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F A C T S H E E T

EU relations with Sahel countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger

Overview of relations with the EU

The EU supports the Sahel countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger in areas issues of shared interest such as security, migration, terrorism, the humanitarian situation and long term development.

The Sahel region faces a number of pressing challenges such as extreme poverty, frequent food crises, high population growth rates, institutional weaknesses, irregular migration and related crimes such as trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling. Violent extremism also poses serious security challenges to the region and have potential spill-over effects outside the region, including Europe.

- **Sahel Strategy**

In March 2011, the EU adopted a comprehensive approach to the Sahel region, using as reference an EU Strategy for Security and Development ("Sahel Strategy").

This Strategy remains the key framework for EU action at both individual and collective levels to help countries in the wider Sahel-Sahara region address key security and development challenges. In March 2014, EU Foreign Affairs extended the Strategy to Burkina Faso and Chad in addition to Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Ministers also asked for the development of a new Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel.

The Action Plan was adopted by Ministers of Foreign Affairs on April 20 2015 and was reviewed and updated beginning of June 2016. With the establishment of this comprehensive framework for EU's action in the Sahel region, the EU reiterates its readiness to continue working closely with the Sahel countries to support their efforts to achieve peace, security and development.

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- **Sahel Regional Action Plan**

The **Sahel Regional Action Plan (RAP)**, adopted in 2015, has taken the implementation of the EU Sahel Strategy to the next steps. It identifies actions and initiatives for years to come, in coordination with Member States' activities, and constitutes a framework for EU's action in the Sahel region. The four key priorities are: 1) Preventing and countering radicalisation, 2) Creating appropriate conditions for Youth, 3) Migration and mobility, 4) Border management, fight against illicit trafficking and transnational organised crime.

The Action Plan is implemented with the full ownership and under the primary responsibility of the countries concerned, and in coordination with key international and regional organisations. It will combine the contribution by EU activities, instruments and resources with those of the EU Member States

- **EU Special Representative for the Sahel**

The new EU Special Representative for the Sahel, Mr Angel Losada, was appointed in December 2015 replacing Michel Reveyrand de Menthon. In this role, he plays a key part in reaching out to the region and in guiding EU action in support of regional and international efforts in favour of peace, security and sustainable development in the Sahel. He is also mandated to help coordinate the EU's overall approach to the crisis, using the EU Sahel Strategy as a basis.

The EUSR's mandate covers the engagement with all relevant stakeholders of the region, in particular G5 Sahel as a regional organisation but also governments, international organisations, civil society and diasporas, including with the countries of the Maghreb and Lake Chad Basin. The EUSR also represents the EU in relevant regional and international fora, including participation in the Comité de Suivi of the Mali Peace Agreement, and ensures visibility for Union's support to crisis management and conflict prevention, including EUTM Mali, EUCAP Sahel Mali and EUCAP Sahel Niger.

- **Missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)**

The EU's comprehensive approach to security and development in the Sahel includes three CSDP actions: EUCAP Sahel Niger, EUCAP Sahel Mali and the EU training mission in Mali (EUTM).

The EU launched a civilian CSDP mission, **EUCAP SAHEL Niger**, in 2012 with the objective to support the country in fighting terrorism and organised crime. EUCAP Sahel Niger provides advice and training to support the Nigerien security institutions (Police, Gendarmerie, National Guard) in strengthening their capacities to combat terrorism and organised crime, in line with the EU Strategy for Security and Development. The mission promotes the interoperability of Nigerien security forces, helps develop criminal investigation capacities, facilitate coordination in the fight against terrorism and organised crime and improve the sustainability of the security forces.

In January 2015, the Council launched **EUCAP Sahel Mali**, a civilian CSDP mission in Mali. The mission's task is to support the Malian internal security forces in ensuring constitutional and democratic order, putting in place the conditions for lasting peace as well as maintaining State authority throughout the entire territory. The mission advises and trains the three internal security forces in Mali, i.e. the police, Gendarmerie and Garde Nationale, and coordinates with international partners. The current mandate of the mission runs until 15 January 2017.

At the request of Mali and in line with relevant international decisions including UNSC Resolution 2085 (2012), the EU launched an EU military Training Mission in Mali (**EUTM Mali**) in 2013. Its mandate currently runs, after a strategic review held in February 2016, until May 2018.

The mission supports the rebuilding of the Malian armed forces and to meet their operational needs by providing expertise and advice, in particular as regards command and control, logistical chains, human resources and international humanitarian law; it also helps training combat units. The mission is not involved in combat operations. It also contributes, upon Malian request and in coordination with MINUSMA, to the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration process framed by Peace Agreement, through the provision of training sessions in order to facilitate the reconstitution of inclusive Malian Armed Forces. The Mission finally provides support to the G5 Sahel process within the activities of EUTM Mali in support of the MAF, by contributing to enhancing coordination and interoperability with G5 Sahel national armed forces.

- **EU-G5 Sahel – a strengthened partnership**

The EU is increasingly engaging with the 'G5 Sahel', formally created in December 2014.

The G5 Sahel comprises Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad. Mauritania assumed the presidency in 2014/2015 and was followed by Chad in November 2015.

The HRVP Federica Mogherini met with the G5 Sahel Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Brussels on 17 June 2015 and attended the Summit in Ndjamena on 20 November 2015, during which the EU-G5 Sahel Roadmap was adopted.

The latest Ministerial Meeting takes place on 17 June 2016 in Brussels.

- **EU development cooperation**

The EU already has a close and substantial cooperation with each of the five Sahel countries, evolving around the National Indicative Programmes, the Regional Indicative Programmes, humanitarian assistance, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace and three CSDP missions. Resources available and pledged for the **five Sahel countries by the EU and its Member States** amount to approximately **EUR 8 billion**.

The EU is also now supporting countries in the Sahel via the Emergency Trust Fund for Africa.

- **Humanitarian assistance**

As one of the largest contributors of humanitarian aid to the Sahel, the European Commission has assisted 1.22 million extremely food insecure people and 650 000 severely malnourished children in 2015. With a contribution of €206 million in humanitarian aid for 2015 and an initial envelope of €139.1 million for 2016, the European Commission continues to support life-saving aid in the region.

BURKINA FASO

Relations with the EU

The European Union has been present in Burkina Faso since 1959 and is the largest donor of aid for the development of the country, all the more so through the bilateral partnerships with EU Member States present in Burkina Faso.

Member States and the EU together provide annually approximately **400 MEUR** and 40 percent of the overall assistance to Burkina Faso.

Through the **11th EDF** (for the period 2014-2020) **National Indicative Programme** of **623 MEUR**, **focal** areas of cooperation are: (i) Governance, (ii) Health and (iii) Food security, sustainable agriculture, water. The strategic objective of the EU's relationship with the [Burkina Faso](#) is to support inclusive and sustainable economic growth to improve the quality of life of the population, reduce inequalities and reduce poverty and malnutrition. It also aims at contributing to the improvement of governance, the resilience of the most vulnerable populations, income and well-being and capacity of civil society as an actor of monitoring and enforcement implementation of public policies. Of the total allocation, 120 MEUR were frontloaded to support the Transition and its immediate aftermath. It is expected that 400 MEUR will be committed in 2016 mainly via budget support.

Under the **Emergency Trust Fund for Africa**, 3 projects have so far been approved for Burkina Faso amounting to a total of 55.2 MEUR.

Humanitarian aid: In 2016 is providing 20.3 MEUR in humanitarian assistance in Burkina Faso. Particular focus is on providing emergency food assistance to the most vulnerable populations during the lean season and to respond to the nutrition crisis, which affects the country

CHAD

Relations with the EU

The European Union has a 50 year relationship with the Chadian authorities. The EU remains committed to supporting [Chad](#)'s efforts to address major challenges in security and development, in line with the EU's Strategy for the Sahel.

Member States and EU together provide annually approximately **200 MEUR** and 50 percent of the overall assistance to Chad.

Through the **11th EDF** (for the period 2014-2020) **National Indicative Programmes EDF** of **442 MEUR** areas of focus are: (i) food security, nutrition and rural development; (i) management of natural resources; (iii) strengthening the rule of law.

Under the **Emergency Trust Fund for Africa**, so far 3 actions amounting to **55.3 MEUR** have been approved and will be implemented to strengthen the resilience and contribute to the stability of the Lake Chad Basin. The **Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)** finances several actions aimed at promoting stabilization, security and peaceful cohabitation, for a total amount of approx. 21 MEUR.

Humanitarian aid: The European Commission's humanitarian aid amounts to 50.2 MEUR in 2016. The funds contribute to the treatment of acutely malnourished children, multi-sectoral assistance to

displaced people as well as food assistance to the most vulnerable food insecure population during the lean season. In addition, basic support is also provided to refugees from CAR (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/sub-saharan-africa/chad_en)

MALI

Relations with the EU

The EU is a very active and important actor in Mali, even more since the 2012 crisis. Collectively with Member States, the EU is playing a key role in supporting the countries stability and development. EU support to Mali comprises political, security (CSDP missions), development policy and humanitarian action.

Member States and the EU together provide annually approximately **660 MEUR** and 50 percent of the overall assistance to Mali.

Through the **11th EDF** (for the period 2014-2020) **National Indicative Programme**, **615 MEUR** will be provided to cover 4 main sectors: (i) Peace consolidation and State reform, (ii) Rural Development and food security, (iv) Education and Infrastructure. The programme also provides support to civil society, to the National Authorizing Officer and a technical cooperation facility. Collectively, EU joint programming for development cooperation foresees to mobilize some 1.7 billion EUR for the 2014-2018 period.

Under the **Emergency Trust Fund for Africa**, 6 projects linking security and development actions for an amount of 91.7 MEUR have been approved so far for Mali, with others in the pipeline. The EU also provides humanitarian assistance and has had humanitarian office in Bamako since 2011, mobilising around 40 MEUR of humanitarian aid per year.

The EU is also engaging in High level political dialogue on migration with Mali.

Humanitarian aid: In 2016, the European Commission has allocated more than 40 MEUR to meet humanitarian needs in terms of nutrition, health and food assistance. Aid is provided to the most vulnerable victims of the conflict as well as to vulnerable populations facing acute food and nutrition insecurity.

MAURITANIA

Relations with the EU

The EU is Mauritania's first trading partner and its biggest donor. The Partnership Agreement on Fisheries is the most important in volume and finance which the EU has concluded. Common interests and close cooperation in fight against irregular migration to the EU and against terrorism and trafficking in the Sahel have in the last years reinforced the partnership and has led to Mauritania being a key partner of the EU Strategy for the Sahel.

Member States and the EU together provide annually approximately **100 MEUR** and 36 percent of the overall assistance to Mauritania.

Through the **11th EDF** (for the period 2014-2020) **National Indicative Programme** of **195 MEUR**, a special focus lie on (i) rural development, (ii) good governance and (iii) the improvement of the

health system. Around 300 MEUR of projects, from all cooperation instruments combined, are currently ongoing in Mauritania. Mauritania has been chosen for the implementation of two pilot-projects in terms of security and fight against radicalisation, underscoring the role of the country as a major security interlocutor in the Sahel region.

Through the **Emergency Trust Fund for Africa**, 2 projects have been approved up to now for an amount of 6,2 MEUR: creating jobs for youth in the infrastructure sector and a project aiming at fighting against child trafficking and irregular migration.

Humanitarian aid: In 2016, the European Commission's humanitarian funding totals some 10 MEUR. ECHO's. This includes emergency food assistance to the most vulnerable people during the lean season as well as the treatment of severe acute malnutrition of children. Support is also provided to Malian refugees, helping to cover basic needs in M'bera camp.

NIGER

Relations with the EU

The EU remains a key political interlocutor as well as Niger's main development partner. Given Niger's role as a key transit country for irregular migrants from West Africa, the EU has a particular interest in dialogue and cooperation on migration issues and with regard to the implementation of the Valetta Action Plan. High Level Dialogue was launched by the HRVP when she visited Niger in September 2015.

Member States and the EU together provide annually approximately **420 MEUR** and 44 percent of the overall assistance to Niger.

Niger receives one of the highest per capita aid allocations under the **11th EDF** (for the period 2014-2020), amounting to **596 MEUR**. The **Emergency Trust Fund for Africa** is complementing existing EU efforts and contributing to better migration management as well as addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration, in particular by promoting resilience, economic and equal opportunities, and security and development. Since the launch of the Trust Fund at the Valetta Summit, Niger has been allocated 104.9 MEUR supporting 6 dedicated projects.

The EU also implements two short term measures under the **Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)**. The first one supports security and development in Northern Niger (21.3 MEUR). The second was approved in August 2015 and aims at fostering resilience in the south-eastern Diffa region and prevent risks related to migration (15.5 MEUR).

Humanitarian aid: The European Commission's humanitarian aid totals **41 MEUR** in 2016. This includes food assistance for the most vulnerable food insecure populations and the treatment of children under five suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition. Basic support is also provided to the victims of Boko Haram violence in the Diffa area, covering food assistance, nutrition, shelter, water and sanitation and protection in regions facing man-made crisis. On the resilience side, Niger is an active partner in the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR) (http://ec.europa.eu/echo/what/humanitarian-aid/resilience/sahel-agir_en), having developed its 3N (Nigeriens nourish Nigeriens) initiative which receives significant EU support. A policy framework and related action plan have been adopted in 2016.