

ANNEX 4

Definitions & General Statements

1 General Statements

If the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation wishes to put a general statement on the EU for its region in written communications such as press releases, fact sheets, publications, project web sites or electronic information materials, it should use the relevant standard general statement. A general statement on the EU and standard definitions for the EU and its institutions are provided below.

Other general statements may be appropriate, e.g. for the instrument under which the action is being implemented, for more general EU development or co-operation objectives, or to emphasise a particular partnership. For defining such statements, the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation should contact the Press and Information Officer or project manager concerned.

General Statement on the EU

“The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms.

The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.

2 Definitions of the European Union and its Institutions

If the contractor, implementing partner or international organisation decides that more detailed information about the EU is needed, the following approved definitions should be used in any communication materials, unless otherwise instructed by the Press and Information Officer.

European Union

The European Union is established in accordance with the Treaty on European Union. There are currently 27 Member States of the Union. It is based on the European Communities and the member states co-operation in the fields of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs. The five main institutions of the European Union are the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, the Court of Justice and the Court of Auditors.

The European Union is a major player in international co-operation and development aid. It is also the world's largest humanitarian aid donor. Today, the European Community has political and financial responsibility for over 11% of the world's public aid (ODA), compared with 5% in 1985.

The primary aim of the EC's own development policy, agreed in November 2000, is the eradication of poverty. To enhance its impact, the EC is targeting its assistance

on six priority areas: trade and development; regional integration and co-operation; support to macroeconomic policies and equitable access to social services; transport; food security and sustainable rural development; institutional capacity building, good governance and the rule of law. In addition to these core areas, important crosscutting issues are being mainstreamed into development activities namely: human rights, gender equality, environment and conflict prevention.

<http://europa.eu/>

European Community

The European Communities consist of the European Community (previously the European Economic Community before it was redefined by the Maastricht Treaty in 1992) and Euratom. These communities share the same institutions and management structures.

European Parliament

The European Parliament is the directly elected expression of political will of the European Union and the largest multinational Parliament in the world. The European Parliament upholds citizens' rights, adopts legislation and monitors the use of executive power.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

Council of the European Union

Usually known as the Council of Ministers, specialised government ministers meet from each Member State to take decisions and resolve national differences in the various policy areas. The European Council, made up of 27 Heads of State or government, meets at least twice a year to set objectives and fix priorities. Each Member State takes the Presidency in turn for a term of six months.

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>

European Commission

The European Commission is the European Community's executive body. Led by 27 Commissioners, the European Commission initiates proposals of legislation and acts as guardian of the Treaties. The Commission is also a manager and executor of common policies and of international trade relationships. It is responsible for the management of European Union external assistance.

<http://ec.europa.eu>

European Court of Justice

The European Court of Justice provides the judicial safeguard necessary to ensure that the law is observed in the interpretation and application of the Treaties and all legislation based upon them.

<http://www.curia.europa.eu>

European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors is responsible for checking that the European Union spends its money according to budgetary rules and regulations.

<http://www.eca.europa.eu>

Committee of the Regions (COR)

The Committee of the Regions is the political assembly which provides local and regional authorities with a voice at the heart of the European Union. It has to be consulted on matters concerning regional policy, the environment and education. It is composed of representatives of regional and local authorities.

<http://www.cor.europa.eu/>

Other institutions

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank is the European Union's financing institution. It provides loans for capital investment promoting the Union's balanced economic development and integration. It is the leading institution for basic infrastructure investments in South Eastern Europe.

<http://www.eib.europa.eu>

European Central Bank (ECB)

The European Central Bank is the central bank for Europe Union's single currency, the euro. The ECB's main task is to maintain the euro's purchasing power and the price stability in the euro area. The euro area comprises the 15 European Union countries that have introduced the euro since 1999.

<http://www.ecb.eu>

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

The European Economic and Social Committee represents the views and interests of organised civil society vis-à-vis the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament. The Committee has to be consulted on matters relating to economic and social policy; it may also issue opinions on its own initiative on other matters which it considers to be important.

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu>