



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 3 May 2022
(OR. en)

8539/22

LIMITE

CSDP/PSDC 236
CFSP/PESC 548
COPS 175
RELEX 538
POLMIL 96
COAFR 97
EPF AM 34

COVER NOTE

From: European External Action Service
To: Delegations

Subject: Concept Note for an assistance measure under the European Peace Facility to support the deployment of the Rwanda Defence Force in Mozambique

DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (13.04.2023)

Delegations will find attached document EEAS(2022) 500.

Encl.: EEAS(2022) 500

EEAS(2022) 500
LIMITE/LIMITED

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



ISP.5

Working document of the European External Action Service

of 28/04/2022

EEAS Reference	EEAS(2022) 500
Classification	Limited
To	PSC
Title / Subject	Concept Note for an assistance measure under the European Peace Facility to support the deployment of the Rwanda Defence Force in Mozambique
Ref. prev. doc.	n.a.

Concept Note for an Assistance Measure under the European Peace Facility to support the deployment of the Rwanda Defence Force in Mozambique

1. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the assistance measure is to support the continued deployment of units of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) in Mozambique's northern province of Cabo Delgado in order to extend, protect and sustain the territorial and tactical gains they have made so far. This should ensure the security and the protection of the civilian population in Mozambique's northern provinces and facilitate the return of law enforcement agencies and of other accountable state structures that deliver services for the benefit of the population.

By contributing to reducing insecurity, the measure could pave the way for the safe, dignified and sustainable voluntary return of internally displaced persons and the improvement of living conditions in the region. By containing the spread of the insurgency, creating stability and generating the conditions for socio-economic development, it will also contribute to protecting EU political, security and economic interests.

The scope of the proposed assistance measure is in line with Article 1(2)(b)(ii) of the Council Decision establishing a European Peace Facility¹, as it supports military aspects of a peace support operation led by a third State.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Crisis background

The current crisis in northern Mozambique, and in particular Cabo Delgado, is multidimensional, with a severe risk of spill over to other provinces, as evidenced by the infiltration of insurgents and a recent attack in the province of Niassa, as well as to neighbouring countries, primarily Tanzania and Malawi. Insurgency attacks are executed by violent extremists known locally as "Al Shabaab" or "Al Sabaab", calling themselves "Ahl al-Sunnah wa al Jamma'ah". The Islamic State's "Central Africa Province" claims ties to the Cabo Delgado insurgency, but the nature and depth of such ties remain unclear.

Since the beginning of the insurgency in 2017, the situation in Cabo Delgado has deteriorated progressively and significantly. Attacks and the resulting displacement of local populations increased during 2020 and have continued in 2021 and early 2022, resulting in around 800,000 internally displaced persons in a region where 1,320,000 million people are severely food insecure and 1,500,000 million are in urgent need of life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian assistance.

¹ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/509 of 22 March 2021 establishing a European Peace Facility, and repealing Decision (CFSP) 2015/528 (OJ L 102/18, 24.3.2021).

Civilians in several districts of Cabo Delgado have been subjected to serious breaches of human rights, including sexual violence and forced recruitment by insurgents. It is estimated that at least 3,700 people have been killed in the conflict so far.²

The dynamics of the conflict have changed following the deployment of troops from Rwanda and from countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in July 2021. Progress has been made and the insurgents have lost the initiative in large parts of Cabo Delgado. However, the situation remains very volatile; smaller-scale violent attacks have continued in various districts and started in the neighbouring Niassa province in December 2021. The continued insecurity hampers the delivery of timely humanitarian assistance and delays the stabilisation and reconstruction efforts of the Mozambican authorities. The crisis demands a sustained response by the Mozambican authorities and their international partners, based on a locally-owned integrated approach encompassing humanitarian, development, peacebuilding and security actions.

2.2 Strands of crisis response

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On 12 July 2021, the Council adopted a Decision to establish EUTM Mozambique.³ The Mission was launched on 15 October 2021 and initial operational capability and training commenced in November 2021. The strategic objective of EUTM Mozambique is to support the capacity building of the Mozambican armed forces with the aim to help ensure a permanent security presence in the affected region and to develop the necessary and sustainable capacities to restore safety and security in Cabo Delgado. During the Mission's two-year mandate, eleven units of the Mozambican Army Commando Forces and Navy Fusiliers will undergo training and subsequently form a Quick Reaction Force (QRF) to be deployed to Cabo Delgado. **DELETED**

An urgent measure approved on 30 July 2021 and an Assistance Measure adopted on 19 November 2021⁴ under the European Peace Facility (EPF) serve to provide equipment not designed to deliver lethal force and supplies to the first five Mozambican companies trained by EUTM Mozambique.

² International Crisis Group, *Winning Peace in Mozambique's Embattled North*, briefing 178/Africa, 10 February 2022.

³ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1143 of 12 July 2021 on a European Union Military Training Mission in Mozambique (EUTM Mozambique) (OJ L 247, 13.7.2021).

⁴ Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2032 of 19 November 2021 on an assistance measure under the European Peace Facility to support military units trained by the EU Training Mission in Mozambique (OJ L 415/25, 22.11.2021).

This includes (1) individual equipment for soldiers within these companies, (2) assets at company level to ensure the companies' ability to deploy and hold ground in the area of operations, and (3) a field hospital capability. An amendment to the Assistance Measure adding funds to ensure that all eleven Mozambican companies to be trained by EUTM can receive the required support to their training and subsequent deployment was adopted on 21 April 2022.

In July 2021, SADC deployed about 1000 personnel under the SADC Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), with the Macomia, Quissanga, Miudumbe, Mueda and Nangade districts as the core area of operations. The mandate of SAMIM includes supporting the Republic of Mozambique to combat terrorism and acts of violent extremism in Cabo Delgado, by neutralising the terrorist threat and restoring security in order to create a secure environment; strengthening and maintaining peace and security; restoring law and order in affected areas; and supporting the Republic of Mozambique, in collaboration with humanitarian agencies, to continue providing humanitarian relief to the population affected by terrorist activities, including internally displaced persons. Since its deployment, SAMIM has registered a number of milestones, including recapturing villages, dislodging insurgents from their bases, and seizing weapons and warfare material, which has contributed to the creation of a relatively secure environment for the safer passage of humanitarian support.

Under the Early Response Mechanism of the African Peace Facility, the European Commission approved on 9 February 2022 funding for the SADC peacebuilding support to the Republic of Mozambique for the period from 1 March to 15 July 2022. This support, within the mandate of SAMIM in Cabo Delgado, focuses on capacity building of police and correctional services officers training workshops, women and youth empowerment skills training programmes, and dialogue with civic leaders tailored towards good governance and observance of the rule of law.

In July 2021, Rwanda, acting under a bilateral agreement with Mozambique, deployed troops in Cabo Delgado. It did so after receiving a formal confirmation that SADC agreed. The objective of the RDF deployment is to assist the Government of Mozambique to restore State authority, law and order, and to facilitate return to normalcy in the province. **DELETED**

The 2000-strong Rwandan contingent of 10 companies, working jointly with the Mozambican armed forces, is based in the Mocimboa da Praia and Palma districts, which are the areas closest to and around the liquefied natural gas site at the Afungi peninsula. In joint operations, the Mozambican and the Rwandan armed forces have recorded significant territorial gains, including the liberation of Mocimboa da Praia in August 2021. **DELETED**

On 31 January 2022, the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) “welcome[d] the contribution of forces by the Republic of Rwanda to complement the efforts of the Government of Mozambique, in countering terrorism and stabilising the affected region, based on the existing bilateral agreement between the two Member States, in the spirit of African solutions to African

problems; and, to this effect, call[ed] on AU and partners to continue to support the efforts of Rwanda in coordination with the SAMIM in Mozambique”.⁵

The RDF and SAMIM troops not only work with the Mozambican armed forces, but also closely with one another. Both forces have set up a Joint Operational Centre as well as Joint Tactical Headquarters. They plan and conduct joint operations, and allow the other to pursue insurgents in their respective areas of operations when needed. The ongoing efforts of SADC and Rwanda, as well as the (proposed) EU support to those efforts are bridging the gap until the Mozambican armed forces are adequately trained and equipped, also with EU support, and fully deployed in Cabo Delgado. This will be a key parameter for the exit strategy of SAMIM and RDF troops.

Looking at the EU Integrated Approach to the Cabo Delgado crisis and the triple nexus, the proposed assistance measure should also be considered as part of the wider set of actions covering peacebuilding, development and humanitarian aspects. The EU is, for example, currently funding six projects to support conflict prevention and resolution, the resilience of communities, community policing, inter-faith dialogue, social cohesion as well as children and young people affected by the conflict. The EU is also preparing an action supporting the capacities of the judiciary to address the threat of terrorism and violent extremism and to bring extremists to justice, based on the rule of law and in a human rights-compliant manner. Most of the eleven EU Member States active in Mozambique also provide humanitarian aid and development cooperation in Cabo Delgado.

3. BENEFICIARY REQUEST

In a letter dated 6 December 2021, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda requested the EU to support the deployment of the RDF in the Cabo Delgado province of Mozambique.

This request underlines that Rwanda deployed troops to Cabo Delgado at the request of the Government of Mozambique and with a view to supporting the protection of civilians against terrorism. It further states that the requested EU support would contribute to the effort of extending, protecting and sustaining the gains made so far by the RDF.

4. PROPOSED SUPPORT

The proposed assistance measure will provide financial support to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of the Republic of Rwanda (MINECOFIN). This will allow the Republic of Rwanda to sustain the current deployment of the RDF in Mozambique by covering relevant types of expenditure linked to it, with the exception of military equipment or platforms designed to deliver lethal force as well as of troop salaries and allowances.

The cost of the RDF deployment in Mozambique is currently borne in totality by the Rwandan budget. The proposed assistance measure would contribute with a reference amount of EUR 20 million over an implementation period of one year. **DELETED**

⁵ AU PSC, 1062nd meeting, Communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.2/1062 (2022), 31 January 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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DELETED The following table summarizes the indicative breakdown of the proposed EPF contribution for a one-year implementation period:

Budget heading	Indicative breakdown of the EPF contribution
Collective equipment (deployable tents, vehicles, generators, etc.)	9,000,000
Personnel equipment	2,000,000
Air transportation (troops rotation and resupply)	9,000,000
Total	20,000,000

The proposed EPF contribution would therefore be dedicated to support the acquisition of collective and personnel equipment (not designed to deliver lethal force), as well as to cover the costs related to the strategic airlift needed to sustain the deployment.

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By keeping the focus on the overall RDF deployment and on the indicative budget breakdown presented above, it will also give the Rwandan authorities the possibility to best use the financial support within this clear framework under the proposed assistance measure. It is tailored to respond to constantly evolving needs on the ground and ultimately to maximise the operational impact of the EU support.

This approach will also be the most efficient and effective one for the EU to react in a timely manner to the Rwandan request for support as it would channel funds directly to its MINECOFIN, which would then manage it for the benefit of the RDF deployment in Mozambique, in close coordination with the Ministry of Defence.

Working through MINECOFIN will also reinforce the level of ownership of the Rwandan authorities over the support, and therefore their appreciation for the EU. MINECOFIN is the driver behind Rwanda's external financial support architecture and overall partners' coordination. MINECOFIN already manages the overall budget of the RDF deployment in Mozambique. Additionally, it manages large amounts of UN funding for the participation of RDF elements in UN peacekeeping missions.

Importantly, MINECOFIN also has a longstanding record of managing EU funds using its own rules and procedures. It has well established management capacities, as reflected in its 2016 successful pillar assessment, notably thanks to its internal processes and its pool of qualified staff. Targeted EU support to MINECOFIN in the past contributed to strengthening such capacities; it would now be advantageous for the EU to reap the benefits of its earlier support. In this instance, there is no need to work via a third party, and pay the overheads associated with that.

5. NEXT STEPS

In line with the Guidelines for the preparatory and decision-making process for Assistance Measures under the European Peace Facility, the following recommendations are made:

- PSC agreement and submission of the Concept Note to the Council for approval.
- Preparation of an HR proposal for a Council Decision on the assistance measure on the basis of the Concept Note approved by the Council.