

Development Policy Committee of Finland:

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION APPROPRIATIONS SHOULD BE SECURED BY LAW

To raise its development cooperation funding to 0.7 on the GNP has been Finland's political goal for more than thirty years, but the target is far from having been reached. The proposal for the state budget for the year 2007, compiled by the Ministry for Finance, suggests the growth of the development cooperation funds to 0.43 of the GNP. Compared to the year 2006, this would mean an increase of only a hundredth of one per cent.

"In order to reach the goal for development cooperation appropriations, serious consideration should be given to the release of development cooperation funds from the State budget framework procedure; this could be accomplished by passing a law that specifies a permanent level of development funding.. This way the political pulling back and forth could finally come to an end" comment the chairperson of the Development Policy Committee Ms. Gunvor Kronman.

"The general public strongly supports the growing of development cooperation appropriations. A credible level of funding is also an important part of the credibility of Finland's foreign policy and effectiveness" Kronman adds.

The target of both the government programs as well as the Development Policy Statement (2003) to rise development cooperation funding to 0.7 percent of the GNP by the year 2010 In the spring of 2006 the Government's resolution for the State budget framework for the years 2007–2011 reaffirmed the goal of 0.7% as the Government's political target. However, the allocation of funds for development cooperation in the years 2008–2011 was left to the new Government, whose term of office will start after the Parliamentary election to be held in May 2007. It is therefore necessary for the political parties to make their stances on the level and mechanisms of development cooperation known prior to the election.

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