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EU releases extra €20 million crisis response and stabilisation support package for Mali

A first 20 million Euro stabilisation support package was approved today under the Instrument for Stability (IfS) to provide immediate support to Mali's law enforcement and justice services, the Malian local authorities, dialogue and reconciliation initiatives at local level, and the first phases of the upcoming electoral process. This decision puts into practice commitments agreed by the extraordinary Foreign Affairs Council of 17 January.

This much needed package is an early instalment of the EU's comprehensive response to the crisis in Mali, and complements the on-going efforts of the Union through other instruments, in particular the financial and logistical support to the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), the EUTM and EUCAP Sahel CSDP missions, the current IfS long-term Counter-Terrorism project for the Sahel, the EU-INTERPOL Western Africa Police Information System, ongoing EU humanitarian aid, and development cooperation. Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs announced on 12 February the fully fledged resumption of development aid to Mali for an amount of some €250 million.

To swiftly deliver concrete results under this first stabilisation support package, the EU intends to rely on the implementation expertise of a mix of EU Member State agencies and other partners, including the UNDP and civil society organisations.

EU High Representative Catherine Ashton said: *"This first stabilisation support package is yet another contribution from the EU to assist Mali to fully restore State authority and stability. It will also help the Malian people through support for the restoration of basic State services. In the coming weeks, the EU will take further decisions to contribute to international efforts in support of Mali and to help the Malian Government and people achieve long term stability, security and development."*

P R E S S

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The IfS stabilisation support package includes five main components:

- i. Support for the restoration of security and protection of civilians: through the provision of urgently required equipment (vehicles, communication equipment, etc.) to enable the re-deployment of civilian security services, especially in the north, and to protect against terrorist threats in urban areas and critical infrastructures – including in Bamako;
- ii. Support to Malian local authorities, to re-establish the presence of the State throughout Mali, especially in the north, with a focus on the resumption of basic social services (by providing administrative, school, medical, veterinary and technical equipment and related training and maintenance);
- iii. Promotion of dialogue and reconciliation initiatives at local level, and support for efforts to reduce radicalisation and violent extremism (notably through community-based radio programmes);
- iv. Contribution to the first phases of the electoral process (through support to a sensitisation campaign and to the update of the electoral register); and
- v. Technical assistance to support the Malian authorities in their efforts to stabilise Mali (through the provision of technical expertise, services and training in areas such as security, justice, reconciliation).

Background

The Instrument for Stability (IfS) is a key external assistance instrument, enabling the EU to contribute to international conflict prevention and provide urgent responses to current and emerging crises. Every year, EU IfS support is deployed for around 40 crisis response actions worldwide.

In the Sahel region, the IfS is currently supporting projects focusing on the reinforcement of border management capacities in Mauritania, security and stabilisation in the northern regions of Niger and Mali, and the building of national capacities for the fight against terrorism and organised crime networks in the region.
