



EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels/Tripoli 6 March 2013
A 116/13

EU-INTERPOL project to support border security in Libya

Senior EU and INTERPOL officials will today inaugurate the establishment of a real-time passport control capacity at Tripoli International Airport.

The EU and INTERPOL, in partnership with the Libyan authorities, are launching a key stage of a €2.2 million project funded by the EU's Instrument for Stability aimed at making tangible improvements to Libyan border security and helping security sector reform. For the first time, the Libyan border control authorities will have the possibility to directly refer to INTERPOL databases and access the INTERPOL network to detect stolen and lost passports, and help identify wanted persons including suspected terrorists and international criminals. INTERPOL's Stolen and Lost Travel Document database contains approximately 36 million documents shared by 166 countries worldwide and is called upon more than 50 million times each month by law enforcement authorities around the world.

High Representative Catherine Ashton said: "*This EU/INTERPOL programme is an excellent example of the kind of practical support the EU is offering to Libya. It responds in real time to real needs, it makes available world class expertise and brings tangible benefits to both sides.*"

The project includes three components:

- reinforcement of the Libyan INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB) and its network, covering, inter alia, central drug, border security and migration services and the main Libyan border crossing points, including all international airports, seaports and main land border crossing points with Tunisia and Egypt.
- reinforcement of the criminal analysis capacity of the Criminal Investigation Department within the Ministry of the Interior.
- a strategic study of the transnational organised crime and terrorist threats in Libya.

P R E S S

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Started in September last year, this project has received the full support of the Libyan government and paves the way for significant cooperation in the area of security sector reform and border security. In parallel the EU is actively working for the quick deployment of an EU Border Assistance Mission in the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), whose first members will meet the Libyan authorities during the second part of this month and gradually build from there. The mission is planned to be launched by June 2013.

EU-Libya cooperation in the area of security and crisis response should be seen in the context of a wider EU response to the security sector, which also includes the establishment of a crisis centre, the protection of the Libyan population through the clearance of unexploded ordnances - including de-mining activities - as well as a planned action for securing and managing weapon stockpiles. In addition to this, the EU started in January the implementation of a € 10 million programme to assist with police and justice reform.

More information on the preparations of the CSDP mission:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/135129.pdf
