EUROPEAN UNION

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EEAS provides a 'Clearing House' mechanism to support

AFISMA mission in Mali

Following the extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council of the 17 January, High Representative Catherine Ashton directed the EU Military Staff to activate the 'Clearing House' mechanism, a dedicated secured platform where requests for and offers of logistical support to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) by EU Member States and other international partners can be handled in the most effective way.

The aim of the EU 'Clearing House' is to assist AFISMA in reaching the operational strength necessary for the immediate transportation of AFISMA contingents, but also in the longer term to provide logistical support to AFISMA's engagement in Mali – including for the transportation of equipment, personnel and ammunition – in the coming months. It highlights the EU's willingness to support AFISMA.

EU High Representative Catherine Ashton said: "At the extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council meeting on the 17 January we agreed to deploy our EU training mission for Mali as soon as possible, but also to support AFISMA, both financially and logistically. With this 'Clearing House' mechanism the EU provides concrete support where it is best placed to help."

The 'Clearing House Support ECOWAS' has been established in Brussels within the EU Military Staff, which is part of the EEAS. It will act as a single point of entry for the registration of requests from ECOWAS via EU Liaison Officers based in Abuja in Nigeria, or Bamako in Mali, as well as for the registration of any support offered by EU Member States or third countries. Possible logistical support to AFISMA can range from technical, material or advisory support to the provision of strategic air lift, planning and training. The 'Clearing House' will then allocate all requests for a final decision by the ECOWAS HQ.

This mechanism relies on voluntary inputs by donors and recipients but will ensure greater coordination of donor effort and coherence with other activities acting in support of the people and government of Mali.
Background

Recent events in Mali have necessitated an acceleration of the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). The EU, alongside other international partners, is committed to support AFISMA financially, in particular through its African Peace Facility, as well as logistically. The 'Clearing House' mechanism responds to this commitment.

At the extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council convened on 17 January 2013 by High Representative Ashton, the EU also decided to accelerate the preparations to launch its training and advising mission for Malian armed forces (EUTM Mali).