Council sets out roadmap for resuming development cooperation with Niger

The Council today set out a roadmap to gradually resume development cooperation with Niger during its return to constitutional order, thus concluding consultations under article 96 of the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement (13280/10).

This decision ends a process that started last year when the then President, Mamadou Tandja, disregarded the opinion of the constitutional court and implemented an unlawful and non-consensual process allowing him to remain in office beyond his second five-year term. The EU considered these events a breach of democracy and the rule of law, essential elements of the Cotonou Agreement. Therefore, it provisionally suspended cooperation with Niger through the European development fund and held consultations with the country's authorities in December 2009. In the wake of a military coup that brought Commander Djibo Salou to power in February 2010, another round of consultations took place in May.

At that session, the Niger authorities put forward a number of proposals concerning the return to constitutional rule and the establishment of a new democratic government, which the EU found broadly encouraging.
Today the Council set out a roadmap for conditionally resuming development cooperation. Advances made by the Niger authorities on the way towards restoring constitutional order will be reflected in gradual resumption of EU development assistance. Once a new national assembly and a new president have been installed through democratic elections, cooperation will be fully resumed. Independently, the EU will continue to finance humanitarian and emergency operations directly benefiting the people of Niger as well as support to the political transition.

The measures adopted today will remain in force for 12 months and may be reviewed in the light of the implementation of commitments.