



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Minister for Europe
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

10 August 2018
Sir William Cash MP
Chair
European Scrutiny Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Bill,

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR) – EXTENSION OF THE MANDATE FOR THE EU TRAINING MISSION

I submitted to you on 11 July an Explanatory Memorandum covering the extension of the EU Training Mission in the Central African Republic (EUTM RCA)

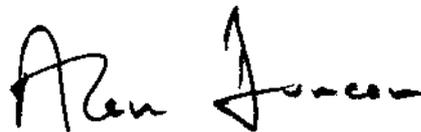
As detailed in the attached Explanatory Memorandum (EM), the EUTM RCA launched in 2016 to help deliver specific defence sector reform tasks in CAR to enable the CAR armed forces (known as the FACA) to become operational. Its work contributes to the security sector reform process coordinated by MINUSCA (the UN Peacekeeping Mission). Her Majesty's Government is supportive of the EUTM and is supportive of the proposal to extend the mandate.

It is in our interest to have a FACA that is well organised, vetted, integrated and able to deliver effective security, justice and stability to CAR. The Mission has achieved good results; it has trained nearly three battalions and some EU trained units have already deployed to key areas. It has also delivered education to around 25% of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

The Mission's mandate expires on 19 September; however, on request from military planners, Member States decided to adopt the Council Decision by written procedure on 30 July. The reason for this is that the mission leadership would like to have the legal and financial certainty to be able to begin work on moving the EUTM's location. A delay until after the August break would mean that this work would not get permission to take place until the start of the rainy season which would lead to a disproportionate delay (as much as six months) of the move; a move which has been agreed by the Political and Security Committee for health and security reasons. The House of Lords EU Select Committee cleared the EM from scrutiny on 17 July. I understand that unfortunately, the European Scrutiny Committee was unable to consider the EM in its meetings of 11 and 18 July. Due to the importance of this Mission, and the consequences of not being able to extend the mandate, you will appreciate that I had to override your Committee's scrutiny.

Your Committee has previously expressed concern that renewals of this type are not considered earlier in the EU calendar, to ensure that the scrutiny process can be followed. This is something I am very aware of and I have instructed my officials to continue to raise these concerns with colleagues in the EU. In the case of this particular renewal, it was not considered earlier as there was a debate amongst Member States over whether a civilian component should be added to the mission's tasks. In the end, support to CAR's internal security forces (known as the FSI) was not included in this extension. Civilian and military working groups are still establishing the feasibility of the EUTM delivering this work. Our experts are contributing to these discussions to ensure that planners follow best practice and that any future proposals match UK views of how best to deliver Common Foreign Security Policy. I have asked my officials to keep both Committees informed should these proposals bear fruit.

I am copying this letter to the Clerks of both Committees, Les Saunders at the Department for Exiting the European Union, Adam Nutley, FCO Scrutiny Coordinator, Nicole Mason, FCO Parliamentary Adviser, and Lynne Smith, FCO Select Committee Liaison Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alan Duncan". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

RT HON SIR ALAN DUNCAN MP