

Agenda Items 6-A/1, 5-D/2, 5-D/2/Add.1

**Country Strategic Plan for Central African Republic 2023 – 2027,
evaluation of the Central African Republic Interim CSP 2018-2022 and
the related Management Response**

Mister President

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

[XXX, XXXX, XXXX align themselves with this statement.]

We take note of the Country Strategic Plan for Central African Republic 2023-2027 as well as the evaluation of the previous Interim CSP 2018-2022 and the related Management Response.

We are concerned by this forgotten crisis and the dire food security situation in the country, where 45% of the population are acutely food insecure due to the recurrence of conflicts, further exacerbated by the global economic situation.

We welcome that the CSP will prioritise its crisis response Outcomes, with 80% of the resources given the current dire humanitarian situation. However, seeking to contribute to both saving and changing lives, we acknowledge that a forecast 60% of this CSP will be focused on crisis responses and that the remaining 40% will be used to address root causes and resilience building to reduce humanitarian needs in the long run. We

invite WFP to explain whether it considers this a realistic ratio to be achieved within the timeframe of the CSP, and how it intends to achieve this. Considering the current instability in the country, we would appreciate a clear prioritisation of the Outcomes, also in case of funding shortfalls, based on WFP's comparative advantage in the country.

In this regard, and taking note of recommendation 1, we would welcome a more streamlined approach to Outcome 1. We encourage a better description of the emergency response activities, including the Rapid Response Mechanism for newly internally displaced people and refugees, seasonal humanitarian assistance and preparedness activities for future shocks. The same applies to activities that seem repeated in different Outcomes such as resilience building. In order to foster an effective Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach and programmatic transparency, we suggest that WFP strengthens the links between well-defined Strategic Outcomes instead of turning them into different cross-cutting activities.

We welcome recommendation 5 and encourage WFP to properly ensure other important qualitative aspects of its intervention such as gender, protection, and Accountability to Affected Populations. In this regard, we would appreciate more information about the practical steps the country office is taking to reinforce its capacities in these domains and to promote for instance joint Complaints Mechanisms with other aid organisations.

According to the draft CSP, the guiding principles will be stabilisation, social cohesion and peace. We also note WFP's intended increased

engagement in peacebuilding. In this regard, we welcome recommendation 6.1 and invite WFP to integrate conflict analysis properly into strategy formulation. We emphasise that when implementing the Peace element of the Nexus, WFP should act within the limits of its mandate and continue exploring partnerships and efforts to mainstream conflict-sensitivity into its programmes. We disagree with recommendations 6.2 and 6.3 that seem to go much beyond WFP's mandate and capacities in a country whose territory is by 70% controlled by non-state armed groups. Hence, we invite WFP to clarify its ambitions related to peacebuilding in line with the Policy on WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings. In this context, we also invite WFP to clarify how it intends to strike the crucial balance between the respect humanitarian principles and the "do no harm" principle, and related peacebuilding and development activities. In a complex setting like the Central African Republic, it is essential that humanitarian organisations are independent and perceived to be independent. Otherwise, the challenges of access and security could further increase.

In terms of partnerships, we welcome recommendation 4.3 to promote synergies with complementary interventions of other organisations. We encourage WFP, as cluster lead, to engage in stronger coordination within the food security cluster. We appreciate cooperation with the other Rome-based Agencies for Outcomes 3 and 4, with UNICEF for nutrition activities and UNHCR. We would like to ask WFP for a realistic assessment of these partnerships and concrete plans to strengthen them further. For the nutrition partnership, we would appreciate more information regarding the Simplified Protocol tested in the previous CSP, information which partner is

covering which aspects and how testing will be used to generate evidence and advocacy for the awaited global roll-out of this approach. At the same time, we invite WFP to elaborate more on the ongoing and planned engagement with International Financial Institutions.

We welcome the development of the large-scale Cash-based Transfers programme, which the evaluation mentions as critical to overcome supply chain issues. We invite WFP to scale up the implementation of the programme, also in coordination with the Food Security Cluster, and ensuring effective oversight. We strongly encourage WFP to give priority to this modality, and to cash over vouchers whenever possible. We consider it the option preferred over in-kind assistance.

Last but not least, we welcome the refinement of geographic targeting through community-based vulnerability-based targeting. As per recommendation 3 A, we invite WFP to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation functions of its country office, given the challenges to the reliability of data found by the evaluation. In this respect, we would appreciate more information on the practical steps WFP is undertaking to overcome this important issue.

Thank you.