

EU-Ghana Newsletter

Delegation

Issue 2 February—May 2012

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H. E. Ambassador Claude Maerten

Editorial

The EU-Ghana partnership is vibrant in this beginning of 2012 as the number of events, projects and new initiatives can testify.

In this issue you will read notably about the development of the Sustainable energy for All initiative (SE4ALL), launched by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon last year, with the visit of a high level mission in Ghana in March as a learning case and the presentation of the European Commission initiative decided at the EU SE4ALL summit held in Brussels on 16th April.

You will get further information on the strong EU support to the independent institutions of Ghana in charge of the electoral process to ensure peaceful, free and fair 2012 elections and the EU collaboration on the decentralization policy reforms to increase service delivery at the local level.

During the period numerous high level workshops were organised by the EU on Migration, Trade control, Food security and commodities and Forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products.

I am very pleased to issue this Newsletter at the eve of the celebration of the Europe Day on the 9th of May.

As you may know, 62 years ago, on 9 May 1950, the first layer of a supranational authority for Europe was announced in what has become known as the Schuman declaration. This is the origin of the "Europe day", and the Schuman declaration's aim was to make war between Europe's nations unthinkable by pooling together national coal and steel production. The aspiration at that time was forgiveness and future. The objective was to build our future on the basis of peace, stability and solidarity.

I am proud to announce you that a high level meeting organised jointly by the Ministry of Finance and Economy Planning and the EU Delegation will take place on the 9th May at the international Conference Centre in Accra on the Future of EU-Ghana Partnership.

It will be honoured by the participation of H.E. the Vice-President, John Mahama, and Ms. Hanna Tetteh, Minister of Trade and Industry, and many stakeholders from the government of Ghana, the international organizations, the diplomatic missions, the private sector and the civil society.

It will be a great opportunity to spark off a free and open debate with stakeholders on the role of external assistance and the future of EU cooperation in the context of the economic transition of Ghana to the status of middle income country (MIC).

"Sustainable Energy for All" SE4ALL initiative - High Level Mission to Ghana—March 12-16, 2012

A joint High Level Mission of the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), the World Bank (WB), the United States (US) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) was in Accra, Ghana in the framework of the UN "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative from March 12 - 16, 2012. Christopher JONES, Head of Cabinet of the EU Commissioner for Development, Andris PIEBALGS, took part in the mission on March 13, 2012.

The aim of the mission was to confirm Ghana's willingness to take part in the initiative and identify the national steps to be taken before the Rio+20 Conference with a view to finalising their action plan and to use this first mission as a learning case for the other countries to benefit from the initiative.

The mission was organised by the UN with the support of the EU delegation and the high level team led by Luis GOMEZ-ECHEVERRI, special advisor to the UN Secretary General. On the Ghanaian side, the main interlocutor was Abeeku BREW-HAMMOND, Chairman of the Board of the Energy

Commission and technical advisor to SE4All high level panel.

The mission met with the Vice-President of Ghana, Mr John Mahama and also the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Mr. Kwesi Ahwoi, the two Deputy Ministers of Energy, Mr. Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah and Mr. Inusah Fuseini, the Deputy Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Dr. Mustapha Ahmed and the Chief Director at Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Regarding energy operators of the sector, representatives of both private and public sector have been met. On the donor side, different meetings have taken place with Heads of Mission, Heads of Cooperation and members of the Donor Energy Sector Working Group.



Christopher JONES, Head of Cabinet, EU Commissioner for Development

"Energising Development": Commission's new initiative to help achieve energy access for all by 2030—EU Sustainable Energy for All Summit in Brussels , 16 April 2012

A new EU energy initiative which will provide access to sustainable energy for an additional 500 million people in developing countries by 2030 was on April 16, 2012 announced by President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso.

Speaking at the EU Sustainable Energy for All Summit in Brussels, the President unveiled this EU commitment in the framework of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4All) launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon last year.

The Commission's proposals included a new EU Technical Assistance Facility worth €50 million over the next two years, which will support developing partners that "opt in" to the initiative by providing EU expertise in the field; thereby promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth.

President Barroso also emphasized that in the run-up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio in June, the "Rio+20" Conference, the EU and Member States will look to mobilise additional support of up to several hundred million euros to support concrete new investments in sustainable energy for developing

countries – working with banks and private sector to create a leverage effect to multiply this amount many times over.

As the largest provider of development assistance in the world, the EU plays a crucial role in the efforts to end energy poverty around the globe.



President Barroso said: "The link between energy and development is fundamental. Without energy access, we simply will not meet the Millennium Development Goals. That is why we have organised today's summit – we are committed to the aim of providing universal access to sustainable energy for all by 2030. By bringing together our partners, the private sector and civil society, we will work shoulder to shoulder to make this aim a reality. With today's strong pledge

that we will assist developing countries in providing energy access for 500 million people by 2030, we are demonstrating our own commitment and hope that others will join us in making sure that by 2030, energy access is no longer a privilege but the right of all."

UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon said: "I welcome the commitment by the European Commission in support of the Sustainable Energy for All initiative. Its strong leadership in making energy central to its development policies, and for advancing the issue of energy access, helps place energy at the forefront of the global development agenda."

The new EU "Energising Development" initiative will also focus on expanding and improving EU innovative financial instruments to make sure that the billions of euros that they leverage result in real change on the ground. This could include, for example, support to develop public-private partnerships on energy access in developing countries or setting up risk guarantee schemes in developing countries with a bank. This could potentially result in substantial investments, as it would provide investors with some assurance that their money is secure.





EU supports Ghana's 2012 electoral process with EUR 7 M

The Head of the EU Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten said the EU has made available for Ghana's 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections EUR 7 million to support independent Government institutions involved in the electoral process.

Out of the EUR 7 million, EUR 1.5 million has been allocated specifically to National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) with specific objectives to strengthen its constitutional mandate and its operational capacity to deliver civic education activities.

Ambassador Maerten, was launching a new logo and website for the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) in Ghana in Accra on January 27, 2012. The new logo (showing five hands reaching out into the sky in the national colours with a black star in the middle, symbolizing

the constant efforts at moving democracy to a higher standard) are geared towards helping the commission to deliver effectively on its mandate in a more effective manner and to carve a more vibrant and revitalised path into the future. The NCCE introduced the new logo and website for the Commission after 18

years in existence, performing its constitutional mandate of informing and educating Ghanaians on their civic responsibilities.



Ambassador Maerten on working visit to Upper West Region

Ambassador Claude Maerten has paid a working visit to the Upper West Region of Ghana to hold discussions with the regional authorities and officials of the Electoral Commission and the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) on the preparation of the 2012 general elections.

During the two-day visit, February 13 – 14, 2012, the Ambassador and his team paid a courtesy call on the Upper West Regional Minister Alhaji Issahaku Salia and the Wa Municipal Chief Executive Officer. They interacted with the staff at the Regional Coordinating Council and later met with some Regional and District officials of the EC including Hajia Saidatu Maida, a Commissioner of the EC, and Mr. Mahama Yahaya, the Regional Director of the EC in Wa.

The Ambassador also went on a field trip to some polling stations in the municipality of WA and later met with officials of the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), Mrs. Augustina A. Akumanyi, NCCE Deputy Chairman, Operations and Mr. Ban Banye, NCCE Regional Director. A



The Ambassador and his team at a durbar hosted in his honour

community durbar was later held in his honour on February 14, 2012 at Kpangu hosted by the chief of Naa Seidu Briamah Kube 1.

In brief remarks at the durbar, the Ambassador praised

Ghana for its democratic credentials recognised worldwide as the beacon of democracy in Africa. He said it was for these reasons that the EU found it necessary to support the EC and NCCE, especially with the introduction of the new biometric voter system to enable them to come out with a credible biometric voter register. According to the EU Ambassador, this would not only lead to free, fair and credible general elections on December 2012 but would further enrich Ghana's democratic gains across the world.

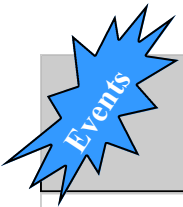
EU Ambassadors inspect pilot Biometric Voter Registration centre at Nima, Accra

Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) will be carried out by the Electoral Commission throughout Ghana from 24th March till 5th May at registration centres, throughout the country to produce a new voter's register for the 2012 general elections in Ghana.

The centres would also serve as polling stations during the 2012 general elections. 7,000 kits have been acquired to be used for the biometric registration at 23,000 polling stations. A pilot exercise for the BVR took place on 26-27th February in two districts of each region to create public awareness about the exercise. In the Greater Accra Region, notably at the Nima Roman

Catholic School, the EU and Dutch ambassadors, Claude Maerten and Gerard Duijfjes, went to the field on 26 February to assess the exercise at Nima. They expressed appreciation at the professionalism of the EC officials.





Seminar on the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility January 24, 2012

The Delegation of the European Union to Ghana on January 24, 2012, organised a day's seminar on the EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility: its content and implementation mechanisms: possibilities for a closer cooperation between the EU and Ghana in migration matters.

The initiative followed a request by the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare in September for the EU to mobilise technical support in the framework of migration under the Migration EU expertise (MIEUX) facility.

This is in order to provide information about the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM) and exchange lessons learnt in the region as well as to consult Ghanaian authorities on the future development of the GAMM and explore possibilities for a closer cooperation between the EU and Ghana on migration issues.

The Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Ghana, Mr. Kurt Cornelis, said in an opening statement that the Global Approach and Mobility framework covers four equally important thematic pillars:

Organizing and facilitating legal migration and mobility;
Preventing and reducing irregular migration and trafficking in human beings;
Promoting international protection and enhancing the external dimension of asylum policy;
Maximising the development impact of migration and mobility

He stated that regional dialogue processes should continue as a strong focus and that the overarching regional framework towards the South should be the Africa-EU partnership. "This will be done through tailor-made bilateral partnership frameworks that will be negotiated between the EU and non EU partner countries.

The first of these frameworks is the Mobility Partnership (MP), which will be promoted as the principal framework for cooperation in the area of migration and mobility between the EU and its partners, with a primary focus on the countries in the EU Neighbourhood".

"A second and alternative framework should be the Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM). This is the viable option in cases where both the EU and the partner country want to establish an advanced level of cooperation, but where one side or the other is not ready to immediately enter into visa facilitation and readmission agreements.

Like the MP, the CAMM should set a number of common recommendations, targets and commitments for dialogue and cooperation and should include a package of specific support measures. If both parties agree, the Common Agenda could be upgraded to a Mobility Partnership at a later stage".

Ghana's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni, hoped the outcome of the seminar would further strengthen the dialogue between Ghana and the EU in the area of migration and mobility, in line with the EU's new Global Approach on the subject.

This is with the view to manage legal migration, tackle irregular migration and to maximize the development impact of migration and mobility and lead to further discussions on a possible Mobility Partnership Agreement between EU Member States and Ghana in the near future that would provide a regulatory framework for the effective management of migration for development.

The seminar was attended by stakeholders from key Ghanaian Ministries and Institutions, the relevant EU services and EU Member States.



Mr. Kurt Cornelis (left) EU Head of Cooperation and Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni, Ghana's Minister of Foreign Affairs at the seminar

Trade Control and Expert System Workshop in Accra – February 2012

Events

The European Commission, in collaboration with the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA), has organised a training workshop in Accra, Ghana from 31 January – 2 February on Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) and official control procedures for food of animal origin imported into the European Union (EU) market.

The event was part of the training for Safer Food (BTSF) programme of the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers' Better. About 20 people selected from the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) countries including Benin, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Cape Verde, the Gambia and Ghana attended the workshop. Most of them were national-level control staff involved in the fields covered by the workshop.

The training was expected to increase participants' knowledge of EU rules and requirements as regards official control procedures for food of animal origin imported into the EU market and allow them to use TRACES, a web-application delivering export certificates on-line.



Participants at the seminar

This was to enable them to better verify that food of animal origin exported to the EU fulfil the conditions for admission to the EU Market. The use of TRACES was

also to provide them with tools designed to ease their tasks and increase the security of the data.

The workshop opened in the presence of Mr. Eugene Adarkwa-Addae, Director of Standards at the Ministry of Trade, Mr. Kurt Cornelis, EU Head of Cooperation, and Mr. Didier Carton, Head of Sector TRACES at the European Commission.

The workshop is part of a series of regional workshops on Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) and TRACES which will be held across the globe during 2011-12, funded by European Commission and implemented by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers. This workshop closes a series of three organised on the same topic in Africa, the two others having been held in Tanzania (6-8 September 2011) and South Africa (22-24 November 2011).

Practical Course on Market Analysis & Private Standards in the Ghanaian Commodities Sector - March 13th, 2012



Participants in a practical exercise at the ITC workshop

A day's workshop on "Market Analysis and Private Standards in the Ghanaian Commodities Sector" was held in Accra on March 13, 2012. It was jointly hosted by the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Delegation of the European Union to Ghana with the kind support of the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

It was attended by 26 participants composed of representatives from both public institution and private sector, namely producers, exporters, and trade promotion organizations. The participants received tutorials on ITC's market analysis tools, notably, the Trade Map and Standards Map.

The Trade Map is the world's largest trade database with indicators on export performance, international demand, alternative markets and the role of competitors from both the product and country perspective, and the Standards Map is a global database on private standards, which includes also academic, scientific papers and research articles discussing private standards issues in global value chains.

Participants had the opportunity to use the tools in practical exercises and to assess the potential market opportunities for Ghanaian commodities exports to the European Union and other possible destination markets.

The role of private standards was assessed as well, using the Standards Map tool to identify the main standards relevant to Ghanaian commodities and analysing their potential market outreach, their technical requirements and potential costs and benefits.

The group showed a keen interest in the subject of market analysis and private standards in particular. The awareness, motivation, interaction of the whole group led to a very positive workshop. Some participants expressed a high interest to be kept informed of the further developments of ITC's project on Non-Traditional Markets (NTMs).



Trade Issues—Regional Seminar on Food Security and Commodities in West Africa - Special focus on Bananas

A Regional Seminar on Food Security and Commodities in West Africa with special focus on Bananas took place in Accra from January 25 – 27, 2012. It provided participants with the opportunity to review the context and performance of the banana sector in the region, as well as the related economic, social and environmental sustainability aspects.

The three-day seminar was attended by participants from three West African countries, Cameroon, Ivory Coast and Ghana consisting of representatives from public sector institutions, private companies and producers' associations, and also trade unions and civil society organizations, as well as EU correspondents from the Delegations in the participating countries and from EU headquarters.

Participants exchanged information on general policy elements such as the National Adaptation Strategies (NAS) for the banana sector adopted by the different countries, and participated in the dialogue on the design of the future Bananas Accompanying Measures (BAM), to be financed by the EU in each country.

They also had the opportunity to exchange ideas at the regional level on key commodity matters and also on their contribution to agriculture and food security, focusing on the banana sector.

The Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Ghana, Mr. Kurt Cornelis said in an opening statement, that the reason for putting the accent in banana is the changing context experienced by the banana exports in the latest period at the international level.

“In the EU market, the changes come from the substitution of the old import system (based on a combination of tariffs and quotas for MFN and ACP bananas), to a regime solely based on a tariff.

The shift responds to the efforts to put an end to a long-standing banana dispute at the WTO, and implies the reduction of EU tariffs applied to all banana imports to EUR 176 per tonne since 1 January 2006, to be followed by gradual reductions up to EUR114 a ton in 2017.

Thus, even if ACP countries continue to receive tariff-free access to the EU markets, the global competition for the EU market share becomes now harder.”

The European Union, he noted, is well aware of the importance that the production of bananas has for the economy of a large number of ACP countries. “For this reason, it has engaged in the process of amending its financing instruments for development cooperation to

include a new set of

Banana Accompanying Measures

(BAM), which will be oriented to provide EU support to the banana stakeholders in the different countries to adjust to the new environment.”

“Following the approval of the relevant regulation in

December 2011, we are now prepared to retake the preparations of the new EU support schemes under the BAM initiative, in alignment with the different National Adaptation Strategies and their processes of implementation.”

Mr Cornelis stressed that it was therefore crucial to steer up the dialogue and to receive the necessary feedback from counterparts, including ideas on how the proposals can be better mainstreamed into the national strategies.

Beyond gathering profitable information on the banana sector, “we hope that the seminar can also become a profitable space for the exchange of experiences in West Africa, bringing to the table innovative ideas and examples of good practices,” he stated.

Background:

The "Banana Package" initialled in December 2009 and adopted in March 2010 includes a) the EU's Geneva Agreement on Trade in Bananas (GATB) with Latin American Most Favoured Nations suppliers, b) the agreement with the United States, and c) the Commission's commitment to African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) banana-exporting countries to provide development assistance to support their adjustment to the new market conditions.



A group photograph of participants

Ghana, EU committed to FLEGT Partnership Agreement—VPA

The Government of Ghana and the European Union (EU) on 15 March 2012 reaffirmed their commitment towards an effective implementation of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). This was announced at the 4th meeting of the VPA Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism (JMRM) in Accra.

The Ghana-EU JMRM ensures an effective development of the systems needed to implement the agreement and to follow up on commitments of both parties.

The meeting provided the parties with the opportunity to have a first hand discussion on how to develop a framework for monitoring the impacts of the Agreement.

Ghana became the first timber-producing country to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA or Agreement) with the European Union (EU) in November 2009. Following Ghana's lead, five other countries have also concluded VPAs, and many more are currently in a process of VPA negotiations.

Both parties are fully committed to taking all necessary measures for the issuance of the FLEGT licenses by March 2013, when a new EU regulation requiring importers to carry out due diligence to assure the legality of timber products, comes into effect.

During the meeting, the parties discussed progress on implementation of the Agreement. Updates were provided on the components of the Legality Assurance System (LAS) - in particular the progress on the wood tracking system, the legality verification protocols and the independent monitoring of the system, the policy and legislative review, and on the progress on the domestic market policy.

The working rules of procedure for the JMRM as well as further elaboration of rules of arbitration have been agreed.

In the update, Ghana highlighted advances in the development of a workable system for verifying the legality of timber and will soon contract an Independent Monitor. The 2010 and 2011 Annual Reports on the VPA implementation will be published by the end of April 2012.

The out-going Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, the Honorable Henry Ford Kamel (MP), expressed appreciation for the continued partnership with the EU to enhance transparency and good governance in the forestry sector.

He stressed the commitment of the Government of Ghana to implement the VPA. The Honorable Minister outlined progress in the review of the Ghanaian forest laws, and in the introduction of a procurement policy for wood on the domestic market.

The Deputy Minister reiterated the good political will of the Government, and emphasised the commitment to inject the needed efforts to speed implementation according to the timelines.



Ambassador Claude Maerten, Head of the EU Delegation (left) and Mr. Henry Ford Kamal, out-going Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, signing an aide memoire adopted by both parties after the joint review monitoring and review mechanism on the VPA.

EU Ambassador Claude Maerten noted that he was very much encouraged by the crucial steps being taken on the Wood Tracking System, the Independent Monitor and on the domestic market.

He stressed that it is important to remain focused on tackling challenges of illegality in the domestic market as it would undermine forest governance. Addressing the supply of legally harvested timber in the domestic market is essential to dealing with deforestation and forest degradation." Ambassador Maerten further pointed out the linkages of deforestation with climate change and loss of fiscal revenue.

He welcome the presence of two parliamentarians from the Parliamentary Committee on Lands and Forestry, as it shows that Ghana is serious to ensure accountability in the forestry sector. He expressed the need to implement decisions taken by both parties.

The Ambassador also welcomed the participation of both the private sector and the civil society as they have a key role in implementation. It is expected that the next series of meetings of the JMRM will be held in Accra in September 2012.

EU support of EUR 52 million to reduce maternal mortality in Ghana - MDG initiative March 8, 2012

Ghana's Minister of Health Mr. Alban Bagbin on March 8, 2012, paid a working visit to the Tema General Hospital in Accra to inspect the Hospital. He was accompanied by the Head of the EU Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten, the Chief of Tema, Nii Adjei Kraku II and other dignitaries.

The team was lead to tour the Hospital by the Medical Director, Mrs. Charity Sarpong. They visited the current maternity wards, antenatal wards, obstetric centre and other areas of care for the prospective mothers and babies as well as a three-storey maternity block currently under construction.



Ambassador Maerten (left) Head of EU Delegation and Mr. Alban Bagbin, Ghana's Minister of Health confers after the inspection

The visit was to acquaint himself with first hand information on the activities of the hospital towards reducing maternal deaths.

The Minister used the occasion to officially announce a EUR 52 million European Union Commitment to support Ghana's Maternal Mortality improvement drive. The support is to help Ghana to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, by reducing the maternal mortality in the country by two thirds in 2015.

He said four years to the deadline of achieving the MDGs, Ghana is yet to achieve meaningful marks in reducing maternal deaths. There is still mixed progress with a very slow pace of achieving some of the targets, while other targets are completely off course.

"There is a need to improve on quality of care to reduce maternal deaths." Mr. Bagbin said the country have four years to arrive at 185 deaths in 100,000 births to be able to

meet the MDG 5 on maternal mortality.

"There is no other option, we must meet the goal and welcome the support of the European Union (EU) and other Developing Partners (DPs) in providing the support which will cover the financing gap that threatened the attainment of the goals on maternal mortality.

He said MDG 4 and 5 are related and together meaning accelerating efforts in MGG 5 will lead to a significant progress in accelerating MGD 4 which is to reduce child mortality.

Ambassador Claude Maerten, said seeing a woman die in the moment of giving life was one of the most devastating experiences in life.

He hoped that governments MDG Acceleration Action Plan (MAF) will lead to avoidable deaths, where all mothers can access and seek adequate maternal care and have access to obstetric emergency care among others.

Although the MAF is not new, it provides a framework, accepted by all stakeholders for achieving MDG 5 by proposing cost-effective, evidence-based solutions.

The three key priority intervention areas identified are improving family planning, skilled attendance at delivery and emergency obstetric and newborn care.

Ambassador Maerten said this year alone EUR 10 million shall be made available. He explained that the MDG initiative from the EU mobilizes additional funding for ACP countries where MDGs are most off track. The money stems from the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) and a total of GHS 2 billion has been made available to support their endeavours to attain the MDG targets.



European Union strengthens anti-drug operations on cocaine route in West Africa—February 13, 2012

A European Union-funded anti-drug operation (Operation COCAIR III), carried out in 30 international airports in West and Central Africa and Brazil, has achieved impressive results and led to concrete seizures of substantial amounts of illicit drugs and capital, according to a report of 13 February 2012.

The anti-drug operation was carried out by the World Customs Organization (WCO), together with Interpol and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, between 28 November and 4 December 2011. It resulted in 45 seizures, including 486 kg of cannabis, 24 kg of cocaine, 5 kg of heroin and interceptions of amphetamines and methamphetamines such as Ecstasy.

Additionally, huge amounts of various counterfeit products, arms and ivory products were seized and cash capital amounting to nearly €3 million was confiscated. Apart from the immediate success visible in the various seizures, the operation also led to increased airport checks, helped to raise awareness about the fraud occasionally committed by airport control services and reinforced the exchange of secure information between custom services and police, particularly in cocaine trafficking.

Drug trafficking is one of the major sources of revenue of worldwide organised crime and has a huge negative impact, both on health and national security. Disrupting this trafficking requires coordinated international action to reduce both the demand and the supply of drugs. The EU has taken a leading role in combating the international trafficking of illicit drugs by financing actions to prevent money-laundering, support law enforcement and improve communication between airports and seaports.

The operation, labelled COCAIR III - the third joint EU-WCO operation under the Cocaine Route programme - was set up to reinforce airport controls against the trafficking of illicit drugs, in particular of cocaine, at 30 international airports in West and Central Africa, such as Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal. These airports are located along the "Cocaine Route" and are used by traffickers to transport the drug from Latin America to Europe, via West Africa. Sao Paulo Airport in Brazil was also part of the exercise.

Under COCAIR III, particular attention was given to so-called "mules"; passengers on Europe-bound flights, either on direct or transit flights, who smuggle drugs or other illicit goods, in often very creative ways, such as fixed to their bodies, swallowed or hidden in items of clothing.

The large-scale cooperation in all COCAIR operations, but especially in COCAIR III, illustrates the importance of the strong involvement of the local authorities when it comes to combating this form of cross-boarder crime, which has the

potential to upset the economic and financial balance of the whole region.

Background

The European Pact to Combat International Drug Trafficking, which was adopted by the Council in June 2010, provides the main framework for action on drug trafficking at EU level. Its objective is to build links between different initiatives to tackle trafficking.

The "Supporting the fight against organised crime on the Cocaine Route" programme fits within this European Pact and is financed by the Instrument for Stability (Programme for Trans-regional Threats) with € 19 million. This project aims to strengthen the anti-drugs capacities at selected airports in West Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, and at selected seaports in West Africa and to help the law enforcement, judicial and prosecution authorities of Latin America and Caribbean countries to tackle transnational organised crime and money laundering, and financial crime in Latin American and Caribbean countries and West-Africa.

The results of the programme, announced 13 February 2012 at a press conference in Dakar, were part of a final analysis report on the programme, carried out by the European Commission.

More information:

Website of DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

Website of the EU Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs
http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm

Website of the EU Delegation in Dakar, Senegal
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/senegal/index_fr.htm

Links:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/ifs_en.htm

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/114889.pdf

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:326:0007:0025:en:PDF>

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/04/st15/st15074.en04.pdf>

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/files/com2011-6892_en.pdf

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/anti-drugs/european-response/index_en.htm



GHANA - EU COLLABORATION ON DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY

The EU has a long tradition of collaboration with the Government of Ghana in the context of supporting Ghana's decentralization reform processes and strengthening of local service delivery. Decentralization in Ghana has been enshrined in the 1992 constitution which marked the transition from the previous military regime to the present democratic system.

Since then Ghana has been operating a hybrid system of managing local governments: whilst there is a relatively extensive allocation of financial and human resources (strong de-concentration) to the districts, the Government has until recently continued to maintain a direct control from the centre over utilisation and management of those resources.



Officials addressing a seminar on decentralisation

The same hybrid approach applies to the political system: whilst District Assembly members are generally elected on a non-partisan basis, 30% of the assembly representatives as well as the political leadership in the Districts, the District Chief Executives, are nominated by the President.

However, and this with an increasing emphasis over the past 3 years, the shared general principle across party-lines has been in Ghana that the decentralization process needs to be completed to the extent that Districts have full responsibility and autonomy in managing financial and human resources for local service delivery.

In this context the EU, after a long tradition of direct support to local service delivery through micro-projects, has changed its approach under the 9th EDF towards a stronger emphasis on supporting the Government in its own policy agenda for strengthening effective service delivery through full decentralization of functions and funds to the District level.

It has thus partnered with the Government of Ghana to support the first Decentralization policy framework and National Decentralization Action Plan adopted in 2006. Several achievements had been recorded during this time like the development of an Intergovernmental Fiscal Framework as well as the establishment of the Local Government Service, based on the Local Government Service Act 2003, among others.

After change of power in 2008, the new Government decided to embark on a comprehensive review of the decentralization framework together with all stakeholders and

with the large participation of citizens across country. The intention was to give the decentralization process a stronger orientation, ensure large buy-in from all parties involved as well as to shape focus and clarity on the decentralization concept to be adopted in Ghana:

1. Decentralisation by devolution to the local level providing the Districts with the maximum degree of autonomy and
2. De-concentration to the regional level, maintaining the regional administrations as entities of the central government.

The review culminated in the adoption of a new decentralization policy framework and action plan in 2010 and the establishment of an Inter-ministerial Co-ordinating Committee. This process was accompanied by two major practical steps towards further devolution of functions and funds: the adoption of LI 1961, a legal instrument commencing the establishment of decentralized departments for all major sectors in the districts and the introduction of composite budgeting.

At the same time the constitutional review process was initiated reviewing particularly also the need and feasibility of further political decentralization. The question of election versus appointment of District Chief Executives has generated passionate debates and exchange of viewpoints across country. A consensus around a workable proposal is yet to be found.

The final report of the Constitutional Review Commission has been submitted to the Presidency which announced recently in the President's State of the Nations Address to Parliament that a Technical Implementation Committee has been identified to assist Cabinet to develop a white paper and to begin the implementation of the recommendations without delay.

This is likely to open the perspectives on the selection of District Chief Executives for a decision to be taken through a referendum possibly by 2013. Also this time the EU has opted for directly supporting the reform, with the view of strengthening the national structures and processes in implementing and sustaining the government-led decentralization reform strategy.

It is thus providing major institutional support to core processes and structures of the reform such as the establishment of human resource management units and systems in the districts, the establishment of a social accountability platform, the rolling out of composite budgeting in the districts and the establishment of a decentralization reform secretariat.

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The Marie Curie Initial Training Network on EU External Action - Exploratory Visit to Ghana, 23-30 January, 2012.



A group photograph of six Marie Curie Initial Training Network EXACT Researchers who visited the Delegation of the European Union to Ghana on 25th January 2012.

With them is Mr. Kurt Cornelis, Head of Cooperation at the Delegation (left) and Mrs Estelle Dzeukou, in charge of educational issues (right)

The group were at the Delegation as part of the Marie Curie Initial Training Network on EU External Action - Exploratory Visit to Ghana, 23-30 January 2012, to deepen their knowledge on the European Union External Action.

They interacted with EU officials and Ghanaian Government Officials on the following areas of interest

- EU Trade Policy
- Development Cooperation
- Peace keeping and Conflict Resolution
- EU Human Security Policy

●Democracy Promotion and Migration

The Researchers conferred with Mr Cornelis on Trade and Development cooperation issues and the Head of Delegation, Ambassador Claude Maerten shared his expertise too on trade issues with the interested students.

They also met with officials in charge of the portfolios they were interested in and with some Governments officials and agencies such as the Conflict Prevention and management Resolution Department of the Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping training Centre (KAIPTC).

The Researchers now completing the second Phase of their programme, made a short presentation of the overall EXACT Programme which spanned three years.

EXACT is an EU wide PhD and professional training programme for young researchers, academics and professionals in the field of EU external Action. It provides the opportunity to realise an individual research project leading to a double PhD issued by two universities.

The programme offers training for 12 participants for a period of three years while local and network-wide activities are provided by the partner institutions of the network.

The EXACT research programme is designed to critically examine EU External Action and its respective institutional architecture from a global perspective.

This policy domain is one of the most challenging and significant fields of theory-led and empirically based research for scholars engaged in research focusing on foreign policy, international relations and European integration.

GHANA - EU COLLABORATION ON DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL SERVICE DELIVERY

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In parallel the EU-delegation is leading on behalf of development Partners the partnership with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, as well as other stakeholders in the decentralization process for a stronger coordination and joint monitoring of the implementation of reforms around a sector wide approach. Based on the shared understanding with the Government of Ghana on the benefits of a sector wide approach, EU intends to support this important step towards more Government ownership and aid effectiveness of decentralization support programs with Sector Budget Support.

How will this help to increase service delivery at the local level? Experiences show that the closer governments are to the people, the more likely people influence public service priorities in accordance with their needs and monitor effective service delivery. The EU is joining forces with the Government of Ghana in providing the Districts with the required autonomy and capacity to take full responsibility for local service delivery in their area of jurisdiction.

To ensure full sustainability, the EU is aligning its support fully with the national decentralization policy framework focusing on dialogue and coordination around the Governments own priorities and delivery agenda.



European Union Week, 5– 12 May, 2012

9 May 2012

Seminar on “The Future of EU-Ghana Partnership”:

The Delegation of the European Union to Ghana and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning is organising a conference on EU Day, May 9, 2012 on the theme “The Future of Ghana-EU Partnership”. The seminar will offer the opportunity to exchange on the EU’s new development policy “An Agenda for Change”, on Ghana’s Development agenda and on the future EU aid portfolio. The Conference will include panels and debates and each session will be introduced by a high level and specialized panellists among them Development Partners, Ghana Government Agencies, Civil Society organizations, and the Private Sector.

Time: **9:30 am - 4:30**

Venue: **Accra International Conference Centre.**

EU Reception:

The Delegation will hold a reception on Wednesday 9th May 2012 at the residence of the Head of the Delegation. **The time is 6:30 pm. It is strictly by invitation**

“European Film Festival”

8 May 2012

Goethe Institut

The Italian **Embassy in collaboration with the Goethe Institut** presents an Italian film titled "**UNO SU DUE**".

Original version (Italian) with English subtitles

Director: Eugenio Cappuccio.

Year: 2006, **Running time:** 100 min

Main Actors: Fabio Volo, Ninetto Davoli, Giuseppe Battiston, Tressy Taddei, Agostina Belli.

Showing 20.00 - 20.15 h. Free Entrance.

12 May 2012

Goethe Institut

Embassy of Spain in Accra, in collaboration with the **Goethe Institut** presents a **cinematographic soirée** with the screening of two Spanish films. The two movies will see us through a series of events which would transform the life of a young African boy and four women caught in their standard everyday life.

1st showing at 19:00h. Free Entrance.

Title: *La causa de Kripán (Kripan’s cause)*

Original version (Spanish and French) with English subtitles

Year: 2010, **Running time:** 86 min, **Director:** Omer Oke

2nd showing at 21:15h. Free Entrance.

Title: *Planes para mañana (Plans for tomorrow)*

Original version (Spanish) with English subtitles

Year: 2010, **Running time:** 96 min, **Director:** Juana Macías

11 May 2012

Brazilian House in Jamestown

The Embassy of the Czech Republic in collaboration with the Danish Embassy presents a movie night with screening of Czech animated children series and a Danish drama at the above mentioned venue.

1st showing at 18:30h. Free Entrance.

Title: O Dorotce (About Dorothy)

Animated children series: 10 episodes

Year: 1978, Director: Božena Možíšová

Running time: 60 minutes

2nd showing at 19:30h. Free Entrance.

Title: In A Better World

Genre: Drama

Year: 2010, Director: Susanne Bier

Running time: 113 min

“Cultural Activities”

5 May 2012

Alliance Française – 20.00h. Entrance is free

The **Embassy of Spain in Accra** in collaboration with the **Alliance Française** presents a Music Concert, **Milo Ke Mandarinini (“Apple and Tangerine” in Greek)**. Milo Ke Mandarinini is a Spanish folk music group who was born as a result of a great interest in traditional music from the Mediterranean sea aroused in two young people, Carlos Ramírez and Isabel Martín.

7 May 2012

Alliance Française – 10.00h. Entrance is free

The **Embassy of Spain in Accra** in collaboration with the **Alliance Française** presents a music workshop to be held at the Alliance Française Exhibition Hall.

Duration: 60-80 min

Audience: open to general public

Activity: Didactic Concert: “Mar en el Medio de las Tierras” / Sea among lands by Milo Ke Mandarinini

10 May 2012

Alliance Française – 20.00h. Entrance is Ghc.10.00 and Ghc.5.00 for Alliance Française members and students

The Alliance Française, French Embassy and Institut française du Ghana, jointly presents “*Acoustic Africa- Afropean Woman*”. Following the success around the world in 2007 of the first version of Acoustic Africa (Vusi Mahlasela, Habib Koité and Dobet Gnahoré) and the second version created in 2010/11 (Oliver Mtukudzi, Habib Koité and Afel Bocoum), the third instalment in this exciting odyssey focuses on the rich tradition of African women’s voices with Dobert Gnahore, Manou Gallo and Kareyce Fotse.

Delegation of the European Union to Ghana

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