe the Lisbon Treaty, with the President of the European Council and particularly with my colleague, Catherine Ashton, who has a very unusual role as High Representative and Vice-President, gives us a new chance to be flexible and responsive.

On the third point, we still need to find a good balance between political necessity and the financial ability to deliver, and it sometimes takes too long to deliver. I could say proudly that the Commission services are working on development projects like our French or British colleagues, but we are still underperforming compared with our Swedish counterparts. We need to learn how to work faster, how to deliver faster, and these are things that could be improved.

1-141

David-Maria Sassoli (S&D). – Gentile Commissario, l'acqua è una fonte di conflitti e sappiamo che la situazione si aggraverà. Sarà una tra le sue priorità?

1-142

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Most definitely. Water poses a lot of challenges. Part of the challenge is that there will be a lot of areas that will be short of water. That means that energy and water should come together with desalination. We are already supporting some small-scale projects, but we need to think about this.

In Central Asia, there is a potential for conflict between one country that is in the mountains, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, which is lower. So we need to follow up first on the facilities that we have started, but also very clear water policies. It is inevitable that this will be a huge challenge, just as energy is.

1-143

Cristian Dan Preda (PPE). – Le questionnaire que le Parlement vous a adressé comportait une question sur les initiatives législatives primordiales. Vous avez indiqué que, pour vous, la révision de l'accord de Cotonou constituait une priorité. Ma question porte sur ce sujet: quelles sont vos attentes en ce qui concerne les

négociations en vue d'une seconde révision des accords de Cotonou?

J'aimerais que vous insistiez, si possible, sur la dimension politique de ces accords. Quelle est votre vision sur cette dimension politique?

1-144

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – L'accord de Cotonou est valable jusqu'en 2020, donc pour vingt ans encore. Nous avons des attentes par rapport à la révision du deuxième accord de Cotonou. Les possibilités de modernisation se font plus précises, notamment pour les questions de commerce et de migration. Nous voulons un véritable partenariat avec les pays ACP. Là réside notre attente. Ce sera assez difficile parce que de nombreuses questions sont en cours de négociation avec les pays ACP. Nous dégagerons un accord, je l'espère, d'ici la mi-2010. J'espère que le Parlement, qui doit s'exprimer sur cet accord, sera satisfait du résultat de nos négociations. Nous sommes en train de négocier et les prochains six mois seront assez durs.

L'accord de Cotonou représente, je crois, un élément important dans l'architecture de notre coopération au développement. Cet accord a en effet beaucoup évolué dans le temps, depuis la Convention de Lomé, et de nombreuses améliorations ont été apportées à cette relation. J'espère qu'il y aura encore un accord de Cotonou après 2020, mais aussi des relations avec les pays ACP.

1-145

Patrice Tirolien (S&D). – Monsieur le commissaire, si l'intégration régionale est l'une des finalités des APE, et si l'Union européenne a fait de l'insertion des régions ultrapériphériques dans leur environnement proche une priorité, force est de constater qu'il n'existe pas aujourd'hui de véritable politique européenne cohérente en la matière.

Bien au contraire, l'appartenance à l'Union européenne constitue souvent un obstacle à une meilleure insertion régionale des RUP. On a pu le constater lors des négociations de l'APE "Cariforum", où les intérêts spécifiques des RUP n'ont pas suffisamment été pris en compte par l'Union européenne.

Le commissaire désigné s'engage-t-il à dégager des synergies avec son homologue du développement régional, et ce afin de simplifier et clarifier les procédures d'accès aux fonds FED et FEDER concernant les projets de coopération transnationale?

1-146

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – La question était assez complexe. Avec les pays Cariforum, nous avons des accords de partenariat économique. Je crois que les deux parties sont assez satisfaites de cet accord.

En ce qui concerne les territoires ultrapériphériques, c'est la politique régionale qui doit répondre à cette question. Pour les pays OTC, nous avons également une politique.

Il est vrai qu'on doit trouver une cohérence mais, comme toutes nos relations politiques sont différentes avec chacun de ces pays, il est difficile de dire "oui, on fait une politique cohérente". Mais vous avez raison, tous les événements dans les Caraïbes, particulièrement en haute mer, sont inquiétants. Et nous devons chercher des solutions pour trouver une amélioration dans ces territoires.

1-147

Filip Kaczmarek (PPE). – Pan Mitchell chciał spytać o oficjalną pomoc rozwojową (ODA). Kilka miesięcy temu rozmawialiśmy z panem Karelem De Gucht na ten sam temat i on wtedy powiedział, że jego zdaniem sposobem na zmobilizowanie krajów członkowskich jest nazywanie ich po imieniu i napiętnowanie. Pan Piebalgs też dzisiaj powiedział, że trzeba twardo postępować wobec krajów członkowskich w sprawie zobowiązań dotyczących oficjalnej pomocy rozwojowej (ODA), ale jakimi metodami można rządy i parlamenty tych krajów przekonać, że trzeba to zrobić?

1-148

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I know that it is not easy to name and shame, and I do not even like this phrase, but I think Member States would sometimes like a very clear position from the Commission.

This is because they too have many challenges. It is not that they are against development aid but, if the Commission keeps quiet, how can they convince their electorates? They could at least say it is the Commission asking for them. That is why I would not call it name and shame. I would say it is reminding.

I mentioned the European Council of December. I should not be completely unworried, and definitely am a little worried, as I know that these types of things are not so easily delivered because there are a lot of challenges at home.

We will continue to follow very closely these ODA issues to ensure that Member States deliver. We will now have a mid-term review and will be preparing the spring package and once again have a moment of truth. We will also have a high level meeting at the United Nations in September and I am fully sure that Member States will once again confirm their commitment. We have the Monterey report system, and a system to really push Member States forwards and we need to support that effort and to say it matters; it is important, it is what we promised and we cannot fail because the consequences will be very bad.

So name and shame is a bad label for a process which is really just reminding everyone of the challenges we face and the commitments we have made.

On energy, we have made progress on renewable energy, when it seemed impossible to devise an EU target, and still Member States ...

(The Chair cut off the speaker)

1-149

Gay Mitchell (PPE). – Could I just ask the Commissioner-designate the following question. Some people are saying that because we are not meeting our ODA commitments, we should change the rules and measure this in some other way. However, the danger is that, if we do that, they will still not be met. So can we take it that you will hold people to this target of 0.7%?

1-150

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Well, I can only repeat. The Heads of State and Government confirmed 0.7. Any Commissioner – whoever it is – who went lower should be fired immediately. It is very clear that 0.7 is a commitment, and I have heard this said since December. So there is no way back.

1-151

Filip Kaczmarek (PPE). – Pan Komisarz pochodzi z jednego z krajów, które czasami nazywamy nowymi krajami udzielającymi pomocy. Moje pytanie dotyczy tego, że wiele krajów Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej w ciągu ostatnich 20 lat przeżyło głęboką transformację ekonomiczną, społeczną i polityczną, i niektóre z tych doświadczeń mogą być użyteczne dla krajów rozwijających się, bo są to doświadczenia zakończone sukcesem. Które obszary mogą być Pana zdaniem użyteczne w pomocy krajom rozwijającym się?

1-152

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – You are definitely right. I think some of the key experiences could be very helpful, and the way we made transformations was never easy.

As in the example I mentioned, all the reforms have been extremely painful. However, it is important to see that the reforms brought good results. We are preparing a compendium of experiences from the new Member States that could be used, but I believe that as more new Member States participate in development cooperation, so the better and stronger the Union is, because nobody could accuse Latvia of having vested interests in the Democratic Republic of Congo or in Angola. It has no colonial past whatsoever, so nobody could use that false argument against us. We are working on just one principle. We can see that we need global poverty reduction because, if the world is not a happy place, it is dangerous for us, or at least for our children and grandchildren.

So we are working in good faith, and I believe a lot of experiences that we have had could be useful. At the same time I know that you cannot copy experiences and that developing countries have had a different historical development. It is not exactly the same experience. You cannot transform one to one, but you can use some elements of the transformation process we went through.

1-153

Bill Newton Dunn (ALDE). – Just a simple question, Commissioner-designate, as you must be as tired as we

are by now. What do you fear the most – what could really go wrong in the next five years?

1-154

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I would say that the biggest tasks are on Catherine Ashton's side, because what she needs to establish is a working External Action Service that has the trust of the European Parliament, of the Member States and of the partners outside the European Union. It is such a delicate task that you cannot afford to make any mistakes. If you make mistakes, it is lethal, and we end up with the European Commission representation just having another name tag. That should not be the case.

I would say that this is the biggest challenge, the biggest opportunity and the biggest risk – and I wish Catherine all the best in her work.

1-155

Thijs Berman (S&D). – From the hearing with Baroness Ashton I did not quite catch who will be responsible for the programming and financing of the DCI. Can you be more specific, please?

1-156

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – This is still policy in the making but, with the responsibilities as they stand at today's hearing, I am responsible for programming in general and I have a very concrete responsibility for the EDF, while Catherine Ashton's services would be responsible for DCI programmes. That is the situation, but everything is in the making so there may be different opinions. We are still establishing the External Action Service and we need to find the best administrative way of working between the External Action Service and my services.

1-157

Michael Cashman (S&D). – Given that there is, arguably, a grab for power by certain DGs related to the External Action Service, how will you ensure that development is not diminished?

1-158

Judith Sargentini (Verts/ALE). – Further to the question by Mr Berman, and your answer that Baroness Ashton is responsible for programming DCI, did you fight that fight? It is time to end the split between the EDF and DCI. After all, they both concern development aid. They have the same goals and the same principles. Is that a fight you fought and lost?

1-159

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – Well I am still not the Development Commissioner, so I cannot have won or lost any fight so far!

I think we should look at this from both sides. If I were to be programming everything, I would actually need a geographical desk. Catherine Ashton would also need a geographical desk, for everybody. This is because development aid goes across the board. Do we need two administrative structures to address this? The answer is 'no'. However, the External Action Service also needs country desks.

I believe that the best way to deal with this is really via horizontal responsibility, and as far as possible programming duties, but I would not see it as the end of the world if the programming were in the External Action Service, because I am also a member of the college and programming, whenever it comes, will come in cooperation with Catherine Ashton. It will not be a game. If I were to be in charge, Catherine Ashton would also be involved.

It is collective work and you should not be afraid that we will lose the development policy dimension. We will not lose this. We will lose it only if in 2013, when the financial perspective is discussed, we still have two instruments and no increase in money from the governments. This is where the big fight is being held, and it will come during your time in the Parliament. This is where the big fight will be, but there will be no divisions between Catherine and me.

(The Chair cut off the speaker)

1-160

Gay Mitchell (PPE). – Clearly, from the questions we have asked you, the EPP, the Social Democrats and others have very serious concerns around this. I would ask you to bear those in mind, because it will go on throughout the time of this committee.

I want to ask you one other question, and I do not want you particularly to answer it today but to bear it in mind. When Congressmen go abroad, the US Embassy is there for them to support them. Up until now, the External Service has been the Commission, so Commission people got the support of the External Service. Can we take it that the External Service will be there to support Members and to ensure that we can do our job in relation to serving the needs of the developing world? I would like you to bear that in mind, and perhaps we could deal with it at another stage when you are back before the committee. Will you bear that in mind?

1-161

Andris Piebalgs, Commissioner-designate. – I can give every assurance that development cooperation policy will not suffer from the establishment of an External Action Service. It will only get stronger, with more coherence and a stronger, single voice for the EU in the outside world.

Concerning the modalities of the External Action Service, these still have to be decided and remain a task ahead of us. Catherine Ashton is preparing the blueprint. She will produce this by late spring and I believe it will provide a good answer to all the questions you have. However, the whole policy, including President Barroso's mission letter to me very clearly states we are not deviating from or compromising on development policy goals.

Everybody is asking whether the changes will be for the worse. Well, I can confirm they will not be for the worse. Things can only get better, and will be more

coherent. I am not one for just fighting turf wars. I am fighting for the principle, and the principle is that I can see the Union will be stronger and we will all gain.

1-162

La Présidente. – Je remercie tous mes collègues pour les questions posées, et M. Piebalgs pour ses réponses. Comme annoncé au début de l'audition, j'invite à présent M. le commissaire désigné – s'il le souhaite – à faire une brève déclaration finale, d'une durée maximale de cinq minutes, avant la conclusion de la réunion.

1-163

Andris Piebalgs, Commissaire désigné. – Madame la présidente, Mesdames et Messieurs les députés, j'aimerais formuler ma conclusion en letton, c'est pourquoi j'invite les personnes qui ne parlent pas le letton à utiliser les casques pour l'interprétation. Je voudrais profiter de cette opportunité pour m'exprimer dans ma langue maternelle.

1-164

Andris Piebalgs, komisāra amata kandidāts. – Vispirms es gribētu pateikties par šo iespēju trīs stundu garumā apmainīties viedokļiem ar Eiropas Parlamenta deputātiem.

Man šī iztaujāšana, protams, nebija nekāda izprieca. Tai pašā laikā, ja es kļūšu par Eiropas Komisijas locekli, atbildīgu par attīstības sadarbību, tā dod ļoti labu bāzi tālākam darbam. Tādēļ es uztveru iztaujāšanu gan kā manas piemērotības pārbaudi, gan arī kā veidu, kā jūs nododat savu uztraukumu un bažas komisāra kandidātam. Tātad es uztveru to kā ceļmaizi tālākam darbam, un paldies jums par to!

Nākamie pieci gadi attīstības sadarbībā ir gan iespēju, gan izaicinājumu laiks.

Pasaules čempionāts futbolā Dienvidāfrikas Republikā, gatavošanās Olimpiskajām spēlēm Brazīlijā pastiprinās cilvēku interesi par problēmām, ar kurām saduras jaunattīstības valstis.

Bet pats galvenais ir, ka mēs nedrīkstam pieļaut, ka laikā, kad pie mums ir pārticība, simtiem miljonu cilvēku cieš badu.

Attīstības sadarbības Tūkstošgades mērķi ir jāsasniedz. Tikai tā mēs varam dod bāzi tālākam mērķim — nabadzības izskaušanai.

Es saprotu, ka šā mērķa sasniegšanai ir jābūt globālai sadarbībai, līdzīgi kā cīņā ar klimata izmaiņām. Tomēr ES (Eiropas Savienība) var spēlēt īpašu lomu. Eiropas Savienība šobrīd sniedz 60 % no oficiālās attīstības palīdzības. Bet mēs zinām, ka mēs varam būt daudz efektīvāki.

Tas prasa pastiprināt sadarbību starp Eiropas Parlamentu, Eiropas Komisiju un dalībvalstīm.

2005. gadā mēs vienojāmies par paziņojumu — Eiropas konsensu attīstības sadarbībai. Pēc 5 gadiem mums ir jāiet tālāk, izmantojot iespējas, ko dod Lisabonas līgums.

Es gribētu vēlreiz apliecināt, ka, ja es tikšu apstiprināts šajā amatā, tad nežēlošu pūles, lai sasniegtu rezultātus, kādi no manis tiek gaidīti.

Es zinu, ka daudzus pārsteidza prezidenta izvēle attīstības komisāra amatā redzēt mani. Kas? Enerģijas

komisārs? No kurienes? No valsts, kura attīstības sadarbības politikā ir iesācēja?

Protams, iepriekšēja pieredze šajā sfērā man būtu noderējusi. Tomēr es gribu uzsvērt, ka mani šajā darbā atbalstīs profesionāli, attīstības sadarbības politikai uzticīgi Eiropas Komisijas dienesti.

Un, starp citu, arī Latvijā ir gana profesionālu cilvēku attīstības sadarbībā gan valstiskajā, gan nevalstiskajā sektorā.

Arī enerģijas komisāra amata pieredze man noderēs šajā politiski ļoti jutīgajā darbā.

Galvenais, ko es gribētu uzsvērt — man ir griba veikt šo darbu pēc labākās sirdsapziņas.

Godājamie Eiropas Parlamenta deputāti! Paldies par šo iespēju būt un diskutēt kopā ar Jums!

1-165

La Présidente. – Avant de lever la séance, je rappelle aux coordinateurs qu'une réunion d'évaluation de l'audition aura lieu à 20 heures, à huis clos, dans la salle ASP 1G2.

La séance est levée.