

Outcome Statement of the Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Sahel Coordination Mechanism 29 November 2013, Dakar

1. The 1st meeting of the Steering Committee for the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel took place in Dakar on 29 November 2013. The meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA), and attended by the conveners of the three Regional Working Groups, regional directors of UN programmes and funds and RCs from Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali, as well as The Gambia. The Committee provides overall guidance to UN entities' coordinated efforts and support to the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel.
2. The Meeting took note of the successful joint UN, AU, WB, AfDB and EU visit to the Sahel and the outcome of the ministerial meeting held in Bamako on its margins on 5 November. The meeting also took note of the establishment in Bamako of a regional coordination mechanism and the creation of a technical Secretariat co-chaired by the UN and AU to support the mechanism.
3. The Meeting noted efforts deployed towards the development and consolidation of the Matrix for the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy to capture on-going and planned interventions of the UN system in the Sahel and identify gaps and funding requirements. The mapping of interventions of regional agencies was practically completed for all three goals (governance, security and resilience). At the national level, four countries have sent their matrix contributions (Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Senegal) to date.
4. On the coordination of regional and national level activities, it was decided that reporting on national programs will focus only on the 5 core countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger), while other countries may be included in regional programs on a case-by-case basis, depending of the issues.
5. The meeting noted the unique opportunity and advantage that MINUSMA provides Mali, particularly in efforts to address security related issues. The meeting took note of the challenges faced by the RCs in inventorying national level activities in the matrix, and emphasized that national interventions are based on UNDAFs, taking into account country-specific realities. The need to harmonize national and regional level

activities was also stressed, while ensuring that this would not lead to extra reporting requirements for Country Offices.

6. The Meeting reviewed the activities of the Regional Working Groups for Goal 1 (Governance), Goal 2 (Security) and Goal 3 (Resilience), and noted the submission of the inventory of activities to be implemented by the UN at a regional level. The Meeting endorsed regional priority areas of focus and new regional initiatives, while noting that final validation is required from the Sahel countries. The new regional initiatives and priority areas of focus are: elections and access to justice (Governance RWG); border management, counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism and radicalization (Security RWG); The Resilience RWG is still to finalize its new initiatives and is reviewing its substantial body of ongoing initiatives. Other areas are under consideration and will be communicated. The Steering Committee requested the three working groups to ensure that activities have clear areas of intervention and indicators of results. The Committee noted the request to associate additional actors to the working groups, and indicated that this should be done on specific projects where necessary, but that they should not be fully integrated into all activities of the Regional Working Groups.

7. The meeting noted the convergence of the strategies of the EU, AU, and ECOWAS and the UN Integrated Strategy, and acknowledged the critical role that regional institutions will have in the implementation of the Integrated Strategy. In this regard, the meeting welcomed plans by the SRSR for West Africa and Head of UNOWA to organize a meeting with relevant senior officials from the Sahel countries with the participation of the AU, ECOWAS, UEMOA and other partners including WB, AfDB and EU. The objective will be to review the proposed priorities and to discuss modalities of cooperation between the UN, concerned countries and participating institutions/organisations.

8. The meeting recognized the need to build strategic partnerships between UN entities involved in the implementation of the Strategy and the World Bank as well as other multilateral and bilateral institutions. The meeting encouraged the three RWGs to jointly develop a strategy on resource mobilization and funding arrangements. The meeting took note that the Strategy does not mention timelines, results or benchmarks and encouraged the three RWGs to develop further options for a Monitoring and Evaluation framework.

9. The meeting took note that the Office for the Special Envoy in Sahel (OSES) will be relocated to Dakar as of January 2014 to provide necessary support to the implementation of the Integrated Strategy for the Sahel. It was noted that there should be continuity of activities that had been initiated by the Office of the Special Envoy upon its relocation, particularly the partnership with the AfDB for the establishment of the Sahel

Action Fund. The meeting acknowledged the need for the Dakar-based Sahel task force to continue its coordination activities until full operationalization of the OSES in Dakar.

10. The meeting concluded with participants noting that 2014 would be a critical year in demonstrating the relevance of the Sahel Strategy to address ongoing instability and potential crisis in the sub-region.

Summary of decisions and action points:

- i. **Matrix:** Technical support team will be sent to Chad, Niger, Mauritania and Mali to assist in finalizing and standardizing inputs.
- ii. The meeting decided that reporting on national programs will focus only on the 5 core countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger), while other countries may be included in regional programs on a case-by-case basis.
- iii. **Regional Working Groups:** Upon validation by regional organizations, concept papers will be elaborated for regional initiatives and priority areas identified by the Regional Working Groups.
- iv. Full participation in the Regional Working Groups should be limited to UN entities, while partners should also be associated on a needs basis.
- v. **Partnership:** The Offices of the RCs in the 5 core countries will communicate to UNOWA the contacts of focal persons within the government of their respective countries for Resilience, Security, and Governance, as well as overall coordination.
- vi. Convene a meeting with relevant senior officials from the Sahel countries with the participation of the AU, ECOWAS, UEMOA and other regional partners including WB, AfDB and EU. The objective will be to review the proposed priorities and to discuss modalities of cooperation between the UN, concerned countries and participating institutions/organisations.
- vii. Resource Mobilisation/Monitoring and Evaluation: The three RWGs to jointly develop a strategy on resource mobilization and funding arrangements, as well as a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

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