

[EUCAP Somalia: mission extended, budget agreed](#)

The Council extended the mandate of the EU capacity building mission in Somalia, EUCAP Somalia **until 31 December 2020**. The Council also agreed on a budget of €66.1 million for the period 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2020.

The mission mandate is to **enhance Somalia's maritime civilian law enforcement capacity**, through supporting Somali authorities in developing the necessary **legislation**, strengthening the criminal justice chain in the maritime domain, and providing training and equipment. The mission also provides **advice on policy** to the Somalia ministry of internal security and the police, in support of initiatives from the EU and international partners.

EUCAP Nestor (now EUCAP Somalia) was launched in July 2012. In December 2016, it was decided that the mission will focus on Somalia to support authorities in strengthening their maritime security capacity in order to enable them to enforce maritime law more effectively, including to counter piracy. EUCAP Somalia is based in Mogadishu and the Head of Mission is Maria-Cristina Stepanescu (of Romania).

EUCAP Somalia is part of the EU's comprehensive approach to Somalia, which comprises diplomatic efforts, development support, humanitarian aid as well as engagement in the field of rule of law and law enforcement. It includes two complementary missions under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy: EUNAVFOR Operation ATALANTA contributing to fighting piracy off the Somali coast and EUTM Somalia providing political and strategic level military advice to the Somali authorities and contributing to the development of the Somali National Army (SNA)'s own training capacity.

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[Declaration by the High Representative Federica Mogherini on behalf of the EU on Human Rights Day, 10 December 2018](#)

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The EU supports human rights

On this day, 70 years ago, the Member States of the United Nations came together to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This step brought the world together after the greatest tragedy in human history. We have come a long way since then.

The Universal Declaration has proven to be the cornerstone of international human rights law on which many countries have built a strong and resilient human rights architecture. Today, the number of people living in good human rights conditions is higher than ever in the history of mankind. The Universal Declaration's 70th anniversary is an opportune moment to look closer at how human rights have had an overall impact on our societies.

This is why together with partner countries from different parts of the world, the European Union launched this year the 'Good Human Rights Stories' initiative – showing to the world that promoting and respecting human rights allow our societies to grow stronger and more resilient.

While reflecting on these stories can be a source of hope and optimism, we cannot take human rights for granted. We know the struggles that are still taking place across the world: the human rights violations, the undermining of democracy and the shrinking space for civil society.

Ever since the adoption of the Universal Declaration, civil society and human rights defenders have contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights through peaceful dialogue and building pluralistic democracies.

Around the world, pressure is increasing against freedom of speech, against civic space, through violent attacks, forced disappearances and punitive registration regimes. The EU remains a staunch supporter of civil society and we will continue our efforts to act and speak out against harassment and intimidation of civil society, including women and youth organisations. Support for human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, is at the core of the EU's external human rights policy and one of its major priorities. The EU is the leading worldwide donor to local civil society organisations, providing €2 billion each year, two thirds of the global support.

On this day, the EU also reaffirms its firm commitment to the multilateral human rights system as the platform for the international community to best address human rights violations and to seek accountability, both at international and regional level. By implementing the international human rights framework within our Union, we hold ourselves to the same standards that we expect from our partner countries across the world. This includes our continuous quest to improve the human rights situation at home and abroad.

By doing so, we continue to honour the commitment made 70 years ago, at the heart of which lie the fundamental fact that all human beings are born free and equal, and the notion that we all need to act in a spirit of respect and solidarity.

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Commissioner Stylianides visits EU-funded humanitarian projects in Jordan

Today the Commissioner visited the Azraq Refugee Camp, where the EU is funding a camp hospital providing primary health care, reproductive health, mental health, psychosocial support, and protection services. He also visited schools which benefit from an EU funded Education in Emergencies project targeting children with disabilities.

Commissioner Christos **Stylianides** said: *“The EU remains committed to supporting Jordan which hosts hundreds of thousands of refugees. We are funding education in emergencies projects so that no child is left behind. This is my personal commitment. Syrian refugees should have the same quality of education as any other child. I am grateful to Jordan and its people for their generosity in welcoming Syrian refugees. During my visit I will also meet with the authorities to strengthen our cooperation on civil protection response.”*

The Commissioner also visited Jordan’s National Center for Security and Crisis Management to discuss civil protection with the national authorities, in particular ways to improve regional emergency preparedness and response mechanisms. The recent floods in Jordan and the region have shown that prevention and preparedness are crucial to prevent natural disasters.

During his visit, the Commissioner is due to hold several meetings with the national authorities, such as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman Safadi and Expatriates and the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Mary Kawar.

EU humanitarian assistance in Jordan

- In Jordan, the EU has provided more than €344 million in humanitarian assistance for refugees since 2012, for services such as health, food and basic needs assistance, winterisation support, shelter, water and sanitation, psychosocial support and protection programmes.
- In 2018 alone, EU humanitarian aid to Jordan totaled €36 million. The aid has benefitted refugees living in the Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps, as well as Syrians in urban settings and at the Berm. The provision of basic services in villages and towns across the country also includes vulnerable Jordanian families.
- Specific programmes support women and children. To address education needs, the EU has initiated a programme that will ensure hundreds of Syrian children complete primary and secondary education in Jordanian schools.

Background

The European Union and its Member States are the leading donor in the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis, having collectively mobilised some €11 billion since the beginning of the crisis in March 2011. The EU institutions have mobilised over €2.2 billion in humanitarian, economic, development and stabilisation assistance for the Syria crisis in Jordan.

Eight years into the conflict in Syria, Jordan remains one of the countries most affected by the displacement, hosting hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees, with the second highest share of refugees compared to its population in the world, 89 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants or equivalent to around 9% of its population. The vast majority, some 83%, live in cities and towns, while the remainder reside mainly in two refugee camps – Azraq and Zataari. Zaatari is the world's second largest camp with close to 80 000 residents.

In addition to Syrian refugees, Jordan is hosting some 67, 000 registered Iraqis, 11,500 people from Yemen, 4,200 from Sudan and 820 from Somalia. Furthermore, Jordan hosts the largest number of Palestinian refugees in the region.

For More Information

[ECHO factsheet – Jordan](#)

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European Commission reaction to Swiss Federal Council announcements

The European Commission respects the wish of the Federal Council to consult all stakeholders on the Institutional Framework Agreement before a formal submission to the Federal Assembly so as to secure an as large backing of the text as possible. We would like to make crystal clear that the final text published today, including annex and protocols, was agreed by the EU and Swiss negotiators and is the result of long, intense and constructive negotiations. We will follow the process closely. We therefore expect the consultation to be swift and hope that its outcome will be positive, as this is necessary to put relations between the EU and Switzerland on a solid institutional footing.

We want to recall that the EU side has invested a lot of time, effort and political goodwill into this process. President Juncker personally spoke 23 times to four Swiss Presidents; 32 rounds of technical negotiations took place. Commissioner Hahn met his Swiss counterpart Federal Counsellor Cassis seven times since January, and spoke to him on the phone numerous times in-between. The EU side has also been willing to address and accommodate the concerns of our Swiss partners. We have shown great flexibility, while respecting the interests of Member States, notably when finding a solution on the dispute settlement and the so-called "flanking measures" on the Swiss side. The text published today is the best possible outcome negotiated between the two sides.

The Commission will now have to discuss and assess the situation, including on the Swiss stock market equivalence decision, and consider the appropriate next steps. The College is expected to discuss these developments at its meeting on Tuesday (11 December).

On the extension of the transitional measures for Croatian workers:

The European Commission regrets the decision by Switzerland to extend the transitional measures for Croatian workers and self-employed beyond the initial period of two years. The decision is particularly regrettable as there was no rapid growth in the numbers of Croatians working in Switzerland justifying this decision.

We invite the Swiss authorities to consider shortening the period of application of the transitional measures, particularly in view of the undoubted economic benefits of free movement of labour between the EU and Switzerland.

On the cohesion contribution:

The European Commission looks forward to the Swiss Parliament agreeing on the financing for cohesion policy as soon as possible. We consider the contribution to be the natural consequence of Switzerland's access to the

Single Market and it should be proportionate to the substantial benefits Switzerland draws from its participation in the Single Market.