



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 15 December 2016  
(OR. en)

15532/16

**LIMITE**

**COSI 233  
CORDROGUE 85  
CRIMORG 182  
COAFR 320  
ENFOPOL 488  
ASIM 169**

**NOTE**

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From:	Presidency
To:	JHA Counsellors / COSI Support Group
No. prev. doc.:	9826/1/16 REV1
Subject:	Management and maintenance of the matrix of technical assistance initiatives in West Africa

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The informal Fontanot Group is a French-led initiative that focuses on the coordination and deconfliction of Member States capacity building efforts in West Africa and is also a forum for discussing future project activity<sup>1</sup>. The group, consisting of representatives of the national departments for international relations from a number of Member States and third parties has been meeting informally twice a year or once a year since July 2008<sup>2</sup>.

In its conclusions of 30 November 2009<sup>3</sup> on the strengthening of the fight against drug trafficking in West Africa, the Council welcomed the activities of the informal Fontanot Group with regard to the mutual benefit of non-operational cooperation among Member States present in West Africa.

The group discusses and coordinates national projects, initially using the "HDG matrix", aiming to achieve mutual benefits and prepare common or joint projects, taking into account national priorities of project leader and other members interested in the same project.

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<sup>1</sup> 14885/09  
<sup>2</sup> 16525/10  
<sup>3</sup> 16451/09

At its meeting on 24 November 2010, COSI agreed to widen the scope of that matrix of activities in West Africa to all projects relevant in combating organised crime as well as projects initiated by a number of non-EU parties and drug demand reduction activities (16525/10). COSI also agreed to include not just current projects but also planned projects and invited the HDG to adapt the format of the matrix to make it more user-friendly and allow targeted searching. Finally COSI also called for improving the distribution of the matrix.

At its meeting on 18 April 2011, COSI Support Group agreed that the format of the matrix was adapted to allow for a better identification of the projects and more targeted searching and that the General Secretariat of the Council would update the matrix once a month, at a fixed time (6959/2/11 REV 2). Delegations were invited to send information about relevant projects (newly planned projects or specifications, cancellations and finalisations of ongoing projects) to the General Secretariat of the Council ([neomatrix@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:neomatrix@consilium.europa.eu)).

In this regard, the General Secretariat of the Council led a specific action (6.1) of the OAP 2013 related to the EU Crime priority "West Africa"<sup>4</sup> of the first two-year Policy Cycle 2011-2013. This operational action 6.1 referred to the management and maintenance of the Matrix.

The current Policy Cycle 2014-2017 does not have the West Africa priority any more. Nevertheless, the informal Fontanot group keeps on developing its activities and meeting regularly (the last meeting took place in Dakar on 26 May 2016). One of the main tools to fulfil its objective continues to be the matrix, which has been regularly updated by the Council Secretariat.

***In the light of the above, COSI Support Group agreed at its meeting on 12 December 2016 on assigning the maintenance and management of the matrix to the Fontanot group as of 1 January 2017, taking over this task from the General Secretariat of the Council. Therefore, the above information about relevant projects should be sent as of that date to the informal Fontanot group via the email address which will be provided by them in due time.***

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<sup>4</sup> 16020/2/12 REV 2 (EU RESTRICTED)