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PRESS RELEASE

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Central African Republic: EU launches its first multi-donor trust fund for linking relief, rehabilitation and development

The EU is about to launch its first ever multi-donor development trust fund, in support of the Central African Republic (CAR). With an initial amount of €64 million the fund creates an effective and coordinated international instrument to help the population of the country and contribute to its stabilisation. This comes in addition to the important contribution of the European Commission in humanitarian assistance to CAR since December 2012 (€84.5 million).

EU Development Commissioner Andris Piebalgs will co-sign the agreement that sets up the fund with the French Secretary of State for Development, Ms. Annick Girardin, the German Minister for Development and Cooperation, Mr. Gerd Müller and the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Ms. Lilianne Ploumen, during the Informal Meeting of Development Ministers in Florence (Italy), in presence of the CAR Minister of Economy and International Cooperation, Ms Florence Limbio.

Prior to the signing ceremony, Commissioner Piebalgs said: "The Central African Republic is experiencing an alarming humanitarian, political and security crisis that needs a realistic and pragmatic approach in helping the people of the country as effectively as possible. We must think and act outside the box, collectively, in order to link emergency management, rehabilitation and development solutions. Acting together, combining our funds, our expertise and respective strengths will allow us to achieve much more than working separately. I am particularly grateful that the French, German and Dutch governments have decided to establish this innovative fund with the Commission and invite other donors from the EU and the international community to join us."

"Linking relief, rehabilitation and development is essential if we want to make a long-term difference in a fragile situation like the CAR crisis. The "Bêkou" trust fund will benefit the long-suffering population of the country, and will also contribute to reducing the fragility caused by this crisis in the wider region," said Kristalina Georgieva, the European Union Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response.

The EU trust fund for CAR "Bêkou" (which means "hope" in Sango, the country's main language) will prepare the transition from emergency response, such as humanitarian aid, towards longer-term development assistance. It will contribute to the reconstruction of the country, in particular restoring the national and local administrations, re-establishing economic activity and essential services (such as electricity, transport, health and education) and stabilizing the country. The activities will also focus on enabling neighbouring countries to overcome the consequences of the crisis in CAR. Highly accountability standards will apply in the implementation of this Trust Fund, considering the particular context in the country. The initial contributions to the "EU Bêkou" trust fund include:

- €39 million from the European Development Fund, and €2 million from the EU Humanitarian Aid budget, both managed by the European Commission
- €5 million in 2014, and an additional €5 million envisaged for 2015 from France
- €5 million in 2014, and an additional €5 million envisaged for 2015 from Germany
- €3 million from the Netherlands

A donor conference is planned for later this year to mobilise additional funding.

Supporting the authorities in the transition process

Commissioner Piebalgs and Minister Florence Limbio will also co-sign an agreement for a so-called state building contract (€33 million) under which the EU will provide direct funding to the government budget of the CAR to support transition authorities, like ensuring the payment of the salaries for civil servants.

Ongoing EU support to the Central African Republic

The funds made available today come on top of previously announced packages; including €27 million of EU development funds for immediate needs in health and education in the CAR, in the form of contributions to the United Nations Children's Rights and Emergency Relief Organisation (UNICEF) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) and €20 million to support the electoral process through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The European Union has been responding to the crisis in CAR since its outbreak in 2012 with a comprehensive approach that links humanitarian aid with long-term development assistance and also a military operation (EUFOR RCA) that contributes to a secure environment, as authorised by the UN Security Council.

More than 2.5 million Central Africans (out of a population of 4.6 million) are in need of humanitarian aid. As of 1 July, there were more than 535,000 internally displaced persons in CAR. At this point, over 388,000 Central Africans have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

The overall amount of EU development assistance mobilised so far in 2014 alone is €120 million. Between 2008 and 2013, around €225 million were allocated for the whole country through the EU's different financial instruments (€160 million through the 10th European Development Fund (EDF), and €65 million through the EU budget).

EU Trust Funds

Trust funds in EU external action are funds pooled from a number of donors, in particular the EU, its Member States, third countries, international organisations or private donors such as foundations or citizens to provide support to agreed objectives.

The trust fund "Bêkou" will allow the EU and other donors to respond collectively and with a clear division of tasks to the political and security crisis in the Central African Republic, where not many countries are present with embassies or their own development agencies. For more details, see [MEMO/14/483](#) on the establishment of the EU trust fund "Bêkou".

For more information

Website of EuropeAid Development and Cooperation DG:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/index_en.htm

Website of the European Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/piebalgs/index_en.htm

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