

4th Strasbourg Lunch
Wednesday, 5 April 2017

“The EU-Training Mission in the Central African Republic: A necessary mission in a suffering country”

Africa is a very important topic on the agenda of the European Union as Michael Gahler, President of the Kangaroo Group, pointed out in his introduction. The European Union approved in 2016 the establishment of a military training mission in the Central African Republic to contribute to the country’s defence sector reform. Therefore he welcomed Major General Eric HAUTECLOQUE-RAYSZ, Deputy-Commander of the Eurocorps, Strasbourg who led the mission.



Major General Hautecloque-Raysz pointed out that Brussels has a good knowledge of that mission. He stated that “Brussels institutions are complex but they are working very well although they are very complex”.

At the beginning of the mission a risk assessment was necessary to ensure the safety of the participants. Missing equipment for the mission was identified as of the risks for the success of the mission.

To support the democratic process a close cooperation with local authorities was needed.

One of the problems were armed groups in provinces which did not respect rule of law. To enhance security it is necessary to have the will to arrest criminals. Therefore security structure needs soldiers, but they have no money. Concerning the training it is better to have Africans to speak to Africans. Success of missions can be improved if there exists good cooperation between security, reconstruction and development and a working chain of command.

Ana Gomez, MEP, Member of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence noted that the European Parliament adopted resolutions about missions of the European Union to make the world around more safe. She criticised that institutions do not deliver what they are supposed to. Ana Gomez stressed that the support in Africa should be a rebirth of the European Union.



Arnaud Danjean, MEP, Member of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence emphasised the link between security and development and remarked that discussions in the Committee on Development are highly dogmatic and theoretical. He stated that small mission are more flexible than big missions, for example those led by the United Nations. But cooperation concerning missions between the European Union and the United Nations should be improved.



Roger Helmer, MEP asked, how the European Union could supply “what we are obliged to”.



Alain Lamassoure, MEP raised the question, how missions of the European Union can be improved.





Major General Hautecloque-Raysz emphasised two points. Firstly the resources. "If there are no resources, there are no results". Secondly the legitimisation. Resolutions by the United Nations often represent the minimum agreement. He also stressed that the European Union has an ethical obligation to support countries like Central African Republic. To obtain the success of missions the ability to support has to be improved. Last but not least he claimed that the management of the missions have to become more efficient.

