

## Event report:

### European Stabilization Efforts in the Sahel: a Lost Cause?

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On December 6, MEP Rasa JUKNEVIČIENĖ (EPP, LT) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Multinational Development Policy Dialogue (KAS MDPD) co-organized a closed-door, Chatham House rules-based high-level roundtable in the European Parliament focusing on the security situation in the Sahel. During the event a new KAS MDPD study titled “*European aphasia in the Sahel: stabilizing how?*” was presented by the authors Delina Goxho and Selina Daugalies. Furthermore, Konrad Adenauer Foundations regional representative in the Sahel, Ulf Laessing, gave an overview of the recent developments in Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger to the participants representing European Union institutions as well as members of the Brussels-based diplomatic corps. The roundtable was moderated by the Paris-based expert on the Sahel Mr. Seidik Abbas.

In their initial input the authors addressed the current security situation in the Sahel region and its impact on Europe. While the EU’s 2021 Sahel strategy affirms the intention to step up the partnership with the Sahel region by addressing the area’s challenges, recent developments show that the strategy has not yielded expected results in the region. In particular, Goxho highlighted a significant mismatch between the strategic priorities of the EU and their practical implementation on the ground, where more European level coordination and targeted action is needed.

In her intervention, MEP Rasa Juknevičienė pointed out that

*“the European Union cannot afford to look away from our close neighborhoods, be it in the East or in the South. European stabilization efforts have not yielded desired results in the Sahel. In light of the recent increased activities by malign actors, like the Kremlin-backed Wagner-Group, the EU should re-calibrate its approach to the region.”*

Next to the increased influence by Russia and China, the region has witnessed a steady rise of deadly attacks, as extremist actors continue to expand into new geographic areas.

During the roundtable, stakeholders representing EU institutions, EU member states as well as actors from the region, discussed how the European Union could better engage in the Sahel.

According to Delina Goxho one way to do this would be for the EU to increase its conditionality mechanisms vis-à-vis Sahelian governments, following the principles of positive conditionality in order to ensure that most of EU funding, be it in the domains of humanitarian aid, development support or security assistance, goes where it is needed the most. New instruments, like the European Peace Facility, should be fully utilized for doing this.

Link to study: [European aphasia in the Sahel: stabilising how?](#)

### Contact

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