NEWS: EU ongoing actions in Horn of Africa - Fact Sheet

Brussels, 14 November 2011 (EC/ACP Press): Commissioners Piebalgs and Georgieva, together with EU Development Ministers met in Brussels on Monday to discuss the situation in the Horn of Africa and exchange ideas about enhanced EU engagement on sustainable agriculture, food security and rural resilience in the region.

Commissioner Georgieva told EU ministers that in spite of the ongoing international aid effort the situation in the Horn of Africa is likely to remain critical for the next six months. In the long term she stressed the need for structural measures to strengthen resilience to disasters in order to avoid similar humanitarian catastrophes in the future.

"We need to address the emergency of the food crisis. But we also need to tackle its root causes and engage in a new approach," said the Commissioner. "Drought cannot be avoided but famine can if we work to build resilience in countries which are the most vulnerable. Developing this resilience needs to be a priority for the development community and the authorities in the region."

Commissioner Piebalgs stressed the importance of linking humanitarian and development assistance and present a framework which we will be applying for the first time in the Horn. Ahead of the meeting, Commissioner Piebalgs said: "If we want to efficiently help the people in the Horn of Africa and if we want to avoid such crisis in the future, the EU needs to act coherently and consistently. By coordinating our work in the region we can increase the impact of EU aid and strengthen food security, resilient livelihood and agricultural sustainability".

What is the EU doing to help in Somalia?

Over the past decade, the EU has been progressively setting up a comprehensive approach to Somalia, including long-term development interventions aimed at creating security, building peace, and improving democratic governance in the country. To date, the EU is the biggest donor to Somalia. From its main financial instrument for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, European Development Fund (EDF), the EU has committed €390.4 million for the period 2008 to 2013. Development aid in the country focuses on governance, education, economic growth and support to food security, health, environment, water and sanitation.

Addressing the security situation and reinforcing governance in Somalia

The EU is one of the biggest donors to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which was launched in January 2007 to help humanitarian aid to be safely delivered and to create the necessary conditions for reconstruction, reconciliation and the sustainable development of Somalia. The total EU contribution to AMISOM since 2007 has been €258.4 million.

The EU is also supporting efforts of the Somaliland coastguard and the police in prosecuting and detaining pirates through the EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta. Operation Atalanta continues to escort World Food Programme shipments and to contribute decisively to maritime security in the strategic commercial sea routes of the Gulf of Aden.

One of the three key sectors of EU development programme in Somalia is strengthening the governance and institutions of the state. €60 million was already set aside for this purpose, and this amount has recently been increased with €53 million. Examples of projects funded by the EU include:

The Support to the Rule of Law and Security project, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), strengthens the rule of law and security by helping to develop the Somali judiciary system including civilian police, improving access to justice for all, and training of custodial services.

The Pillars of Peace project, implemented by Interpeace, strengthens the role of youth and community groups in peace-building processes and promotes reconciliation through extensive public consultations, workshops, forums and stakeholder dialogue.

Strengthening the Participation of Somali Non-State Actors in decision making is also a priority area of intervention for the EU. Implemented by Saferworld UK, this project supports the development of Non-State Actor platforms in Somalia to enable their participation in decision-making on peace, security and development.
Encouraging results of international support, including from the EU, can be observed. Notably, free and fair elections were conducted in June 2010 in Somaliland, leading to the peaceful turnover of power and a renewed Somali-owned and Somali-led commitment to longer-term development outcomes. Village markets, health posts and community centres built as a result of the reforms have benefited over 95,000 people. Partners were able to monitor and report human rights abuses across Somalia and conducted training for police and law officials. Free legal aid and representation were provided.

* Helping to provide food and support to agriculture in the Horn of Africa

The European Union has committed over €440 million since 2008 for agriculture and food security in the Horn of Africa (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Somalia), helping to feed the most vulnerable people, improve nutrition and encourage sustainable agriculture.

The EU delivers aid via programmes funded by the European Development Fund, the geographic financial instrument covering African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, as well as through the EU budget – notably the Food Security Thematic Programme and the Food Facility instruments.

1) Programmes funded by the European Development Fund (2008-2013)

The EU funds programmes in the Horn of Africa through its geographic financial instrument for African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, the European Development Fund (EDF). The 10th EDF covers the period 2008-2013, and in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia agriculture and/or food security have been selected as focal sectors for cooperation.

Somalia

For Somalia, €135 million is allocated for economic development and food security. The EU is currently implementing an Economic Development Programme (€26 million), partly in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). The objective of the programme is to increase the income and to reduce food insecurity through private sector-led economic growth. It is expected that the programme will help people to make a better living from agricultural and livestock, as well as enabling them to gain access to markets. It also aims at helping to create jobs and improve livelihoods of vulnerable households in urban and peri-urban areas.

* Livestock Support in Somalia

The Livestock Support programme has helped over 1.5 million people across Somalia. By improving animal health services and increasing surveillance, inspection and certification of animals, livestock exports are protected, helping farmers to make a living. Support is also provided to pastoralists, through an animal vaccination scheme for example. Similarly, facilities have been built through the scheme to rehabilitate and construct livestock buildings such as slaughterhouses. The EU has given €2.5 million to this project.

Kenya

The EU has set aside €98.8 million for agriculture and rural development in Kenya. It has launched the Kenya Rural Development Programme (€66.4 million), which helps to fund projects on improved research and information, spreading knowledge on better crops and technologies, as well as providing better access for small-scale farmers to seeds and fertilisers and markets. The EU also supports the country in handling droughts; notably by strengthening a drought early warning system and developing drought-resistant crops and fodder.

Ethiopia

* Helping the poorest people in drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia

The EU has set aside €130 million for rural development and food security in Ethiopia. Large part of these funds directly benefits Ethiopia’s poorest people by providing food and cash in return for work (through the Productive Safety Net Programme or PSNP). The programme also funds public works to help improve areas that the whole country can benefit from, such as soil and water conservation, and rural roads and social services. Depending on the needs, in between 5 and 13 million people benefit from this programme. Faced with the current drought, the programme was able to quickly scale up, preventing vulnerable people from falling into destitution.

Eritrea

For Eritrea, the EU has allocated €70 million for Food security. A €37 million Support to the agricultural sector/food security in Eritrea programme was launched in 2011 with the objective of enhancing food security through increased agricultural production and productivity and improving food access at household level.
Djibouti

In Djibouti, the EU has used funds to finance a Food Aid programme (€1.54 million) as a complement to the humanitarian aid provided by ECHO. The programme was implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) and targeted the most vulnerable groups of people.

Rinderpest eradication – regional approach

Rinderpest was a devastating disease affecting livestock. The EU largely contributed to free farmers from this disease by providing more than €203 million for Africa (€340 million worldwide) since the beginning of the eradication campaign in 1960s. In the Horn of Africa, the EU notably financed the Somali Ecosystem Rinderpest Eradication Coordination (SERECU) project (€4 million). Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia were granted disease freedom status by the World Organisation for Animal Health respectively in 2008, 2009 and 2010 and global eradication was declared in June 2011.

2) Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP)

This instrument addresses food security at global, continental and regional levels and helps countries to improve food security in particularly fragile situations, especially during the transition period between receiving emergency assistance and long-term development cooperation.

Through the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP) Somalia has received €14.2 million in support (between 2007 and 2010) to link relief, rehabilitation and development in fragile situations and Ethiopia received €2.2 million in 2010 to support food security. Moreover Kenya benefited with €14.5 million and Eritrea received €2 million in 2009.

Agricultural research for development is crucial in building longer term resilience of countries and farmers to drought. Through the Food Security Thematic Programme, the Commission has allocated around €225 million (2007-10) to agricultural research. Programmes include breeding crop varieties which have a greater tolerance to drought, as well as research on climate change, agriculture and food security, to find ways of coping with current climate variability and adapting to the future effects of climate change.

3) Food Facility

The €1 billion EU Food Facility was set up in order to respond to the challenges of rising food prices in 2007/08. By the end of 2011, it is expected to have benefitted 50 million people in 50 developing countries. The Food Facility helps beneficiaries to re-invest in agricultural production and supports the needs of the most food insecure.

In the Horn of Africa, the Food Facility is providing:

- €13.5 million to Eritrea
- €42.9 million to Ethiopia
- €31 million to Kenya
- €14.1 million to Somalia (through the Food and Agriculture Organisation and the African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources)

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