

**SIXTH BOARD MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION EMERGENCY TRUST
FUND FOR AFRICA, Brussels, 14 June 2019**

devco.d.1.dir(2019)4543354

MINUTES

The European Commission convened the sixth meeting of the Board of the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF for Africa). The meeting was attended by Commission services (DG DEVCO, DG NEAR, DG HOME, DG ECHO) and the European External Action Service (EEAS), donor countries including EU Member States (MS), Switzerland, Norway, partner countries, and concerned regional organisations. The Director-General of DG DEVCO, Mr Manservisi, chaired the meeting.

Introduction session

In his introductory remarks, the Chair of the Board, Mr Manservisi, highlighted the developments since the last Board meeting held in September 2018:

- (i) received additional resources from the EU and its Member States and other donors for a total of EUR 200 million;
- (ii) approved new programmes for a total of almost EUR 700 million;
- (iii) received increased support from the European Parliament and EU Member States on the business model of the EUTF Africa;
- (iv) the European Court of Auditors (ECA) issued a positive report underlining the key features of the EUTF Africa (flexibility, rapidity and effectiveness compared to other aid instruments);
- (v) monitoring and learning systems in place showing concrete and remarkable results in terms of outputs; and
- (vi) mid-term evaluation of the Trust Fund launched in early 2019.

In short, the EUTF Africa has confirmed its added value in reinforcing political and policy dialogue with partner countries, strengthening further the partnership between the EU and a variety of stakeholders, pooling together resources, expertise and experiences from different sources and producing concrete and visible results.

As to the future, the Chair indicated that with the current level of resources, the Trust Fund would not be able to continue its work beyond the end of 2019. He mentioned the 10% spending target for migration/development work, recently discussed in the framework of the negotiations on the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MMF) and financial architecture. Migration management will remain a central element of EU external action. What remains to be discussed, however, is how an important level of funding will be spent.

The Director-General of DG NEAR, Mr Danielsson, highlighted that challenges in the North of Africa remain huge despite the decrease of irregular migrants on the Central

Mediterranean Route since the peak in 2015, balanced by a recent increase of the flows on the Western Mediterranean Route. Highlighting some of the significant results of the EUTF in the North of Africa region, he indicated for example:

- in Libya nearly 90,000 migrants received medical assistance;
- the EUTF substantially contributed to the return of almost 40,000 migrants stranded in Libya;
- more than 3,600 refugees and asylum seekers were transferred from Libya to Niger for resettlement through the Evacuation Transit Mechanism funded by the EUTF; and
- the opening of a Gathering and Departure Centre (GDF) has enabled to take nearly 900 detainees out of harm's way during the recent clashes in and around Tripoli.

He reminded that Morocco received substantive support in the area of border management in response to the increase of migration flows on the Western Mediterranean Route. As for future work in the region, Mr Danielsson indicated the need to move forward in the area of legal migration by developing strategies at both national and regional level as well as to pursue further the ongoing efforts to confront smuggling and trafficking criminal networks and to improve the reception conditions for migrants. While expressing his gratitude for the financial and political support received so far, he called the donors to continue their support in order to deliver successfully along the same priority areas.

The Director-General of DG HOME, Ms Michou, acknowledged the holistic approach of the EUTF Africa that has led to a positive partnership and managed to deliver on the political priorities defined at the Migration Summit in La Valletta in 2015. Through the Trust Fund, the EU and its Member States have been partnering and managed to address a number of challenges including confronting smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings and protecting vulnerable migrants in several countries. She also mentioned the work accomplished in Libya through the cooperation with Italy and the Libyan Coast Guard. Ms Michou recalled the need to work together in the negotiations to the next MFF with the objective of shaping governance instruments so to respond to joint policy priorities.

The Deputy Managing Director for Human Rights, Global and Multilateral Issues at the EEAS, Mr Giacomini, recognised the significant results of the EUTF Africa in different areas, including the high number of programmes approved based on the strategic priorities. As to the future of the EUTF Africa, he indicated that any decision in this respect would have to take into account the outcome of the negotiations on the MFF.

The Director C of DG ECHO, Ms Kaminara, stated that although humanitarian aid is not a direct objective of the EUTF Africa, the humanitarian-development nexus approach has worked well in a number of countries of the Horn of Africa (Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, Somalia and Djibouti) or the Sahel/Lake Chad (Nigeria and Central Mali). She also indicated that ECHO fully supports the work of the Trust Fund in the resilience sector. She highlighted that the EUTF Africa has allowed for a successful integrated approach.

Session I - Stock-taking of progress achieved by the EUTF Africa

The Director D of DG DEVCO, Ms Kramer, made a presentation on the operational state of play of the Trust Fund including approved programmes, contracts signed, and an overview of the implementing entities, selected results and progress in communication activities.

ALTAI Consulting made a detailed presentation of the Monitoring and Learning System (MLS) in the Horn of Africa and Sahel/Lake Chad presenting a great number of results in terms of outputs (disaggregated by gender, age, etc.) across the two regions, and highlighting few lessons drawn from the three and a half years of work of the EUTF Africa. The work of the MLS needs to be seen in complementarity with other monitoring and evaluation tools such as Result-Oriented Missions (ROM), single project evaluations, and others. The consultants referred in particular to the high number of returnees reintegrated in their country of origin, to the great number of jobs created and to the improvement in life conditions as a response to increased resilience to shocks. Despite the fact that at this stage it is not possible to report on impact, the MLS work will advance a lot in the next two years. Through the experience of the EUTF Africa, it is anticipated that mobility is likely to continue across Africa and in particular within regions, which will generate vulnerability, increased instability and trafficking.

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) made a presentation on the EUTF Monitoring System in the North of Africa region. The work of ICMPD should not be seen as a monitoring or evaluation exercise of EUTF-funded programmes but as an assistance to the North of Africa window and implementing partners in collecting and aggregating results from EUTF programmes. The consultants presented the main outputs produced so far by implementing partners in Libya, Tunisia and Morocco. While a few projects reported quantitative data, future reports will include a more robust set of quantitative output and outcome data by country. Implementation and results produced to date vary considerably by country and at regional level, reflecting (i) priorities and partnerships developed to meet country and regional needs and (ii) the nature of projects being implemented. In Libya, for example, the complex and unstable situation led the EUTF Africa to focus on the implementation of projects providing direct assistance to migrants, refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and stabilising host communities through the improvement of social infrastructures. In Tunisia and Morocco, on the other hand, the pace of implementation and production of outputs has differed time wise, due to the longer time needed to build partnerships to develop and extend infrastructures and staff resources able to respond to migrants and host community needs.

A representative of the DEVCO Evaluation Unit made a presentation on the ongoing mid-term evaluation of the EUTF for Africa outlining the timeline and process, the actors involved (Reference Group and MS Technical Group), the criteria for the selection of country visits, and the overarching challenges in conducting such a wide exercise to be completed by early 2020.

Comments by delegations

Overall, delegations expressed strong support for the developments of the EUTF for Africa since the last Board meeting and the remarkable results emerging from the MLS systems in place. More in particular, some reiterated the added-value of the Trust Fund in building a valuable and effective partnership between the EU and many stakeholders (**IT, ES, UK**) in

producing concrete and visible results in terms of outputs (**FR, UK, IT, DK**) and in promoting the development-migration nexus (**ES**).

Some delegations (**IT, DK**) highlighted the need to improve coordination at country level including with donor agencies in order to ensure synergies with their bilateral programmes. **FR** raised also the need to separate temporary outcomes from long-term and sustainable impact. **NL** reiterated the need to demonstrate outcomes and impact of the EUTF Africa overtime to respond to the scrutiny of Parliament and civil society.

DE, BE, IE and **AT** welcomed the launch of the MTE and called for the respect of the timelines while recognising the challenge to measure the direct impact on the reduction of irregular migration flows in a traceable manner.

NOR and **SE** announced additional contributions of respectively NOK 60 million and EUR 3 million. **IT** and **FI** informed the Board of their recently approved contributions of respectively EUR 11 million and EUR 2.5 million.

DE requested that background documents be distributed to delegations more in advance to allow for an effective preparation of Board meetings. Moreover, **DE** asked for an overview of successful programmes being implemented, which could be topped-up, programmes with contracting delays or programmes approved but unlikely to be implemented for other reasons.

EGY and **GAM** highlighted the need for a greater involvement of partner countries in programme implementation and evaluation processes. **GAM** also advocated for a greater involvement of private sector in programme implementation, especially in the area of job creation.

Conclusions

In responding to the above remarks, the Chair thanked donors providing additional contributions and confirmed that:

- (i) the EUTF integrates different aspects of EU action in different work strands;
- (ii) the EUTF considers country ownership carefully; local partners often participate in programme implementation through international implementers (UN or EUMS agencies);
- (iii) sustainability requires close attention;
- (iv) On the mid-term evaluation, timelines need to be fully respected as the outcome of this process represents an important element for the future of the EUTF Africa.

The representatives of DG NEAR and the EEAS reiterated the need to look at sustainability in the longer term while reminding that some actions can only be sustainable in the short-term (e.g. voluntary returns in Libya).

Session II - Future perspectives of the EUTF for Africa

The Director D of DG DEVCO, Ms Kramer, presented the financial state of play of the EUTF Africa, outlining the level of resources currently available across the three windows and the expected financial situation at the end of the year, provided the programmes currently

under preparation would be approved at the level of operational committees. New programmes will be adopted either through written procedure or at meetings of the Operational Committee planned over the summer and in the fall. The Director indicated that programmes under preparation fully reflect the strategic priorities validated by the Board in 2018 as well as the limited level of available resources for new commitments. It is estimated that with the exception of the Eritrea envelope, the available resources under the Sahel/Lake Chad and Horn of Africa will be fully committed by the end of 2019.

The Director-General of DG NEAR, Mr Danielsson, presented the financial state of play of the North of Africa (NOA) window indicating that while they will continue to deliver on ongoing programmes, some new ones will be approved in line with the four strands of action validated by the Board for the region. To this end, a package of actions worth EUR 74 million will be presented for approval at the Operational Committee meeting planned in July. Considering the level of resources currently available, only EUR 41 million will remain available for new commitments after the summer. An additional pipeline of programmes, to be adopted by the end of the year is estimated between EUR 105 and 130 million, which will lead to a funding gap of up to EUR 89 million. Mr Danielsson concluded his presentation by stating clearly that unless political commitment is matched with financial resources provided by donors, the NOA region will be limited in its future achievements. He called the Board to consider the challenge that the NOA window will face in 2020 due to the lack of resources.

The Chair of the Board, Mr Manservisi, reiterated that if the Board wishes to look at the sustainability of Trust Fund actions, it is necessary to take care collectively (EU and donors) of the financial resources issue.

Comments by delegations

DE, supported by **FR** and **NL**, stressed that the Board should not pre-empt the current discussions on the next MFF. **DE** reiterated also its request to receive a plan of action on financial resources for 2020 and expressed the wish to create a reserve of funding to top-up successful programmes in line with the Board strategic priorities. It also suggested to pool remaining resources under the three windows to make future investments in a more balanced manner. Priorities should remain the same as in 2018/2019 with focus on migration management and sustainable reintegration of migrants.

FR, supported by **IT**, expressed concerns about the EUTF Africa not being able to approve additional programmes in 2020 and invited the Commission to assess carefully the availability of resources under the existing funding instruments (mainly EDF) to make additional funding available. Both expressed the need to focus on Morocco, Tunisia and Libya and countries of origin at large, or on Ethiopia and Eritrea (**IT**). As to the priorities for the future, **FR** mentioned the support to border control, the civil registry reforms and biometrics, the fight against networks of smugglers and traffickers, voluntary return and reintegration (supported by **IT**). **FR** highlighted also the need to reflect on how best to ensure the transition between the EUTF Africa and the new financial architecture of the EU.

NOR would like the EUTF Africa to focus on four priorities: legal migration, protection and asylum, fight against criminal networks, and return and reintegration (supported by **NL**, which indicated clearly that the Trust Fund has already invested a huge amount of resources on addressing root causes of irregular migration).

ETH advocated for a greater involvement of African partner countries in the selection of strategic priorities and expressed the wish to see the EUTF Africa much more engaged in legal migration actions and in addressing the root causes of irregular migration (supported by **SUD, GUI** and **KEN**).

Conclusions

In his concluding remarks, the Chair of the Board highlighted that:

- (i) an important spending target for the future is being negotiated in the framework of the proposal for a single instrument for EU external action (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation, NDICI) (10%);
- (ii) the future instrument should replace a plethora of EU funding instruments, simplifying the management, whilst not changing different political objectives (e.g. EDF, ENI);
- (iii) pooling together resources of the three operational windows is not possible today as they have different legal bases; this will be possible with the new single instrument (NDICI) is adopted;
- (iv) the experience with the EUTF will inspire the modalities for implementing migration-related funds in the new instrument; this may well lead to consider to keep the EUTF or to set up a dedicated facility or similar;
- (v) the current strategic priorities are still valid and agreeable to a majority of Board delegations; the pipelines of programmes under preparation reflects well the dialogue with partners held at country level through EU delegations;
- (vi) some additional resources could become available in 2020 as a result of the EDF end-of-term review. Nevertheless, it would be useful to develop an EU funding plan for 2020 reflecting the availability of resources of the EU and its Member States and other donors including their plans at bilateral level;
- (vii) in addition to the EUTF Africa other tools such as the European Investment Plan (EIP) are available to partially address the root causes of irregular migration through stimulating investments and economic growth.

On the issue of resources, the Director-General of DG NEAR, Mr Danielsson, reiterated that based on the pipeline for 2019, the North of Africa window will have a funding gap of up to EUR 89 million. The Commission will not be able to fund with its own resources alone, hence a strong need for additional funding and political support to be provided by MS and other donors to continue fulfilling the priorities of the region. He concluded that the EUTF has confirmed its added-value in supporting an effective management of migration flows from, to and within the region.

Finally, the Chair informed the Board that the Government of the Republic of Korea, which had expressed the wish to join as donor the EUTF Africa, has not yet been able to produce the requested information, namely the level of contribution envisaged and its timing. He reiterated the opportunity to welcome new donors as member of the EUTF Africa partnership.