



NEWS RELEASE

National platform welcomes CIDA/DFAIT merger legislation and looks forward to a strong Canadian commitment to poverty reduction

Ottawa, April 30, 2013. The federal government tabled Bill C-60 in Parliament yesterday, which contains the new legislation that will guide the amalgamation of the Canadian International Development Agency with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The new department is the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development.

“We believe the legislation introduced yesterday provides a good foundation to move ahead with the merger of CIDA and DFAIT,” said Julia Sanchez, President-CEO of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, the national platform of development and humanitarian organizations.

“We are encouraged by the mandate that this legislation spells out for the Minister for International Development, and by the explicit reference it makes of poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance,” she added.

The new Act creates the position of Minister for International Development on par with the Trade Minister, and transitions the current CIDA President into the role of Deputy Minister. Instead of being responsible for *the conduct of Canada’s international relations*, the Minister now has specific *responsibilities relating to international development, poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance*.

The new legislation spells out the Minister’s duties: undertaking activities on, ensuring the effectiveness of, and fostering relations with other countries and organizations on international development and humanitarian assistance, and ensuring that this contribution is in line with Canadian values and priorities.

“The legislation is just the starting point. How the mandate and agenda of the Minister translates into practice will be key both in terms of the mechanics of the merger and how it ensures policy coherence for development,” remarked Ms. Sanchez.

Before the government released the new Act, CCIC released [a set of benchmarks](#) for more effective and coherent international development and humanitarian assistance which reflect what civil society groups hoped to see in the legislation, its implementation and any future policy framework.

In this regard, CCIC is pleased that the ODA Accountability Act (ODAAA) has been maintained and that the new legislation specifically refers to the core mandate of poverty reduction as stipulated in the ODAAA. The legislation, however, does not reference international human



rights, nor commonly accepted principles and standards relating to aid effectiveness and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

"We look forward to working with the government to ensure that the new Department, and the adoption of the new Act, addresses the needs of those living in poverty", said Ms. Sanchez. "We also expect that the government will consult with Canadians to learn more about what they value when it comes to international development and humanitarian activities, and how Canada's aid program can best reflect these values."

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