



Baroness Catherine Ashton of Upholland
Vice-President/High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

cc. Stefan Füle, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

Brussels, 18 June 2013

Honourable High Representative, honourable Commissioner,

The European Union seeks to be a strong partner for countries and their populations in our direct neighbourhood. As a community of values we seek to protect and promote the rights, freedoms and lives of citizens who often rely on our support. Through economic cooperation and financial assistance we support economic development, reforms and cooperation.

The European Parliament works alongside the Commission, the EEAS and our EU experts and diplomats on the ground in third countries. With the recent review of the European Neighbourhood policy and the introduction of the 'more for more' principle the external financing instruments of the EU are now subject to legislative review. They need to translate from speech lines and principles to policies.

As the ALDE shadow for the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) I am pushing for the introduction of clear conditionalities and benchmarks in the legislative text of the new financing instruments. While the negotiations on the final provisions of the instruments are ongoing I want to express my concerns about the report released today by the European Court of Auditors (the "Court") on the spending of EU financial assistance in Egypt between 2007 and 2013.

The Court concludes that the financial support for governance in Egypt was "well-intentioned but ineffective" and that the "softly softly" approach has not worked. More than half of the allocated aid of EUR 1 billion was provided as budget support. In general the report finds that insufficient transparency by the Egyptian authorities was ensured by the Commission and the EEAS, it also concludes that financial and political leverage was not sufficiently used to improve the success of human rights interventions. As you are aware I have myself urged for a more clearly defined emphasis on conditionality, values and clear benchmarks from the EU. I have done so in the context of ENI broadly, and with regard to Egypt specifically.

The conclusions in the Court's report call for a detailed written response by the Commission and the EEAS. They are in sharp contrast with the objectives of the EU's external actions and undermine the support by our citizens for the EU's external actions. As we are about to determine the framework for assistance in the next years, let us learn from the past, and not repeat the same mistakes.

I am looking forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Marietje Schaake
Member of European Parliament / Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe