

EN
E-000613/2024
Answer given by Ms Urpilainen
on behalf of the European Commission
(29.7.2024)

The Commission works with Member States in a Team Europe approach to deepen comprehensive partnerships with partners based on mutual interests, of which migration is often one. Tailor-made partnership with Mauritania reflects shared goals, such as stability and security in the Sahel region, as well as developing green hydrogen and efficient connectivity.

The President of the Commission announced more than EUR 210 million of support¹ by the end of 2024 to reinforce the EU-Mauritania partnership under Global Gateway² and in the fields of migration and security. EU support to Mauritania varies from border management, fighting migrant smuggling, to doubling humanitarian assistance, supporting skills and jobs opportunities for youth, as well as supporting access to international protection, social services, and reinforcement of the reception capacities of the Mauritanian authorities.

The respect for fundamental values is central to EU's foreign policy. While cases of human rights violations are still reported and need to be addressed, notable efforts to protect human rights and to fight against smuggling and trafficking have recently been made, notably through new legislation and dedicated bodies and institutions. Mauritania is hosting more than 200 000 refugees, including those escaping severe systemic human rights violations. The Mauritanian authorities requested European support to boost their capacity to tackle human smuggling and trafficking, while fully respecting international standards for the protection of migrants, as part of the migration partnership between the EU and Mauritania.

The Commission is committed to further reinforcing Mauritania's capacities on border management, including through an enhanced cooperation between Mauritania and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) in full respect of Mauritania's sovereignty. Further to the President of the Commission's visit on 8 February 2024, the EU and Mauritania agreed on a Joint Declaration establishing a Migration Partnership³, which aims at enhancing cooperation between Mauritania and Frontex, based on needs identified by Mauritania in border management, notably in terms of equipment and training, and in full respect of its sovereignty. Mauritania does so, while continuing supporting human rights defenders and civil society organisations and contributing to fundamental rights training and monitoring.

Transparency and accountability requirements are applicable to all Commission decisions, financed under the general EU budget, along with the scrutiny right of the European Parliament stemming from the comitology.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_24_703

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/stronger-europe-world/global-gateway_en

³ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/eu-mauritania-joint-declaration_en