

Statement by the Spokesperson on the executions scheduled in Arkansas

Seven executions by lethal injection, scheduled by the US State of Arkansas for the period between 17 April and 27 April, would break the de-facto moratorium on the death penalty observed by this US State since November 2005. Arkansas would also become the first State in the US to conduct seven executions over an 11-day period since the resumption of the use of the death penalty in 1977 in the United States.

The European Union opposes capital punishment, which fails to act as a deterrent to crime, represents an unacceptable denial of human dignity and integrity and cannot be justified under any circumstances. More than 140 countries in the world are now abolitionist in law or practice.

Today, the death penalty is illegal in nineteen of the fifty US States and the District of Columbia. The number of executions in the US has steadily declined to its lowest level in 2016. The executions in Arkansas, if carried out as planned, would be a serious setback in this overall development.

We therefore call on the Governor of Arkansas to commute the sentences of Mr Bruce Earl Ward, Mr Don Williamson Davis, Mr Ledell Lee, Mr Stacey Eugene Johnson, Mr Jack Harold Jones, Mr Marcel W. Williams, Mr Kenneth D. Williams, as well as the sentence of Mr Jason F. McGehee, which has been temporarily stayed, and grant them relief from the death penalty.

Republic of Moldova: Council agrees to €100 million financial assistance

The Republic of Moldova's economy was affected by political instability during the period between elections in November 2014 and January 2016. It has also been affected by a banking fraud scandal, weak economic activity and import bans imposed by Russia. Since early 2016, the authorities have adopted a number of **reforms**, but need to undertake further efforts in implementing them, whilst those responsible for banking frauds need to be brought to justice. Reforms in the **financial sector** and in the management of **public finances** have been undertaken in the framework of negotiations on an IMF programme.

In July 2016 the Moldovan authorities and the IMF agreed a three-year extended credit facility and extended fund facility arrangement for \$178.7 million. The Republic of Moldova requested complementary assistance from the EU in August 2015 and renewed that request in March 2016.

The EU assistance would be subject to a **memorandum of understanding** (MOU), including precise and specific conditions, to be agreed by the Republic of Moldova with the Commission.

A precondition would be that the Republic of Moldova respects effective democratic mechanisms, including a **multi-party parliamentary system**. It would have to respect the **rule of law** and guarantee respect for **human rights**. Objectives also include the efficiency, transparency and accountability of public finance management, an effective prevention of corruption and money laundering, and financial sector governance and supervision.

The Commission and the European External Action Service would regularly monitor the fulfilment of these preconditions and objectives.

The decision requires a qualified majority within the Council, in agreement with the Parliament. The legal basis is article 212 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

[EU Trust Fund for Africa adopts €90 million programme on protection of migrants and improved migration management in Libya](#)

Today, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa has adopted a comprehensive €90 million programme to reinforce protection and resilience of migrants, refugees and host communities in Libya. The programme will also support improved migration management in the country.

High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *“For the European Union, Libya and the Libyans have been and stay a top priority. We are working to promote a political solution to the Libyan crisis and to support the Libyan authorities on the many challenges they have to face, including the managing of the migration flows. As the first donor for Libya, we already are providing a sizeable package of support worth €120 million to assist the authorities and the population. And while we are working to provide training and capacity building to the coast guard to save lives in the Mediterranean Sea, we are addressing the appalling situation the migrants stranded in Libya face, together with international organisations such as IOM and UNHCR. The additional €90 million we adopt today are aimed at protecting and assisting migrants in the country, and the people who host them. Our aim remains cooperating in protecting lives, and promoting peace and stability in Libya. The European Union is doing its part and the Libyan authorities, all of them, have to do theirs”.*

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes **Hahn** said: *“At the initiative of the European Commission, the EU Trust Fund for Africa is taking rapid action on a pressing priority for both the EU and our partner countries. By supporting actions in Libya, today’s newly adopted programme will address the needs of the migrants and contribute to a better management of migration flows. In addition, the projects will also support improved socio-economic conditions for all in Libya, and thus contribute to reducing the drivers of irregular migration and make the smugglers’ task more difficult”.*

The new programme addresses various aspects of the migration challenge in Libya and along the Central Mediterranean route: stepping up the protection of migrants and refugees, including the most vulnerable, in Libya; improving the conditions of host communities and of internally displaced persons, taking into account the difficult socio-economic conditions in Libya; and facilitating the voluntary return of migrants from Libya to their countries of origin. The programme activities will be implemented in the main areas of settlement or transit of migrants and refugees (Libyan Southern border, municipalities along the migratory routes and along the coastal area) and in areas of displacement of Libyans and places to which internally displaced populations are returning.

The programme includes the following activities:

1. **Protection (€48 million):** assistance to and protection of migrants and refugees at disembarkation points, in detention centres and urban settings (e.g. primary health care, psychological first aid, identification of vulnerable persons – including children – access to food and non-food items); voluntary humanitarian returns and reintegration of migrants to their countries of origin (overall 15,000 envisaged); creation of ‘Safe Spaces’ as alternatives to detention (shelters providing 24/7 care and specialised services); assistance to migrants on the move in the form of information on viable options (including returns) and risks of irregular migration as well as food and non-food items; collection and analysis of data on mixed migration flows, routes and trends through a ‘Displacement Tracking Mechanism’ which will help better understand the migration dynamics.
2. **Socio-economic development at municipal level and local governance (€42 million):** activities to improve socio-economic development at municipal level and local governance, through strengthening capacities of local authorities to provide services and foster local development and stability, through provision and access to quality services for Libyans and migrants (including health facilities and education and rehabilitation of local infrastructures for example) and through local economic development and access to job opportunities (including through safe income for migrants and host communities in the South where smuggling and trafficking provide major revenues).

The programme will be implemented through five partners, selected on the basis of their capacity to surge swift operational deployment building on existing operations and presence on the ground: 1) the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2) the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP), 3) the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), 4) the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and 5) the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ). Concrete implementation on the ground will start after finalisation of contracting with the partners.

Background

Migrants transiting or remaining in Libya are facing increasingly dire conditions. The programme addresses the priorities set out by the European Commission in its Joint Communication "Migration on the Central Mediterranean Route: Managing flows, saving lives" (25 January 2017), confirmed and further developed by the Heads of State or Government in the Malta Declaration of 3 February 2017. Further actions under the EU Trust Fund for Africa will address the remaining priorities identified in both documents.

The planned activities cover:

- reducing the number of crossings and saving lives at sea;
- stepping up the fight against smugglers and traffickers;
- development of local communities in Libya to improve their socio-economic situation and enhance their resilience as host communities;
- protecting migrants, increasing resettlement and promoting assisted voluntary returns and reintegration;
- managing migrant flows through the southern Libyan border;
- increased cooperation with Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria.

For More Information

[Communication of 25 January 2017: Migration on the Central Mediterranean route. Managing flows, saving lives](#)

[Annex to the Communication](#)

[Malta Declaration of 3 February 2017](#)

['North of Africa Window' of the EU Emergency Trust Fund](#)

EU-Libya relations, factsheet

Print version:

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Through diplomatic action and concrete support, the EU is assisting Libya's transition towards a stable, functioning country and is supporting UN mediation efforts in this regard. The EU underlines Libyan ownership of the political process and the importance of inclusiveness, notably through the participation of political and local actors, women and civil society.

The EU provides assistance to Libya and the Libyan people through a set of measures, including supporting a political transition and a negotiated settlement acceptable to all legitimate groups in the country, bilateral assistance, including humanitarian assistance and targeted assistance in the field of migration, as well as support through its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, especially EUNAVFORMED Operation Sophia and EUBAM.

Support for political transition and negotiated settlement

The EU has been supporting efforts to implement the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) agreed in 2015, the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA*) that was formed under the terms of the Agreement and local authorities through institution building, including the deployment of Stabilisation Facility funding to restore public infrastructure and improve inter-governmental coordination.

The EU works closely with the United Nations Support Mission in Libya under the leadership of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General to facilitate the implementation of the Libyan Political Agreement and support mediation efforts to ensure all parties in Libya come together in a spirit of compromise and reconciliation to make the Agreement work and prevent conflict, in the interest of all Libyans.

The EU also supports the mediation activities of neighbours and regional partners including by coordinating efforts with the League of Arab States (LAS), the African Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN) in the framework of the Libya Quartet in order to advance the political process and assist Libya in its democratic transition.

Bilateral assistance

The EU has been providing significant support to the Libyans since the beginning of the crisis.

EU support is provided mainly through the [European Neighbourhood Instrument](#) (ENI) and the [Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace](#) (IcSP).

The EU currently has a package of close to €120 million in bilateral support to Libya in 37 projects across six sectors: civil society; governance; health; youth and education; migration and protection; and support to the political process, security and mediation. Many of these projects, which were suspended in 2014 due to the rapidly deteriorating security situation, have been resumed with the arrival of the Government of National Accord (GNA).

This includes €10.8 million in **humanitarian aid** in 2016, providing assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees and other vulnerable groups in conflict-affected areas.

Cooperation on migration and protection continues

The European Union's engagement includes support to rights-based management of migration in Libya, capacity-building and training of the Libyan Coast

Guard, as well as promoting dialogue between Libya and its southern neighbours on the management of their common borders. The EU is also active in supporting the GNA in providing essential services to the Libyan population, displaced persons, migrants and refugees.

Of the EU's total support to Libya, over €46 million have been allocated to programmes related to migration that facilitate the assisted voluntary return of stranded migrants, support to host communities by providing employment opportunities for both local population and migrants, assistance and protection to vulnerable migrants, including with the aim of improving living conditions in retention centres and disembarkation points. Thematic assistance programmes – for example, on human rights or migration – are also included.

This includes two programmes approved under the [EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) (EUTF) established to increase protection of migrants and to strengthen effective migration management. The first is implemented by a consortium of Non-Governmental Organisations led by the Danish Refugee Council, which aims to improve the protection and the resilience of refugees, migrants (including in detention centres), IDPs and host communities, and a pilot 'alternative to detention' initiative. A second programme will be implemented by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), to better protect and assist the most vulnerable migrants, and to help their host communities in Libya. This programme will assist the most vulnerable migrants rescued at sea in Libyan territorial waters and disembarked in Libya. It will improve protection by supporting the respect of fundamental rights and addressing the most urgent needs of migrants in detention centres. Finally, it will scale up humanitarian repatriation and reintegration in their home countries of vulnerable migrants stranded in Libya, with a first target of assisting 5000 people.

On 25 January 2017 the **Joint Communication on the Central Mediterranean Route, followed by the Malta Declaration** on 3 February 2017, identified a set of priorities to be addressed through the mobilisation of €200 million under **the North Africa window of the EU Trust Fund for Africa in 2017**, with a priority **focus on migration-related projects in Libya and North Africa**. Actions will enhance combatting smuggling and trafficking networks along the migration routes and at sea, help to manage migratory flows more effectively, continue saving lives, and improving the living conditions of migrants.

As a first step of implementation, the EU Trust Fund for Africa approved a comprehensive programme of €90 million on 12 April 2017.

This programme consists of two components:

1. **Protection and assistance** for all those in need, with the aim to expand the protection space in Libya, with a particular focus on migrants and refugees – to be implemented by the IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF.
2. **stabilisation**, aiming at supporting socio-economic development at municipal level and local governance, in order to better integrate migrants and stabilise host communities – implemented by UNDP, GIZ, IOM and UNICEF

Through the EU's Regional Development and Protection Programme, the EU also supports the UNHCR and IOM in their capacity-building for Libyan authorities and in their assistance to refugees and asylum seekers present in or disembarked in Libya.

With the Joint Communication on the Central Mediterranean Route, the EU will step up our efforts by **mobilising €200 million for the North Africa window of the EU Trust Fund for Africa for projects in 2017**, with a **priority focus on migration-related projects concerning Libya**. **Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia** are also addressed in the communication whereas **Morocco** continues to be eligible to the North of Africa window. Proposals are being prepared by the services allowing for actions that will enhance combatting smuggling and trafficking networks along the migration routes and at sea, help to manage the flows more effectively, continue saving lives, and improving the living conditions of migrants.

CSDP Missions and Operations

The EU is engaged in providing focussed support to Libya through its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations: EUBAM Libya and EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia.

EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia

EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia was launched in June 2015 as part of the EU's broader action to provide a comprehensive response to the global migration and refugee crisis and to encourage a democratic, stable and prosperous Libya. It seeks to counter human trafficking and smuggling by taking action against the criminal networks and disrupting the smugglers business model and has so far contributed to the apprehension of 109 suspected smugglers and traffickers and neutralised 415 assets. While operating on the high seas off the coast of Libya, Operation Sophia has also rescued more than 34,500 lives.

Last June, Operation Sophia was extended by two supporting tasks, namely capacity delivery to the Libyan Navy and Coastguard, and information exchange and contribution to the implementation of the UN arms embargo in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2292. This will help enhance the Libyan Navy and Coastguard's capability to disrupt smuggling and trafficking in Libya, perform search and rescue activities and improve overall security in Libyan territorial waters.

The training of the Coastguard is being implemented in three packages. Op Sophia has been able to formally complete an initial package of sea-based training for an initial group of 93 trainees, including 39 personnel for patrol boat crews. Op Sophia initiated a second package of shore-based training in late January 2017. To date, modules have taken place in Greece and Malta resulting in the training of an additional 41 personnel. An offer for subsequent modules was recently confirmed by Italy and Spain for respectively 255 and 20 personnel.

EUBAM Libya

EUBAM Libya was initially launched in May 2013 as an integrated border management mission in Libya. The mission was downsized in 2014 due to the deteriorating security situation and relocated to Tunis.

In February 2016, its mandate was amended to provide for a possible civilian capacity building and assistance crisis management mission in the field of security sector reform, focussing on police, criminal justice, border security and migration. This future CSDP mission would need to be requested by the Libyan authorities (GNA) and subsequently endorsed by the Council.

This planning mission is analysing the police and, criminal justice system and civilian security sector in Libya, including on border security and migration. The mission also retains a limited capacity to assist and engage with Libyan parties on civilian security issues, including on assisting in improving reception capacities of migrants in Libya and reducing pressure on Libya's Southern borders.

EULPC (EU Liaison and Planning Cell)

The United Nations Support Mission to Libya (UNSMIL) leads international efforts to support the peace and security process in Libya.

The main objective for the EULPC is to support UNSMIL in planning and operationalising the military element of the security track, currently focusing on planning efforts to establish a Presidential Guard or similar force charged with providing security in Tripoli.

The EULPC consists of 8 military planners under the lead of the Security Adviser to the Head of the EU Delegation to Libya.

* The UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) has been internationally recognised as the sole legitimate government of Libya, as endorsed in UN Security Council Resolutions 2259 and 2278.

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