



## Commission reports on progress under the migration partnership framework and increased action along the Central Mediterranean Route

Brussels, 2 March 2017

**Today, the Commission and the High Representative/ Vice-President presented the third Progress Report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration.**

### What has the College adopted today?

Today, the Commission and the High Representative/ Vice-President presented the third Progress Report on the Partnership Framework with third countries under the European Agenda on Migration, which also takes stock of progress achieved and sets out next steps in the EU's efforts to more effectively manage migration along the Central Mediterranean Route.

### What is new?

Since the launch of the Partnership Framework in June 2016, a number of tangible results across the five sub-Saharan priority countries, Niger, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Ethiopia, have been achieved. Packages are better tailored to our partners, while more policies and tools are being harnessed. Also, the geographical scope has been broadened and the report also looks beyond the priority countries, in line with the discussions held at the December European Council. In particular, the current focus on the Central Mediterranean route is reflected and actions are outlined to respond to the continued high crossings on this route, as well as the still high number deaths in the Mediterranean. It sets out further actions to implement the Malta Declaration, adopted by EU Heads of State or Government on 3 February 2017, covering a wide range of measures to save lives, step up the fight against smugglers and traffickers, provide protection to migrants and improve border management.

### What results have been achieved?

A detailed overview of results achieved since the last reporting period can be found in the report itself. However, some concrete results, both with the five priority countries can be highlighted:

- **Ethiopia** will actively cooperate with the EU Trust Fund supported Regional Operational Centre to fight against trafficking and smuggling. It will also benefit from an additional Facility to support Sustainable and Dignified returns and reintegration and assist stranded migrants.
- As regards **Niger**, after the visit of President Issoufou on 15 December 2016, progress has continued at good pace building on previous achievements. The EU has reinforced its presence with the deployment of a migration liaison officer and a Frontex liaison officer, as well as with the creation of a liaison office in Agadez. At the end of January 2017, three projects under the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) were launched in Agadez, targeting agriculture, vocational training and sustainable migration management. Two EU field missions took place in January to assess emerging alternative routes and to help identify rapid impact projects for creating economic alternatives in local communities reliant on income from smuggling.
- Political dialogue with **Nigeria** continues with High Level visits and meetings. VP Ansip visited Abuja and Lagos on 2-3 February 2017. An interest for cooperation was expressed in the areas of cyber security and governance, with important by-effects on fighting corruption, promotion of trade and investment and migration management. Future cooperation on "Digital 4 Development" was equally explored.
- Cooperation with **Mali** continues, in particular as Chair of the Rabat Process in the preparations of the Valletta Senior Officials Meeting in February 2017. During the Valletta meeting the HRVP and Minister Sylla agreed to focus next EU-Mali actions around the fight against migrant smuggling networks.
- Four additional projects for **Senegal** have been adopted under the EU Trust Fund in December, addressing the root causes of migration, enhancing migration management, the integration of returning migrants and the involvement of the diaspora, and re-enforcing the civil registry.

### What are the next steps under the Partnership Framework?

EU Institutions and Member States remain jointly committed to continue to translate the Partnership Framework into tangible results to the mutual benefit of the European Union and our partners. Thus, the substantial efforts already put into the Partnership Framework will be continued and will be enhanced. Concrete next steps foreseen include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Ethiopia:** Finalise actions on the pilot return cases (32) and use them as a blueprint for faster returns to be performed in the future, and continue to support Ethiopia as a country of origin, transit and destination of migrants and refugees. A Strategic Engagement sectoral dialogue on migration is targeted to launch in April 2017, while close dialogue will continue with Ethiopia, as Chair of the Khartoum process.

**Niger:** Intensified action is foreseen to support Niger to fight smuggling and trafficking, including support to a Joint Investigation team and full operationalisation of the EU antenna in Agadez, including for training<sup>[1]</sup>. Contracts on all actions agreed under the EU Trust Fund should be signed swiftly, to ensure concrete implementation and provide alternative income opportunities to substitute the smuggling economy. At the same time, intensified monitoring of possible alternative routes will be conducted in the Agadez region and a working arrangement between the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and Nigerien authorities will be put in place.

**Nigeria:** Finalise the Readmission Agreement by June 2017 and identify EU Trust Fund for Africa projects with a strong migration focus. Active cooperation on anti-smuggling and trafficking through the Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community and the recently launched Cooperation Platform on Migrant Smuggling will continue.

**Mali:** Step up work on the transit dimension, focussing on voluntary return of transiting migrants; ensure adoption of a National Border Strategy and explore options for cooperation and strengthening of capacities for border management and the fight against smuggling. Further cooperation on effective return of irregular migrants including of Malians attempting to cross the southern Libyan border irregularly should be strengthened, as well as close dialogue with Mali as Chair of the Rabat Process should be maintained.

**Senegal:** Improve day-to-day cooperation for both identification and issuance of travel documents; follow up missions were undertaken, to ensure the effective return of identified irregular migrants. Working arrangements between Senegal and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency should be finalised and on the basis of results achieved so far cooperation should be stepped up in other areas, including border management.

As regards policies and tools to be applied, a step-change is needed in the effectiveness of returns inside the EU and matched with the work with third country partners. In this regard, the report is closely linked to the renewed Action plan on return which proposes a number of concrete actions. Engaging with third countries through the Partnership Framework, using all the available policies and tools, will foster better cooperation with a view to identifying, re-documenting and readmitting their nationals.

In this context, the mobilisation of also other policy instruments will be considered, such as providing legal migration pathways, for example through Erasmus+, and other operational tools will be applied. This includes the increased use of EU agencies, like the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, European Migration Liaison Officers and financial instruments, in particular the EU Trust Fund for Africa.

For more information on the Commission's action to take this forward, please see here.

### **What will you do under the Central Mediterranean Route?**

When it comes to Libya: Support is to be focussed on protection at disembarkation points, as well as on the humanitarian assistance to those migrants who are in reception/detention centres, while increasing the development of alternatives to detention. The contribution to socio-economic stabilisation in Libya will continue to be addressed, in particular through work at the municipality level.

**Humanitarian repatriation and reintegration** will be scaled up. The IOM has been contracted, as part of a project funded under the EU Trust Fund for Africa, to assist an initial target 5.000 migrant in Libya to return to their communities of origin. Reintegration will be provided to returnees across the whole of the area covered by the Trust Fund. The Commission and the IOM have [signed a joint initiative in December](#) 2016 for migrant protection and reintegration in Africa along the Central Mediterranean migration routes, worth €100 million.

**Training of the Libyan coastguard and Navy:** EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia and the Seahorse Mediterranean network have both already trained members of the Libyan Coast Guard. Operation Sophia has completed a first package of activities resulting in the training of 93 personnel. Operation Sophia has now started the training under the second package on Crete. The Libyan Coast Guard has expressed the ambition to further train 600 Coastguard personnel with a focus on generating 8 trained crews for the Libyan patrol vessels. Training should also align with the overall plans for the

development of a Libyan a Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre and search and rescue area, which are foreseen to be completed in 2018.

Immediate action by the Commission includes the expansion of the Seahorse training of the Libyan Coast Guard, with 15 new training courses being planned for the period February-July 2017. This is also complemented by support to migration management under the Regional Development and Protection Programme.

### **Increased cooperation with the neighbouring countries**

Increased cooperation with Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria, including through regional initiatives like the Seahorse Mediterranean network are key.

**Egypt:** The EU now has an agreement to launch a formal EU-Egypt dialogue on migration, fully embedding migration on our overall relations and existing frameworks such as ENP, Khartoum and Valletta.

**Tunisia:** The EU remains committed to continue addressing the root causes of migration, and to reinforce governance in the field of migration. Furthermore, the EU intends to reinforce cooperation on irregular migration, concluding a Readmission Agreement in parallel with Visa Facilitation Agreement; In addition, focus will be on reintegration of returnees, promotion of legal migration and cooperation on border management.

**Algeria:** Cooperation with Algeria remains important to combat irregular migration to Europe. At political and technical level, discussions have been taking place since September 2015. Dialogue will continue to follow up on issues such as trafficking, preventing and combatting counterfeiting of travel documents, as well as visa liberalisation and cooperation on readmission.

### **What about the funding?**

#### **Partnership Framework**

The EU is using a range of financial instruments to support the implementation of the Partnership Framework, most prominently the EU Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). The EUTF operates in a total of 26 countries, with resources allocated amounting to more than €2.5 billion, including €2.5 billion from the European Development Fund and several EU budget financing instruments, and €152 million pledged so far by EU Member States and other donors (Switzerland and Norway).

Most recently, a total of 42 new programmes worth €587 million were agreed in December 2016. These include 28 new programmes under the Sahel/ Lake Chad window worth a total of €381 million; 11 additional programmes under the Horn of Africa window, worth €169.5 million and 3 new programmes under the North Africa window, for a total of €37 million.

This brought the total number to 106 adopted projects worth over €1.5 billion. Programmes contracted so far amount to €627 million.

#### **Central Mediterranean Route**

€200 million have been pledged by the EU for migration-related projects in Libya and North Africa through the EU Trust Fund. This comes on top of other projects launched in 2016, focussing on providing protection to most vulnerable migrants and creating socio-economic opportunities at local level.

Discussions are under way to focus support on protection at disembarkation points and in detention centres, as well as support for alternatives to detention. The contribution to socio-economic stabilisation in Libya will also be addressed through work at the municipality level. This will add to the work to enhance rescue at sea, including by the training of the Libyan Coast Guard. Strong coordination on the ground will also be sought with Member States.

#### **For more information**

Factsheets for progress made with: [Ethiopia](#), [Mali](#), [Niger](#), [Nigeria](#) and [Senegal](#)

Factsheet: [Migration Partnership Framework](#)

Factsheet: [EU Trust Fund for Africa](#)

See the Q&A on the Communication on the Central Mediterranean route [here](#).

Factsheet: [EU relations with Libya](#)

[1] Training is done by EUCAP Sahel Niger, in support of the Nigerien security force (Police Nationale, Gendarmerie Nationale and Garde Nationale) to reinforce the rule of law and Nigerien capacities to fight terrorism and organised crime, in line with the EU Strategy for Security and Development, as well as irregular migration.

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