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# Development Policy Committee: Finland still needs to catch up on goals in development policy

The Government of Prime Minister Sanna Marin has made a good start in implementing the development policy entries in the Government Programme. However, there continues to be room for improvement. At present, the main focus should be on preparing a clear roadmap, extending beyond the current government term, in order to raise development finance to the UN's recommendation of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI). The recommendation should be achieved by 2030.

The opinion was expressed by the Development Policy Committee, which is an advisory body representing Finnish parliamentary parties and society at large. The Committee's interim review gives recommendations that will enable Finland to better fulfil its international commitments, meet its global responsibility and increase the effectiveness of development policy as part of the implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Development Policy Committee considers that, during this government term, particular attention should be paid not only to drawing up the roadmap but also to clarifying the responsibilities and division of labour in development cooperation and development policy within external relations and more broadly in central government across policy sectors. The role, monitoring and effectiveness of international climate finance should also be clarified.

The Development Policy Committee commends the Government for the Report on Development Policy across Parliamentary Terms, which was presented to Parliament in September. The Report brings continuity to the development policy priorities and encourages multi-sectoral cooperation across administrative and organisational boundaries in the spirit of sustainable development. Closer collaboration between development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and the peace promotion are among the key reforms. In addition, such themes as education, climate and biodiversity feature more strongly in the Report than before.

In the Development Policy Committee's view, development finance and upgrading its various forms are key measures and targets for monitoring across several parliamentary terms. In addition, it is important to monitor the allocation and distribution of funding, for example, to the official development cooperation (ODA) administered by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and to other development cooperation as well as to funding in the form of grants and development policy investments and loans. Different forms of funding must promote development policy priorities and complement each other consistently. In the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, sufficient human resources must be allocated to development policy priorities and to related key themes.

Among the members of the Development Policy Committee, the Finns Party does not agree with the sections of the report concerning the amount of development finance. According to the Finns Party, in future, development assistance should be paid only from the budget surplus.

The Development Policy Committee proposes that the monitoring of development finance be clarified and made more transparent across the board. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs must develop statistical communication for stakeholders and the wider public. The Ministry should open a development assistance portal as soon as possible and make it accessible to everyone, and statistical communication with stakeholders and the wider public should be made a key part of it.

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The Development Policy Committee is the only body that conducts systematic and broad-based monitoring and analysis of Finnish development cooperation and development policy. The Government appoints the Committee for each government term. Its members include representatives of parliamentary parties, advocacy organisations, CSOs and universities in the UniPID network (Finnish University Partnership for International Development).