



FRENCH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
**European Charter on development cooperation in support of local governance**  
**Concept note**

In the framework of the upcoming EU Council Presidency, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs has initiated a multi-actors process (administrations, local authorities, civil society organisations, private sector...) dedicated to the elaborating of a **European Charter on development cooperation in support of local governance**, which purpose is to enhance aid effectiveness at the local level.

The European Commission suggested that this originally French process be extended at European level. The Charter will be referred to as an “innovative way” in the **Communication “Toward an EU approach to democratic local governance, decentralisation and territorial development”**. The Charter proposal will be presented as an appendix to this Communication which is currently being prepared by the European Commission (on which the Council will make a declaration on 10 and 11 November 2008). It could be promoted during the European Development Days which will take place on November 15-17<sup>th</sup> in Strasbourg (France) on the theme “Local Governance and the MDGs.”

### **Aim**

The necessity of this charter emerged from the following considerations :

- The importance of the local dimension of development
- The multiplication of actors cooperating in the field of local governance (States, local authorities, civil society organisations, private sector...).
- Their interventions are often scattered or even contradictory.
- There is a need for more harmonization in the field of local governance support to enhance aid effectiveness

This charter aims at strengthening **the coherence, the complementarity and the efficiency** of the different types of actors co-operating at the local level (public institutions, local authorities, civil society, private sector...). Following the political principles expressed by the Communication, the document also has an **operational purpose**. It aims at defining a shared vision about harmonised **development cooperation principles and modalities** that respect the specific characteristics of the actors concerned.

### **Elaboration methodology**

The Charter is being written up in a consensual manner through a **multi-actors working group** which brings together the European Commission, Member States, representatives of European organizations (Council of European Municipalities and Regions, Committee of the Regions, Concord...), experts and actors from the South.

The discussions are based on exchanges of experience and lessons learned and aim at elaborating a consensual and appropriate instrument. They take into account the various European existing Charters and reference documents on local governance and development.

The following topics are addressed by the working group : Local Governance and Democracy Development, Local Governance and Economic and Social Development, Territorial Dynamics and Multi-level Governance, Financing Territorial Development ...

The outcomes from each topic meeting are assembled in a draft Charter document discussed with all stakeholders until its final adoption. *A wrap up session will take place in Brussels on 2 July.*

The last draft version of the Charter and the background documents related to the thematic sessions are available on

[www.localgovernance-coop-charter.eu](http://www.localgovernance-coop-charter.eu)