

Summary note:

Amphitheatre session: Eradicating Poverty in Middle-Income Countries: Whose Responsibility?

1 December, 11h15-12h00, Amphitheatre Room

Moderator: Mr. Jonathan Glennie, Director, Sustainable Development Research Centre, Ipsos

Panellists (in speaking order):

- Mr. Manuel Gonzales Sanz, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Costa Rica
- Ms. Vicky Tauli Corrpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous people
- Mr. Luis Tejada, Director, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Spain
- Ms. Beverly Sakongan, Indigenous Peoples Movements for Self Determination and Liberation, Philippines

Key messages and actions arising:

- Middle-income countries (MICs) are often perceived as “almost developed” when, in fact, **there is a wide variety of contexts among different MICs and the great majority of them are still considered vulnerable or fragile** when social, environmental, governance dimensions are taken into account. Many MICs have experienced important economic and social advances over the past decades, but they still face challenges particularly with poverty since 70% of the world’s poor people live in MICs today.
- **While it was largely agreed that the main responsibility for eradicating poverty in MICs belong to their own national governments, participants pointed out that sources of poverty and inequality are not only national but also international** (e.g. trade regimes, subsidies). Therefore, solutions for tackling inequality and eradicating poverty should be implemented both nationally and internationally – and here development co-operation still has a role to play.
- Participants highlighted the following **areas that could be addressed by national governments, development partners and the international community** more broadly:

- National governments should take action to ensure that development results are delivered to all segments of society, particularly marginalised groups. They should create enabling environment and ensure peace and stability for civil society, minorities and marginalised groups to fully participate in the development process and benefit from its results.
- In the same vein, development co-operation should focus on helping people, independently of whether they are in low-income or middle-income countries. In MICs, exchange of knowledge and experiences could take a bigger role rather than economic support.
- International classifications should reflect not only the size of a country's economy, but also social and political indicators. This will help to assess whether a country has had a marked development improvement, and not only economic growth. Since there is often inequality and great disparity within countries, it is also important for international classifications to go beyond aggregate numbers and look at poverty at subnational level.