



Coronavirus Global Response: EU sets up a Humanitarian Air Bridge

Brussels, 8 May 2020

The European Commission has set up an EU Humanitarian Air Bridge to transport humanitarian workers and emergency supplies for the coronavirus response to some of the most critical areas around the world.

Janez **Lenarčič**, Commissioner for Crisis Management, is travelling today to Bangui on the first flight and will meet H.E. Faustin-Archange Touadéra, President of the Central African Republic, as well as humanitarian organisations.

Commissioner Janez **Lenarčič** said: "*Leaving any area of the world unprotected today leaves us all unprotected tomorrow. As part of our global response, the EU will open a dedicated Humanitarian Air Bridge to get aid into areas which lack supplies due to the difficulties of global transit. This can be a lifeline for some of the most vulnerable communities worldwide.*"

The first EU flight, operated in cooperation with France, is departing from Lyon and will transport around 60 humanitarian workers from various NGOs and 13 tonnes of humanitarian cargo. Two subsequent humanitarian cargo flights will follow in the coming days to transport a further 27 tonnes of humanitarian supplies in total. On their return leg, the Air Bridge flights will also bring back EU citizens and other passengers from the Central African Republic in a repatriation effort.

More EU humanitarian flights are being scheduled for the coming weeks, prioritising African countries where the pandemic has the potential to worsen many existing humanitarian crises.

How the Humanitarian Air Bridge works

- In a joint effort between the Commission and Member States, the Commission funds air transport of Member States' flights to and from the proposed destinations, where possible combined with ongoing repatriation flights, also including humanitarian workers on rotation.
- Humanitarian staff from national administrations, NGOs or UN Agencies can benefit from the facility.
- The Commission finances 100% of the transport costs, whereas the EU partners remain responsible for the procurement of the humanitarian material.

Background

The Global EU response to Coronavirus follows a Team Europe approach. It draws on contributions from all EU institutions and combines the resources mobilised by EU Member States and financial institutions, to address the humanitarian, health, and other consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.

As part of its long-standing solidarity with the people in need in the Central African Republic, through its humanitarian aid, the EU is also supporting 15 new projects in 2020 with a total funding of €15.2 million. This funding is going towards providing life-saving assistance to the most vulnerable people. Since 2014, the Central African Republic received more than €770 million in humanitarian assistance from the EU and its Member States.

In addition to humanitarian aid, the EU has mobilised over €30 million for the coronavirus response via its different instruments, including the Bêkou Trust Fund. This funding will help in addressing immediate needs in the Central African Republic in the health, water and sanitation sectors as well as supporting the State budget with an early budget support payment.

For More Information

[EU Coronavirus response: crisis management and solidarity](#)

Factsheet: [EU Humanitarian Aid in the Central African Republic](#)

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[Participation of Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner, in the launch of the EU initiative Humanitarian Air Bridge](#)