Record of outreach meeting with the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development

We held an outreach meeting with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) on 22 February 2013. The following is a record of the statements made by the representatives at that meeting.

BEGINS

Background: the relationship between the EU/EIB and EBRD

- The European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) are both shareholders in the EBRD.
- The EU is the largest single donor to the Bank, and accounts for more than one third of total grants channelled through the EBRD.
- Substantial additional co-financing takes place where projects receive parallel but separate flows of funds from the EBRD and from the EU.
- Increasing number of activities where EU grants are "blended" with EBRD loans.
- The EU is a key donor in areas where the EBRD operates such as central Asia and the southern and eastern Mediterranean.
- EIB is EBRD's most important co-financier and there is a Memorandum of Understanding between them.
- The EBRD supports maintaining a strong EU role in the future because of geographical proximity.

Advantages of working through the EU

- The EU guarantees collaboration with international financial institutions (IFIs) by providing large-scale funding.
- The EU is able to fund big infrastructure projects and leverage private sector finance.
- The EU is also critical to EBRD operations in supporting policy dialogue.
- The EU is accessible in Brussels and in developing countries.

Disadvantages of working through the EU

- Non-specialist bureaucrats rather than development experts attend meetings with the EBRD. They demonstrate a limited understanding of what the EBRD does.
- Relations between EBRD country offices and EU delegations need further developing.
- EU staff can at times show rigidity in their attitude to rules on monitoring and reporting.

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