

THE FUTURE OF DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

Charting strategic directions

11-12 May 2026 | OECD, Paris



Conference session note – 11 May 2026, 14:30-15:15

Interests, agency and accountability in a new era of development co-operation

Description

What guiding principles are needed to navigate a new era of development co-operation?

Key tensions include balancing national interests with international solidarity, addressing the structures that undermine the agency of low- and middle-income countries and marginalised groups and pursuing genuine mutual accountability. This session explores new opportunities to reshape relationships and shift narratives to better reflect the priorities of low- and middle-income countries, as well as the risks of not resolving long-standing issues within development co-operation.

Additional background material can be found on the [Resources page](#).

Key takeaways

- **A clearer understanding** of the new political reality shaping development co-operation.
- **Explore the opportunities and risks** posed by the “interest-based” development co-operation.
- **An understanding of why narratives matter** in shaping development outcomes and policy space for development co-operation.
- **Practical ways to strengthen the agency of low- and middle-income countries** in international development systems.

Speakers

- Patricia Danzi, Director General, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation
- Stefan Dercon, Professor of Economic Policy, Blavatnik School of Government
- Olivia Lazard, Senior Fellow, Berggruen Institute
- Moky Makura, Executive Director, Africa No Filter
- Alexandra Yised Palencia Garnica, Director, APC Colombia

Moderator

- David Pilling, Africa Editor, Financial Times

Speaker Bios



Patricia Danzi, Director General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). H.E. Ambassador Patricia Danzi has been Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) since May 2020. Prior to her engagement with SDC, she spent 23 years with the International Red Cross, both in the field and at headquarters, and became Regional Director for the Americas and then for Africa. Patricia Danzi studied in Lincoln, Nebraska and in Zurich and holds a master's degree in agricultural economics, geography and environmental science. She undertook postgraduate work in development studies in Geneva. She

represented Switzerland in the 1996 Olympic Games in athletics (heptathlon). She speaks seven languages and is the mother of two adult sons.



Stefan Dercon, Professor of Economic Policy, Blavatnik School of Government, Oxford University. Stefan Dercon is Professor of Economic Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government and the Economics Department, and a Fellow of Jesus College. He is also Director of the Centre for the Study of African Economies. Between 2011 and 2017, he was Chief Economist of the Department of International Development (DFID). Between 2020-2022, he was the Development Policy Advisor to successive Foreign Secretaries at the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. His research interests concern what keeps some people and countries poor: the failures of markets, governments and politics, mainly in Africa, and how to achieve change. He is a Fellow of BREAD, a Research Fellow of

CEPR and of IZA, an Affiliate of J-PAL, a Non-resident Fellow, Centre for Global Development, Washington and Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Manufacture (FRSA). He studied economics and philosophy at the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) and holds an MPhil and DPhil in Economics from the University of Oxford. Before re-joining the University of Oxford, he held positions at the University of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), the Catholic University of Leuven, and WIDER (Helsinki), part of the United Nations University.



Moky Makura, Executive Director, Africa No Filter. Moky Makura was born in Nigeria, educated in England and has lived in London, Johannesburg and Lagos. She has been a TV presenter, producer, author, publisher and a successful entrepreneur in her own right. She is currently the Executive Director of Africa No Filter, a donor collaborative focused on shifting the African narrative. She started her media career as the African Anchor and field reporter for South Africa's award-winning news and actuality show – Carte Blanche. She conceptualized, co-produced and presented a lifestyle TV series for the pan African pay TV channel MNet called “Living It”, which focused on the lifestyles of the African continent's wealthy elite. She also

played a lead role in the groundbreaking and popular MNet Pan-African drama series Jacob's Cross. Her book *Africa's Greatest Entrepreneurs* with a foreword written by Richard Branson, featured on the top 10

best-selling business books in South Africa when it launched. Moky has since compiled and published a number of non-fiction titles.



Olivia Lazard Senior Fellow, Carnegie Europe & Fellow, Berggruen Institute. Olivia Lazard is a Senior Fellow at Carnegie Europe, specialising in the geopolitics of climate, the transition ushered by climate change, and the risks of conflict and fragility associated with climate change and environmental collapse. She is also an experienced mediator and environmental peace-making practitioner. She has worked for various NGOs, the UN, the EU, and development partners in the Middle East, Latin America, Sub-Saharan and North Africa, and parts of Asia. Her work examines how global political, economic, and environmental systems interact to create new forms of violence and conflict vulnerability. She founded Peace in Design Consulting, a consultancy working exclusively in fragile and conflict-affected regions. Olivia is also a fellow at the Berggruen Institute within the Planetary Programme. She holds a master's degree from the London School of Economics and a second master's degree from Sciences Po.



Alexandra Yised Palencia Garnica, Director, APC Colombia. Alexandra Yised Palencia Garnica is the Director of the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation of Colombia (APC Colombia). She holds a degree in International Business from the University of Magdalena and a specialization and master's in Government and Public Administration from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. She combines strong academic training with extensive public sector experience, particularly in administrative and financial leadership for complex public entities and high-impact projects. Her work has focused on planning, institutional strengthening, resource optimization, and territorial development, with an emphasis on efficiency, transparency, and results. She served as an advisor in the House of Representatives, contributing to legislative and public policy processes. At APC Colombia, she promotes institutional coordination, strategic partnerships, and Colombia's international positioning through cooperation, with a focus on sustainable and territorial development.



David Pilling is the Africa editor and a columnist at the Financial Times. He covers business, politics and development on the continent and writes a regular column on topics from Africa. Before that he was the Asia editor and assistant editor. Previous roles include Tokyo bureau chief, pharmaceuticals correspondent, deputy features editor and correspondent in Buenos Aires and Santiago. He is the author of two books - *The Growth Delusion* (2018), shortlisted for the Orwell Prize, and the highly acclaimed *Bending Adversity: Japan and the Art of Survival* (2016). He is a regular moderator and speaker both for the FT and for organisations including the World Bank, OECD and ADB. In 2023 he briefed a G7 meeting in Kamakura, Japan on the ideas behind his book, *The Growth Delusion*.