

Jozef Sikela (Commissioner for International Partnerships)

Questions LEAD:DEVE Invited: AFET, FEMM, INTA, LIBE

DEVE

1. Development cooperation in relation to economic foreign policy and the Global Gateway strategy

The primary objective of European Union development cooperation according to the treaties (Art. 208 TFEU) is "the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty". The political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029, presented by the Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and your mission letter, put forward also the concept of a new "economic foreign policy".

Against this background, what are the EU's development policy goals from your perspective, how will you pursue them in the geopolitical battle of offers and narratives and in particular how will you implement the Global Gateway strategy? In this context, how do you want to scale up the Global Gateway initiative and incentivise private sector investments, including from European companies, in developing regions, which are mutually beneficial? What mechanisms will be put in place to ensure that these investments align with local development needs, respect the primary objective of EU development cooperation policy and involve partner governments and civil society actors? How will you set up a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for projects funded under the Global Gateway initiative, and ensure transparency and parliamentary scrutiny over the strategic planning and implementation in line with the NDICI-Global Europe regulation and our Treaty obligations?

2. Delivering on the SDGs, addressing inequalities and policy coherence

The mission letter makes no reference to core human development policy areas, such as health, education, or food security. Which concrete measures will you take to strengthen the implementation of and reporting on the SDGs, including those regarding inclusive human development on the basis of commitments undertaken by the Commission, especially the minimum 10% for education from the International Partnerships budget, health, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and the protection of children, while involving local partners, as well as to reinforce and broaden the use of the inequality marker?

Will you operationalise Policy Coherence for Development throughout the legislative and political processes, including an ex-ante assessment and reporting on the impact of all Commission initiatives on our Global South partners, to ensure that European policies in areas such as trade, finance, security, agriculture, fisheries, climate, biodiversity, energy, raw materials and migration will create synergies, rather than undermine the EU's role in promoting the achievement of the SDGs globally?

3. EU-Africa partnership and relations with other regions

What specific areas will you prioritise in the EU-Africa partnership, how do you expect to

earn the trust of our African partners and will you update the EU-Africa strategy? How will you ensure a balanced approach to engaging with other geographic regions under your portfolio? What new EU measures or legislative initiatives, if any, would you propose to achieve those objectives? How do you intend to interact with the BRICS+ member countries, considering the consequences of the groups' expansion and integration for EU development policy?

4. Migration

How do you see the interlinkage between migration and the EU's development cooperation, particularly in the context of our obligations on Policy Coherence for Development? How will you address the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement and do you commit to ensuring that the relevant provisions and targets in the NDICI-Global Europe regulation as well as the EU's human rights obligations are fully respected? How do you foresee the cooperation and division of work on external aspects of migration and mobility with other Commissioners, in particular on migration-related agreements, and in ensuring the EP's scrutiny over such agreements? How will you enhance transparency about the use of NDICI-Global Europe funds in the area of migration, and engage with civil society organisations, diaspora groups and migrant communities in the design and implementation of migration related development programs?

5. Financing for development and needs of fragile countries

How do you intend to make sure that EU Official Development Assistance delivers more efficiently, including through localisation, and provides sufficient funding for Least Developed Countries and countries in fragile contexts, implementing the "differentiated approach" and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, while preventing any misuse of funds? In view of the development funding gap and increasing debt burdens faced by many developing countries, what initiatives will you take, at EU, Team Europe and multilateral level, on domestic resource mobilisation, illicit financial flows, as well as debt relief and debt restructuring management? How do you plan to engage private sector investments, including European companies and European Development Finance Institutions as well as Member States' funding agencies to scale up financing? What concrete approach in the proposal of the next long-term budget will you suggest for your portfolio and how will you contribute to the College work on a "revamped external action financing" in terms of resources and programmes to strengthen EU partnerships with developing countries?