The European Union's partnership with the G5 Sahel countries

On 18 June 2018, High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission Federica Mogherini will host the annual EU-G5 Sahel meeting, with the participation of Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica, alongside with Foreign Ministers from the G5 Sahel countries: Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad, as well as the Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel, to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on areas of shared interest such as development, governance in fragile areas, and improved security, including the fight against terrorism and illicit trafficking.

Why is the EU working with Africa's "G5 Sahel countries"?

In 2014, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger set up the "G5 Sahel" group of countries to foster close cooperation in the region and tackle the major challenges that these countries face. Since then, the EU has stepped up cooperation with this African-led initiative to build a strong partnership on many fronts: from political dialogue, to development and humanitarian support, to strengthening security and tackling irregular migration.

The Sahel region faces a number of pressing challenges such as extreme poverty, frequent food and nutrition crises, conflict, irregular migration and related crimes such as human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Violent extremism also poses a serious security challenge to the region and has potential spill-over effects outside the region, including Europe.

What are the EU's main areas of support to the G5 Sahel countries?

The EU is now supporting the G5 Sahel countries on 3 main tracks:

- **Political partnership:** The EU is a strong political partner of the G5 Sahel countries and has set up regular "EU-G5" dialogues. High Representative Vice-President Federica Mogherini has held annual meetings with G5 Sahel Foreign Ministers to strengthen cooperation in areas of shared interest such as development, governance in fragile areas, improved security, including the fight against terrorism and illicit trafficking. The EU is also strongly engaged in Mali's peace process.

- **Development assistance:** The EU, together with its Member States, is the biggest provider of development assistance to the region with **€8 billion** over 2014-2020. It uses all its tools to
support development efforts in the region, notably the ‘EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa’ under which €930 million has been committed so far for the region. The EU is also a member and key supporter of the Sahel Alliance, set up to coordinate existing EU and Member States development assistance better in the region, in a faster and more interlinked way than before through joint action.

- **Security and stability support:** The EU supports concrete regional-led security initiatives. The EU has already provided €100 million to establish the African led G5 Sahel Joint Force which aims to improve regional security and fight terrorist and criminal groups. The EU is itself a key security player in the region, with its 3 Common Security and Defence Policy missions; EUCAP Sahel Niger, EUCAP Sahel Mali, EU training mission (EUTM) in Mali. The EU also provides more than €400 million in programmes to support stability and development in the region. In Mali, the EU launched, in 2017, a stabilisation action in the central Mopti and Segou governorates, deploying a team of experts to support Malian national plans and policies, in order to counter the growing insecurity and to re-establish and expand the civilian administration and basic services.

**How is the EU involved in the Sahel Alliance?**

The EU is a member of the Sahel Alliance, launched and signed by the EU, France and Germany in July 2017. It is currently composed of 10 members: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK, Luxemburg, the EU, UNDP, the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the World Bank. It aims to coordinate and deliver aid quicker and more efficiently in the region. It will have a particular focus on peripheral, cross border and fragile zones of the Sahel. Since its launch, the Sahel Alliance has identified priority six priority areas: (1) youth employment; (2) rural development, agriculture and food security; (3) climate, notably energy access, green energy and water; (4) governance; (5) support for return of basic services throughout the territory, including through decentralisation; (6) security.

**What security support does the EU provide in the Sahel?**

- **The G5 Sahel Joint Force**

The EU has fully supported this African led initiative from the very beginning and provided a contribution of €100 million to help set it up. This EU funding is provided through the African Peace Facility and can only cover non-lethal equipment. This support also includes the establishment and operationalisation of a Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law compliance framework for the G5 Sahel Joint Force together with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Building on the EU’s defence planning capacity and expertise, the EU has set up a one of a kind Coordination Hub to gather together the many offers of international support to the G5 Joint Force. The Hub is already up and running and enables donors to channel much needed assistance. In practice it works by matching the offers of donors to a Recognised List of Needs provided and determined by the Joint Force.

The Joint Force will be comprised of troops from Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad, and will operate in all five countries. To step up action on security, particularly in border areas in the Sahel countries which face terrorist and security threats, the G5 Sahel countries have set up their own
regional security force. Concretely, the G5 Joint Force will have permanent forces deployed along the borders, able to operate together under a centralised command and communication structure. This will help tackle the pressing terrorist and security threat in the region, which is a cross-border issue for all the countries concerned.

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

The EU currently has three CSDP missions and a specific action in the Sahel:

1. **EUCAP Sahel Niger** is a civilian capacity building Mission supporting the Nigerien Internal Security Forces (Police, Gendarmerie and National Guard) in strengthening the Nigerien capacities to fight against terrorism, organised crime and irregular migration, through advice, training and delivery of equipment. The Mission established a field office in Agadez, with a permanent presence from April 2016. The Mission provides its support to the Nigerien presidency of the G5, in particular regarding the operationalisation of the Police component of the G5 Sahel Joint Force. It is foreseen that the mandate of the Mission will be renewed as off 1 October 2018 for two years.

2. **EUCAP Sahel Mali** is a civilian mission providing expertise in strategic advice, training and equipment to the Malian Police, Gendarmerie and National Guard, and the relevant ministries in order to support the restructuring of the Malian Internal Security Forces and reform in the security sector. Its mandate runs until January 2019. The Mission also supports the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the Malian Police component of the G5 Sahel Joint Force, in coordination with the other CSDP missions in the region.

3. **EUTM Mali** is a military training mission providing advice to the Malian authorities in the restructuring of the Malian Armed Forces, through the training of battalions (8 between 2013 and 2017) and support for the elaboration of the first Defence Programming Law ever adopted in Mali.

4. In addition to these three Missions, the EU has, in summer 2017, initiated the process of **Regionalisation of CSDP action in the Sahel**, aiming at combining Civilian and Military activities with the final objective to enhance the capabilities for co-operation of the five G5 Sahel countries. In the context of Regionalisation, a network of security and defence experts has been established consisting of experts in EU delegations and contact points within the three existing CSDP Missions.

**How does the EU support the peace process in Mali?**

The EU actively supports Mali’s peace process and is a guarantor of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement signed in 2015. The EU supports the United Nations Security Council Resolution for targeted sanctions against those who threaten the Mali peace agreement, and is a major partner of Mali on security and development. Two EU CSDP missions, one military (EUTM) and one civilian (EUCAP Sahel Mali) provide strategic advice and training to Mali’s Armed and Internal Security Forces and relevant ministries in order to contribute to the restauration of Malian territorial integrity, the protection of the population, and to support reforms in the security sector. High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini visited Mali in June 2017 and announced EU support of €500,000 to the ‘Comité de suivi de l’accord pour la paix et la réconciliation au Mali’.

**How does the EU support the region with humanitarian assistance?**

The European Union is one of the largest providers of humanitarian aid to the Sahel countries (including Nigeria and Senegal). In 2017, the European Commission allocated **€240 million**, to
provide emergency food assistance, nutrition treatment, essential health care, water and sanitation and protection. Furthermore, the EU also supports disaster risk reduction initiatives to enhance emergency preparedness and response. Thanks to EU support, over 1.9 million vulnerable people received food assistance in 2017. The EU also supported the treatment of 455,000 children for malnutrition and in need of assistance.

**EU assistance per G5 Sahel country:**

**Burkina Faso**
- European Development Fund: €628 million (2014-2020): support for 1) good governance, 2) health, 3) food security, sustainable agriculture, water, 4), sustainable energy, mainly via budget support
- EU Trust Fund for Africa: €154.5 million (since 2016) plus regional projects

**Chad**
- European Development Fund: €542 million (2014-2020): support for (i) food security, nutrition and rural development; (ii) management of natural resources; (iii) strengthening the rule of law
- Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: €113.3 million (since 2016) plus regional projects
- Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace: €9.3 million

**Mali**
- African Investment Facility: €96 million for the construction of road and energy infrastructures
- Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: €196.5 million (since 2016) plus regional projects
- Humanitarian aid: €32.3 million (2017)
- EU CSDP missions: EUCAP Sahel Mali, EUTM Mali

**Mauritania**
- European Development Fund: €160 million (2014-2020): support for (i) food security and sustainable agriculture, (ii) strengthening the rule of law and (iii) the improvement of the health system.
- African Investment Facility: €20.5 million for the construction of infrastructure (2016 – Rosso Bridge)
- Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: €54.2 million (since 2016) plus regional projects.
- EU-Mauritania Fisheries Protocol: the EU pays a financial contribution of €61.625 million per year for the partnership, comprising €57.5 million for the access to waters and €4.125 million for supporting local fishing communities in Mauritania and improving fisheries governance.

**Niger**
- European Development Fund: €686 million (2014-2020): support for (i) food security and resilience (ii) supporting the State in delivering social services (iii) security, governance, and peace consolidation (iv) road infrastructure for regions at risk of insecurity and conflict.
• Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: €229.9 million (since 2016) plus regional projects.
• Humanitarian aid: €42.6 million (2017)
• African Investment Facility: 39 million (2017)
• Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace
• CSDP mission: EUCAP Sahel Niger

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