

# **European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa**

## **BOARD MEETING MINUTES 12/11/2015, HOTEL DOLMEN, VALLETTA**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Fernando Frutuoso de Melo, EU Trust Fund (EU TF) Chair, welcomed participants to the inaugural Board Meeting of the Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. The meeting took place following the ceremonial signature of the EU TF by Heads of State of the contributing European donors at the Valletta summit. Represented at the Board meeting were the Deputy Trust Fund Chairs (currently contributing European Donors) as well as other EU Member States and partner African countries and regional organisations for the EU TF. A full list can be found in annex.

### **2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board approved the proposed agenda.

### **3. ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURES**

The Chair reminded the Board that the documents for the meeting had been circulated (Rules of procedure, EU TF strategy) and informed them that the comments received from two delegations had been included in the revised rules of procedure (FR - France, NL - Netherlands).

During the exchange that followed, FR and UK (United Kingdom) requested more details on the administrative budget. DK (Denmark) welcomed that the rules of procedures are easy and accessible. Finally, in response to EL (Greece) request for clarifications on voting rights of deputy chairs the rules of procedure have been adapted accordingly.

EG (Egypt), MA (Mauritania) and SN (Senegal) insisted the importance of participation by African countries. EG and LY (Libya) underscored the importance of full African participation in the Board meetings. While most documents for the meeting were available in French for the meeting, BF (Burkina Faso) requested that all the documents be available in French in the future.

Finally, there were some queries (SD, MA) if any donor, including partner countries, could participate in the fund.

The Chair recalled that the Commission and EEAS are committed to ensuring participation of partner countries in the Board. He highlighted that ownership is one of the guiding principles of the EU TF and that implementation of the EU TF would be done with partner countries and that participation of partner countries in the Board setup with European donors is unprecedented. He explained that the voting rules for the EU TF are fixed by the financial regulation of the EU. In addition, he stressed that any country may participate in the EU TF and may acquire voting rights as per the threshold of €3 million contribution.

With regards administrative costs the Chair indicated that the costs presented include salaries, infrastructure and other costs associated with the staff member in post. These costs vary from country to country depending on, amongst others, the living conditions and level of fragility or development of the country concerned. In complement to the information presented prior and during the meeting, the breakdown of costs for the contract agents to be financed under the EU TF is as follows:

- Salaries make up some 50% of the staff costs
- Other associated costs make up around 35% of the total costs; these include costs of installation and related insurance, security costs for accommodation, rental costs for accommodation as well as possible evacuation costs or those related to crisis situations.
- Infrastructure costs represent 15% of the total costs, which include office rental, use of overheads and office-related repairs, insurance, purchase and use of IT equipment and communications material.

The rules of procedures were subsequently adopted by the Board.

#### **4. PRESENTATION, EXCHANGE AND ADOPTION OF THE EU TRUST FUND STRATEGY**

##### **4.1. Presentation**

Christian Leffler from the EEAS presented the draft Strategic orientation document for the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. He explained the process for preparation and consultation of the document with EU MS, other donors and African partners.

Carla Montesi from DEVCO informed participants that the first operational committees would take place shortly, possibly by the end of 2015, and that their first tasks would be to adopt their rules of procedure. DEVCO clarified that the idea was to encourage work through EU Delegations to lead the dialogue with partner countries and identify possible projects for implementation. The first operational committees would present projects that are considered mature and that fall within the EU TF priorities.

##### **4.2. Exchange**

The Chair then opened the floor for an exchange of views on the strategy.

Participants welcomed the creation of the Emergency Trust Fund, recognising the relevance of contributions from so many donors and thanked the Commission for having quickly set-up the Fund and organisation of the first Board meeting.

**Comments on ownership, coordination & complementarity:** Participants were unanimous in recognising the importance of ownership and the related imperative of coordination with national and local authorities (DK, MA, NL, KE - Kenya, CI – Côte d'Ivoire, SN). Participants also highlighted the need for planning, coordination, complementary and coherence, looking for the added value of the Trust Fund (FI - Finland, DK, FR, PT - Portugal, LU - Luxembourg, PL - Poland), being able to build on existing successful projects (UK, FR, LU), while at the same time encouraging innovation (FI, NO - Norway, FR). The Trust Fund should strike a balance between short term intervention and long term results, making sure that its interventions have a sustainable impact (FI, DK, IT - Italy, CH – Switzerland). In that framework, IT, PT, EG, SO (Somalia) and MA called for the actions financed by the trust fund to duly take into account the Khartoum and Rabat processes.

**Comments on flexibility, framework & results:** Commenting on the trust fund and its principles of operation, a number of participants insisted that to be successful it must be a flexible and effective instrument, ensuring quick delivery of results (DK, NL, UK, FR, AT - Austria, SO, PL, CI). FI and DK called for a risk management analysis framework. SE and MT raised the importance of 'DACability' of activities. Participants also commented on the issue of cost-effectiveness (SE), that should rely on a good framework for measuring results (FI, DK, SE) and allocations/projects, that should be based on evidence (UK, SS – South Soudan). A number of participants asked for clarifications with regards to the procedure that would be used to select and implement projects (MR - Morocco, LY - Libya, SO, SS, BE, DJ - Djibouti).

**Comments on areas of work & activities:** In terms of strategic focus, participants insisted on the place given to children and youth (FI, NO - Norway, MA, UK, FR, AT, SO), the recognition of the role of women (FI, NO, UK, SE, SO), of private sector development (FI, UK, SE), civil society, informal groupings and structures (DK, IT, PT, SO), resilience (IT, AT), social economy (MA), governance, the rule of law and labour market liberalisation (UK), and technical vocational education and training (DE, CH). Many participants also underlined the role Diasporas could play to reach the objectives of the trust fund (DE, IT, FR, SE, SO, SS). DK considered that the trust fund should focus on areas in conflict and crisis situations.

**Specific requests for amendments to the strategy:** EG insisted that the language used in the strategy should be consistent with the language agreed for the declaration and action plan of the Valetta Summit. EG also requested amendments to the text on tackling irregular migration in the section on North of Africa, so that the text would complement the text for the other windows, and stressed the need to receive a new version of the strategy which reflected this and other concerns during the meeting. EG and LY regretted only being observers at the board. EL thanked the Commission and asked for references to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) to be properly denominated.

**EU response to comments:** The Chair informed the participants that the Summit was over and that the declaration and plan of actions had been adopted. Chair then gave a number of answers to issues that were raised. He reminded the Board that the strategy was the result of a comprehensive consultation process with all partners in Brussels.

The Trust Fund is one of the tools that the EU has with its partner countries and comes in addition to other instruments that continue to be applicable and are supporting development across Africa. He agreed on the need to take into account long term results and short term needs and ensure that the EU TF is a responsive and flexible tool. The Trust Fund will respect the principles of aid effectiveness, including ownership, and

European development policies that rely on partnerships. All programmes and projects will be discussed with our partners.

The Chair confirmed that ‘DACability’ will be in line with the financing sources (DCI, EDF) and that the Trust Fund will have a results framework (see attached) and therefore be part of the EU’s efforts to better measure results. The language of the strategy will be adapted to better reflect the language of what has been agreed at the Valetta Summit – namely in the summit declaration and action plan.

### **4.3. Adoption**

The Chair noted that there was an overall agreement on the strategy and that the comments raised during the exchange should be incorporated to the extent possible into a new, and finalised, version of the document. Moreover, he noted the concerns of the participants on the nature of the document and agreed that the document should be considered a living document.