



INSIDE THE AFRICA - EUROPEAN UNION PARTNERSHIP



Lettre d'information de la Délégation de l'Union Européenne auprès de l'Union Africaine

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In this issue of LINK!, EU Commissioner Cecilia Malmström & AU Commissioner Bience Philomina Gawanas share their view on the topic of migration.

Interview with...



## Cecilia Malmström, EU Commissioner for Home Affairs

### Commissioner Malmström, why is a proper management of migration flows between Africa and the EU mutually beneficial for both Africa and the EU?

Well-managed migration and mobility between Europe and Africa constitute a huge opportunity for both continents. Most European countries have a history of welcoming people from many different countries. Migrants have brought cultural enrichment to the European countries and no doubt will continue to do so. Europe also constitutes a region that offers great opportunities for those looking for a better future as well as a safe haven for people in need of international protection. Moreover, Europe needs migrants in order to compensate demographic decline and labour shortages in specific sectors.

To give one striking example, in terms of future demand for carers for the elderly, the Commission's 2010 Agenda for new skills and jobs estimates that by 2020 there will be a shortage of about one million professionals in the health sector - and up to two million if ancillary health-care professions are taken into account.

On the other hand, migration is crucial for many African countries as it provides a substantial source of income and an opportunity in terms of human resources and education. We are therefore speaking about a win/win situation, a mutually beneficial phenomenon provided that we, political leaders on both sides, elaborate the right tools and sign the relevant agreements to channel and optimise migration flows. Without proper rules,

without clear mechanisms, we run the risk of ruining this huge potential. It is in our mutual interest to fight against irregular migration. We need to work more closely to dismantle the criminal organisations exploiting the hope of thousands of migrants and risking their lives, to create the right channels for legal migration and to address the root causes of migration through ambitious development policies.

### What are the current challenges and opportunities for Africa-EU migration?

Over the last years, Africa and the EU have both made serious investments in dialogue and cooperation. We have put in place bilateral and multilateral dialogues and many projects have been launched successfully. It is crucial to strengthen even more this frank and deep dialogue. This is the best way to exchange and understand our respective points of views and to elaborate on each other's ideas. It is of utmost importance for the European Union to take on board Africa's interest and concerns in our migration policies, such as brain drain, remittances and visa facilitation for specific categories. Among the already existing channels of dialogue between the two continents, the EU-Africa Migration, Mobility and Employment Partnership adopted at the EU-Africa Summit in 2007 is of special relevance. I am concerned that cooperation under this partnership is currently stalled due to the current conflict in Libya. We need to find ways to ensure that key projects can be (re)started and to maintain the dialogue under the Partnership until the situation is normalised. Last May, during the last Commission to Commission meeting between the African Union and the European Union, I had the opportunity to discuss this matter with Commissioner Gawanas and after this fruitful exchange, I trust a suitable compromise will be found.

More generally, one of the most important challenges for decision makers is to adapt to the new emerging mobility trends. Migration and mobility are to be envisaged under new angles and therefore, we should boost other forms of mobility (such as circular migration) and focus on the added value of migrants in their countries of origin. In other words, let's think outside the box!

### What actions have you foreseen in the near future on combating human trafficking, in particular in relation to Africa?

Human trafficking for sexual or labour exploitation is a terrible crime affecting the most vulnerable citizens, it is a modern form of slavery against which the Commission is determined to fight with all our means. The EU's

policy on trafficking is characterised by a holistic approach focusing on prevention, prosecution of criminals, and protection of victims. This approach is reflected in the new legislation adopted on 29 March 2010, which, apart from approximating substantive criminal law, brings robust provisions on victim's protection and supports the principle of non-punishment for petty crimes and unconditional assistance.

The African continent has traditionally been one of the priority areas. In November 2006 an EU-Africa Action Plan on trafficking in human beings - known also as the Ouagadougou Action Plan - was adopted and is now one of the priorities of the Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME). Moreover, the EU is funding 5 projects with civil society organisations in Africa: Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Uganda.

Trafficking is a transnational crime, and is best addressed jointly and I hope that Commissioner Gawanas and I can work together on joint initiatives to fight this horrendous crime that affects women, children and men across the world.

### What are your migration related priorities for 2011-12?

As regards the external dimension of the EU's migration policy, the Commission's agenda for the months to come is rather full. One of our top priorities is to start a Dialogue on Migration, Mobility and Security with Southern Mediterranean countries, especially Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. This dialogue, which will hopefully end up in the conclusion of Mobility Partnerships, is part of the broader Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity the EU adopted in the light of the Arab Spring. The Commission is willing to start the talks as soon as possible and to conclude Mobility Partnerships with these countries in the next year and hopefully extend the dialogue to other interested countries.

A second priority is the strengthening of our overall framework for the external migration policy. The Commission carried out in the last months an evaluation of the EU's Global Approach to Migration which was first established in 2005. Various African stakeholders were involved and contributed actively to our policy thinking. Our aim is to launch a new, second phase of this framework. We want to make it more strategic, adapted to the evolving needs of the European Union, and the needs of our partners. By the end of November, the Commission will hence present an important Communication on the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility, in other words with a particular highlight on the incidence of migration on development and the impact of climate change on migration flows.



AU Commissioner for Social Affairs,  
**Bience Philomina Gawanas**

The global increase in migration is a feature of globalisation and increases multiculturalism at all levels. If opportunities offered by migration are exploited positively, it can play a vital role in reducing poverty and economic vulnerability and in improving sustainable human development. People move for various reasons – from conflict, war, persecution, famine and disease to imparting technical knowhow and skills to others in response to specific requests or for the betterment of their future. Migration is both the result of a cause (positive or negative), as well as an act of voluntary choice due to social and economic circumstances.

**What are the current challenges and opportunities for Africa-EU migration?**

Migration has implications for host populations who could benefit by allowing migrants to take up job opportunities which are not fully exploited. Alternately, local populations may feel threatened by seeing many opportunities taken away by “outsiders” who are either better skilled or willing to accept lower wages.

What is new is the possibility for gathering of information which allows systematic evaluation of the impact of migration on labour markets, remittance flows and migration networks which can help to formulate effective policies to manage migration flows in a way that allows a greater contribution to global development.

Effective development is promoted, not just by aid

and trade in goods and services, but by expanding the exchange of experience and skills. Migration reflects the interdependence of countries of the world as one of the most effective ways of promoting respect and understanding amongst communities and the elimination of friction. Some of the benefits of international migration are exposure to globalisation through study visas and short term work permits for skills’ enhancement; internationalisation of production involving the movement of labour and management; promotion of fundamental political economic and social values which are common to humanity; increase in foreign direct investments and capital flows necessary for development; and foreign exchange earnings for developing countries in the form of workers’ remittances sent from abroad.

An area often talked about but least implemented is the human rights of migrants. Countries have an obligation, under the UN instruments and subsequent international protocols, to take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and family members. There have been many case studies of exploitation of migrant workers. Many developing countries are reluctant to engage in a national debate on human rights in the context of international security as it puts an additional strain on law enforcement agencies.

Development assistance also needs to focus more on capacity building programmes for improving education and

health sectors and strengthening other institutions of the state in order to transform societies through economic, social and human development. Development of innovative approaches for deepening inter-state cooperation can help promote the managed transfer of migrants from countries with adequate labour surplus such as those in Africa to those facing projected labour shortages.

The debate also needs to focus on how the countries of origin that benefit from human resource development and workers’ remittances can prepare themselves to meet the shortages that are temporarily created due to the flight of human capital and absorb their skilled workers back in the countries of origin after they have returned home at the expiry of their work visas.

An important area which should form part of the policy framework on migration and development is strategy for information management. Migration can only be managed properly if there is accurate information about labour markets. Both labour and migration authorities need to be equipped with the machinery and technical skills to be able to provide accurate figures, when required for planning and evaluation.

**What actions have you foreseen in the near future on combating human trafficking (TIP)?**

The eradication of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) requires a comprehensive approach which focuses on the prevention and protection of victims and prosecution. Countries must ratify and fully implement 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.

In Africa, the impact of TIP is vast and putting an end to this trade is understandably a major priority for the Africa-EU Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) partnership and the foundation for AUC’s launching of the the African Union Commission Campaign Initiative against Trafficking (AU.COMMIT). Launched in 2009, this initiative aims to foster the implementation of the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and assists Africa’s Regional Economic Committees (RECs) in developing and implementing regional action plans to strengthen protection, prevention and prosecution of people trafficking. These three pillars are joined by a fourth without which none of this would be possible – partnership.

AU.COMMIT believes the eradication of people trafficking can only be accomplished through the collaborative efforts of the AU Commission, the EU and its members, the RECs and the private sector, as well as development partners such as the UN, bilateral donors, the media, academic institutions, children, teenagers and women themselves.

In the immediate future, AUC will focus its resources on auditing strategies being implemented, identifying all stakeholders, initiating discussions of the gaps and the mechanisms to be employed in closing those gaps, assess the impact of the absence of data and how this information could reliably be obtained, establishment of an inter-sectoral national and regional focal points and task teams to commence a process of coordination and refinement of activities towards the development of multi-sectoral and comprehensive strategies. AU.COMMIT believes that the management of labour markets can address the gaps between supply and demand and ultimately, dry up the existing ground for traffickers and smugglers who abuse the openings in the system for personal gain.

**What are your migration related priorities for 2011-2012?**

There is a need to improve the understanding and implementation of existing legal instruments on migration, supplemented by voluntary and cooperative efforts to provide capacity building, foster dialogue, and make migration mutually beneficial to countries and migrants.

**LAUNCH OF THE EU IMMIGRATION PORTAL IN NOVEMBER 2011**

The EU Immigration Portal will serve as a gateway to information on migration to the European Union. The Portal aims to be a first point of entry for up to date, practical and understandable information on migration issues. It is addressed to third-country nationals willing to migrate to the EU, to those already in the EU – especially those who are thinking of moving from one Member State to another – as well as to migrants’ organizations. The EU Immigration Portal will help them identify immigration opportunities and be informed of the rules that must be complied with. General information on EU and national policies and law and on the risks related to irregular information will be offered, initially, in English and French. As well as providing essential basic information, the EU Immigration Portal will also direct users to official national and European external websites for further details. The EU Immigration Portal is expected to be launched in November 2011.

# DOSSIER MIGRATION'S FOLDER

**P.7 AFRICAN INSTITUTE FOR  
REMITTANCES (AIR) PROJECT**

**P.13 CRISIS IN LIBYA**

Questions to...

## Richard Cambridge

*Adviser, African Diaspora Program. Office of the Regional Vice President, Africa Region, The World Bank.*



Richard Cambridge (photo: World Bank)

### Could you explain the commitment of the World Bank to remittances?

Remittances represent a lifeline for 700 million people worldwide, comprising over 200 million international migrants, and a fundamental contribution to economic growth and development. In times of crisis they are more resilient than other private flows and the World Bank estimates that in 2010 remittances to developing countries amounted to approximately US\$325 billion, exceeding the volume of official aid flows, which is estimated at US\$120 billion (2010). The World Bank plays an important role in fostering innovation and efficiency as a facilitator and a catalyst for development. Through constant work in different areas related to remittances, the World Bank supports countries to improve the remittance environment where that migrants' remittances can be transferred safely, efficiently and at a reasonable cost and that, as private money, their potential can fully contribute to economic growth and development in receiving countries.

The World Bank has published in 2007, together with the Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (CPSS) of the Bank for International Settlements, the General Principles for International Remittances Services, a set of standards officially endorsed by the G8, the G20 and other international fora, on how to create in each country an efficient market for remittances, with

the ultimate goal of reducing the cost of remittances through competition, transparency, innovation of payment systems and development of an appropriate regulatory framework. Such effort has been officially shared by the G8 and the G20 and it is estimated that, if countries achieved an overall reduction of the cost of remittances by five percentage points, migrants could save each year approximately US\$16 billion.

The World Bank provides governments and other international organizations with technical assistance based on the General Principles to develop payment systems infrastructures, to increase transparency in the remittance markets and to strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks, that would ultimately lead to the reduction of remittance costs, to offer migrants and their families better access to financial services and protect the financial system and national economies from disruptions of their remittance flows. This work ranges from training of government institutions, to supporting client countries in drafting and revising the legal framework for remittances, and enabling organizations such as post offices to offer safe and low cost remittance services.

Furthermore, the World Bank has developed and maintains several databases that monitor both the flows of remittances worldwide and their cost. Each year the "Migration and Remittances Factbook" provides, among the other things, a detailed analysis of the international flows of remittances across the whole world, including a description of the main corridors in each single country. Similarly, the Remittance Prices Worldwide (<http://remittanceprices.worldbank.org>) provides experts, scholars and governments with detailed information on the cost of remittances over 200 corridors worldwide. In addition, a Send Money Africa database was recently launched, to focus exclusively on cost of remittances to and within Africa, covering 50 corridors from 15 sending countries to 27 receiving countries (<http://sendmoneyafrica.worldbank.org>). The World

**“The cost of transferring remittances to Africa is the highest in the world, due to lack of competition among Remittance Service Providers.”**

Richard Cambridge

Bank has also provided technical support in developing regional and national remittance price databases.

Finally, in order to coordinate the work on remittances at global level, the World Bank has created in 2009 the Global Remittances Working Group (GRWG), the most relevant international forum to discuss any thematic related to remittances and achieve common objectives both on the operational aspects of remittances and on their developmental impact and potential. The GRWG is currently working with the G20 in the definition of global goals to which all the member countries will commit, in line with the similar actions undertaken by the G8 in 2010.

**Could you clarify why the World Bank has committed itself to the AIR project?**

The African continent received nearly \$40bn in remittances in 2010, equivalent to 2.6% of Africa's GDP in 2009. More than US\$23 billion flows to sub-Saharan Africa alone. After foreign direct investment, remittances are the continent's largest source of foreign inflows. However, the overall impact of remittances is limited by several factors. For example, the cost of transferring remittances to Africa is the highest in the world, due to lack of competition among Remittance Service Providers; inappropriate regulatory framework with discrepancies and lack of level playing field; poor development of the payment systems infrastructure and scarcely developed networks (e.g. Mexico alone has more disbursing points than all combined in the African continent); consumer protection issues remain largely under-served; information and data related to migration and remittances is not complete, consistent and readily available; and there are few public policies aimed at increasing the developmental impact of the flows of money received by the migrants.

The World Bank's mandate covers all the above issues and this is the reason why the African Diaspora Program (ADP) of the World Bank decided to accept the duty of coordinating the AIR project and implement the several activities under its scope. The African Institute for Remittances (AIR) is proposed to be established as a result of the partnership on migration, mobility and employment between Africa and the European Union

(EU). In this area, the collaboration of the World Bank is essential in facilitating the capacity building of member states of the African Union (AU) in order to increase the potential of remittances in the continent.

The core objective of the AIR project is to facilitate the process leading to the creation of the Institute, as well as capacity building of member states of the AU, remittance senders and recipients, private sector, universities and other stakeholders to develop and implement concrete strategies and operational instruments to use remittances as development tools for poverty reduction.

We aim, through the AIR project, at facilitating the African Union Commission (AUC) in establishing an entity able to coordinate the activities related to remittances in the African continent by offering the technical and political support to donors and international partners. The AIR also aims at promoting the creation of conditions for improved financial access and banking products and services for both senders and receivers of remittance services.

Despite impressive lessons of success and practices in Latin America and elsewhere, there are only a few, mainly small-scale initiatives aimed at enhancing the development impact of remittances in Sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence from these regions indicate that partnerships and institutional relationships among the major stakeholders can encourage and motivate the African Diaspora and remittance senders and recipients in African countries to embark upon productive investments and entrepreneurial activities. It is, therefore, imperative for Africa to forge partnerships and develop tools through the establishment of the AIR to harness the potential of remittances for accelerated and sustained development.

Questions to...

## Mr Fokion Fotiadis

*(Development and Cooperation, EuropAid Director General, European Commission)*

**Could you explain the commitment of the EU to remittances?**

The money migrants send to their home countries forms an increasing financial flow, contributing to economic growth and social welfare. This is particularly true in development countries (325 billion US dollars in 2010 according to the World Bank).

While respecting the private nature of these flows which directly benefit migrants' families, much can and should be done to work towards ensuring efficient, secure and low-cost remittance transfers, and increasing the development impact of remittance transfers. Remittances are one way to maximise the positive impact of migration on development and answering migrants' needs should guide our actions.

The European Union has long committed, including at the highest level, to pursue efforts along these lines. Recent statistics (Eurostat data) indeed highlight the importance of remittances that EU Member States registered in their Balance of Payments statistics. Of the €30.3 billion of remittances reported in official statistics for 2009, €8.3 billion were intra-EU and €22 billion extra-EU. €19 billion were sent to developing countries.

This is why both Member States and the European Commission have worked on setting in place an enabling environment at EU level and on supporting remittance-related projects in partner countries.

With regard to the regulatory framework within the EU, substantial progress has been achieved in the form of the adoption of the EU Payment Services Directive (PSD) in November 2007, which laid the legal foundation for an EU-wide single market for payments.



The PSD, fully applicable since November 2009, aims to apply the same regulations across member countries in relationship to the requirements to set up a money transfer operation. Although the PSD applies to intra-EU money transfers only, fourteen Member States have gone beyond the requirements of the Directive to cover transfers between operators when one of them is outside the EU or when the transaction is made in currencies other than those used in the EU.

This is particularly relevant with regards to migrants based in the EU who send remittances home, as it allows for fostering competition in the market by allowing new providers to offer remittance transfers – hopefully lead-

**“The issue of migrant remittances has moved over the last years to the top of the development agenda.”**

Mr Fokion Fotiadis

ing to a cost reduction beneficial to them – as well as for protecting their consumer rights – the PSD for example introduced some transparency requirements which allow them to know the real costs and charges of payment services in order to make an informed choice.

The EU also supports an increasing number of projects in partner countries aiming at improving data on remittances, enhancing the development impact of remittances and promoting innovative transfer solutions. The AIR (African Institute for Remittances) project is one of them.

#### Could you clarify why the European Commission has committed itself to the AIR project?

The issue of migrant remittances has moved over the last years to the top of the development agenda. In many African countries this additional financial input can make a substantial difference in directly contributing to migrants' wellbeing as well as giving the much needed economic impetus. Nevertheless remittances to African countries still remain more costly than to other regions in the world.

Conscious of the importance of remittances at African level, the EU and the African Union committed in the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership in 2007 (EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment) to foster the linkages between migration and development including by maximising the development impact of remittances. Amongst planned activities was highlighted the objective to “make further steps towards the facilitation of safer, faster, and cheaper remittances, including for investments; ensure that sufficient data, research and know-how is made available to governments; and promote innovative solutions for transferring money”.

One idea was to fill the knowledge and capacity gap in Africa in dealing with remittances and reflect upon the creation of an Institute that would act as a centre of excellence, providing data, information, policy advice and training on migrant remittances to African governments,

central banks and regional organisations. The Institute would for example help them to integrate remittances flows in national and regional development strategies, and assist in the necessary bank reforms.

In this context, the World Bank, whose expertise and research capacity on the volume and consequences of remittances in developing countries is widely recognised, submitted with its key partners (the International Organisation for Migration and the African Development Bank) a proposal in the framework of an European Commission call for proposals of the EU Thematic Programme on Migration and Asylum.

In partnership with the African Union Commission, whose political leadership is determinant, the project known as “African Institute for Remittances” was selected. Co-funded by the World Bank, its core objectives are both to facilitate the process leading to the creation of such an Institute and to support capacity building of Member States of the African Union, remittance senders and recipients, private sector, universities, and other stakeholders to develop and implement concrete strategies and operational instruments to use remittances as development tools for poverty reduction.

It will of course be for African Union Member States to make the final decision regarding the structure and mandate of AIR. I was pleased to hear that the Consultative and Experience Sharing Forum on Remittances Leverage for Development, held in Addis Ababa in early July 2011 was fruitful in terms of exchanges and I am looking forward to keeping up the good work with all these different institutions involved in order to pave the way for an Institute whose value added and result-oriented approach will be demonstrated.

Questions to...

**Olawale Maiyegun,**  
Director for Social Affairs Department, African Union

#### What is the commitment of the African Union Commission to remittances?

Remittances are much more than official flows and are more and more being recognised for the vital role it plays in poverty alleviation – directly transforming the circumstances of individuals, being a relatively stable source of income for recipient families, being for the sole use and benefit of receivers; and the overall economic development of Africa – by leveraging remittances to better overall development through a collective response - spending allowed by remittances has a multiplied effect on local economies, as funds subsequently spent create incomes for others and stimulate economic activity generally.

Exorbitant fees affect those who can least afford it which points out some fundamental flaw in the regulatory framework which is only solved through policy coordination in both “receiving” and “sending” countries. Improving access to banking and transfer services in both “sending” and “receiving” countries reduces costs and inevitable further encourages financial development in “receiving” countries as less money is paid to fees and commissions.

The potential for using remittances to encourage development in countries is tremendous, yet, its impact for all African Union Member States still needs to be better understood to realize its full benefits and potential for our Continent and its people.

#### Why has the AUC committed itself to the African Institute on Remittances (AIR) project?

The development community needs to consider how to best manage remittance flows and how the body of research on remittances can be strengthened, both for the purpose of understanding the impact of remittances and for forming more effective policy for managing remittances.

Facilitating remittance flows would entail managing existing retail financial infrastructures (postal, savings, and commercial banks, and microfinance institutions), while there is a need to strike a balance between a regulatory regime that minimizes money laundering, terrorist financing, and general financial abuse, and one that facilitates the flow of funds between hard-working migrants and their families back home.

In order to achieve financial literacy, consumer protection and market transparency in the transfer and receipt of remittances to AU Member States, the AIR will have the overarching purpose to encourage easy, legitimate and cost effective methods of sending remittances from, into and within African countries. Furthermore, AIR will sharpen the development impact of remittances through the application of appropriate policies and improving the dissemination of data on remittance fees in major corridors, thereby reducing remittance transaction costs in a selected number of countries. Key opportunities arise from the local context, such as the existence of the large delivery networks that are still untapped opportunities for providing remittances such as post offices and microfinance institutions that extend deep into the rural areas but do not currently pay remittances and the successful use of technology to deliver affordable and accessible retail payment services in many countries in Africa.

In brief, an AIR will promote a greater awareness of monetary and financial matters throughout the region and beyond by means of training, dissemination and research. It is envisaged that the AIR will, continentally facilitate the reduction of remittances costs, drastically decrease the use of unsafe and unregistered informal channels of remittances to Africa and identify and link additional services to remittances (such as insurance, annuities and investment).

The establishment of an AIR for the Continent will be the first time such an initiative is launched in the field of remittances.

## CONSULTATIVE AND EXPERIENCE SHARING FORUM ON REMITTANCES LEVERAGE FOR DEVELOPMENT

On July 7-8, 2011 a consultative and experience sharing forum on Remittances Leverage for Development took place in Addis Ababa, organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the World Bank. AU Member States were consulted for the first time within the framework of the AIR Project on the establishment of the African Institute for Remittances. AIR aims to make sending money easier, cheaper and safer and productive for the development of the broader community.

The Forum was attended by 26 AU Member States (representatives of the Central Bank and Ministry of Finance), international organizations (IOM, Universal Postal Union), private sector (Western Union, Money Express, Commercial Bank of Ethiopia), and permanent representatives to the AU (EU Delegation, Germany, Italy and Mexico).

The participants provided recommendations regarding the roles and functions, the organizational structure, the location, and the funding of the AIR. These recommendations will now be converted into a plan of action. The AUC is planning to make a final decision on the establishment of the AIR at the June 2012 AU Summit.

For further information on the forum:  
<http://www.au.int/en/content/consultative-and-experience-sharing-forum-remittances-leverage-development-provisional-agend>

## ONLINE DISCUSSIONS ON AIR PROJECT

From 31 May 2011 to 15 July 2011, online consultations were conducted, aimed at collecting feedback on remittances, specifically related to how they are sent and used, challenges, costs and alternatives.

The online consultation included a survey hosted on the AU website and discussion forums.

Over 3,000 visitors visited the AIR website and 235 responses have been received on the survey. Respondents identified their country of origin from 30 different countries, with the top 3 from Nigeria, Ethiopia and Kenya. 90% of the respondents were remittance senders based in the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom.

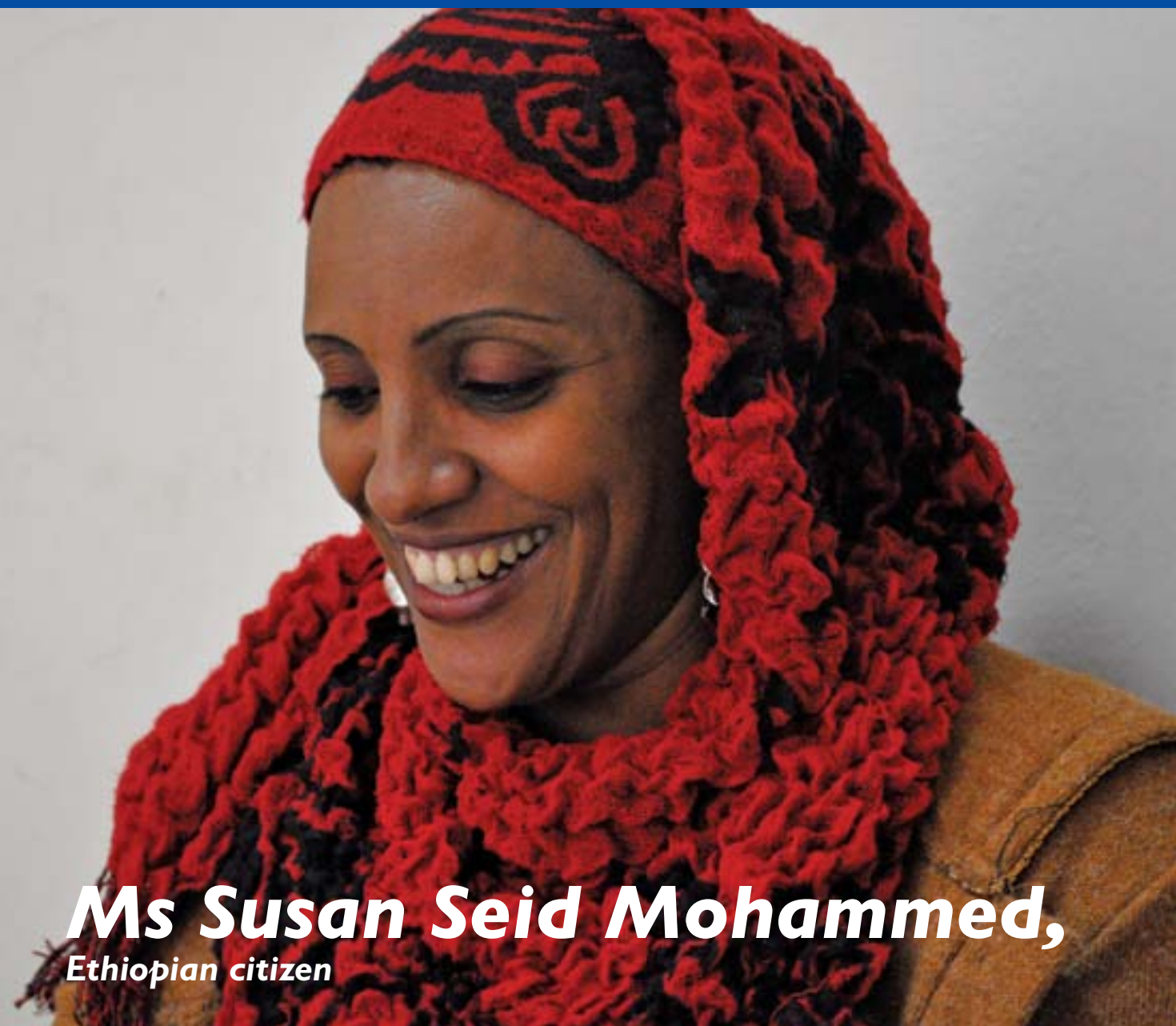
The key findings show that remittances are largely sent monthly or irregularly. Remittances received are primarily used for living expenses, education and medical expenses. The most popular channel used to send remittances were Money Transfer Organizations (49%), followed by banks and unofficial flows. Respondents indicated that lower costs, secured funds and speed would encourage them to use official channels over unofficial methods.

When asked to identify the cost of sending remittances as a fraction of the total amount, 17% of respondents indicated that they were not aware of the costs, while the majority said 1-5% was typical of the average transaction. In addition, 23.4% of respondents pointed out that they did not know what the total amount is that is collected by recipients.

## Interview with...

**"I strongly advise my peers not to leave the country, specially the girls. Crossing deserts is very hard and will expose you to rape, smugglers and death".**

*Ms Susan Seid Mohammed*



**Ms Susan Seid Mohammed,**  
*Ethiopian citizen*

***A young woman shares her hard life in the Sudan and a 28-days desert trek to Libya where she found conflict instead of hope.***

I was raised in Ethiopia; Oromia region around Welega. I was married young with my father's choice which made me decide to leave Ethiopia for a better future. I left for Sudan and worked my way through for 3 years. I used my saving from Sudan to cross to Libya. My dream was to make money in Libya and return to my 14 year old child. While I was searching for a good way of returning to Ethiopia, I missed two return fleets by IOM. In the meantime the conflict started in Libya.

### **How was life in Libya?**

Tripoli was not very bad if you are strong enough to resist possible personal attacks. The government was accommodating but most of the people have a degrading outlook of Ethiopians. Libyans respect the ladies much better than foreigner men.



#### Did you approach IOM voluntarily and deliberately?

Yes; Libya is a closed country. There is no air or road transport to reach east Africa. IOM was the only choice to return home; even during peaceful times. I saw a lot of people returning home through IOM.

#### How did you hear about IOM?

There are cafes Ethiopians frequently visit and I heard it from friends around the café. When I heard IOM package was good; I called an Ethiopian friend who returned home through IOM. She confirmed her safe return and I have decided to do the same. I travelled to the neighbouring Tunisia to find IOM returnees camp. I became part of the third batch of returnees. I was also worried about returning empty handed; fortunately IOM supported us financially. I still wish IOM could help us bring our belongings which we left due to the conflict in Libya.

#### What is your plan now?

I am just enjoying time with family; but I have decided never to leave Ethiopia again. There are a lot of Ethiopians stranded in Tunisia; some wants to return some doesn't, because of their desperation about returning without money.

#### What was your best and worst experience during your more than 5 years in Sudan and Libya?

Leaving behind everything that I worked for is my worst experience. I paid my saving to go to Libya from Sudan. In Libya; you can not send money abroad. You can not exchange currencies. It's a closed country. You can not travel or send items to your country. So whatever I made I bought items for myself and my small rented house. When the trouble starts: I closed my house and left empty handed; even without my clothes.

My best experience is seeing my 14 year old boy and family after returning home safe. What if I died crossing Sudanese and Libyan deserts? I have seen so many horrible situations in the desert.

#### What is your advice to others especially to your peers?

I strongly advise them not to leave the country, specially the girls. Crossing deserts is very hard and will expose you to rape, smugglers and death. We spent 28 days in the desert crossing Sudan. We were stranded under sandstorm for two day. Many died among us. We left them even without proper barrier. It is not worth it.



## Kristalina Giorgieva,

### EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

#### What are the challenges faced by ECHO regarding the current situation in Libya, specifically on migration?

The conflict in Libya is still on-going and frontlines are moving constantly. From the humanitarian point of view, the greatest challenge we face is the difficulty to reach the people in need of assistance. Humanitarian access is now better than in the early weeks of the emergency, but it still remains precarious and insufficient, particularly in the West of the country. One example is the coastal city of Misrata, which has been under siege since the beginning of the conflict, and remains inaccessible by road for humanitarian operations. Due to continued fighting in the surrounding areas, humanitarian personnel can only reach the town by sea. Fortunately, the humanitarian presence within Libya continues to grow, with a number of organisations establishing offices in Zintan and Jadu in the Nafusa Mountains, including the UN.

Another challenge is the 'energy blockade' resulting from the closure of the south oil pipeline in close proximity to Tripoli, the diversion to Benghazi of an oil tanker on its way to Tripoli as well as the blockade of oil trucks coming from Tunisia. This blockade could result in serious fuel shortages

in Tripoli, which could complicate the work of hospitals, for instance. There are also increasing signs of the deterioration of the economy and public services which may impair the short-term services provided to the population and their access to food and water.

To respond to these challenges, the international community must continue to press for unlimited access in Western Libya and full respect of International Humanitarian Law by the parties to the conflict. We must also continue to support the provision of essential goods (fuel, food, medicines) to all of Libya.

Finally, probably the greatest challenge is the regional humanitarian impact of the Libyan crisis which remains critical. We need to continue to provide support to people fleeing to neighbouring countries and help their own host communities, especially in Tunisia. In this way, it is hoped that the destabilising effect on countries already facing considerable difficulties will be avoided.

#### What joint actions are being taken by the EU and the AU in order to meet the challenges of this crisis, particularly on migration issues?



To cope with humanitarian emergencies like the one in Libya and its neighbourhood, the Commission works through international humanitarian organisations, NGOs and UN agencies. We do not channel our humanitarian assistance through governments, which is why there have been no joint initiatives on the humanitarian front between the Commission and the African Union.

However, the EU has been working closely with the AU throughout the Libyan crisis to ensure that we both remain engaged in the long term, together with the United Nations and the Arab League, to build a solid foundation for democracy and to give the Libyan people the possibility to choose their leaders.

We have worked closely together on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1970 and 1973, both through the Libya Contact Group and through the Cairo Group, which brings together the EU, AU, UN, AL and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

We all have an interest in an immediate end to the violence, the restoration of stability, a transition to democracy and the economic reconstruction of the country.

My colleague, High Representative Catherine Ashton, has maintained a close working relationship with Jean Ping to coordinate our efforts to this end.

**In this issue of LINK!, we have interviewed an Ethiopian lady who was in Libya when the conflict started and who was repatriated by IOM. What are the main actors, such as IOM, that are supported by the EU on migration issues? What kind of support does the EU provide to these actors (IOM, UNHCR, ...)?**

As of 12 August, the EU's total funding in response to the Libyan crisis has exceeded €150 million, including € 80 million from the Commission itself. Part of the Commission's humanitarian funding allocated to the Libyan crisis has supported the activities in Tunisia and Egypt to repatriate over 24,800 Third Country Nationals back to their countries of origin via IOM and UNHCR. The EU is also providing assistance to refugees who cannot return to their home countries and Libyans fleeing Libya (emergency, health, food, wash activities, non-food items) via IOM, UNHCR, IFRC and OCHA.

€10 million of the overall funding has also been dedicated to providing humanitarian aid to helping vulnerable Chadians affected by the crisis in Libya. An estimated 300,000 migrants from Chad were working in Libya before the crisis and the EU funding is being used to give help to these returnees at the main entry points in Chad and to support the evacuation process by improving transport and transit conditions to their home villages. Funds are also used to provide them with vital goods and services such as food, water, medical assistance and protection, and to assist their immediate reintegration in local communities in Chad.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM) LEADING RESPONSES TO MIGRATION CRISIS AROUND THE WORLD.**

Following unrest in Libya IOM operates since 20 February to evacuate the thousands of stranded migrants in the country, and principally at the border with Egypt, Tunisia and Niger.

IOM's humanitarian objective is to assist and protect vulnerable migrants stranded and with no means to go back home.

Through the contribution of ECHO to a pool fund which amounted to USD 28.5 million, IOM evacuated Third Country Nationals with the support of UNHCR and other partners.

The methods of evacuation are a combination of charter flights, commercial flights, land and sea vessels, ground assistance and operations in Northern Chad.

IOM has also repatriated Libyans from Benghazi, Tripoli, Misrata, Sebha while conducting pre-departure health checks, acute conditions referral and medical evacuation assistance to home.

## **EU COMMISSIONER GEORGIEVA ATTENDS AU PLEDGING CONFERENCE**

Kristalina Georgieva, EU Commissioner in charge of International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response took part in Addis Ababa in the African Union donors conference meeting for countries of the Horn of Africa affected by drought and famine, on 25 August 2011.

African Union (AU) leaders gathered at the first ever AU Pledging Conference and made pledges of more than US\$350 million dollars toward the relief effort assisting the millions of people in crisis due to the extreme drought and famine conditions in the Horn of Africa

The EU Commissioner reminded that the European Union collectively has already provided some €600 million in 2011, of which €160 from the European Commission. "I would like to lend my full support for the attention that African Union has put on engaging with non-traditional donors and with the private sector", she added.

Commissioner Georgieva also met with Meles Zenawi, Ethiopian Prime Minister, Sheikh Sharif Ahmed, Somalia's President, Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, and Jean Ping, President of the African Union Commission.



***"African countries are already making great efforts to deal with the crisis. (...) There are few countries in the world that would respond with such generosity to their neighbours. In this context, it is a moral imperative for the rest of us in the international community to shoulder the burden fallen on the region", M. Georgieva said, addressing the Conference.***

## INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT AND AFRICAN UNION SEMINAR: AN EXCHANGE FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING



International Criminal Court and African Union Seminar : an exchange for a better understanding.

A joint seminar between the International Criminal Court and the African Union took place at the African Union Headquarter, in Addis Ababa, on 18 and 19 July.

The Seminar was attended by staff of the African Union Commission, Ambassadors and legal advisors of African States Parties and Non States Parties to the Rome Statute based in Addis Ababa. The purpose of the Seminar was for each Organ of the Court to explain its work with a view to fostering better understanding of the work of the Court and for the Court to hear AU concerns.



The ICC talked about all the cases currently before it, all from Africa, and described the different operations it undertook, explaining the 4 organs of the Court, Presidency, Judiciary, Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry.

The ensuing lengthy but constructive question and answer session on the Office of the Prosecutor's work (OTP) helped clarify some of the misconceptions and in particular the belief that OTP deliberately targets Africa and that it is controlled by the UN Security Council.

All participants said that this was a very important and useful exercise that should be repeated and expressed the view that there can be better understanding with more exposure.

The Seminar was sponsored by the International Organisation of La Francophonie and the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and Irish Aid.



## STUDY: CONFLICT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Under the theme of "Climate Change and Security in the Horn of Africa", a session of the Political Breakfast Meetings series, co-organized by the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation (FES) and the European Union Delegation to the African Union took place on 28 June 2011.

The meeting was addressed by Mersie Ejigu, Chief Executive Officer and founder of Partnership for African Environmental Sustainability (PAES) and chaired by Col. Sandy Wade, Military Advisor at the European Union Delegation to the African Union.

In his presentation Mersie Ejigu discussed the current challenges for the region, the linkages between climate change and security, as well as what needs to be done in the future. He stressed the importance of local experiences that need to be better recognized in order to develop scenarios of what local communities will actually face in the future.

**Findings of his recent research show that there are indeed local perceptions of serious environmental degradation which already have serious effects on markets as well as individual households and farms.**

Mersie Ejigu explained that resource management lies at the heart of the problem, although there is no direct causal relationship between climate change and conflicts. However, eroding eco-systems and mismanagement can be an important contributor to an already vulnerable social system, so that climate change is best understood as amplifier and threat multiplier. Research conducted by PAES in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, and Ethiopia found different conflict patterns between cultivators, pastoralists and the state, which all have a strong link to resource degradation and mismanagement.

Looking forward, suggestions were made to focus on knowledge and capacity development, adaptation strategies, as well as technology development. The meeting was also used as a forum to constructively think about policy recommendations for national governments, regional as well as continental organizations.

## PRIORITIZING SANITARY AND PHYTO-SANITARY INVESTMENTS

Regional Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) Sub-Committee meeting on the theme "Prioritizing SPS Investments through the CAADP\* framework" in COMESA\* was conducted 23-24, June 2011 in Lusaka, Zambia.

In line with COMESA Council Decision to abolish SPS barriers, and the Tripartite Summit (COMESA-EAC\*-SADC\*), which launched Tripartite Free Trade Agreement negotiations, COMESA is stepping up efforts to prioritize the harmonization of SPS in the region. Agriculture is a dominant economic sector, and a lack of common SPS principles hinders regional trade and integration.

Currently, SPS constitutes the single most important non-tariff barrier affecting cross-border movements of agro-products. There are very distinct national systems in the SPS field, with very little uniformity in legislation or controls among member states in the 3 regions.

Trades in live animals and food products are subject to varying controls, inspections and enforcement usually involving costly checks at national borders and certification from official authorities. This impacts businesses. For instance, it has been estimated that in some countries, the average import procedure may take up to 124 days, compared to 12 days on average in an OECD\* country.

COMESA is taking the lead to sensitize its member states to ensure SPS is prioritized in CAADP compacts and investment plans.

\***COMESA:** Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

\***CAADP:** Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme

\***EAC:** East African Community

\***SADC:** Southern African Development Community

\***OECD:** Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

## ADDING-VALUE THROUGH ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

In response to African Heads of State and Government Decision on Organic Farming; calling for development partners to provide the necessary technical and financial support for the implementation of this Decision, the European Commission (EC) and the African Union Commission (AUC) organise a kick-off workshop with the aim for conclusions to feed into the Strategy on Organic farming development in Africa. The workshop was held 11-12 July 2011, Brussels.

EC and AUC are strengthening collaboration to promote environmentally friendly methods in agriculture by developing organic farming to contribute to CAADP (Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme) and food security for smallholders, to facilitate access to markets and increase trade opportunities through moving up the value chains.

Certified organic farming in Africa covers 0.88 million hectares and an estimated 9.5 million hectares are used for organic beekeeping, forest and wild collection of products. This is less than 1 % of agricultural land. Most organic products are exported, mainly to EU markets. Developing organic agriculture may have a positive impact on food security and sustainability in some countries.

At present Tunisia is the only African country with its own governmental organic standards, certification and inspection system such that it can be listed by the EU as an equivalent third country. Other African countries have not applied for recognition but a number of countries like Egypt, South Africa and East African countries are making progress in the right direction.

The workshop, under the theme 'Building strategies for Africa: Adding-value through organic agriculture' will gather experts and participants from the EU and AU Member States (public and private sector, civil society organisations), international organisations, regional and pan-African farmers and producers' organizations, etc.

Workshop material will be eventually uploaded on European Commission Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development website ([http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/agriculture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/agriculture/index_en.htm))

## AMESD OFFERS NEW SERVICES FOR AFRICAN DECISION MAKERS

More than 130 decision makers and experts from Africa and Europe, gathered on 20-23 July 2011 in Mauritius on the occasion of the second Forum of the African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) program. The theme of the forum was "AMESD Services and Products: achievements and perspectives in support of environmental management". High level delegates such as the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Mauritius and the Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Commission were among the participants.

The Forum was organized at a crucial stage of the program: the completion this month of the deployment and upgrade of key infrastructure (111 satellite reception stations) in 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa and associated training activities, and the presentation of prototype versions of products and services being developed by the 5 implementing regions (CEMAC, ECOWAS, IGAD, IOC, and SADC) to relevant stakeholders and potential users for various purposes (water resource management, water monitoring for cropland and rangeland, land degradation and natural habitat conservation, coastal and marine and agricultural and environmental resources management). Participants called for enhanced cross fertilization between products and services being developed by different regions, and for pursuing the continentalisation of services (i.e. the preference for some of the services to be diffused continent-wide and not specific to one region only). At the same time it was suggested to strengthen the national networks, to enable them to play a more active role in reaching out to decision makers and planners at national level as well as to the local communities.

The ultimate goal is not only the integration of AMESD products and services into decision making process in Africa but also in the implementation of the decisions, which need to be translated into action on the ground. Thus, AMESD will continue activities to strengthen sustainable participation of African governments in global environmental surveillance.

Future avenues for training and capacity development were discussed, including a stronger involvement of universities and the use of distance education training methods, to ensure sustainability.

The Forum was also an occasion to talk about how the investment made and the achievements reached under AMESD will be integrated in future initiatives such as the Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) program and GMES (Global Monitoring of Environment and Security) Africa.

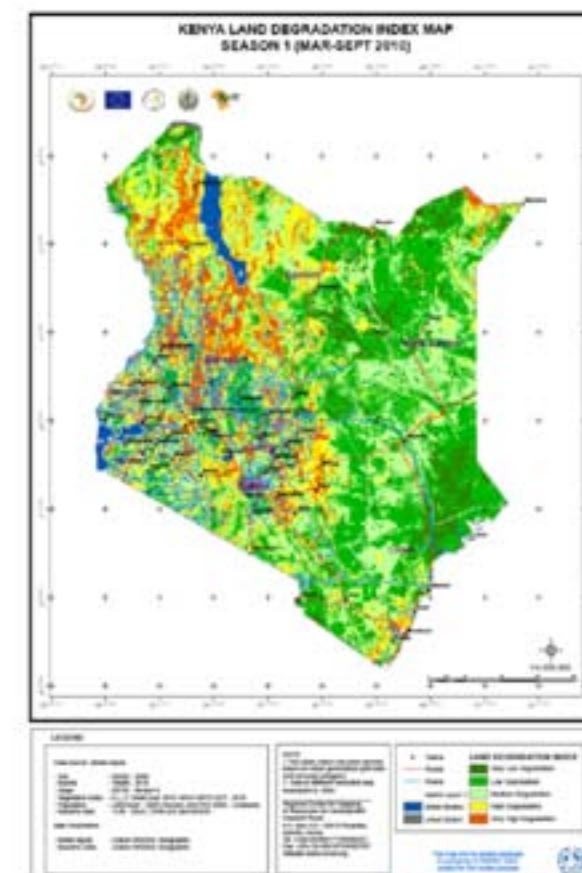
AUC and EU thank the Government of Mauritius, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Mauritius Oceanography Institute for the support in the organisation of the Forum.

AMESD is a EU funded operational program started in 2007 until 2013 under the coordination of the African Union Commission, using Earth Observation (EO) data to develop information services in the thematic areas of water resource management, water monitoring for cropland and rangeland management, land degradation and natural habitat conservation, coastal and marine and agricultural and environmental resources management.

For further information: [www.amesd.org](http://www.amesd.org)

## AMESD DROUGHT MONITORING IN EAST AFRICA

AMESD is implementing a specific action using earth observation data to monitor land degradation and natural habitat conservation in East Africa. Participants asked whether the drought phenomenon and consequent crisis in the Horn of Africa had been anticipated. It was confirmed that the current situation in the Horn of Africa had been forecasted as early as August 2010 and warning given to national authorities. The example shows that the availability of appropriate information services is crucial for environmental monitoring and early warning, but not sufficient if this is not integrated in political and policy frameworks and translated into action.





# ARRIVAL DEPARTURES

**COLONEL DANIEL  
VENTURI**

**CONSEILLER MILITAIRE, A  
QUITTÉ LA DÉLÉGATION DE  
L'UNION EUROPÉENNE AUPRÈS  
DE L' UNION AFRICAINE LE 13  
JUILLET 2011.**



Website of the Delegation of the European Union to the African Union:  
Union [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african\\_union/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/african_union/index_en.htm)



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