

**Summary of meeting 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023**  
**from 16h:30 until 17h:45**  
**Ministry of BUZA - the Hague**

with Luc Bagur, Director Sustainable Development Policy and Coordination European Commission, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA.D)

Organised by BUZA:

Eveline Chaudron <[eveline.chaudron@minbuza.nl](mailto:eveline.chaudron@minbuza.nl)>

Hanna Idema <[hanna.idema@minbuza.nl](mailto:hanna.idema@minbuza.nl)>

Present:

- EU team of 4 persons led by Mr Luc Bagur
  
- Representatives from Spark; Both Ends; Partos; Nedworc Association; SNV; Hivos; Cordaid; Nederlands Food Partnership; Aqua for All; SDG Netherlands; Fair Wear; Mondiaal FNV; ECDPM; UN Global Compact Netherlands; Recourse and Oxfam Novib

Summary by Sjaak de Boer ([sjaakdeboer16@gmail.com](mailto:sjaakdeboer16@gmail.com)), representative from NEDWORC Association

Mr Luc Bagur started his presentation with the statement that the achievement of the SDGs is behind schedule and that there is need to revitalize efforts. The planned SDG summit this year with UN and EU will have as common interest to get the SDGs back on track. An important role is foreseen for Team Europe, where EU services, Member State entities, diplomatic services and International Financing Institutions (IFIs) like European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and European Investment Bank (EIB) are working together in international cooperation.

The Global Gateway Strategy (GGG) will become an important EU instrument. The Global Gateway Initiative is a worldwide strategy by the European Union to invest in infrastructure projects and establish economic partnerships, based on certain principles. The project was initiated by the EU Commission, under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen<sup>1</sup>. Between 2021 and 2027, Team Europe, meaning the EU institutions and EU Member States jointly, is planning to mobilise up to € 300 billion for investments in projects improving the digital environment, climate change & energy, transport, health, education and research. Projects will be based on ownership, taking into account the needs of partner countries and ensuring lasting benefits for local communities. Financing will have to be achieved mainly through blending of grants with concessional loans from IFIs, and through providing guarantees for de-risking commercial loans to mobilise investments by the private sector.

The Global Gateway Strategy is a change in the EU approach to its external actions in development cooperation whereby the needs of partner countries will be more aligned with interests of the EU. One very clear example is the provision of € 110 million by EU and its Member States for leveraging an investment of around € 500 million to produce Green Hydrogen (i.e. Green House Gasses free energy carrier) in Namibia. The Green Hydrogen will be a response to the increasing demand for this energy carrier in the EU.

The call for proposals addressed to the private sector for joining the Global Gateway Strategy has generated so far 200 applications from the private sector, representing 23 EU Members States. The EU contemplates a system of certification of businesses to maintain ethical standards in these GGS projects.

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<sup>1</sup> [Global Gateway \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu)

The Global Gateway Strategy will be an important vehicle in accelerating achievements of the SDGs, with emphasis on poverty reduction. Quality investments will be envisaged through maintaining transparency, applying technical assistance, and policy dialogue. EU Delegations around the world will have to play an important role in structuring the dialogue between Team Europe and the private sector to operationalise the Global Gateway Strategy. A four tier framework will support this operationalisation: the Global Gateway Board; Civil Society (amongst others represented by Concord); the Business Advisory Group for private sector involvement and International Fora.

Critical issues brought forward during the discussion:

- Development of a transparent and impartial system for certification of businesses was emphasised as being critical. Representatives of organisations in advocacy in the garment industry provided examples on how difficult it is to introduce and maintain ethical standards;
- EU member states often have an ambivalent attitude in their efforts to contribute to the achievement of SDGs: supporting biodiversity in partner countries while exporting chemicals and pesticides to the same partner countries was cited as an example of contradicting policies;
- EU Delegations will have to be equipped with new skills for dealing with the private sector: training modules in INTPA conferences and workshops for Delegations must include therefore input from civil society and also private sector on how to best structure the dialogue for successful implementation of the GGS;

Luc Bagur concluded the session with inviting development partners around the table to contact his office for any questions and/or discussing ideas: Gianluca Azzoni ([Gianluca.azzoni@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Gianluca.azzoni@ec.europa.eu)), responsible for civil society within the European Commission, and Mads Hove ([mads.hove@ec.europa.eu](mailto:mads.hove@ec.europa.eu)) and Karen del Biondo ([Karen.DEL-BIONDO@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Karen.DEL-BIONDO@ec.europa.eu)).

Overall my impression was that the GGS needs to be facilitated with a much more structural approach than now presented by Mr Bagur. The similarity with budget support came to my mind. One of the weaknesses in budget support was that the policy dialogue led by EU Delegations was often hampered from the fact that Cooperation Sections in EU Delegations could seldomly devote sufficient time for a quality dialogue with the partner country on budget support. Complying with procedural conditions and guaranteeing accountability of expenditures in conventional projects normally eats the majority of staff time in EU Delegations. As a result the conceptual approach of budget support was never fully understood by e.g. partner countries, a circumstance contributing to the often sub-standard application of the conceptual approach of the budget support instrument.

The dialogue with the private sector and partner countries for the GGS might suffer the same, if not pro-actively tackled. This key issue must be an important area of attention for any technical assistance, e.g. provided in the recently launched tender by INTPA on 'Support to programming, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge sharing in the EU external action'<sup>2</sup>, supporting DG INTPA and DG NEAR in improving their quality of performance, institutional learning, and accountability for a better targeted and more sustainable impact of EU external action.

NEDWORC consultants can certainly play an important role in providing quality support to EU Delegations, helping to structure the dialogue for a successful implementation of the GGS. NEDWORC could thereto organise a follow-up to this visit by Mr Bagur by means of a network meeting on the Global Gateway Strategy, possibly with other participating organisations.

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<sup>2</sup> INTPA/2022/EA-RP/0143: [eTendering - Data \(europa.eu\)](#)

Op 7 juni 2023 ontving Vereniging NEDWORC onderstaande uitnodiging. In overleg met Marion Eeckhout (bestuurslid), Paul Hassing (oud-voorzitter), beiden werkzaam geweest bij BUZA, en Sjaak de Boer (EU-ervaring als consultant in Brussel en in service contracten, en als programma manager op EU Delegaties) werd besloten dat deelname aan deze bijeenkomst waardevol zou zijn, en dat Sjaak daaraan zou deelnemen vanuit Vereniging NEDWORC.

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Op 7-6-2023 om 16:23 schreef Chaudron, Eveline:

Beste Marian Marseille,

Op maandag 19 juni zal de heer Luc Bagur, directeur en plaatsvervangend Directeur Generaal International Partnerships bij de Europese Commissie, de opvolger van Felix Fernandez-Shaw, een bezoek aan Nederland brengen.

Graag nodigen wij u uit voor een gesprek over EU internationale samenwerking met de heer Bagur. Dit gesprek zal plaatsvinden van 16.30 tot 17.45 uur bij het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken op de Rijnstraat 8 te Den Haag samen met andere organisaties. Met het oog op de beschikbare ruimte kan per organisatie één persoon deelnemen. We horen graag of uw organisatie deelneemt en wie uw organisatie zal vertegenwoordigen. Deze persoon kan zich een kwartier voor aanvang van het gesprek aanmelden bij de receptie van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken.

We hopen op uw deelname,

Met vriendelijke groet,

Hanna Idema

**Hanna Idema**  
plaatsvervangend afdelingshoofd  
EU Extern

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Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken  
Directie Integratie Europa (DIE)  
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**M** +31-6-52814152  
[hanna.idema@minbuza.nl](mailto:hanna.idema@minbuza.nl)