

SERA Conference Budapest

We thank all participants of the Single European Railway Area (SERA) Regional Conference East Mediterranean on 26 April in Budapest for their interest and their contributions.

Find all presentations here beside.

The conference series will reach a conclusion at the SERA Convention on 20 June in Brussels.

EU approves €59 million to support peace, stability and job creation in the Horn of Africa

EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, **Neven Mimica**, said: *"This new package illustrates how the EU Trust Fund provides sustainable solutions to address instability and lack of economic opportunities, as they are two main root causes of forced displacement in the Horn of Africa. By promoting peace, stability and job creation, these new actions will help create alternatives for people to improve their lives to ensure that migration can become a choice for people, and not a necessity."*

Fifth package of actions in the Horn of Africa under the EU Trust Fund

The package of actions announced today consists of:

- The regional project **"Promoting Peace and Stability in the Horn of Africa Region"** (€40 million) covers all countries in the Horn of Africa and aims to contribute to achieving sustainable peace, security and stability to improve economic integration and development. The project will enhance the capacity of IGAD and national governments of the region in key areas of peacebuilding. This will be done for example by improving early warning and response mechanisms or by countering transnational organised crime such as trafficking and smuggling.
- The new **"Kenya-EU Partnership for the implementation of the Kenya CVE strategy"** (€5 million) will support Kenya in improving the implementation of its recently adopted National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism. The aim is to prevent and counter violent extremism in an efficient and inclusive way, and in full respect of human rights.
- Two further projects build upon ongoing support to the people in Sudan. A project in North Darfur, **"Wadi El Ku Integrated Catchment Management Project (Phase 2)"** (€10 million), will directly target 80,000

smallholder producers and indirectly benefit the 700,000 people dependent on the Wadi El Ku catchment, by strengthening rural livelihoods through the inclusive and sustainable management of water resources.

A second project is a “**Technical Cooperation Facility for Sudan 2018 – 2020**” (€4 million) to provide monitoring, assessments, specific studies and other technical assistance to support the sound implementation of the [**€100 million Special Measure for Sudan**](#) channelled through the EU Trust Fund.

These actions build on previous packages of actions worth €606 million (approved in packages of [**€253 million**](#), [**€117 million**](#), [**€66.5 million**](#) and [**€170 million**](#)) committed under the EU Trust Fund since December 2015 aimed at providing regional sustainable solutions to irregular migration and forced displacement. They were approved by the operational committee of the EU Trust Fund for Africa.

Background

The European Commission launched an “[***Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa***](#)” at the [**Valletta migration summit**](#) in November 2015. The Fund amounts to €2.5 billion from the EU budget and European Development Fund, combined with contributions from EU Member States and other donors. The aim of the EU Trust Fund for Africa is to address the root causes of instability and irregular migration and to contribute to good migration management. The bulk of its resources are dedicated to the creation of jobs and economic development, especially for young people and women in local communities, with a focus on vocational training and the creation of micro and small enterprises

For More Information

[**On the Trust Fund for Africa**](#)

[**Website of Commissioner Neven Mimica**](#)

EU-Myanmar relations

Myanmar's efforts in **combating forced labour**, acknowledged by the International Labour Organisation, have opened the way for the EU to reinstate preferential market access under the “*Everything But Arms*” scheme in 2013. As a result **bilateral trade reached €1.55 billion in 2016** up from €404 million in 2012. **Myanmar exports to the EU reached almost €1 billion**. Major exports from Myanmar to the EU were garments (more than 69% of total exports), rice (8%), and footwear (6%). According to Myanmar's official statistics (as of January 2017), the **EU was the 4th largest foreign investor**

in 2016. According to Myanmar's official figures (end January 2017), cumulated existing investments originating from the EU amounted to USD 4.8 billion (or 8.2%), behind China (USD 18.4 billion or 31% of total), Singapore (USD 15.7 billion or 27%) and Hong Kong (USD 7.4 billion or 13% of total).

The EU is working towards concluding an **Investment Protection Agreement** to enable European businesses to realise the full potential offered by the country's economy, while complying with the highest standards of corporate social responsibility and responsible investment.

The EU demonstrated its commitment to work with the government, the International Labour Organization and other partners (Denmark, the United States and Japan) on **labour rights** when joining the *Initiative to Promote Fundamental Labour Rights and Practices in Myanmar* in May 2015. The EU is also actively engaged to promote **responsible business conduct** and is funding a €9 million ILO/OECD project in this area in a number of Asian countries, including Myanmar.

In order to help European business to better tap Myanmar's vast economic and investment potential, Myanmar has been selected as a **European Economic Diplomacy** case study country. The recently established [**Eurochamber**](#) can play an important role in representing EU business interests in the country.

Steps have been taken to prepare for negotiations on a [**Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Voluntary Partnership Agreement \(FLEGT VPA\)**](#). Progress is however dependent on the outcome of the peace process since vast forest areas are located in ethnic areas. The EU attaches particular importance to the preservation of environment and biodiversity.

42/2017 : 27 July 2017 – Opinion of the Advocate General in the case C-186/16

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41/2017 : 27 April 2017 – Opinions of the Advocate General in joined cases

C-168/16, C-169/16, C-169/16

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