Realising Effective Development Cooperation (EDC) commitments are essential to ensure that all forms of development cooperation: (1) fulfil the principle of leaving no one behind, (2) apply human rights-based approaches to development, and (3) address long-standing issues of poverty, marginalisation, and inequality, including gender inequality. In this regard, the effectiveness agenda, starting with the principles of democratic ownership, is a requisite to meet the 2030 Agenda, specifically SDG 17 (on Means of Implementation), and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Existing Aid and Development Commitments from Paris, Accra, Busan, Mexico, and Nairobi. As evidenced by the 2019 Progress Report and the CPDE Monitoring Report, the four Busan principles are yet to be fully implemented. Untying aid, using country systems as first option, ensuring mutual accountability involving all stakeholders have been slow. Providing an enabling environment for civil society has regressed. Fully realising this “unfinished business” requires reinvigorated effort, supported by a time-bound Global Action Plan.

Human rights and human rights-based approach to development. The 2011 Busan Partnership Agreement is explicit that principles of ownership, focus on results, inclusive development partnerships, and transparency and mutual accountability are founded on human rights and democratic principles. It also acknowledges that “reducing gender inequality is both an end in its own right and a prerequisite for sustainable and inclusive growth.” The linkages between genuine democracy, human rights, gender equality and the Busan EDC principles, however, are largely invisible in GPEDC’s work streams and discourse. In the GPECD biennial monitoring exercise, HRBAs are only implicit in some indicators that explore degrees of inclusion and mutual accountability. There is a need to define in concrete terms how the GPECD intends to promote and implement HRBA and development effectiveness.

SDGs and Civic Space. Real and transformative progress in poverty eradication, in tackling hunger, in decent work and sustainable livelihoods for all, in addressing gender and all forms of inequality, and in action for climate justice, will not be possible without a fully engaged civil society and population. The enabling environment for CSOs has faced significant barriers at all levels - from local, national to global. Civic space is shrinking and, in some instances, even closing entirely. All evidence confirm that legal, structural, political, financial, and systemic factors are hindering effective and inclusive partnerships. CSOs have been subject to various forms of rights violations, oppression, and violence, which infringe on their ability to operate and contribute to the SDGs. The commitment to reverse this trend made in Nairobi in 2016 should be put into action.

Emerging issues on EDC. CSOs note that implementation of development effectiveness commitments has limited progress; we are deeply concerned by the erosion of country’s policy space (SDG 17.15) as highlighted in the third GPECD Progress Report which is also the result of weak democratic global governance and participatory processes for developing countries. If this continues, EDC can become a blind spot in the new development architecture, including South-South Cooperation.

Climate financing, humanitarian assistance, migration and security issues are redefining official development assistance (ODA) and its purposes, with little attention to development effectiveness. If these new areas of focus are going to meet the challenges of expanding finance for the SDGs, they will require an even deeper commitment to the effectiveness agenda. It is important to uphold the integrity of ODA and its explicit purpose to lift people out of poverty.

Blended financing and leveraging private sector resources is becoming preferred modality to drive development processes despite lack of solid evidence on their development impact, adherence to human rights, international labour and environmental standards, which undermine efforts to realise SDGs. GPECD’s Kampala Principles on effective private sector engagement in development co-operation along with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide shared guidance for holding these new forms of finance accountable to EDC.
Since the adoption of Agenda 2030 in 2015, the international community has not been on track to realise the SDGs, including commitments to providing quality ODA. This is the result of the weak political will in the achievement of the goals both at the global and country levels.

1. Strongly encourage all members of the Global Partnership, in their messages to the High Level Political Forum, the UN special Summit on the SDGs as well as the UN High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development in September, and the HLPF reform process, to stress the fundamental importance of the effective development cooperation principles for achieving rapid and sustainable progress in advancing Agenda 2030, particularly with regard to SDG 16 and 17.

2. Enhance inclusive partnerships towards leaving no one behind, which implies strengthening democratic ownership and including representatives of the most marginalised groups in development strategies and projects while ensuring the CSO enabling environment and parliamentary oversight.

3. We call on the development partners to deliver on the realisation of the CSO enabling environment commitments. To that end, initiate a multi-stakeholder work stream to implement country-level initiatives to realise the Nairobi commitment on reversing CSO shrinking and closing civic space, and to report back on progress in the next High Level Meeting. We invite all GPEDC constituencies to commit to the Belgrade Call to Action, including the protection of human rights defenders.

4. Uphold principles of horizontal development cooperation, including solidarity, transparency, mutuality, gender equality, human rights, respect for sovereignty, non-conditionality particularly with respect to unequal conditions of partnership that often prevail even within South-South cooperation.

5. Building on the outcomes of the Third Monitoring as elaborated in the 2019 Progress Report, advance a time-bound agenda for the renewal of specific commitments from Paris to Busan, which remain unfulfilled. Review the extent to which the breadth of sustainable development goals may undermine the integrity of ODA and development cooperation by, for instance, pursuing interests such as those in the area of migration management and security, which must be addressed through appropriate, distinct initiatives.

6. Strengthen the GPEDC’s monitoring capacities through regular biennial reporting on progress in the realisation of the effectiveness agenda in all forms of development cooperation, at the local, regional and global levels.

7. Elaborate and monitor human rights-based approaches in carrying out our shared commitments to the effective development cooperation principles as a foundation for strengthening outcomes in relation to the SDGs.

8. Adapt the monitoring framework for the Fourth Monitoring Round to countries facing conditions of conflict and/or fragility and South-South Cooperation in the context of stock-taking from the 2018 Third Monitoring Round and by safeguarding the integrity of the Monitoring Framework endorsed in Busan.

9. Build upon the Kampala Principles to develop a monitoring indicator for the effective private sector engagement in development cooperation, including an assessment of blended finance and other leveraging arrangements consistent with development effectiveness principles, labour and other international human rights standards, with case studies to test this indicator in a range of partner countries prior to the Fourth Monitoring Round.

We, CSOs, commit to working together with governments, international organisations, business and other development actors to turn the promise of an effective development cooperation into concrete actions leading to a successful celebration of Busan+10.

Reference Documents:
CPDE Manifesto, Beirut Declaration, Belgrade Call to Action, and Action Agenda