



## Descriptive Note

### **International Conference on the Central African Republic**

#### ***From humanitarian relief to resilience building: the contribution of the EU Trust Fund “Bêkou”***

Brussels, 26 May 2015

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#### **The context of the Central African Republic**

Since March 2013, the Central African Republic is experiencing an unprecedented crisis. Most human development indicators, already fragile prior to the crisis have significantly worsened and state, economic and social structures had to be rebuilt from scratch. Despite some positive but fragile signs, the overall situation in the country remains extremely challenging as about 3 million people depend on international humanitarian assistance inside CAR and in neighbouring countries.

#### **The response of the European Union and the Trust Fund “Bêkou”**

The EU is a longstanding partner of the Central African Republic. Following the crisis, the European Union has made use of all the instruments at its disposal and will continue to do so in the future: humanitarian action, development cooperation (mainly through the European Development Fund) including budget support and stabilisation funding, alongside, until recently, a peacekeeping operation and an ongoing advisory military mission under the EU common security and defence policy. As part of its response to the CAR crisis, the EU has also set up in July 2014, jointly with France, Germany and the Netherlands, the first European Union Trust Fund: the EU Bêkou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic.

Building on a resilience-based approach, the EU Bêkou Trust Fund, currently endowed €74 million, aims to support projects that better link humanitarian and development actions in key areas such as basic services, social sectors and economic development, whilst maintaining as overall objective the fostering of reconciliation and coexistence of the country's populations, including those who have fled to neighbouring countries.

To date, the EU Bêkou Fund has been able to select, draft and launch concrete projects on the ground, aiming to improve the living conditions of nearly 1.4 million people in the Central African Republic for a total amount of €47 million.

#### **The International Conference on Central African Republic**

It is against this background that an International Conference on the Central African Republic will be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2015. It is organised jointly by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, Mrs Federica Mogherini, the Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Mr Neven Mimica, and the Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Mr Christos Stylianides.



The event will be attended by a great number of high level participants, including the President of the Transition in the Central African Republic, Mrs Catherine Samba-Panza, the French Secretary of State for Development and French-speaking world, Mrs Girardin, the German Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Mr Müller, and the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Mrs Ploumen, as well as representatives of international organisations such as the UN and NGOs partners.

This conference will focus on the link between short-term humanitarian challenges in the country (and region) and the challenges of medium-term resilience. The aim is to present the first results of the European Union Bêkou Trust Fund as well as its future goals. This will also provide an opportunity for donors to contribute to immediate short-term humanitarian needs and recovery of the Central African Republic.