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DRAFT REPORT

on the implementation report on the EU Trust Funds and the Facility for
Refugees in Turkey
(2020/2045(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs
Committee on Development
Committee on Budgets

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(Joint committee procedure – Rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure)

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EXPLANATORY STATEMENT - SUMMARY OF FACTS AND FINDINGS

The report seeks to make a political evaluation of the EU Trust Funds (EUTFs) established since 2014 and extended until December 2021, as well as the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRT).

While being of a different political and legal nature - FRT being a coordination mechanism and not an extra-budgetary instrument; Member States' contributions to the FRT being not voluntary but based on their GNI contributions and entered in the Union budget as external assigned revenue - both EUTFs and FRT have been posing challenges with respect to the democratic accountability, the role of the European Parliament and also the integrity of the EU budget.

Parliament has repeatedly acknowledged the value-added of these extra-budgetary (EUTFs) and extraordinary (FRT) tools but has also repeatedly voiced its criticism about the way they were established, and prolonged, failing to secure its proper involvement. Parliament's control role over these tools has also been limited.

The rapporteurs believe that external assistance should be financed in full from the Union budget and be implemented in a coherent way following a streamlined set of rules, based on co-legislated instruments and in full respect of Parliament's legislative, budgetary and control prerogatives. They also believe that all the possibilities afforded by the NDICI-Global Europe and IPA III instruments must be used to the full.

Especially in the case of NDICI-Global Europe, they believe that the new main external instrument will result in increasing flexibility and responsiveness, allowing it to continue the activities of the existing trust funds and thereby safeguarding the unity of the Union budget.

To cope with possible greater needs, a clear preference is for the use of the current instruments, especially NDICI-Global Europe, when needed with an increased envelope through a revision of the current MFF and NDICI-Global Europe, or boosted by Member States' and third countries' contributions in the form of external assigned revenue.

In case a new Trust Fund would be still needed, the rapporteurs believe that it should be duly justified by either an outbreak of a major crisis, a sudden change in international relations requiring a major EU financial response, or the need to pool resources with third countries, which would not be feasible under the co-legislated instruments. In such case, unlike in the previous MFF 2014-2020, Parliament would need to be fully involved from the very start.

BÊKOU

The Bêkou Trust Fund for the Central African Republic was established by the EU and 3 Member States (France, Germany, the Netherlands) in July 2014 as the first ever Union Trust Fund in order to pool and manage support for the Central African Republic (CAR) in the aftermath of the crisis that engulfed the country in 2012-13 and subsequently. Its objective is to strengthen the resilience of the population and of the State in a very fragile context, notably by supporting programmes in health, water and sanitation, rural development and economic recovery, as well as reconciliation and social cohesion.

In addition to allocations from the European Development Fund (EDF) and EU budget (EUR 218.9 million), France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Switzerland contributed to the Fund, bringing it to a total of EUR 296.8 million in 2019. Bêkou ('hope' in local Sango language) aims to link relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and longer-term development interventions in a flexible and dynamic way.

Since 2014, the EU, by far the first partner of CAR, and its Member States and other contributors, devoted more than EUR 910 million in total for the basic services to the population (particularly education and health, including, since the outbreak of the epidemic, the fight against the COVID-19), the stability and the peace process.

MADAD

The European Union Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis (Madad) was set up in December 2014 to address longer-term resilience needs of Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons in neighbouring countries, as well as to support host communities and their administrations. It was established for the initial period of 5 years, with the initial funding of 1 billion. It was later extended in 2019 and 2020 by two more years until 14 December 2021, to ensure a seamless transition to EU response to the crisis under the current MFF 2021 – 2027.

The Fund has mobilised over EUR 2,2 billion from the EU budget, 21 Member States, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, with EUR 2 billion contracted (as of December 2020) in over 94 projects. The Trust Fund is meanwhile supporting more than 7,29 million beneficiaries. In 2015, the Fund was amended to cover also the Iraqi crisis. In geographical terms, the large majority of the funding has been allocated to multi-country actions targeting those countries that host the highest number of Syrian refugees: Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan. The budget is allocated as follows: 43% to Lebanon, 23% to Turkey and 24% to Jordan. Iraq-based actions receive 7%, while 2.1 % has been allocated to the Western Balkans (Serbia, North Macedonia). The Trust Fund could have also been asked to address needs and provide support in a post-conflict Syria, subject to a credible political transition firmly underway, in line with UNSC Resolution 2254/2015. However, these conditions have clearly not been met due to the continued conflict.

AFRICA

The European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa (Trust Fund for Africa) was set-up on 12 November 2015 to help address multi-dimensional challenges fostering instability in the Sahel and Lake Chad, the Horn of Africa and North of Africa regions. The Trust Fund for Africa covers 26 eligible countries across three regions: the Sahel and Lake Chad (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire); the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda); and the North of Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia).

The Trust Fund for Africa operates along four strategic axes: 1) Greater economic and employment opportunities through economic programmes aimed at creating employment opportunities; 2) Strengthening resilience of communities including providing basic services to local populations, refugees and displaced people in the area of food and nutrition, security, health, education and social protection; 3) Improved migration management including the

development of national and regional migration strategies, preventing irregular migration, fighting against trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, promoting effective voluntary return, and sustainable reintegration, international protection and asylum, legal migration and mobility; and 4) Improved governance and conflict prevention, addressing human rights abuses and enforcing the rule of law, including through capacity building in support of security and development. The Fund has mobilised approximately EUR 5 billion, of which approximately EUR 0.6 billion from EU Member States and other donors.

COLOMBIA

Colombia has been plagued for more than 50 years by internal armed conflict, which has claimed over 220,000 lives, most of them civilians, and forced the internal displacement of more than 5 million Colombians, one of the highest numbers of internally displaced persons in the world. A long history of political violence, high social and economic inequality, drug trafficking and other illegal activities and the lack of a strong state capable of providing services for its citizens, amongst others, have nurtured this conflict, which has affected in particular rural and remote areas, but has had a very negative effect on the economic and social development of Colombia as a whole.

On 24 August 2016, a peace agreement was reached between the government of Colombia and the main rebel group of the country, the ‘Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia’ (FARC). While a lot of progress has been achieved since, the situation in Colombia has become again more fragile recently, as the country is dealing with multiple crises at the same time: the fallout of the Venezuelan refugee crisis (more than 1.8 million Venezuela’s refugees now live in Colombia); the peace process is suffering setbacks and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The European Trust Fund (TF) for Peace in Colombia was set up in December 2016 to support the implementation of the peace agreement between the Colombian government and FARC. The Fund has mobilised over EUR 128 million from the EU budget, 20 Member States, Chile and the United Kingdom.

FRT

In October and November 2015 the EU committed to provide an initial EUR 3 billion of additional resources to support Syrians under temporary protection and host communities in Turkey. Subsequently, the Commission adopted, at the end of November 2015, a decision setting up the Facility for Refugees in Turkey as the EU response to the call to support refugees in Turkey fleeing conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan or originating from other countries. Established on 1 January 2016, the Facility had initially a budget of EUR 3 billion. Of this amount, EUR 1 billion was financed from the EU budget and EUR 2 billion from the EU Member States to avoid further strain on EU’s budget. Member States’ contributions are calculated through a distribution formula based on their gross national income. The Facility coordinates financing from different EU existing external financial instruments (IPA, ENI, DCI). The funding covers humanitarian and non-humanitarian activities, with a financial allocation of EUR 1.4 billion and EUR 1.6 billion respectively.

In the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016, the European Council and Turkey confirmed their commitment to implementing the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan (JAP) to assist Turkey in the management of the migration crisis. On this occasion, it was also agreed that an additional

EUR 3 billion will be added to the Facility's budget before the end of 2018. This time with EUR 2 billion from the EU budget and EUR 1 billion from the Member States. The projects funded under the two tranches run until mid-2021 and mid-2025 latest, respectively and the EU and its Member States are by far the largest donors addressing the consequences of the Syrian crisis. It should be noted that the Madad TF and FRT overlap to a certain extent.

MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

on the implementation report on the EU Trust Funds and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey (2020/2045(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 210, 214 and 314 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020¹,
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012²,
- having regard to the general budgets of the European Union for the financial years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021,
- having regard to the Action Plan of the Valletta Summit of November 2015,
- having regard to the EU-Turkey statement of 18 March 2016,
- having regard to the original constitutive agreements of the Bêkou EU Trust Fund (EUTF), the Madad EUTF, the Africa EUTF and the Colombia EUTF, and their revised constitutive agreements of December 2020,
- having regard to Commission Decision C(2015)9500 of 24 November 2015 on the coordination of the actions of the Union and of the Member States through a coordination mechanism – the Refugee Facility for Turkey³, as amended by Commission Decisions C(2016)855 of 10 February 2016⁴, C(2017)2293 of 18 April 2017⁵, C(2018)1500 of 14 March 2018⁶, and C(2018)4959 of 24 July 2018⁷,
- having regard to the Commission's Fourth Annual Report on the Facility for Refugees in Turkey of 30 April 2020 (COM(2020)0162), as well as to its previous reports,

¹ OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, p. 884.

² OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1.

³ OJ C 407, 8.12.2015, p. 8.

⁴ OJ C 60, 16.2.2016, p. 3.

⁵ OJ C 122, 19.4.2017, p. 4.

⁶ OJ C 106, 21.3.2018, p. 4.

⁷ OJ C 278, 8.8.2018, p. 3.

- having regard to the 7th Results Report on the Madad EUTF⁸,
- having regard to the European Court of Auditors special reports on ‘The Bêkou EU trust fund for the Central African Republic: a hopeful beginning despite some shortcomings’ (No 11/2017); ‘The Facility for Refugees in Turkey: helpful support, but improvements needed to deliver more value for money’ (No 27/2018); and the ‘European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa: Flexible but lacking focus’ (No 32/2018),
- having regard to the Commission’s decisions to extend the EUTFs until December 2021 in line with Article 234 of the Financial Regulation, and to Parliament’s positions on the draft extension decisions,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 April 2018 on the implementation of the EU external financing instruments: mid-term review 2017 and the future post-2020 architecture⁹,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 April 2018 on the implementation of the Development Cooperation Instrument, the Humanitarian Aid Instrument and the European Development Fund¹⁰,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 September 2016 on the EU Trust Fund for Africa: the implications for development and humanitarian aid¹¹,
- having regard to its resolutions of 20 January 2021 on the implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy – annual report 2020¹², of 18 May 2017 on the EU strategy on Syria¹³, of 6 October 2016 on Syria¹⁴, of 24 November 2016 on the situation in Syria¹⁵, of 6 July 2016 on the Council position on Draft amending budget No 2/2016 of the European Union for the financial year 2016: Entering the surplus of the financial year 2015¹⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 March 2019 on the 2018 Commission Report on Turkey¹⁷, of 12 December 2018 on the Council position on the second draft general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2019¹⁸, of 4 July 2018 on the Council position on Draft amending budget No 3/2018 of the European Union for the financial year 2018, Section III – Commission: Extension of the Facility for refugees in Turkey¹⁹,
- having regard to the Commission’s decisions in 2019 and 2020 to extend the Madad TF until 14 December 2021 in line with Article 234 of the Financial Regulation,

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/sites/default/files/7th_results_reporting_eutf_syria_sept2020.pdf

⁹ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 76.

¹⁰ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 33.

¹¹ OJ C 204, 13.6.2018, p. 68.

¹² Texts adopted, P9_TA(2021)0012.

¹³ OJ C 307, 30.8.2018, p. 117.

¹⁴ OJ C 215, 19.6.2018, p. 44.

¹⁵ OJ C 224, 27.6.2018, p. 88.

¹⁶ OJ C 101, 16.3.2018, p. 179.

¹⁷ OJ C 23, 21.1.2021, p. 58.

¹⁸ OJ C 388, 13.11.2020, p. 326.

¹⁹ OJ C 118, 8.4.2020, p. 264.

- having regard to the commitments to addressing the Syrian crisis and supporting its people, made by the EU and its Member States at the London and Brussels conferences held between 2016 and 2021,
 - having regard to Commission’s mid-term evaluation 2018 and regular results reporting on the Madad EUTF,
 - having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 of 20 June 1996 concerning humanitarian aid²⁰, the proposal of 14 June 2018 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe) 2021-2027 (COM(2018)0460), and the proposal of 14 June 2018 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA III) 2021–2027 (COM(2018)0465),
 - having regard to Rule 54 of its Rules of Procedure, as well as Article 1(1)(e) of, and Annex 3 to, the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 12 December 2002 on the procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports,
 - having regard to the joint deliberations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development and the Committee on Budgets under Rule 58 of the Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinions of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and of the Committee on Budgetary Control,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development and the Committee on Budgets (A9-0000/2021),
- A. whereas four EUTFs have been established since 2014 to respond to the need for flexible and quick instruments to provide a coherent and reinforced aid response to crises: the Békou EUTF, established on 15 July 2014, with the objective of supporting all aspects of the Central African Republic’s exit from crisis and its reconstruction efforts; the Madad EUTF, a European Union Regional Trust Fund in response to the Syrian crisis, established on 15 December 2014; the Africa EUTF, a European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, established on 12 November 2015; and the Colombia EUTF, established on 12 December 2016 to support the implementation of the peace agreement in the early recovery and stabilisation post-conflict;
- B. whereas the revision of the Financial Regulation in 2018 introduced provisions strengthening Parliament’s scrutiny powers when new EUTFs are established or the current ones are extended;
- C. whereas Parliament issued positive opinions in 2020 on the requests to extend the EUTFs until the end of 2021;
- D. whereas the establishment of both the EUTFs and the Facility for refugees in Turkey (FRT) have been justified by the need for a flexible and swift reaction not possible

²⁰ OJ L 163, 2.7.1996, p. 1.

under the classical institutional framework; whereas the extra-budgetary instruments such as the EUTFs, as well as extraordinary tools such as the FRT, pose challenges with respect to democratic accountability, including the role of the European Parliament and also the integrity of the EU budget;

- E. whereas Parliament, while acknowledging their value-added, has repeatedly voiced the need for enhanced parliamentary scrutiny of the EUTFs and the FRT;

I. General considerations

Budgetary aspects

1. Notes that, by 31 December 2020, the total pledges to all of the EUTFs amounted to EUR 7 691 million, with the EU budget contribution amounting to EUR 3 170 million, of which EUR 3 534 million originated from the European Development Fund (EDF), and with EUR 988 million originating from Member States and other donors' pledges; notes further that, by the same date, EUR 7 141 million had been contracted and EUR 4 869 million had been paid by the EUTFs; also notes that, by 31 December 2020, the implementation rate of commitment appropriations for all the EUTFs was 98 % (the EUTF Madad had committed over 95 %, the EUTF Bêkou 99 %, the EUTF Africa 99 % and the EUTF Colombia 94 % of the commitment appropriations available), while the overall implementation rate of payment appropriations was 63 % (with the EUTF Africa at 62 %, the EUTF Bêkou at 66 %, the EUTF Colombia at 52 % and the EUTF Madad at 64 %);
2. Recalls that the Turkey Facility is made up of two tranches of EUR 3 billion each; regrets the fact that, unlike in the first tranche 2016-2017, where the EU budget contributed EUR 1 billion and Member States EUR 2 billion, in the second tranche 2018-2019 the ratio of contributions was reversed, to the detriment of existing Union projects;

Parliament's involvement in the decision-making and results-monitoring frameworks and in reporting and/or evaluation

3. Notes that Committee Chairs and relevant Members have been granted observer status in meetings of the Strategic Boards of the Trust Funds and in the FRT Steering Committee; notes further that this status has not been formally reflected in the Constitutive Agreements of the Trust Funds;
4. Continues to express concerns over the limited role of Parliament in the supervision and scrutiny of the Union contributions to the EUTFs; recalls Parliament's request to monitor the activities of the Operational Committee, and calls on the Commission to provide in good time detailed information on the decisions taken in that Committee and to ensure that Parliament is represented at its meetings;
5. Welcomes the Commission's efforts to closely monitor and evaluate interventions, and to generate knowledge about the activities of the EUTFs and of the FRT, through a dedicated set of reports; hails these efforts to achieve greater transparency by publishing relevant data on the web pages of the EUTFs and the FRT;
6. Regrets the late evaluations of some of the Trust Funds, which did not allow Parliament

to arrive at full and precise conclusions in a timely manner in the case of the Trust Fund for Africa;

II. Assessment per EU Trust Fund / FRT

Bêkou

7. Considers that the Bêkou Trust Fund has proven its value as an important tool to address the post-conflict situation in the Central African Republic (CAR); notes that the EUTF made a major contribution to the nexus approach of development and humanitarian needs in the CAR;
8. Notes the conclusions by the European Court of Auditors, published in its 2017 special report, that the Bêkou Trust Fund has had positive achievements overall and has attracted aid, but few additional donors, and that most of its projects have delivered their expected outputs and provided enhanced visibility to the EU;
9. Notes that the emerging security challenges in the CAR will require well-targeted, flexible EU support under the NDICI-Global Europe to enhance peace and security, democratisation and strengthening democratic institutions in the CAR;

Madad

10. Considers that the Madad EUTF has proven its added value in response to the crisis and for the EU in terms of higher external visibility and clout, increased control, coordination and leverage of funds from various sources, as compared to national level or other international channels; notes that its spending was aligned with the legal bases or the Union instruments used;
11. Welcomes the rapid and flexible reaction of the Trust Fund in support of partner countries and communities during the coronavirus outbreak, showing active engagement in the realignment and refocusing of activities, not only in the domain of health, but also in other areas, such as livelihoods, protection, education or social cohesion in Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Jordan;
12. Emphasises the importance of continuous support for refugees, internally displaced persons and for vulnerable host communities, both inside Syria and in the wider region, affected by the continued conflict, by means of a mix of longer-term, predictable and rapidly deployable funding under instruments established for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF) and potential contributions from the Member States as external assigned revenue, taking into account all financial instruments provided under the Financial Regulation;

Africa

13. Considers that the Trust Fund for Africa represents an important tool to provide a swift, flexible and targeted response to emerging challenges and underlines that common, global challenges, such as migration and forced displacement, the impact of climate change and economic crises in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, make this flexibility and rapidity more necessary than ever;

14. Welcomes the fact that the EUTF for Africa has contributed to the triple humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach, which was not possible with the EU financial instruments under the previous MFF;
15. Welcomes the generally strong degree of local ownership, the involvement of local authorities and civil society organisations (CSOs) in projects supported by the EUTF for Africa;
16. Notes that the EUTF for Africa made a major contribution to strengthening resilience and implementing the humanitarian-development nexus in fragile contexts; notes further that it also fostered cooperation between different stakeholders, and allowed contributions from non-EU donors, which in the post-Brexit context have acquired particular importance, and increased the visibility of the issue of migration and forced displacement and the EU's response to it;

Colombia

17. Considers that the Trust Fund for Colombia has proven its value and represents, under the current circumstances, an important tool to support the implementation of the peace agreement between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC); points out that the extension of the Colombia EUTF has further reaffirmed the EU's commitment and provided much-needed support to the Colombian peace process;
18. Congratulates Colombia on its efforts, despite its own challenges with the implementation of the peace agreement, to provide support for over 1.7 million Venezuelan migrants who have fled to Colombia, in particular by granting them a 10-year temporary protection status;
19. Welcomes the involvement of the Republic of Chile as a donor in the Trust Fund; notes that the participation of regional partners is of high value added, and has increased both local recognition and the legitimation of the EU's engagement and cooperation;

Facility for Refugees in Turkey

20. Considers that the EU FRT has proven its value as an innovative pooling tool and important coordinating mechanism for assisting Turkey in swiftly responding to the immediate humanitarian and development needs of refugees and their host communities;
21. Reiterates its deep regret that Parliament was not formally consulted or asked to give its approval to the creation or extension of this Facility and was only involved as one arm of the budgetary authority, thereby undermining the democratic accountability of the FRT;
22. Reiterates its request that Turkey respect the principle of non-refoulement, in particular on the Syrian border, and that it not use the flows of refugees against the EU;

III. Future outlook and recommendations

23. Underlines the necessity of better addressing the funding needs in situations of

protracted crisis and with a view to the coordination and transition between humanitarian relief, reconstruction and development in a flexible and interconnected manner;

24. Stresses the need to take on board the lessons learned in the establishment, management and implementation of the Trust Funds and the FRT in order to apply them to the new generation of external financial instruments;
25. Reiterates Parliament's long-standing insistence that external assistance be financed in full from the Union budget and be implemented in a coherent way, following a streamlined set of rules, based on co-legislated instruments and in full respect of Parliament's legislative, budgetary and monitoring prerogatives, and of the principles of accountability, transparency, effectiveness and sound budgetary management;
26. Expects the Commission to fully make use of the possibilities afforded by the programme-based approach under the geographic pillar of the NDICI-Global Europe and IPA III, complemented by global thematic programming, rapid response funding and the large unprogrammed reserve under the NDICI-Global Europe;
27. Is confident that the NDICI-Global Europe will allow for increased flexibility and responsiveness, allowing it to continue the activities of the existing Trust Funds and thereby safeguard the unity of the Union budget;
28. In the event of greater needs in the MFF 2021-2027, advocates increasing the NDICI-Global Europe envelope through a revision of the MFF and the NDICI-Global Europe regulations, or a strengthening of the relevant NDICI-Global Europe budget lines with contributions in the form of external assigned revenue; stresses that, should a need for a duly justified new Trust Fund nevertheless arise, it insists that Parliament must be fully involved from the very outset;
29. Calls on the Commission to prioritise the nexus approach in the implementation of the NDICI-Global Europe, and calls for the cooperation between EU humanitarian and development actors, notably in post-crisis settings and in protracted crises, to be increased in order to better adapt to local needs and deliver more efficient results;
30. Notes that the close-to-ground decision-making procedure and adaptation to the local realities of the EUTFs and the FRT is of high added value, and needs to be mainstreamed in the future programming exercises linked to budgetary instruments for EU external policy;
31. Acknowledges that cooperation with representatives of local communities, including local religious leaders, in settings affected by conflict is crucial to foster reconciliation, dialogue and peace;
32. Calls on the Commission to adapt the programming methods to the local realities and emerging local challenges and to support local ownership in the implementation of the new EU development instruments; calls further on the Commission to carry out a needs assessment and adapt the EU's response to local needs;

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33. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and to the Council.