Dear Mr Smith,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 18 February and for consulting us in the framework of UK Government Balance of Competences Review.

A concrete example of the importance of promoting a coordinated approach among EU Member States can be taken from the current international agenda. At the coordination meeting of EU Development Ministers, held in Brussels last 26 February and aimed at reinforcing the European Union’s common response to Mali’s development challenges, emerged with strong evidence that EU’s and Member States’ development cooperation and humanitarian aid policies complement and reinforce each other.

An integrated and coordinated EU approach is key to:
- maximise EU aid impact and efficiency;
- avoid fragmentation;
- adopt a common approach towards the implementation of Budget Support initiatives.

In this context, the gradual resumption of EU development assistance to Mali – which Italy supports - and the initiation of actions in the field of elections, reconciliation and dialogue, health, sanitation and basic services can prove to be all positive outcomes of such a common EU approach.

Other relevant examples emerge from the EU approach to resilience: the SHARE strategy (Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience) in the Horn of Africa and the AGIR initiative (Alliance Globale pour l’Initiative Resilience) in the Sahel are both important initiatives testifying the importance of providing a common and integrated approach to tackle, in a comprehensive and cost-effective way, the root causes of recurrent crises.

I look forward to receiving the results of your important exercise.

Kindest regards,

(Fabio Cassese)

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