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Subject: Council Conclusions on the EU Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan 2015-2020

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Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on the EU Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan, as adopted by the Council at its 3420th meeting held on 26 October 2015.

**Council Conclusions on the  
EU HORN OF AFRICA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN 2015-2020**

1. The Council adopts today the annexed Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan 2015-2020 that outlines the European Union (EU)'s comprehensive approach to addressing key issues throughout the region. As with the EU Horn of Africa Strategic Framework, adopted in November 2011, this Regional Action Plan reasserts the importance which the EU attaches to continuing close co-operation with partners across the region in using all available instruments to support and encourage peace, stability, sustainable growth and prosperity throughout the Horn of Africa. Since 2011, the EU has taken substantial steps – through political dialogue and active engagement, Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and targeted development co-operation assistance to implement the strategic framework. Persistent poverty, social grievance, unaccountable governance, corruption, absence of the rule of law, disputes over borders or water resources, the effects of climate change, proliferation of small arms and weak regional co-operation were already identified in the Strategic Framework of 2011 as key challenges, and until today despite progress in many respects, they remain entirely relevant. Yet since then, three issues affecting EU interests in the region have gained particular salience: the influence of the wider region on the Horn of Africa, violent extremism and migration and forced displacement.

2. The Council underlines that in line with the objectives set out in the Strategic Framework, and taking into account the new challenges in the region, the EU should give priority to the following five groups of actions in the period 2015-2020, namely: regional security and stability, migration and forced displacement, counter-radicalisation and violent extremism, youth and employment, and human rights, rule of law and democratic governance. Eradication of poverty is a precondition to addressing these challenges effectively and will remain the central objective of the EU's development co-operation. Moreover, the EU will work with all actors in the region to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, and to promote the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Addressing these challenges will require interventions in peripheral regions and across borders, and will demand a better synchronised approach to the political, development, economic, migration, gender-based and security aspects of these issues. The implementation of the Regional Action Plan will also reinforce inter and intra-regional co-operation between all relevant partners. The Action Plan will be implemented *inter alia* through the EU Trust Fund to be presented at the Valletta Summit on Migration on 11-12 November 2015.

3. The EU reiterates its readiness to continue working closely with the countries and regional organisations of the Horn of Africa to support, including through capacity building, their efforts to achieve peace, security and development. The implementation of the Regional Action Plan will be carried out with the full ownership and under the primary responsibility of the countries concerned, and in co-ordination with key international and regional organisations and other partners, such as the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The EU underlines the importance of ensuring close international and regional co-ordination, including through the work of the EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, in order to create synergies in the implementation of all relevant initiatives.

4. The Council invites the High Representative and the Commission, in close consultation with Member States, to start implementing the Horn of Africa Regional Action Plan, in co-operation with the countries of the region, and key international partners. The Council will revert to the matter as appropriate, and at least once a year.

## EU HORN OF AFRICA REGIONAL ACTION PLAN 2015-2020

### 1 Introduction

In November 2011, EU Foreign Ministers adopted a Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa to guide the EU's engagement in the region. The Strategic Framework spelled out the EU's objectives in the Horn of Africa<sup>1</sup>: peace; stability; security; prosperity; and accountable governments, and identified actions to further these goals. The EU subsequently appointed an EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa and reviewed the Strategic Framework in January 2013. The Strategic Framework has led to an Action Plan on Counter-terrorism for the Horn of Africa and Yemen<sup>2</sup>, an Action Plan on Counter-Piracy, and the Support to the Horn of Africa Resilience (SHARE) initiative<sup>3</sup>. While the priorities in the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa remain valid, some particular issues have become more pronounced and critical over the last few years, i.e. the broader geopolitical framework, the flows of mixed migration and violent radicalisation. This Action Plan seeks to implement the EU Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa, taking into account the new challenges, and in complementarity with the above mentioned Action Plans and initiative for the region.

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<sup>1</sup> The Strategic Framework covers Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Communication to the Council “EU Counter-terrorism Action Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen”, JOIN (2012) 24 final of 31.8.2012.

<sup>3</sup> "Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience", Staff Working Document (2012) 102 final of 11 April 2012.

Since 2011, the EU has taken substantial steps – through political dialogue and active engagement, Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and targeted development co-operation assistance to implement the strategic framework. Through its support for the Somali Compact<sup>4</sup>, the EU has made a decisive contribution to Somalia's emergence from prolonged conflict. The EU has contributed to a significant reduction in piracy off the coast of Somalia through CSDP missions and Commission co-operation programmes that have bolstered partner countries' maritime security capacity and their ability to bring pirates to justice. However, threats to maritime security remain a concern.

More broadly, there have been important developments in the Horn since 2011. Several countries of the region have made considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. GDP has continued to grow in most countries of the region. The discovery of oil and gas reserves in several countries has raised the prospect of rapid economic growth. Flows of foreign direct investment remained buoyant to many countries of the region. Business in the region remained characterised by high levels of entrepreneurship, ranging from the development of mobile payment systems to creating networks for delivery of organic agricultural products. At the same time, climate change exacerbates pressure on scarce resources; the livelihoods of large numbers of people already affected by poverty and food insecurity are further worsened by erratic rainfall and crop yields. Moreover, civil war has broken out in South Sudan and continues despite repeated efforts to achieve peace and the signing of a peace agreement. Civil conflict in Sudan has increased in intensity. Terrorist groups, notably Al-Shabaab, have expanded their influence to a point where they pose a danger to all states in the region and have been able to perpetrate several grave atrocities. The conflict in Yemen has had a significant impact on the region. Moreover, countries of the region are still faced by considerable challenges in poverty reduction and income disparities, unemployment and lack of basic services. There are unprecedented numbers of forced displaced persons and migrants both moving within the region and leaving it, with growing numbers travelling to Europe.

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<sup>4</sup> The Somali Compact is the result of an inclusive process to determine the priorities of Somalia for the period 2014-2016. The process, based on the Busan New Deal principles, was initiated in December 2012 by the Federal Government of Somalia and the international community. In March 2013, the Federal Government of Somalia and representatives of the Somali Federal Parliament, Somali civil society, the United Nations and the lead donor representative (European Union) established the High Level Task Force to guide and support the Somali Compact, on the basis of mutual accountability.

While the EU remains an influential actor in the Horn of Africa, both through its political engagement and its development cooperation, it must be recognised that the importance of development aid as a proportion of the national budget is diminishing for some, although not all, countries in the region. The countries of the region are developing closer ties with a diversity of international partners. China is not only playing an increasingly important economic role in the region, but has also assumed a political role in peace negotiations in South Sudan. The United States remains a key partner of the EU on all issues. President Obama's visit to the region in July 2015 reflected the United States' interest and engagement in the region. In this context, co-ordination between the EU and the other regional and international actors is of paramount importance for the stability and prosperity of the whole region.

Developments since 2011 need to be addressed by the EU, working together with its partners in the region. Furthermore, while the Strategic Framework covered the member states of the regional organisation for the Horn of Africa, the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), most if not all of the challenges identified are equally relevant to Tanzania, which is not an IGAD member state.

The implementation of the EU Strategic Framework will be pursued through this Action Plan, which is intended to describe a set of areas for priority actions that will enable the EU to step up its engagement on a basis of partnership with, and ownership by, the countries of the region with a view to addressing both new developments and chronic problems in the period from adoption of the plan until 2020. This Action Plan also aims at allowing the EU to incorporate other actors through rethinking its geographical areas of cooperation so as to integrate the Arabian Peninsula as well as Egypt and Libya, to work across borders so as to focus on peripheral regions and transnational challenges, and to better synchronise and coordinate common approaches on political, development, economic, migration and security issues.

## 2 A changed political landscape

The challenges identified in the Strategic Framework for the Horn of Africa remain entirely relevant today: absence of the rule of law; unaccountable governance; corruption; the effect of climate change; social grievance; disputes over borders or water resources; persistent poverty; proliferation of small arms; and weak regional co-operation. These factors combine to produce chronic instability in the region. Yet since 2011, three further issues affecting EU interests in the region have gained particular salience: the influence of the wider region on the Horn of Africa; radicalisation; and migration and forced displacement.

(i) **The wider region:** The Horn of Africa remains a volatile region subject to violent conflict. Conflict is currently mostly intra-state in nature such as in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. But the Horn of Africa also retains a significant risk of inter-state conflict. IGAD, as a regional body, has made significant strides both in managing internal conflict, particularly in Somalia, and also in containing conflicts such as the South Sudan crisis, and thereby limiting the risk of inter-state conflict. Nonetheless, while a fragile peace agreement is in place, the South Sudan conflict has highlighted the need to continue developing IGAD's capability in this critical field. In this framework, EU cooperation with IGAD and key regional partners, notably Ethiopia, is of paramount importance.

The internal dynamics of the region are themselves affected by broader supra-regional dynamics such as the Gulf States' increasingly active engagement in the politics of the Horn of Africa. While the Gulf States have always had interests in the Horn of Africa due to their geographic proximity, the politics and security of the Horn of Africa are today increasingly and visibly intertwined with those of the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt, whereby the politics of the region are influenced by, and in turn affect, the politics and security of a wider Red Sea region. The recent crisis in Yemen has been emblematic of this change, and has affected the security of northern Somalia and the geopolitical position of both Sudan and Eritrea. At the same time Darfur represents a linkage point between the Horn and the Sahel, with the political situation in this part of Sudan having significant impacts upon Chad, the Central African Republic and Libya, and vice versa.

So far as trade is concerned, the Horn of Africa, whose trade has traditionally been concentrated on the Indian Ocean, has effectively become part of a wider sub-region centred on the Red Sea, through which 13% of world trade travels annually. However, there is no regional forum tasked with promoting cooperation on maritime security and other matters for the Red Sea. Given Europe's dependence on this shipping route for its trade and energy, the EU has an important interest in promoting discussion amongst the littoral states and other key actors on the management of security in those shipping lanes, and on identifying and tackling the root causes of insecurity.

(ii) **Violent radicalisation:** Various forms of violent extremism have increased across the Horn of Africa in recent years. Islamic radicalisation and violent extremism, underpinned by the propagation of extremism and Jihadi ideologies over several decades and the influence across the region of Al-Qaeda and affiliated groups such as Al-Itihaad Al-Islamiya and Al-Shabaab, has emerged as a primary challenge. Moreover, extremism is also arising in some Christian communities.

Radicalisation has been driven by numerous factors: the inability of many states to fulfil basic social functions and ensure sustainable economic growth, leading to the marginalisation of substantial segments of the population (especially youth); widespread popular resentment of Western foreign policy; chronically high levels of unemployment, with little prospect of improvement; increasingly repressive and authoritarian methods used by state organs, such as the police, to maintain public order; in some countries, an increasing influence of the armed forces both in government and business; and, in some cases, deliberate oppression of particular groups. All these developments undermine the legitimacy of the state. The withdrawal of the state from providing basic social services, such as education, has left a vacuum which radical groups quite deliberately try to fill in order to gain support and sympathy among the population at large. Populations that might previously have emphasised an ethnic identity are, in some cases, adopting an identity on the basis of religion, increasing the possibility of sectarian politics emerging in a region of highly mixed populations. The inability of states in the region to address radicalisation and violent extremism in an effective manner heightens the challenge.

The most sophisticated exponent of violent extremism, Al-Shabaab, continues to attract recruits from Somali communities throughout the Horn of Africa and beyond, but in recent years its ranks have been swollen by growing numbers of non-Somalis, including Kenyans, Tanzanians, Ugandans and Ethiopians. Small numbers of Europeans have also joined the movement. Other radicalised youth from the Horn of Africa, including members of the Somali diaspora, now seek to join jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria instead of Somalia.

(iii) **Migration, refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs):** The countries of the Horn of Africa are both a source of, and a transit route for, unprecedented migration flows, into Europe, Gulf countries, Middle East, and Southern Africa, as well as being destination countries for migration. Significant numbers of refugees leave their country to escape from violent conflict, political persecution or environmental catastrophes; the conflicts in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan as well as ongoing repression in Eritrea lead to substantial numbers of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In some cases, refugees fall victim to grave abuses at the hands of traffickers *en route*. Some of these migrants continue their journey through North Africa to the EU. In 2014, some 22,000 persons from the Horn of Africa countries were granted asylum or subsidiary protection in the EU.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, within the region, countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda are transit or destination countries for refugees. Ethiopia and Kenya host the largest refugee communities in Africa, with some 700,000 and 550,000 refugees respectively.

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<sup>5</sup> Asylum applicants and first instance decisions on asylum applications : 2014, Table 11. Eurostat Data in Focus, Paper 3/2015, 19 March 2015.

An important contributor to economic migration is the rapid population growth that the region has undergone in recent years; all the countries of the region have a fertility rate above, or substantially above, the global average. The overwhelmingly youthful populations in the Horn often face very limited social and economic prospects, with high rates of youth unemployment. Growth in national GDP, which is often very unequally distributed among the population, combined with heightened exposure to international and social media, raises increased expectations that are often not met. Despite the significant progress made in several countries towards the Millennium Development Goals, in some countries of the region more than half the population remains destitute. Chronic environmental degradation, desertification and natural disasters affect countries across the region. Women, in particular, remain especially disadvantaged in most countries of the region. In some cases, the state is seen by the poorest sectors of society as distant and unresponsive to their needs. Discontent with government structures that are perceived – especially by the poorest – to be corrupt or unaccountable, marginalisation of minorities, and increasing restrictions on political freedom in several countries of the region all impel individuals to seek a new life elsewhere.

The high number of people in the region who are willing to migrate is by far larger than the limited possibilities of legal avenues for migration, be it within the region or outside. Lack of opportunities for legal migration or complex and expensive procedures mean that many migrants feel that they have no other option than to use irregular channels. Moreover, the administrative capacity of the countries of the region to deal with all aspects of irregular migration – from border management to trafficking in human beings or smuggling of migrants – is often too weak.

### 3 New challenges

As defined in the Strategic Framework, the EU's interests in the Horn of Africa remain defined by the region's geo-strategic importance, the EU's historic engagement with the countries of the region, its desire to support the welfare of the people, and the need for the EU to address common challenges as well to protect its own citizens from the threats that emanate from some parts of the region.

The objectives of the EU remain to achieve greater peace, stability, security, sustainable growth, prosperity and accountable governments, with a view to assisting states to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

The five broad areas for work by the EU in order to pursue these objectives also remain relevant:

- 1) Assist all countries in the region to build robust and accountable political structures, including civil and civic institutions, allowing the people of the Horn of Africa to express their legitimate political aspirations and ensure that their basic human rights and freedoms are respected;
- 2) Work with the countries of the region and with international organisations (especially the United Nations and African Union, and IGAD) fully to resolve current conflicts, particularly in Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, and to avoid future potential conflicts between or within countries;
- 3) Ensure that, until that is achieved, the insecurity in the region does not threaten the security of others beyond its borders, e.g. through maritime criminality (including piracy), terrorism or irregular migration;
- 4) Support efforts to promote the sustainable and inclusive economic growth of all countries and people in the region, to enable them to reduce poverty, increase prosperity, ensure environmental sustainability, combat climate change and enjoy the benefits globalisation can bring;
- 5) Support political and economic regional cooperation and bolster the role of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to tap into positive trends and developments across national borders;

Despite the progress that has been made towards achieving the objectives of the Horn of Africa Strategic Framework, such as in Somalia and concerning maritime security, forced displacement of individuals and the associated migratory flows have grown in the region since 2011.

The following challenges should receive a higher attention for the implementation of the Strategic Framework in the period 2015-2020.

(i) Many countries in the region are prone to conflict and instability due to inherent structures of underdevelopment and lack of accountable state institutions. Developments in the wider region have become an additional factor of destabilisation. There is a need to encourage frameworks for cooperation and integration in the form of **security and development cooperation** between the Horn of Africa countries themselves, with IGAD, and between them and the wider region, namely the Arabian Peninsula, including the countries of the Red Sea, Egypt and Libya. Where countries in the region are undergoing conflicts or facing grave political crises, support to mediation efforts at all levels needs to be continued.

(ii) Individuals living in destitution may well turn to **migration** or fall prey to radicalisation. It is therefore needed to support the legitimacy of states in the Horn of Africa through strengthening their capacity to fulfil all aspects of the social contract between the state and its citizens, so that citizens have access to both physical security and basic social services, such as education and health care, sufficient to enable them to live a life of dignity. Moreover, ever-increasing migratory flows place severe strain on the administrative capacity of states in the region. Building on the more for more principle, it appears necessary to enhance cooperation with partners in the region to address the root causes and provide alternatives to irregular migration and forced displacement, to support states' capacity to better manage mixed migratory flows, including through integrated border management, and to help combatting trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling, in line with the four pillars of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Communication from the Commission on the global approach to migration and mobility, COM(2011) 743 final, adopted on 11 November 2011.

(iii) Promoting the political and institutional structure that underpins pluralism is essential to counter the increasingly seductive appeal of **violent extremism**. States and civil society should both be encouraged to implement measures to promote religious tolerance, inclusivity and social co-existence. Factors of marginalisation and desperation, which can give rise to radicalisation, should also be countered.

(iv) Young people faced with little or no prospect of finding a job will have little opportunity to develop stable lives in their home communities. Promoting the creation of sustainable jobs with decent working conditions is indispensable to meeting the aspirations of the region's **youth**. Special attention must also be paid to empowering women and addressing pervasive discrimination on grounds of gender. In this light, efforts to promote **employment** in the region are critical

(v) Violations of human rights, absence of the rule of law and authoritarian governance all give rise to exclusion, grievance and alienation among citizens; despite the EU's attempts to engage the countries of the region on these issues, they remain an especially difficult area of cooperation and there have been few improvements. States must be encouraged to improve **governance**, respect **human rights**, to implement the rule of law, and to respect democratic processes, with a view to ensuring that the state enjoys legitimacy and is accountable and responsive to the views and needs of its citizens. In this context, enlarging the space for civil society and the media and strengthening the capacity of citizens and communities to organise is essential. States must also be pressed to respect international humanitarian law and allow unimpeded humanitarian access.

## 4 EU actions

Following the objectives set out in the Strategic Framework, and taking into account the new challenges in the region, the EU should give priority to the following five groups of actions in the period 2015-2020: regional security and stability; migration and forced displacement; countering radicalisation and extreme violence; youth and employment; and human rights, rule of law and democratic governance. This will complement EU support to promote inclusive economic growth in the Horn of Africa.

Given that Tanzania is an important actor in the Horn of Africa, and that the challenges of radicalisation and migration set out above affect Tanzania, the scope of this Action Plan should also apply to Tanzania.

### **Regional Security and Stability**

(i) **Developing regional political frameworks:** Building on facilitation by the EUSR for the Horn of Africa of the Nile Waters Agreement and coordination with Gulf actors on Somalia, more intensive engagement with partners in the Gulf, Egypt and Libya, in addition to the Horn of Africa, should encourage and support political frameworks that can contribute to the stability of the Red Sea region. In this context, the EU should support preparatory work for a high-level regional security conference. The EU should promote that the Horn of Africa is discussed at Ministerial and Senior Officials' meetings with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and consider the possibility of establishing trilateral meetings, as well as opening structured political dialogues with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states in addition to its existing dialogue with the GCC. The EU should encourage increased participation of the countries in the wider region in appropriate co-ordination mechanisms at country level.

(ii) **Supporting IGAD:** As provided for in the strategic framework, continued support to IGAD, including conflict prevention, early warning and mediation, would encourage greater political and security integration in the region. Eritrea's return to IGAD would make it more relevant in this respect. The EU should undertake a dialogue with the IGAD secretariat and IGAD member states about an appropriate security mechanism for the region and IGAD's role and ambition in this respect. The EEAS and Commission services will assess the role of other relevant regional organisations, and encourage coherence and close cooperation between all regional mechanisms. This should take into consideration EU engagement with the African Union, especially given its role in Somalia through AMISOM, and with the aim of advancing towards the full operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

(iii) **Reviewing CSDP missions:** The Council, EEAS and Commission services are taking stock, within their respective competences, of the implementation of CSDP operations, security arrangements, instruments and assets in the region, including capacity building in support of security and development, for which Somalia was identified for a pilot project. CSDP has been an important part of the EU "toolbox" for its engagement in the Horn of Africa, especially Somalia. The holistic strategic review of the three CSDP missions in the region later this year will provide an analysis of achievements to date and options for the future.

(iv) **Supporting mediation and dialogue:** Appropriate mediation, dialogue and transitional justice mechanisms can play an important role in addressing the causes of conflicts across the region, including in border areas. The EU should continue to be involved in conflict prevention and mediation processes at various levels – from the governmental to local communities - and at different stages - from preliminary talks to the implementation phase of peace agreements. The EU will continue to promote the role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)<sup>7</sup> and subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, including Resolution 2242 (2015).

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<sup>7</sup> See Council document 15671/1/08 REV 1.

(v) **Fighting illegal activities:** Controlling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, drug trafficking, poaching of and trafficking in wildlife, illegal border crossing, illicit financial flows, and illegal unreported and unregulated fishing remain challenges for many countries of the region. The EU should seek to step up its support to partners to ensure the effective investigation, detection and prosecution of these activities.

(vi) **Country by country approach:** (1) **Somalia** - The EU, working jointly with international partners, should continue supporting a peaceful transitional and electoral process in 2016 in Somalia, and the creation of a sustainable public administration and national security architecture, in the context of the formation of federal states. Together with other partners, the EU should continue to support the government's efforts, working together with AMISOM, to ensure security and stability in the country. The EU should invest in developing state capacity and providing basic education and health care, as well as considering supporting higher education. The EU should also continue to support the rule of law, democratic governance and an enlarged space for civil society and the media. (2) **Eritrea** - The EU should incrementally intensify its dialogue and cooperation with Eritrea with a view to encouraging the government of Eritrea to grant greater political and economic freedoms to its citizens. The EU should also continue to support a political resolution of both the Eritrea-Ethiopia and Eritrea-Djibouti border disputes, essential for overall stability and development throughout the Horn of Africa. (3) **South Sudan** - The EU should support regional and international efforts to bring peace to South Sudan while continuing to focus on transparency of oil revenues, accountability and provisions of basic social services. In addition, the EU should continue to be committed to respond to the increased conflict-related humanitarian needs. (4) **Sudan** - Finally, the EU should also support efforts towards a holistic and inclusive political solution in Sudan.

## Migration and forced displacement

- (i) **Implementing the Khartoum Process:** The EU should aim to establish broad partnerships with countries in the region to address migration in an integrated and coordinated manner. In this regard, the EU should step up implementation of actions under the Khartoum Process, launched in November 2014, which brings together EU Member States, countries of the Horn of Africa, and Egypt and Tunisia as transit countries and will focus increasingly on delivery. In particular, the Khartoum Process will provide an important forum for political dialogue with partners at Senior Officials' level, with a focus on a rights-based approach. The EU should in particular work with the African Union, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan to improve migration management in the region.
- (ii) **Improving facilitation of legal migration and mobility:** The EU should explore ways to support opportunities for legal migration to Europe, in line with the European Agenda on Migration. Moreover, the EU should look at ways to support South-South migration, such as the development and implementation of regional agreements on legal migration within the Horn of Africa and beyond, including through regional organisations such as IGAD, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC).
- (iii) **Preventing irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings:** Faced with increasingly professional trafficking and smuggling networks, the EU should support the development of legislation on trafficking and smuggling, and capacity building of police and judicial authorities as well as strengthening of national coordination mechanisms. The EU should also support regional and international mechanisms, possibly through IGAD and the UN, for intelligence sharing and joint operations against traffickers and smugglers in the region. The EU should also consider supporting the implementation of integrated border management projects in the Horn of Africa, in full consistency with the EU's comprehensive approach.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Council conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach, Foreign Affairs Council meeting held in Brussels, 12 May 2014.

(iv) **Supporting sustainable returns and promoting cooperation on readmission:** EU actions should be used to create both incentives and pressure for improved cooperation on readmission. The EU should, in parallel, contribute to improving the capacities of countries in the Horn of Africa to reintegrate returnees and support creating conditions conducive to their sustainable return. In particular, the EU should upgrade cooperation with international partners to (i) ensure that Somalis returning from Yemen and Kenya are properly re-integrated into Somalia and (ii) ensure conditions are met for the safe and sustainable repatriation of Somalis into Somalia.

(v) **Providing protection to those in need:** The EU should develop the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) for the Horn of Africa and support states in the region to reinforce the protection of refugees and IDPs, support integration of long-term refugees and displaced persons in host communities and strengthen resilience and livelihoods of these communities. The EU should explore possibilities to assist Ethiopia to improve integration of increased numbers of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and will look into the readiness of Sudan to undertake similar actions.

(vi) **Investing in development:** The EU should intensify its efforts to ensure that the factors that lead individuals to move, such as conflicts, instability, natural disasters, the effects of climate change, environmental degradation, desertification, poverty or lack of basic social services, are comprehensively addressed in development cooperation programmes with countries of origin, notably Eritrea and Somalia. The impact of displacement including migration on all development programmes, financed under National or Regional Indicative Programmes should be assessed during their design. The EU should also support initiatives to enhance the role of diasporas in development and political processes. The EU should also work intensively with transit states to strengthen their ability to accommodate migrants or refugees from their neighbourhood by creating economic opportunities both for host communities and migrants or refugees. The EU delegations' capacities in the field of migration and displacement should also be reinforced.

(vii) **Exploring emerging issues:** The EU should conduct analyses of the local drivers of mixed migration flows and of the migration – security nexus in the Horn of Africa, including issues of radicalisation and migration and the potential impact on diaspora communities in Europe of developments in the Horn itself, and of the link between trafficking of people, goods (e.g. drugs, wildlife products) and weapons in the context of the Horn of Africa with a view to identifying further actions.

### **Counter-radicalisation and violent extremism**

(i) **Supporting global and regional initiatives on counter-terrorism:** The EU should continue to support global and regional initiatives on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism such as the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum Working Group on the Horn of Africa, which the EU co-chairs with Turkey. The EU should promote enhanced measures to strengthen capacity among the countries of the region on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, together with international partners such as the United Nations. The EU should also promote cooperation between the countries of the region on intelligence-sharing, including assisting the AU-led Djibouti process, as well as assisting individual states that wish to improve legal and intelligence cooperation.

(ii) **Targeting development cooperation** towards mitigating the underlying factors and root causes that drive radicalisation. The structural dysfunction of states, such as their inability to provide access to basic social services, in particular health and education among the poorest and the most marginalised, and corruption, have been identified as among the drivers to radicalisation. On the basis of additional analysis of the local causes of violent extremist threats, the EU should better target and define its development cooperation in a way that encourages the state to assume its responsibilities in the provision of public services and to protect the human rights of its citizens.

(iii) **Strengthening capacity building in justice, security and law enforcement:** Indiscriminate heavy-handed responses to violent extremism by countries in the region coupled with inadequate capacity and capabilities in the follow-up and investigation of terrorist cases run the risk of exacerbating the problems they are designed to address and alienating citizens. The EU should support reforms in the security sector, aiming at building capacity of law enforcement authorities adequately to respond to violent extremism, while respecting human rights, and to properly investigate and prosecute alleged terrorist cases.

(iv) **Promoting tolerance and strengthening the voice of moderating influences:** Governments, through state education establishments, as well as local and faith-based communities bear an important responsibility in promoting tolerance and critical thinking skills which are essential in the long term to tackle radicalisation. Free and full access to all public education is a fundamental tool to prevent marginalisation and radicalism; the EU support in this sector should be based on a careful assessment of agencies directly implementing projects in the field. The EU should support governments' reforms aiming at promoting tolerance. The EU should also support efforts by civil society organisations and local communities to facilitate local conflict mediation and resolution as well as inter-faith dialogue and counter-terrorism narratives. The EU should consider developing support for individuals who have defected from extremist movements, with a view to encouraging them publicly to challenge the attraction of such movements. Strategies and actions leading to the empowerment of women will also be essential to prevent radicalisation and counter terrorism.

(v) **Responding adroitly to violent extremism:** The EU should offer assistance to governments both in framing and communicating policies to counter violent extremism that are holistic and led by an understanding of the forces driving radicalisation in the first place. The EU should also consider providing support to civil society organisations, including religious bodies, active in the field of preventing violent extremism. Consideration should be given to provide support for implementation of the IGAD Security Sector Programme.

(vi) **Exploring emerging issues:** The EU should support academic analyses of national and international factors contributing to radicalisation, including financing.

## Youth and Employment

- (i) **Supporting entrepreneurship and sustainable and inclusive economic growth:** The EU should support the development of enterprise in the private sector, through supporting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurship, microcredit and business networks, integration of diaspora, and facilitating trade. The EU should continue to be committed to the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the countries of the Horn of Africa, with a view to deepening trade relations.
- (ii) **Fostering good business practice and fighting corruption:** The EU should support initiatives to share knowledge and good practice on improving the business and legal environment. The EU should also intensify its support for efforts to fight corruption, both through initiatives to develop states' capacity in this field, as well as through efforts to encourage business to address corruption more actively.
- (iii) **Developing vocational training:** The EU should support programmes and projects for vocational training and development of technical skills, especially for the young. The needs for vocational training should be identified in close cooperation with the private sector. Existing vocational training centres should be rehabilitated or upgraded, or, where the necessity has been identified, new centres should be built. Access to vocational training should be made available for both women and men.
- (iv) **Improving connectivity:** The EU should promote rural development through supporting transport infrastructure that connects rural areas to markets. In addition, the EU should provide assistance to improve transport links between central and peripheral areas, as well as cross-border links.

(v) **Reintegrating former combatants:** In post-conflict situations, large groups of disarmed and displaced young persons – principally men but also women - or children, many of whom have been entirely deprived of education and training, require reintegration. The EU should support projects, taking full account of a gender perspective, to enable them to reintegrate into society and to develop livelihoods.

### **Human rights, rule of law and democratic governance**

(i) **Tackling human rights country by country:** The EU has identified priorities tailored to the situation in each country of the region in its human rights country strategies adopted since 2012, and should continue to address these priorities with a view to encouraging partners to pursue policies that allow citizens to play a role in governance. In particular, the EU should, in accordance with the human rights country strategies, underline through political dialogue with partners the importance of ensuring freedom of expression and opinion, ensuring the human rights of women and of encouraging a vibrant and critical civil society, by respecting *inter alia* freedom of association and assembly. Specific attention should be devoted to the prevention, at all levels, of sexual violence and abuse. Overall, the importance of respecting international human rights obligations should be stressed in political dialogues.

(ii) **Supporting democratic principles:** The EU should provide support for the establishment and development of democratic processes and institutions. The EU should continue to support the holding of democratic elections through Election Observation Missions to appropriate countries, as well as providing support for implementation of their recommendations.

(iii) **Eliminating torture:** Ill-treatment of citizens by the security forces, whether in the form of torture, arbitrary arrest or prolonged pre-trial detention, is especially likely to exacerbate resentment among those affected; the EU should step up its efforts to address these issues, including through funding projects where appropriate.

- (iv) **Promoting economic, social and cultural rights:** Partner countries continue to face difficulties in ensuring all citizens can enjoy economic, social and cultural rights; the EU should continue to address issues such as access to water and food security through development projects, but also intensify its work on emerging issues, such as land-grabbing, that have a particular impact on livelihoods of the poorest and the most marginalised.
- (v) **Supporting human rights defenders:** Human rights defenders play a vital role in identifying problems in the implementation of human rights and democratic governance, yet often find themselves in difficult situations; in line with the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, the EU should step up its advocacy on behalf of human rights defenders to reinforce their legitimacy, as well as continue providing practical support, including through strengthening regional links between defenders.
- (vi) **Strengthening the rule of law:** Violations of the rule of law – whether through unfair trials, inability of individuals to enjoy access to legal remedies at all, or heavy-handed behaviour by partisan, unaccountable or corrupt police forces – also undermine citizens' faith in state institutions. The EU should encourage actions to improve the capacity and efficiency of the legal system, as well as to strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, the impartiality and professionalism of police forces and to widen access to justice, including transitional justice in post-conflict countries. Funding Security Sector Reform programmes should be considered.
- (vii) **Promoting effective revenue collection:** The mobilisation and effective use of domestic public finances provides the largest and most stable source available for financing sustainable development. In line with the Addis Tax Initiative, the EU should support efforts by partners to improve the fairness, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of their tax systems.

(viii) **Supporting respect of International Humanitarian Law:** Violations of international humanitarian law, whether by states or non-state actors, continue unabated in several countries of the region. The EU should strengthen its efforts to support effective implementation of international humanitarian law, in accordance with the EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with International Humanitarian Law<sup>9</sup>.

(ix) **Protecting women in conflict situations:** The EU should strengthen its efforts towards the protection of women and girls in conflict situations from all forms of violence, including sexual and gender based violence, with reference to implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 and 1820 and the Guide to Practical Actions at EU level for Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict. These efforts should include measures aimed at preventing as well as to ensure accountability for such violence.

(x) **Protecting children in conflict situations:** The EU should pursue and further strengthen its efforts towards the protection of children in conflict situations from all violations and abuses, including inter alia the recruitment and use of children and their killing and maiming with reference to the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1612 and subsequent resolutions as well as the EU guidelines on children and armed conflict. These efforts should include measures aimed at ending and preventing violations and abuses committed against children as well as to ensure accountability for them.

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<sup>9</sup> Updated European Union Guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) 2009/C 303/06, published in OJ C 303/12 of 15 December 2009.

## 5 EU instruments and initiatives

The implementation of the Action Plan will involve a range of instruments and mechanisms aiming at strengthening the comprehensive approach. This will include efforts spanning the diplomatic, security, military, trade and development cooperation fields.

Co-operation with the partner countries of the Horn of Africa takes place in the framework of the EU-ACP partnership under the Cotonou Agreement. The 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund's (EDF, 2014-2020) National Indicative Programmes (NIPs) for seven Horn of Africa countries and Tanzania could contribute an important part of funding to the implementation of this Action Plan. Moreover, funds from the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for East Africa, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region (EA-SA-IO) and the Pan-African Programme (PANAF) under the Development Cooperation Instrument<sup>10</sup> (DCI) could target projects and activities under this Action Plan. While the main focus of the EDF and the DCI is on long-term development, other instruments have different mandates with different time horizons and concentrating on security, stability and peace. The Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace<sup>11</sup> (IcSP) is intended to respond to situations of crisis or emerging crisis to prevent conflicts (Art. 3, non-programmable actions), and to support conflict prevention, crisis preparedness and peace-building (Art. 4, programmable actions). Under Article 5, the IcSP focuses on global and trans-regional and emerging threats (programmable actions).

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<sup>10</sup> Regulation (EU) No 233/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020.

<sup>11</sup> Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 of 11 March 2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace.

Moreover, on 9 September 2015 the European Commission endorsed the establishment of a European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (EUTF) as a crisis Trust Fund. The overall objective of the Trust Fund is to address the crisis in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin, Horn of Africa including Tanzania, and North Africa regions. It will support all aspects of stability and contribute to better migration management as well as addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration, in particular by promoting resilience, economic and equal opportunities, security and development. The European Commission proposed to mobilise EUR 1.8 billion of EU funds including EUR 1 billion from the EDF Reserve. The European Commission has called on Member States and other donors to contribute. The EUTF would complement existing programmes and contribute to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan.

Following the severe drought that devastated the Horn of Africa in 2010-2011, IGAD adopted a regional resilience strategy (IDDRSI - IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative) aimed at addressing the effects of drought and related shocks in the region in a sustainable and holistic manner. IDDRSI identifies seven priority intervention areas, where investment and action will help to build resilience through reducing the vulnerability of target communities to climatic and economic shocks. The strategy serves as a common framework for developing national and regional programmes that will be designed to enhance drought resilience through developing sustainability in the IGAD region.

In line with the IDDRSI strategy and the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council concerning “The EU approach to resilience: learning from food security crises” (COM(2012)586 final), the European Commission services are preparing a new resilience programme which may support the IDDRSI.

The EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative ("Khartoum Process") was launched by a Ministerial Conference in Rome in November 2014. It gathers the countries of origin, transit and destination along the migratory routes from the Horn of Africa to Europe. During a first phase, activities under the initiative should concentrate on addressing trafficking in human beings, as well as smuggling of migrants, with the perspective of expanding the process at a later stage. A series of concrete actions have already been identified by the Steering Committee of the Khartoum Process.

The EU is also preparing a Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP) in the Horn of Africa, with the aim of addressing the protection and developmental needs of people suffering long-term displacement, in particular by creating education and livelihood opportunities for IDPs, refugees and host communities.

The EU-Somalia "New Deal Conference" held in Brussels on 16 September 2013 brought significant progress with the endorsement of a Compact between Somalia and the international community (the Somali Compact). It spells out the immediate priorities and actions for 2014-2016 for peace and state-building goals, including a political vision for an inclusive political process to achieve a stable and federal Somalia through the adoption of a Federal Constitution and elections by 2016. The Compact enshrines the principle of Somali ownership, including commitments against benchmarks, and direct engagement. It also includes principles for donor coordination and financial mechanisms to channel international support to the Compact priorities.

## **6 Coordination and Monitoring**

EU and Member State's activities will have to be closely coordinated in line with the comprehensive approach. Reinforced coordination, in particular in countries of the region is required and will be envisaged. This includes a better overview of ongoing and planned initiatives. These efforts should be undertaken in coordination with other key regional and international actors.

Appropriate monitoring should be established to oversee the implementation of the proposed actions, in close cooperation with the Member States. As concerns risk management, regional and country conflict and risk assessments will have to be regularly updated.

With regard to the EU Trust Fund, a Trust Fund Board will ensure the oversight of the overall strategy. The Board will be chaired by the European Commission with representatives of EU Member States and other donors contributing to the Fund in line with the EU Financial Regulation.