

27 October 2010

EUR 122 million of aid for Eritrea

After Eritrea became independent, the country entered the Cotonou Agreement with the EU. From 2002 to 2007, EUR 96.8 million was given in aid to Eritrea under the EDF Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme (2002-2007).

For the period 2009-2013 a total amount of EUR 122 million will be given in aid from the European Development Fund.

The aid is basically unconditional; its purpose is to promote the development of food production and transportation systems, the judiciary and public administration. The Commission states that it has effective control over where the money will be spent and has access to all project sites. It also states that the aid will be managed by international organisations such as UN agencies and the World Bank, NGOs and private-sector contractors.

Mr Piebalgs stated in his answers of August 5 that the European Commission had disbursed EUR 6 166 492.33 in Eritrea since the beginning of 2010.

1. As follow-up to the question of 9 August by MEPs Ulvskog and Svensson, how much of the allocated EUR 122 million has the Commission already spent? To what projects and through which organisations exactly did the money go? Are funds being given directly to the Eritrean government as well?
2. Will the money be spent in line with the Cotonou Agreement, on strengthening the political dimension by placing greater emphasis on effective dialogue and results (Articles 8, 9 and 96)? And if so, could you please explain how this is achieved? In particular, what plans are there on the part of the EU to ensure that the Eritrean government creates political space in the country in line with the requirements of the Cotonou Agreement, for example by implementing the 1997 Eritrean Constitution, by releasing political prisoners, journalist and others, and by taking other relevant and symbolic steps?