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EU resumes full development cooperation with Niger

The Council confirmed today that the EU is fully resuming development cooperation with the Republic of Niger, following the country's successful democratic transition and return to constitutional order ([11266/11](#)).

"I am very satisfied with the return to democracy in Niger, through a very successful process of transition," said Catherine Ashton, High Representative for EU Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. She assured the newly elected authorities that the EU is determined to support their efforts to overcome the challenges they face, in particular regarding security and development issues.

EU development cooperation with Niger was suspended in 2009 after former President Mamadou Tandja unconstitutionally attempted to remain in office beyond his second term. The EU considered this as well as the subsequent military coup in February 2010 a breach of democracy and the rule of law, essential elements of the Cotonou Agreement between EU and ACP states.

Niger's return to democracy was supported by a gradual resumption of EU cooperation. With the investiture of Mahamadou Issoufou as new president in April, the country has completed its democratic transition and fulfilled all commitments made during consultations with the EU. Today's Foreign Affairs Council therefore confirmed full resumption of EU development cooperation with Niger.

The European Commission welcomed today's announcement: *"On top of the ongoing support to Niger's economic stability, food security and transport infrastructure, today's decision will allow helping the country facing the new challenges of development and security in the Northern region. Most cooperation projects that were suspended have already been resumed and the procedures for approving new projects amounting to € 87 million are in very advanced stage"*, said Andris Piebalgs, EU Commissioner for Development. He added that Niger had also become eligible for the EU's Millennium Development Goals Initiative, focusing on the welfare of the poorest people.

P R E S S

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