

By email

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On the 10th of March 2014, the Political and Security Committee (PSC) of the European Union will discuss the future of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), EUPOL and EUSEC. The current mandates of these missions, tasked with assisting the Congolese authorities in police and army reform are ending in September 2014.

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAc) and its members have always supported European engagement for peace and security in the DRC, especially in the field of security sector reform (SSR). EU support to the development and strengthening of a comprehensive security sector reform focusing on the creation of a republican and professional army and police is of vital importance to guarantee peace, stability and human security for the population in the DRC.

Both EU missions, EUSEC and EUPOL, tasked with assistance to the reform of respectively the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and the national police (PNC), have certainly had an impact on the Congolese security sector, in the field of strategic advice, training and management of human resources and payments. We consider it therefore crucial to preserve these achievements and to agree on a proper exit strategy, in order to guarantee sustainability.

President Joseph Kabila described SSR as “the priority of priorities” in his speech to the nation in October 2013. As mentioned in the EU Strategic Framework for the Great Lakes Region, “there may now be a better environment for re-engagement” in the domain of security sector reform, characterized by the Congolese commitment in the Addis Abeba Framework Agreement and a reinforced role for Monusco (UN resolution 2098). Although a structural deficiency exists with regards to real political will for a deepened and structural reform of the security sector, scaling back EU support to the DRC at this particular moment would not be a good signal of the importance attached by the EU to SSR and of overall EU engagement for the Great Lakes region, as laid down in the EU Strategic Framework.

We welcome the commitment of EU Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs to include SSR in the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) for the DRC. Using EU development funds for SSR certainly has an added value, scaling up the coherence between the different instruments of EU external action and the financial leverage. We are however worried about the possible negative effects of completely transferring EU SSR activities to the EU delegation, due to ODA-limits, procedural obstacles to include policing and military elements in the EU delegation and different working methods.

Eurac and his members therefore ask the EEAS and the representatives of the EU member states to:

- Create a **transition mechanism for both EUPOL and EUSEC**, in order to gradually phase-out CSDP engagement in the DRC and to transfer the activities of the missions to EU development instruments, member states and other actors, such as Monusco.

- Agree on a **memorandum of understanding with the concerned international stakeholders** in the field of SSR on the transfer of the tasks that are currently implemented by EUPOL and EUSEC. While the work of the missions on human resources management and payments can be taken over by the EU Delegation, bilateral donors (including EU member states) and Monusco can play a role in the mission's activities on strategic advice and training.
- Consider a new EU mechanism that allows the **integration of a team of military/police counselors under the responsibility of the EU delegation** to support, monitor and counsel the competent Congolese authorities with regards to SSR. This could allow the follow-up of the achievements of the CSDP-missions and could fill gaps in the memorandum of understanding with international stakeholders.
- Start a **dialogue with the Congolese authorities** in order to strengthen their political involvement and ownership of the achievements of the EU Missions. Both the dialogue with international and national stakeholders should be a condition for the end of CSDP engagement.
- Adopt a EU common position asking the Congolese authorities to scale up their commitment to a deepened security sector reform and asking Monusco to play, in accordance with its mandate, a **leading role in the coordination of international efforts** and in the political dialogue with the Congolese authorities.
- **Link the new EDF funds for SSR to commitments of the Congolese authorities**, taking into account the fundamental political character of SSR and the weak political will manifested by the Congolese authorities. These commitments should be followed up by the EU delegation in a reinforced political dialogue with the competent authorities, using benchmarks and conditionality if needed.
- Allocate sufficient **financial and human resources to the strengthening of democratic oversight** of the security sector by national parliament, civil society and media actors and to the reinforcement of internal and external accountability mechanisms for human rights violations, in order to scale up the fight against impunity within the security sector.

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is the European Network for Central Africa. EurAc counts 38 member organizations in 12 European countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK) working for development and humanitarian aid in the Great Lakes region.