

**Minutes from meeting in the Council for Development Policy**  
**on 10 June 2025**

- Members: Professor Anne Mette Kjær, University of Aarhus (Chair)  
Deputy CEO and International Director Jarl Krausing, CONCITO (Deputy Chair) (Agenda items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)  
Secretary General Charlotte Slente, Danish Refugee Council (DFC)  
Director Charlotte Flindt Pedersen, Danish Foreign Policy Society  
Chief Advisor Mattias Söderberg, DanChurchAid  
Director for Global Development and Sustainability Marie Gad Hansen, Confederation of Danish Industries (DI)  
Head of Secretariat Lone Ilum Christiansen, The Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA)  
Senior Researcher Adam Moe Fejerskov, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS)  
Director for Nutrition Line Damsgaard, The Danish Agriculture & Food Council
- MFA: Under-Secretary for Development Policy Ole Thonke  
Head of Department Tove Degnbol, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING  
Deputy Head of Department Mette Bech Pilgaard, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING  
Head of Section Lotte Blom Salmonsén, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING  
Head of Section Lea Ambra Klein Skovbjerg, Department for Evaluation, Learning and Quality, LEARNING
- Agenda item 2: Deputy Head of Department Simon Wandel-Petersen, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Chief Advisor Jakob Tvede, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Chief Advisor Mikkel Klim, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Chief Advisor Henrik Vistisen, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA
- Deputy CEO Søren Peter Andreasen, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK  
Chief Investment Officer Lars Krogsgaard, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK  
Sustainability Director Rikke Carlsen, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK

Head of Strategy & Business Development Morten Buur Østerby, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK  
Strategy & Business Development Director Anemone Birkebæk, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK

Agenda item 3: Deputy Head of Department Simon Wandel-Petersen, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Chief Advisor Mikkel Klim, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Special Advisor Marie Isacsson, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA

Deputy CEO Søren Peter Andreasen, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK  
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Strategy & Business Development Director Anemone Birkebæk, Investment Fund for Developing Countries/Impact Fund Denmark, IFU/IFDK

Agenda item 4: Ambassador Steen Sonne Andersen, Royal Danish Embassy to Somalia, Mogadishu Representation Office (online)  
Deputy Head of Mission Gertrud Kümmel Birk, Royal Danish Embassy to Somalia, Mogadishu Representation Office (online)  
Team Leader Marianne Vestergaard, Royal Danish Embassy to Somalia, Mogadishu Representation Office (online)  
Development Specialist Mette Melson, Royal Danish Embassy to Somalia, Mogadishu Representation Office (online)

Agenda item 5: Head of Department Kasper Thams Olsen, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
Deputy Head of Department Christian Palomäki Nybroe Arnesen, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
Team Leader Thea Ribergaard Askhøj Nielsen, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
Chief Advisor Nicolaj Sønderbye, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
Special Advisor Andrea Bruhn Bove, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
Head of Section Clara Simonsen Tørsleff-Manea, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB

Head of Section Laura Winther Engelsbak, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB

CFO Antonio Ugaz-Simonsen, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB

Deputy Permanent Secretary Henrik Ankerstjerne, The Ministry of Immigration and Integration, UIM

Deputy Head of International Division Camilla Kjærgaard, The Ministry of Immigration and Integration, UIM

- Agenda item 6: Head of Department Kasper Thams Olsen, Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation, MIGSTAB  
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Deputy Permanent Secretary Henrik Ankerstjerne, The Ministry of Immigration and Integration, UIM

Deputy Head of International Division Camilla Kjærgaard, The Ministry of Immigration and Integration, UIM

- Agenda item 7: Ambassador Stephan Schønemann, The Royal Danish Embassy in Nairobi (online)  
Development Specialist Mette Melson, The Royal Danish Embassy in Nairobi (online)  
Team Leader Kanar Patruss, The Royal Danish Embassy in Nairobi (online)

- Agenda item 8: Deputy Head of Department Mads-Emil Stærk, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA  
Chief Advisor Morten Houmann Blomqvist, Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate, KLIMA

Deputy Head of International Office Henrik Silkjær, The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities, MCEU

Head of Section Randi Dahlen, The Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities,  
MCEU

### **Agenda Item No. 1: Announcements**

The Under-Secretary opened the meeting with a briefing on the upcoming strategy for Denmark's development cooperation, which was currently under negotiation in the Danish Parliament. He also presented questions and viewpoints expressed by political spokespersons during the debate on the annual report to Parliament on development cooperation. Council members commented the proposed changes to quality assurance and approval procedures for new grants, expected to be part of the upcoming strategy, and expressed reservations. Furthermore, the Under-Secretary highlighted Denmark's upcoming EU Presidency commencing on 1 July. In response to an inquiry from the Council regarding the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, the Under-Secretary offered a brief update, noting the significant international pressure being exerted on the Israeli Government by political actors to permit the delivery of humanitarian aid. He emphasised that multiple organisations were fully prepared to provide assistance as soon as access was granted.

*With reference to the Rules of Procedure for the Council for Development Policy, the Chair of the Council asked if members had any conflicts of interest related to the agenda items. Jarl Krausing announced a conflict of interest in relation to agenda item 3 due to his membership of the Board of the Impact Fund Denmark (IFDK) (previously Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU)). Jarl Krausing left the room during the deliberations of agenda item 3.*

### **Agenda Item No. 2: Annual Consultation with the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU)**

*For information and discussion*

The Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (KLIMA)

*Summary: The reform of Impact Fund Denmark (IFDK) (previously Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU)) was approved late 2023. In October 2024, the MFA approved a capital contribution of DKK 3.6 billion and an appropriation of DKK 2.8 billion for DSIF. Annual consultations between IFDK and the Council were agreed in the Council meeting held on 10 October 2024. Within the framework of the annual consultations, IFDK will report on progress in the reform, opportunities, and challenges. The ambition of the consultation is that the Council will be able to assess IFDK's progress, ask for additional information and provide inputs to the strategic direction taken by IFDK.*

### **Key observations and recommendations from the Council:**

- Members of the Council asked for further details on the transformation process that IFDK is undergoing. In particular, Council Members requested further reflection on efforts to focus on development impact and poverty in the poorer countries. Reflections on the risks related to expansion vis a vis securing results were also asked for, and Members wanted more information on IFDK's competences and ability to analyse and understand development contexts in the global south, including the ability to make a full

sector analysis and not just an analysis of a specific investment project. IFDK was requested to clarify how much of the budget for fragile countries Ukraine was accounting for, and to reflect on the challenges related to the debt burden which many countries in the global south are struggling with. Referring to the new name, concern was raised as to what type of impact it referred to, i.e. financial impact vs. development impact.

- Council Members asked about possible grant offers to Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) under DKK 15 million and expressed concern that it was too difficult for SMEs to access IFDK's financing. Related to this, questions were also asked about the interest rate on loans to end users such as entrepreneurs and farmers in less developed countries (the case of Agriculture Business Initiative (aBi) in Uganda was mentioned). It was found that the pipeline for Impact Venture were too small, and IFDK was asked to explain what it intended to do to make it grow.
- Council Members focused on IFDK linkages to Danish companies and pointed out that it had been hard for Danish companies to get IFDK investments. This had been driven by a IFDK shift to larger ticket sizes as well as liquidity crunch, especially during COVID-19. Members of the Council found that it would require a dedicated long-term effort to get the Danish companies on board – more than just marketing. Too large ticket sizes remained a concern. Lastly, it was emphasised that DSIF needed to ensure high standards and focus on lifecycle costs when designing and launching tenders, and it was added that DSIF should shorten its long processes to make the instrument more useful.
- Members of the Council acknowledged the reported 388,000 jobs created but requested IFDK to elaborate on the quality of these. How did IFDK monitor these jobs to ensure that a) they did not just disappear after IFDK exits b) compliance to standards as e.g. workers' rights, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) etc., and c) notification of and use of local labour administrations in the global south ensuring compliance?
- Members of the Council would have liked more reflections on the dilemmas and challenges related to IFDK's decisions on how and where to invest. More data on key issues such as how to measure additionality and assessing possible crowding out of private sector actors were mentioned. Members would also have liked to have more discussion on challenges related to ensuring the necessary competences to work in fragile contexts, data on staff turnover, and considerations about transparency to the general public. Council Members suggested that future consultations should be based on more substantial reporting on the themes highlighted by the Council and more willingness by IFDK to share information which was not given in general introduction material on the organisation.

### **The Impact Fund Denmark (IFDK) response to key issues:**

- Regarding the focus on development impact and poverty in poorer countries, IFDK provided information on the increase in investment volume also in poor and fragile

countries, of which Ukraine represented approximately one third. Africa was a difficult market, and West Africa was particularly difficult. IFDK explained that climate mitigation investments allowed a high degree of mobilisation, whereas investments in poor and fragile countries depended almost entirely on IFDK core capital. IFDK underlined that ‘impact’ in the new name was referring to development impact.

- Explaining the screening process for new projects, IFDK stressed that it would not move forward with any project if it did not have clear development effects within the two impact objectives – green economy and just and inclusive economy. Furthermore, issues such as additionality, materiality (scale), attribution, and measurability needed to be fulfilled satisfactorily. For each project, a theory of change was established as well as a result framework. When preparing project documents, IFDK investment teams needed to respond to an extensive list of questions. Concerning the issue of additionality, together with the University of Copenhagen, IFDK had developed an additionality screening tool which was now being rolled out. The results measurement system was being updated and strengthened.
- Responding to the question about competences, IFDK explained that employee recruitment had been frontloaded in 2024 and 2025, including capacity in the sustainability team. DSIF had recruited staff with competences in results measurement and had also increased qualifications in law and IT.
- IFDK underlined that the new Africa Facility would provide additional possibilities for Danish companies. It was suggested that the question about ticket sizes could be discussed in a future dialogue meeting. IFDK explained that DSIF loans were some of the most concessional loans in the market, and DSIF did not provide loans to countries in a debt crisis. During 2024, new DSIF loans had not been signed.
- It was confirmed that companies must live up to the international standards agreed. IFDK insisted that complaints mechanisms were established, and if represented in the Board, IFDK regularly took up issues related to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards. Companies had a reporting responsibility to IFDK, and IFDK could undertake specific audits.
- IFDK acknowledged that there were considerable dilemmas linked to prioritising investments for development versus investment for other purposes. IFDK would like to better accommodate the wishes of the Council concerning the annual reporting and was not interested in painting a rosy picture of its achievements. IFDK had strengthened its communication and updated transparency policies. While it wanted to be as transparent as possible, IFDK could not publish commercial information as e.g. contracts.

### **Agenda Item No. 3: IFU Africa Facility**

*For discussion and recommendation to the minister*

DKK 350 million

The Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (KLIMA)

#### *Summary:*

*The IFU Africa Facility will promote social and economic development in African countries by investing in commercial partnerships between African and Danish businesses. It will follow the financial and non-financial additionality requirements of the Impact Fund Denmark (IFDK) (previously Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU)), contributing to green, social or economic development. The Facility will complement IFDK's existing financial products and services as well as other MFA financing instruments being developed. IFDK will relax certain standard requirements on minimum transaction size and returns, which have been identified as challenges setting up a barrier for increasing commercial engagement between African and Danish businesses. With the Africa Facility, IFDK will engage actively to address the information gap and risk perception challenges with relevant stakeholders to facilitate Danish investments and commercial partnerships with African businesses.*

*The Council for Development Policy recommended IFU Africa Facility for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs with an emphasis on the importance of the inception review that should focus on demand, ticket-size, and development impact. The Council emphasised the importance of the inception review having real consequences in case it found inadequate demand for the kind of partnerships supported through the Africa Facility.*

#### **Key observations and recommendations from the Council:**

- While Members of the Council agreed that there was a need for increasing commercial partnerships between African countries and Denmark, Members questioned the need for the facility and suggested that existing tools could be adjusted to serve the same purpose. Other Members saw the facility as a relevant contribution to close the current financing gap and pointed to the importance of widening the engagement of stakeholders to support demand by also involving business organisations, trade unions, and others. With reference to the substantial capital contribution that IFDK was granted in late 2024 (DKK 3.6 billion), Members enquired about the need for further funds and why IFDK could not provide the activities under the Africa Facility as part of the capital contribution.
- As a prerequisite for ensuring demand for the facility, Members of the Council emphasised the importance of ensuring relevant sizes of investments ('ticket sizes'). Concern was expressed about the size available and it was strongly recommended to significantly reduce it (to DKK 1-2 million) with a view to make investments available to Small and Medium-Size enterprises. It was also pointed out that the interest rate offered by IFDK was too high and that the term of loans needed to be looked at.
- Members of the Council expressed concern about possibilities of monitoring the use and impact of the instrument. It was asked why country targets had not been defined (e.g. fragile countries, Less Developed Countries etc.), why only indicators for mitigation but not for adaptation had been defined, and why indicators for export from African countries to Denmark were not included.

- Members wanted to know the arguments for tying aid to Danish companies and asked if more tied aid arrangements were being prepared.
- With reference to the uncertainty about the demand for the facility, Members of the Council pointed to the appraisal's recommendation to approve only DKK 200 million, while the remaining DKK 150 million should depend on a positive assessment by an inception review. While agreeing that development impact should be the main purpose of the facility and the inception review should be used to decide its further development, other Members argued for the approval of the full DKK 350 million but with the understanding that the inception review would have real consequences for the second tranche of this funding.

**The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) response to key issues:**

- The Deputy Head of Department, KLIMA, clarified that the Africa Facility would include cooperation with business organisations and embassies (including the Trade Council) and would focus on communication and engagement with Danish and African commercial partners. Other initiatives, devised as part of the new development cooperation strategy, would supplement and interact with the Africa Facility.
- Despite the fact that the overall capital contribution to IFDK was substantial, the Deputy Head of Department explained that it was relevant to set aside new funds for the Africa Facility as the capital contribution already was allocated to specific activities.
- Concerning the question of tying aid to Danish companies, the Deputy Head of Department confirmed that the Danish policy remained in favour of not tying aid and said that this particular project should be considered additional to the general picture.
- As the Africa Facility was a new aspect to IFDK's activities, the Deputy Head of Department underpinned the importance of setting a strong mandate from the beginning in order to ensure relevant pipeline building. The full grant, therefore, should be approved now, and the review would have a strong mandate and would recommend budget adjustments, if required. It was important to allow IFDK a conducive environment for starting up the activities.
- The Deputy Head of Department stated that setting targets for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) would be an unnecessary limitation for this facility, since IFDK's Key Performance Indicator (KPI) across instruments would ensure 30 % investments in LDCs.

The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council recommended IFU Africa Facility for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs with an emphasis on the importance of the inception review that should focus on demand, ticket-size, and development impact. The Council emphasised the importance of the inception review having real consequences in case it found inadequate demand for the kind of partnerships supported through the Africa Facility.

## **Agenda Item No. 4: Annual Stocktaking Somalia**

*For information and discussion*

Royal Danish Embassy to Somalia, Mogadishu Representation Office

### *Summary:*

*The Annual Stocktaking Report Somalia provides an analysis of the changes in context and the implications for the implementation of the Country Strategic Framework for Somalia 2024-2028. Specifically, the report outlines the marked deterioration in stability and an increase in conflict, as well as political crises within Somalia and with its neighbours. The analysis is followed by an update on the implementation of the Bilateral Development Programme (BDP). The BDP was approved in 2024 and is implemented in a volatile political context, taking into account the risks and challenges faced in an extremely fragile operational setting. The BDP is complemented by the Peace and Stabilisation Programme for the Horn of Africa (PSP HoA) which contributes to peace-building, early recovery, and maritime security. The total budget for the BDP is DKK 1,100 million and DKK 297 million for the PSP. In addition, Danish humanitarian assistance amounts to approximately DKK 90-100 million annually.*

### **Key observations from the Council:**

- Members of the Council commented on the deteriorating security situation on the ground and asked how the Representation Office (RO) adapted the portfolio to this situation. Considering Al-Shabaab's offensive as well as uncertainties related to upcoming presidential elections (2026), it was asked at what point the RO would need to adapt programmes. In light of the difficult funding situation, would global aid cuts affect the Danish portfolio, including how Denmark could adapt its programmes and approaches in this context?
- Council Members expressed concern about the increasingly challenging political context and asked about the political dialogue. Who were the Danish dialogue partners, and what role did Denmark play in this difficult political space? Also, who were dominating the political climate?
- Members of the Council asked about multilateral organisations' capabilities as implementing partners in Somalia, noting the challenging context. With reference to the evaluation of Danida multi-bilateral interventions, which pointed to the difficulties related to this modality, it was asked if Denmark could do more on a bilateral basis. Was it at all possible for Danish partners to operate on the ground?
- Furthermore, Members of the Council asked of partners in Somalia were interested in green initiatives included in the Danish portfolio.
- Finally, the Embassy was asked to comment on the experience of the Danish engagement with Impact Fund Denmark (IFDK).

### **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) response to key issues:**

- The Ambassador stressed that the RO still operated with the scenario planning developed as part of the Bilateral Programme and adapted it accordingly under implementation. The

portfolio of engagements was designed to withstand set-backs in the security situation, and it was the assessment of the RO that Denmark was still able to implement according to plan. Core reasons for Danish continued engagement in Somalia - maritime security, counter extremism and displacement and migration - were evident. Macro-trends might cause an even more difficult security situation and impeding implementation. The RO followed the situation closely. Regarding the significant aid cuts, the Ambassador noted that projects were likely to be impacted. In Somaliland, the UK was the second largest donor. It was too early to estimate the potential impact on current Danish projects co-funded with the UK.

- On the political dialogue, the Ambassador explained that the International Community was fragmented in its dialogue with Somalia, and that non-traditional donors such as Türkiye, Qatar, and the Emirates had better luck in policy dialogue and in making transactional agreements with Somalia on port access and concessions on natural resources. The Ambassador referred to the fragmentation (also within the EU), but noted that Denmark had an ongoing dialogue with the Federal Government, which was even more relevant during times of political crisis.
- In relation to multilateral organisations' capabilities on the ground, the Ambassador noted that the UN would cut significantly, but it was still unclear how the UN would prioritise locally. The Somali Government was reluctant to cooperate with the UN due to poor evaluations and high overheads. As a result, the UN was becoming less central as implementing partner. The World Bank (WB), on the other hand, was changing and a central partner to the Government on green projects and State Building. CSO's and NGO's operating with long term perspectives were also capable to operate under the current situation. Ambassador emphasised the newly established CSO facility, building voice and accountability in a fragmented and squeezed civic space, and the Somaliland Development Fund. Denmark was taking the lead on both.
- The Ambassador noted a marked interest from Somalia in green investments and energy, as well as climate-smart agriculture and access to water. Problems could arise between the Central Government in Mogadishu and the Federal Member States on sharing of resources but so far, the Ambassador was optimistic about opportunities in this space. Implementation remained feasible and sustainable in the relatively more stable Northern regions, including Somaliland.
- Regarding the question on IFDK, the Ambassador informed that so far implementation had not started. The Ambassador considered IFDK a good opportunity to engage a finance institution and it was hoped that also the Africa Facility could have activities in Somalia.

## **Agenda Item No. 5: Regional Migration Governance Programme – Türkiye and the Western Balkans (2025-2030)**

*For discussion and recommendation to the minister*

DKK 300 million

The Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation (MIGSTAB)

### *Summary:*

*The Türkiye and Western Balkan Migrations Programme is designed to focus on needs analysis, local ownership, and a more focused effort in fewer countries. Due to the significant migrant pressure on Türkiye, deepening the ongoing migration governance partnership, particularly with Presidency of Migration Management (PMM), will be central to the programme. Additionally, Western Balkan still constitutes a very central transit route for irregular migration towards the EU and there is a great need to support the region and the EU's accession process. Here, emphasis will be on counter trafficking/smuggling of migrants, migration management, and ensuring access to decent jobs for refugees and regular migrants, who often do not have access to decent jobs and who are exploited in the informal sector.*

*The Council for Development Policy recommended Regional Migration Governance Programme - Türkiye and the Western Balkans (2025–2030) for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

### **Key observations and recommendations from the Council:**

- The Council welcomed the new portfolio approach to migration programmes and recommended it as inspiration for other thematic areas in the MFA. Synergies with the three other migration programmes approved in late 2024 and the focus on Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) were highlighted as strengths. While the Council found the strategic programme approach innovative, Members asked if implementing partners such as IOM were just doing the same activities as before.
- The Council suggested that Denmark should have joined forces with more donors and particularly underlined the importance of the European Union (EU) in the context of migration. While Members of the Council found that the programme was in line with EU's migration and enlargement policies on the matter, questions were raised on the Danish decision to form an independent programme instead of merely supporting the EU migration programmes in the region. What was the added value of the Danish approach? Members asked if the independent programme might contribute to draining capacity of Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) considering their involvement with other actors such as the EU?
- Members of the Council asked how the programme's assumptions and risks would be considered in a volatile political and operational changing context that could lead to significant changes in the programme and its impact. How did MIGSTAB ensure that the portfolio's impact would not crumble, if assumptions were not met?
- The political analysis of Türkiye's willingness to act and engage in migration matters was considered too positive, and Members of the Council highlighted the significant political

challenges in Türkiye regarding migration management. Only a limited group of those, who should have rights, had experienced progress. Access to the labour market in Türkiye was highlighted as a key challenge for several categories of migrants, and it was suggested to engage the trade unions in the programme. Also, the description of border security was challenged. Members found that it was framed as a fight against smuggling, whereas the protection aspect appeared to be downplayed.

- The Council requested information on how Civil Society Organisations (CSO) would be involved in the programme and its implementation. The importance of CSOs in relation to border security measures was stressed. In the Western Balkan, CSOs possessed important knowledge and data because of their work with monitoring the conditions of asylum seekers, including push backs, and providing protection along the migration routes. CSOs also had an important role in relation to integrating vulnerable groups into the labour market.
- Finally, Members of the Council asked how compliance with the OECD DAC criteria was addressed in the programme, and considering Türkiye's growing economy, how ODA-eligibility was ensured. While Human rights and the programme's Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)/Gender Equality focus was duly noted, Members asked how MIGSTAB would operationalise HRBA in the programme and the partners interventions?

Other issues mentioned included the importance of clearly distinguishing between the definitions of “migrants” and “asylum seekers” and distinguishing among people with different types of protection (e.g. differences among Syrians according to their employment); climate change as a driver of migration; and lack of quantifiable targets.

#### **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) response to key issues:**

- Although the decision had been made to operate the programme as independent, the Head of Department, MIGSTAB, underlined that close coordination and alignment with the EU remained essential. Regular dialogue with relevant partners was ongoing. The Team Leader added that varying capacities among EU Member States to meet ODA targets would be a key focus for Denmark during its EU Presidency. In this context, several like-minded countries – particularly Sweden – expressed interest in joining the programme and engaging in dialogue with Denmark. The EU framework formed the foundation of both the programme and Denmark's migration approach.
- The Head of Department stressed that the operational scope of the programme was quite complex, combining both new elements and familiar material. Given the programme's five-year timeframe, many of the underlying assumptions were expected to change, particularly with regard to developments in Syria. This meant that the programme would need to be adaptable and flexible to respond to changing circumstances over time. The Chief Advisor outlined plans to strengthen the MEAL system and on the

operationalisation of human rights and HRBA, he noted that the Danish Institute for Human Rights would engage with each implementing partner to ensure consistent application across the programme.

- Concerning the cooperation with Türkiye, the Head of Department underlined that there was a continual need for reflection and opportunities for strategic cooperation in Türkiye. Open and constructive dialogue was maintained on sensitive issues such as human rights, supported by the enhanced MEAL system. The Team Leader noted that significant progress had already been made and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on migration governance was anticipated.
- The Head of Department told that civil society engagement was most prominent in the Türkiye programme, where it formed a key component of the Whole of Route programme. Emphasising the importance of civil society actors, it was confirmed that their involvement would be integrated into portfolio management and incorporated within the MEAL framework for results monitoring. In the Western Balkans, civil society participation was also included under the EU4FAST programme, focused on combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling.
- Finally, the Head of Department established that Türkiye was ODA eligible until 2030.

The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council recommended Regional Migration Governance Programme – Türkiye and the Western Balkans (2025-2030) for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

#### **Agenda Item No. 6: Briefing on the Regional Whole-of-Route migration programme, and the Programme related to return, readmission and reintegration (CAPACITY)**

*For information and discussion*

The Department of Migration, Peace and Stabilisation (MIGSTAB)

##### *Summary:*

*The Whole-of-Route programme is implemented by civil society actors and focuses on enhancing the situation for people on the move along the Mediterranean migratory routes. It addresses and prevents further irregular migration movements along the East, Central, and West Mediterranean migratory routes. The CAPACITY Programme aims at strengthening the capacities of countries of origin to manage migration challenges in line with international standards, and to contribute to improved structures in countries of origin to accommodate safe and dignified return, readmission and sustainable reintegration.*

The purpose of the agenda item was to brief the Council about the status of the two programmes, which were still in their nascent stages when recommended for approval by the Council in November 2024.

### **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) key observations:**

- Regarding the update on the Whole-of-Route programme, the Head of Section, MIGSTAB, highlighted the recently formed consortium, consisting of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Danish Red Cross (DRK), and the International Detention Coalition, which won the Call-for-Proposal in November 2024. MIGSTAB considered the consortium partners to be well balanced and complementing each other. The Head of Section outlined the primary objectives of the programme, which was to protect migrants and support them in making informed decisions. Activities would be implemented in Egypt, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan, Niger, Chad, Mali, Libya, Tunisia, and Türkiye. At present, efforts were primarily administratively focused on finalising formalities with local partners and establishing relevant committees, while some activities concerning essential services to migrants had started.
- The Head of Section stressed that it was expected that approximately 50% of the programme funds would be allocated directly to partner organisations. Furthermore, the consortium had decided to establish the 'Consortium Management Unit' in Tunisia, where DRC was already present and registered to do activities under the DAPP engagement. Discussions were underway with Tunisian authorities to formalise and secure the approval for this arrangement.
- Regarding the CAPACITY programme, the Inter-ministerial Steering Committee in December 2024 approved the first projects in Algeria, Nigeria, Somalia, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq. The projects were now in various phases of implementation, with the exception of the projects in Iraq which were expected to commence in late 2025. The projects addressed a range of issues, including reintegration initiatives, migration data and policy development, capacity development in the area of migration management, registration and issuance of ID documents, as well as improvements to border infrastructure.
- At management level, focus had been on building a solid programmatic foundation and furthering a joint programmatic understanding and approach. Implementing partners were encouraged to coordinate at global and country level in order to maximise synergies of interventions. The results framework was also currently being finalised with efforts made to streamline the frameworks of the implementing partners in order to facilitate joint data gathering and analysis and reporting of higher-level outcomes across the different country-level interventions.
- With a significant portion of funds still unallocated, new projects would be added to the programme in the coming years. Currently, new projects in Morocco and Algeria were under discussion, with Syria also on the radar, depending on developments.

The Chair of the Council appreciated the briefing and complimented the programmatic approach which now showed in these and the other programmes in the portfolio.

## **Agenda Item No. 7: Sustainable and Inclusive Trade in Africa (SITA)**

*For discussion and recommendation to the minister*

DKK 200 million

The Embassy of Denmark in Nairobi

### *Summary:*

*The overall objective for the Sustainable and Inclusive Trade in Africa (SITA) programme is to improve livelihoods and economic opportunities through more inclusive trade in Africa. This will be achieved through four components. Component (1) targets the continental level and consists in evidence-based policy advocacy for African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) implementation, and component 2-4 target the East African region with activities in relation to (2) facilitation of “smart borders” in East Africa through, inter alia, infrastructure investments, (3) support to a transition from air to sea freight for avocado exports from the region; and (4) promotion of inclusive trade for women and youth border traders. The expected outcomes include improved political buy-in from African Union (AU) member States for AfCFTA implementation, improved efficiency along the Northern Corridor, increased volumes of sea freight for containerised horticulture exports and increased market access for women and youth in trade.*

*The Council for Development Policy recommended Sustainable and Inclusive Trade (SITA) for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.*

### **Key observations and recommendations from the Council:**

- The Council generally commended support to implementation of the free trade agreement, AfCFTA. The programme was found relevant, especially in relation to the priorities in the Africa Strategy.
- Concerning TradeMark Africa (TMA) as the implementing partner, the Council acknowledged the choice of TMA given its professionalism and ability to deliver results. At the same time, the Council inquired about government ownership and ensuring equal partnership when working with a private organisation, highlighting the importance of political will to drive necessary policy changes. Members of the Council also pointed to the importance of securing anchorage with local private sector actors, including business associations.
- The Council noted that several interventions in SITA were presented as pilots taking place in a few specific geographical locations and focusing on one commodity only. It was recommended to have a stronger focus on ensuring that interventions could be scaled or replicated, which was not always an easy task across countries and regions. Members of the Council also wanted more information on the balance between the individual components, questioning the low budget allocated to component 1 (AfCFTA). It was pointed out that component 2 on smart borders appeared to be extremely complicated, including its reliance on artificial intelligence and block chains.
- Members of the Council commended the climate focus of the “air to sea freight” component but requested more information on the choice of the avocado value chain

which was the focus for component 3, including considerations about the sustainability of avocado production (high water consumption and risk of deforestation).

- The Council noted the number of actors involved in the programme, including several Danish Embassies in the region and local authorities, and underlined the need for a comprehensive coordination of activities.
- Council Members inquired about the calculation of the climate tagging of DKK 100 million which differed from the figure in the budget.

Other issues mentioned by the Council included the potential for a stronger focus on climate adaptation through the work on cold chains, SITA's contribution to the EU Global Gateway, consideration of including more general capacity-building on compliance with sustainability standards for exports to Europe, and the choice of border posts to be turned into smart borders.

#### **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) response to key issues:**

- The Ambassador recognised the importance of ensuring local ownership and political buy-in. Component 1 would support this, along with the demonstration of results and benefits of more efficient trade. It was explained that TMA had 25 years of presence in Africa and a strong track record of influencing policy. In addition, it was explained that a major advantage of only having one implementing partner was that more resources would be available at the Embassy to pursue political dialogue.
- The Ambassador agreed with the recommendation to focus efforts on ensuring that pilot projects could be scaled. He further explained that the balance between SITA's components should be viewed in the context of synergies with the existing Danish support to the AfCFTA through the Embassy in Ethiopia.
- The Team Leader clarified that the choice of the avocado value chain was based on the Programme Committee's recommendation to adopt a value chain approach and a need to ensure a more regional focus by promoting exports from landlocked countries in the region, whereas e.g., flowers would be heavily Kenya-focussed. Avocados were a heavy commodity making them a good business case for transitioning to sea.
- On the issue of coordination, the Ambassador underlined that the Embassy would increase its coordination efforts both with other donors as well as internally in the MFA, including with embassies in the region but also e.g., with relevant Strategic Sector Cooperation programmes. It was further important to ensure coherence between SITA and the upcoming support to East African Community (EAC).
- The Team Leader confirmed the calculation of the climate tagging of DKK 100 million should be changed to DKK 31.5 million.

The Under-Secretary for Development Policy informed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was currently preparing a new support to regional institutions, which would complement the SITA programme.

The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council recommended Sustainable and Inclusive Trade (SITA) for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Agenda Item No. 8: Danish contribution to the International Energy Agency's (IEA) Clean Energy Transition Programme (CETP)**

*For discussion and recommendation to the minister*

DKK 75 million

The Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate (KLIMA)

*Summary:*

*The Danish contribution to Clean Energy Transition Programme (CETP) will enable the International Energy Agency (IEA) to support developing countries and emerging economies' ability to accelerate and implement a clean energy transition, including a particular focus on energy efficiency targets. Based on a demand-driven approach, the CETP is providing technical support to targeted countries and regions to overcome market, regulatory and governance barriers towards a clean energy transition and to improve energy efficiency in targeted sectors. This is done by providing technical assistance, policy support, capacity building and improving data for decision-makers in the specific context. The CETP is also contributing to strengthening international coordination, knowledge and political will to accelerate a global green energy transition, including developing more people-centred approach for a clean energy transition.*

<i>The Council for Development Policy recommended the Danish support to IEA's Clean Energy Transition Programme for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.</i>
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**Key observations and recommendations from the Council:**

- The Council emphasised that they could see the relevance of supporting IEA as global leader on energy transition and welcomed the good coordination with activities of Danish Energy Agency's (DEA) Global Cooperation. The Council emphasised, however, that Denmark is supporting many institutions on mitigation global emissions and asked how IEA is adding value in the global green energy landscape. Members of the Council inquired about the means of action connected to the collaboration with the DEA and how the programme would include other global actors.
- While the relevance of focusing on energy efficiency was appreciated, Members of the Council asked how civil society was forming part of this work, stressing how important cooperation with civic society was to achieve energy efficiency in least developed countries (LDCs).
- The geographical focus of the programme was challenged by Members of the Council who asked if support to emerging economies was the right priority in times where global levels of development assistance were under pressure. The Council asked why the focus

was not on the least developed countries. Members of the Council recommended to reflect on the changed geopolitical context seen since the support was initiated.

- Members of the Council enquired about IEA's "people-centred clean energy transition" approach and how IEA was supporting working with human rights and the "Do no harm" principle to avoid adverse impacts.
- Finally, Members of the Council appreciated the proposed seconding and asked if Denmark was supporting IEA by other financial contributions.

### **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) and Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities (MCEU) response to key issues:**

- The Deputy Head of KLIMA welcomed the comments and explained how IEA had transitioned to become an agenda-setting voice for global clean energy transition and had expanded its work towards emerging economies and also to countries in Africa. In the current geopolitical context, where uncertainty about the green agenda was increasing, the Clean Energy Transition Programme (CETP) was providing important evidence and data to support global clean energy transition. The work of IEA was complementing the work of the Danish Energy Agency.
- The Deputy Head of Department further explained that Denmark would emphasise the cooperation with civil society organisations and also advocate for a Human Rights Based Approach in the ongoing dialogue with IEA. Since staff of IEA had a technical approach, there might be limitations to how far they would go, and also poverty-orientation was difficult in the energy efficiency agenda. IEA, however, had initiatives on clean cooking which had important development advantages.
- The People-Centred Approach was briefly explained as an approach to just transition where affordability and jobs were playing a key role and it also addressed the adverse impacts of transition such as new building codes on energy efficiency that could lead to higher rents in poor communities. The Deputy Head of Department noted that the "Do not harm" principle was gaining importance within IEA, reflected in a significantly greener approach to energy than the organisation used to have.
- On the geographical focus, the Deputy Head of Department explained that keeping a focus on the emerging economies was important as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were increasing fastest there. The selection of countries was based on where the highest reduction of emissions could be reached. He pointed out, however, that in recent years, CETP had increased its support to the African region significantly.
- Finally, the Head of Section from the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities (MCEU) informed that Denmark also paid an annual Danish non-ODA financial contribution to the IEA to finance the core work of the agency. The current annual Danish contribution was approximately DKK 1.5 million.

The Chair of the Council concluded that the Council recommended the Danish support to IEA's Clean Energy Transition Programme for approval by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**Agenda item no. 9: Any Other Business**

No issues were raised under this agenda item.