



**Statement at the first Ministerial meeting of the
Coalition for the Sahel held by videoconference,
12 June 2020**

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Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania**

A secure, stable and peaceful Sahel is in the common interest of all those participating in this high level event initiated by France, which reflects the long term commitment and engagement in the region by the European Union and the international community as a whole.

The very fact that a number of Sahel initiatives, strategies and frameworks are in place - from the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, the EU Sahel strategy and Regional action plan to Sahel Alliance and now the P3S - underlines how important the region is for our common security and prosperity. As we seek to support and assist the region, we must make sure there is a clear ownership of the processes and efforts by the G5 Sahel countries.

The effectiveness and impact of all the mechanisms on the ground will depend on our ability to ensure synergetic, mutually reinforcing action, non-duplication, as well as better division of labour, information sharing and coordination among all the actors involved.

We therefore welcome the initiative of the Partnership for Security and Stability in the Sahel (P3S). We hope that it can become, inter alia, an action-oriented clearing house that will improve the coherence and harmonization of our actions, aimed at delivering real, tangible change in the lives of the people of the Sahel region.

We fully support the EU's engagements with G5 Sahel governments on governance, human rights, youth unemployment and migration, women's empowerment and other issues at the center of tensions among local communities. Creating opportunities for local populations will also contribute to making these communities more resilient against militant jihadism and radicalization.

For its part, Lithuania is firmly committed to international efforts to improve peace and security in the region by continued participation in MINUSMA. We will also continue our contribution to the overall aims of P3S through further participation in EUTM Mali (2 pillar) as well as development assistance focused on renewable energy (4 pillar).