Mali and the EU

Over the decades and successive partnership agreements, the collaboration between Mali and the EU has been covering aspects such as political dialogue, security and trade.

Political Relations

In the face of a political and security situation that has been unstable for several years, the European Union (the EU) is supporting the Government with a view to a recovery strategy and is guiding Mali on the path to sustainable development.

The EU’s current cooperation strategies with Mali as regards the European Development Fund (EDF) are mainly focused on political and economic governance, strengthening institutional capacities and regional integration.

In the political domain, the collaboration encompasses:

- Political support for the peace and reconciliation talks in Mali and for modernisation of the State;
- Consideration of the regional dynamics affecting Mali, notably with regard to security issues.

Diplomatic activity

The EU became significantly involved in Malian politics in 2013, notably through its participation at the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreements (18 June 2013) which made a cease-fire possible in the north of the country, and enabled the organisation of general elections. Within this context, the EU deployed a Monitoring Mission for the presidential elections of 2013, support for the electoral process financed to the amount of EUR 17 million. Together with France, it co-organised the Donors’ Conference of 15 May 2013 which made it possible to mobilise EUR 3.25 billion, including 523 million promised to Mali by the EU. The European Union is supporting the implementation of the Mali Peace Agreement signed in 2015 and is a member of the international mediation process within the framework of the follow-up to the Agreement.

Security activities

The EU’s commitment in the realm of security in Mali dates from the adoption of the strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel (2011).

This commitment centres around several interventions:
• The **EUTM Mali** Mission (European Training Mission). Established in February 2013, this mission’s mandate is carried out within the framework of the common security and defence policy (CSDP). The Council has decided to extend this for a third mandate until May 2018;

• Since January 2015, a similar mission (**EUCAP Mali** [European Union CSDP mission in Mali]) has been operating in aid of the police, the gendarmerie and the national guard. The European Sahel Counter-Terrorism programme (Sahel CT – 2011-2014) financed by the EU through its Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (ICSP) has made it possible to organise some 42 training courses for internal security. The EU’s commitment in this domain is continuing with the **EUCAP Sahel Mali Mission** [European Union CSDP mission in Mali] and through other instruments and programmes which must be defined in consultation with the Malian authorities.

### Economic relations

Relations between the European Union and the African continent are based on mutual respect and solidarity. Their objective, through dialogue and a multidimensional partnership, is to improve the well-being of populations, this being based on good governance and the Rule of Law, and on optimising the impact of trade and investment as methods of reducing poverty and promoting economic and social development (conclusions of the fourth EU-Africa summit of Heads of State and Government, 2-3 April 2014, Brussels).

The European Union’s vision for its relations with Africa was set out by the head of European diplomacy, Mrs Mogherini, before the African Union, in Addis Ababa, in autumn 2015.

The partnership between the European Union and Africa is built on two major instruments: the Cotonou Agreement which governs the conditions of development cooperation between the European Union and the so-called ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) countries and a continental approach known as the “Joint Africa-EU Strategy” (JAES). The EU-Africa partnership advocates an innovative and ambitious approach in all areas of common interest, based on the principle of political equality between partners, while taking account of structural differences and the level of development which justify bespoke solutions in certain cases.

Regarding trade and investments, the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) concluded between the African regions and the EU is a stable, secure and predictable long-term partnership which aims to support countries in their objectives regarding integration into the world economy, in addition to promoting inclusive and sustainable development. The EPA will help Africa’s companies to import quality inputs for less, acquire new technologies, attract investment and boost exports thanks to increased competitiveness, in addition to accessing the European market without customs duty or quotas.

The EPA will help African consumers by improving product choice while simultaneously reducing prices. So that benefit can be derived from these arrangements, the EU is working in common agreement with the African countries to build strong awareness of the Agreement, and create support through reforms and measures which improve economic governance at national and regional level.

### Humanitarian Aid

The Directorate-General office for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) was reopened in Bamako in 2012, in order to better respond to the humanitarian needs that have
arisen from the crisis in Mali since the outbreak of the armed conflict in the north.

Faced with the conflict situation in northern Mali, ECHO is providing substantial aid for people suffering extreme food insecurity and for the victims of violence remaining in these areas.

ECHO has also mobilised its air service, ECHO flight, in order to facilitate access to humanitarian programmes and to the populations in the north.

Refugees and displaced persons

Approximately 350,000 Malians have been displaced within the country or have been displaced and are living in neighbouring countries. The majority of refugees depend entirely on aid for their basic needs such as food, health, water and protection which are partially covered by ECHO.

Food and nutritional insecurity

Throughout the Sahel and in Mali, food and nutritional insecurity is recurrent and results in an almost permanent crisis in some areas. ECHO has contributed, at the regional level, to improving awareness of malnutrition by financing programmes on nutritional support, access to healthcare, access to drinking water, and food security.

See also, in this regard, Project resilience 2016 lead by a consortium of NGOs in the Tombouctou [Timbuktu] and Gao regions.

Financial and technical cooperation

Development cooperation remains at the heart of collaboration between the EU and Mali. It represents an indispensable tool for re-establishing peace and national unity.

Within the framework of the 2014-2020 National Indicative Programme by way of the 11th EDF, the EU intends to grant Mali a budget of €615 million covering the period from 2014 to 2020. This support focuses on state reform and consolidation of the rule of law, rural development and food security, education, and road transportation in addition to other projects scheduled in Mali’s northern regions. These development priorities were derived from the 2013-2014 Mali Sustainable Recovery Plan (SRP), presented by the Malian government at the International Donors’ Conference for Development in Mali, held in Brussels in 2013. Examples of interventions in the Timbuktu region

The EU continues to pay special attention to the northern regions, as demonstrated by its interventions in the Timbuktu region.

- Construction works for 565km of road between Bamako and Timbuktu begun in 2010 and resumed in 2014 subsequent to the security problems in the area. It is anticipated that, in 2016, Mali shall have a fully asphalted road connection.
- More drinking water is being produced in the large cities of the north
- The EU is also financing the reconstruction of Timbuktu’s mausoleums which were destroyed during the jihadist occupation, in addition to safeguarding ancient manuscripts.

Documents

Strategy for security and development in the Sahel, European External Action Service

See also

National Indicative Programme 2014-2020
European Development Fund (EDF)
EUTM Mali (European Training Mission)
EUCAP Sahel Mali
Donors’ Conference for development in Mali
Plan for Mali’s Sustainable Recovery
www.eeas.europa.eu

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