



**EUROPEAN UNION
COUNCIL SECRETARIAT**

~FACTSHEET~¹

EU ENGAGEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

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The European Union has a longstanding commitment to Afghanistan and its government. It is a key donor, with Member States and the European Commission together committing around EUR 8 billion for the period 2002-2010. The EU, working with international partners, plays a major role in the stabilisation and reconstruction efforts. The EU has deployed a police mission (EUPOL Afghanistan) under the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). Detailed information about this mission is provided in a separate fact-sheet.

A leading donor to Afghanistan with a concrete political and operational presence

➤ EU assistance to Afghanistan

The EU (European Community and Member States combined) have committed some **EUR 8 billion** in aid to Afghanistan for the period 2002-2010. For 2007-2010, the EU, through the European Commission, has pledged about **EUR 700 million** for Afghanistan

➤ A political partnership

The EU's partnership with Afghanistan is highlighted in the joint political declaration signed on 16 November 2005 and is based on shared priorities such as the establishment of strong and accountable institutions, security and justice sector reform, counter-narcotics, development and reconstruction.

➤ A presence in Afghanistan

The EU has had a Special Representative (EUSR) in Afghanistan since December 2001 (Ettore Sequi since September 2008). The EUSR is in close contact with key stakeholders in the Afghan political process and with international partners and advises the EU on its Afghanistan policy and on the implementation of its priorities for action.

The European Commission has had an office in Kabul since May 2002, notably to implement aid delivery. The European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) is also present in Afghanistan. It opened an office in Kabul in January 2002.

¹ Contributions from the European Commission are gratefully acknowledged.

P R E S S

A key partner in the reconstruction and stabilisation effort

Working with international partners, the EU is making a major contribution to Afghanistan's reconstruction and stabilisation. In agreement with the Afghan government and the donor community, EU Member States and the European Commission play key co-ordination roles in crucial areas of assistance, including security-related areas.

➤ *Reconstruction aid*

The reconstruction programme managed by the European Commission is on track to meet the EC's pledge of EUR 700 million in reconstruction funding over the 2007-2010 period. It includes the key areas of **rural development, alternative livelihoods and food security** (roughly 30 per cent of the total amount committed); **governance, including police and justice** (in the order of 40 per cent of the total commitment); and **health** (roughly 10 per cent of the total amount committed). These activities are in addition to the activities for the period 2002-2006 which included the following areas: **rural development, alternative livelihoods and food security** (EUR 236 million); **economic infrastructure** (EUR 106 million) – including reconstruction of the Kabul to Jalalabad road; **public sector reform**, including capacity building within government institutions and budget support via trust funds (EUR 393 million); the **health sector** – extending provision of a basic healthcare package (EUR 94 million); **de-mining** (EUR 66 million); **human rights and civil society**, including support for the media and social protection for the most vulnerable (EUR 21 million); promotion of **regional cooperation**, including for refugees and specific support to help facilitate **refugee returns** (EUR 53 million).

➤ *Security*

Twenty-five EU Member States (including non-NATO members) are deploying troops to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Their **combined contribution to ISAF is approximately 27 000 troops**.

Separately, several Member States are also contributing to the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom coalition conducting counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in Afghanistan.

➤ *Police and the Rule of law:*

Since 2002, the Community and a number of EU Member States have been actively involved in the rule-of-law sector. The EUPOL Afghanistan mission supports the reform process towards a trusted police service working within the framework of the rule of law and respecting human rights. Its authorized strength is some 400 personnel, mainly police, law enforcement and justice experts deployed in Kabul, regional and provincial level. The mission monitors, mentors, advises and trains Afghan Police officers.

The European Community is the largest contributor to the Law and Order Trust Fund (LOTFA), which pays the running costs of the Afghan National Police. It has already paid over EUR 200 million. The rule of law is critical for the success of counter-narcotics and other efforts.

➤ Counter-narcotics

The EU has played an active role in supporting counter-narcotics efforts from the outset of the reconstruction process, not least because 90 per cent of the heroin in Western Europe originates in Afghanistan and also because the growth in corruption and crime associated with the burgeoning opium economy poses a grave threat to the success of the entire reconstruction and stabilisation process.

Member States are also actively involved in the field of rural development which is critical for the provision of sustainable alternative livelihoods for farmers involved in opium-poppy cultivation.

➤ Health

The EU has contributed significantly to improving access to basic primary health care (from 9% in 2002 to 80% in 2008) and to the sharp reduction of the under 5 mortality rate (a 25% reduction over 2002-2008). To date, it has channelled EUR 280 million into the health sector programme.

➤ Elections

The EU will commit funding of EUR 40 million for the preparation of the elections scheduled for 2009. It sent an Election Observation Mission for the elections in 2004 and 2006. Subject to security and other conditions being met, the European Union will again deploy an electoral observation mission for this year's elections.

An important provider of humanitarian aid

In addition to its leading role in the reconstruction effort, the EU is one of the major donors of development assistance and humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. From 2002 to 2008, it committed EUR 1.6 billion. Of this, EUR 1.2 billion has already been distributed. This commitment will continue into the future and funding is already assured up to 2013.

For more information go to:

EU Police Mission in Afghanistan: www.consilium.europa.eu/eupol-afghanistan

EU High Representative website: www.consilium.europa.eu/solana

EU-Asia Relations: [www.consilium.europa.eu/third countries/asia](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/third_countries/asia)

EU-Afghanistan website: www.ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/afghanistan

EU-Afghanistan humanitarian aid website: www.ec.europa.eu/echo/aid/asia/afghanistan