



OFFICIAL REMARKS

Mr. Mohamed Abdi Ware, IGAD Deputy Executive Secretary

EU-IGAD Workshop to Identify IGAD AAP-2025 Priorities

IGAD Secretariat, Djibouti

Tuesday, 27 February 2024

H.E **Amb. Sylvie Tabesse**, EU Permanent Representative to IGAD in Djibouti

H.E **Ms Daniela Rofi**, Head of the Africa Sub-Saharan Division at INTPA

Mr. **Josephat Onyari**, Director of Administration and Finance

H.E **Amb. Moussa Ali Meigague**, Permanent Representative of IGAD to the EU in Brussels

Kristyan Spidaryk, Deputy-Head of EU Delegation

Dr. **Simona Schlede**, Head of the Cooperation

Participants both physical and joining virtually

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning,

It gives me great pleasure to warmly welcome you to IGAD Secretariat in Djibouti to take part in this very important meeting today. We're particularly honored to receive you, Ms. Daniela Rofi, as the Head of Africa Sub-Saharan Division of EU-INTPA with your delegation from all the way in Brussels, and we are truly grateful for taking the time off from your busy schedule to come and visit with us here in our HQs.

IGAD Secretariat particularly delights in hosting this important EU-IGAD meeting, that conveniently comes just after the signing of the Samoa agreement of EU-OACPS in Apia (Samoa) on 15th November 2023 where IGAD was ably represented by our Permanent Representative to the EU in Brussels. The Agreement which succeeded the Cotonou Agreement after more than 20th years marks a significant and progressive turning point in the strategic partnership between EU and Sub-Saharan Africa with all parties jointly affirming willingness to work together towards achieving the sustainable development goals. As IGAD, we clearly underscore that the geo-strategic importance of the Horn of Africa to Europe cannot be over-stated and conversely, the strategic significance of Europe to the Horn of Africa is abundantly clear.

Your Excellences, ladies and Gentlemen,

Today's meeting, which follows the 2nd IGAD-EU Senior officials meeting that was held last year in June in Brussels, reaffirms the strategic importance of IGAD's long-standing relationship with EU which is based on the principal of mutual respect and a purposeful, regular and structured dialogue that defines our shared priorities towards achieving the strategic objectives of our respective Organizations. The symbolic signing of the EU-Horizontal capacity building project today, which aims to strengthen IGAD's institutional capacity to effectively implement its mandate is a living testimony of this purposeful relationship and readiness to work together in addressing the key challenges facing the Horn of Africa. IGAD Secretariat also wishes to acknowledge with immense gratitude the allocation of investments under the AAPs 2021, 2022 and 2023 towards addressing regional agro-pastoralism, free movement of persons, delivering durable solutions to forced displacement and ensuring a peaceful and resilient borderland. This vote of confidence further cements IGAD's standing with EU and shall accelerate our determination to qualify in the long-delayed pillar assessment this year, for which we continue to count on the support of the EU as our reliable partner and friend.

The current the geopolitical context of the world has resulted to significant concerns that have impacted negatively on the socio-economic conditions of the globe, with the Horn of Africa being one of the hardest hit regions, which requires political, diplomatic and technical solutions for resolving them. More specifically, the IGAD region is faced with political instabilities such as the Sudan civil war which has been very difficult and challenging in terms of the destruction of lives, property and infrastructures. The Ethiopia and Somalia situation triggered by the MoU signed by Ethiopia and

Somaliland has seen a high escalation of tension between the two sisterly nations. The organization of elections in South Sudan as required by the revitalized peace agreement requires to be managed carefully. The Executive Secretary H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu is in close consultations with the Heads of State and Government of IGAD member states in an effort to find peaceful means to resolve the current situation.

Your Excellences, ladies and Gentlemen,

As we gather here today, the resolve to renew and further strengthen our EU-IGAD cooperation has never been more apparent. The critical situations unfolding in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East necessitate a concerted effort to address the challenges at hand. The deployment of the “**ASPIDES**” mission in the Red Sea stands as a testament to the high-level collaboration between IGAD and the EU, demonstrating our shared commitment to regional stability and security.

Today’s workshop provides us with another opportunity to discuss and listen to each other on our respective and inter-twined strategic priorities both in the Horn of Africa and Europe as reflected in the NDICI Sub-Saharan Africa Regional Programme 2021-2027 and the IGAD Strategy 2021-2025, as well as the current circumstances that compels us to focus our discussion on identifying the priorities of the IGAD region for possible consideration under the AAP2025 in order to respond to the succession of crises that materialized in both our continents.

Our emphasis on collaboration should be directed towards pivotal sectors, notably Peace and Security. The significance of Peace and Security in the IGAD region is paramount for various fundamental reasons, including regional stability, regional cooperation, conflict prevention, mediation, development facilitation, counterterrorism, migration, and refugee management. The establishment of peace and security creates an environment conducive to economic, social, and political development. Stable contexts enhance the likelihood of success for both domestic and foreign investments, thereby fostering economic growth and job creation.

Moreover, the urgent challenges presented by Climate Change, Food Security, and Regional Pastoralism require collaborative efforts. IGAD is ready to collaborate closely with the EU in these domains, leveraging our respective strengths to formulate durable and sustainable solutions. This commitment underscores our joint responsibility to

tackle the distinct challenges facing our region.

Your Excellences, ladies and Gentlemen,

In looking ahead, we must confront the operational challenges that hamper the smooth implementation of programmes under the NDICI. The recent mid-term review of NDICI provided us the opportunity to share our views on areas where the MIP could be strengthened to better respond to the evolving needs and dynamics of the SSA region. In ensuring the active participation of RECs in the identification of priority actions contained in the MIP as well as in the selection of implementing partners and co-implementors, IGAD calls upon EU to ensure a standard and coherent criteria in the allocation of funds between direct and indirect management methods. Currently, for resources allocated to IGAD under AAPs 2021, 2022 and 2023, IGAD has observed that the ratio between direct and indirect fund management ranged from as low as 4% to as high as 23% in favour of direct management by IGAD.

As is evident, I'm very keen on behalf of IGAD to take these conversations forward so that we can maximize on the limited resources available, and with the support and collaboration of EU, we can work together towards a future characterized by sustainable development, regional integration and peace. Together, we can forge a path that not only addresses immediate concerns but also lays the foundation for long-term stability and prosperity.

In conclusion, the EU-IGAD partnership is not merely a collaboration; it is a shared vision for a future where our regions thrive together. Let us leverage this meeting to chart a course that reflects our collective commitment to a brighter and more secure future for all.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to the fruitful discussions ahead.