



**COUNCIL OF
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**SOUTH AFRICA – EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
TSHWANE, 10 OCTOBER 2007
JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

Within the framework of the South Africa- European Union Strategic Partnership, the second Ministerial Troika was held in Tshwane, South Africa, on 10 October 2007. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E Dr Nkosazana DLAMINI ZUMA, Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, and H.E. Dr Luís AMADO, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal for the EU Presidency.

The South African delegation included H.E. Trevor MANUEL, Minister of Finance, H.E. Marthinus VAN SCHALKWYK, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, H.E. Mandisi MPAHLWA, Minister of Trade and Industry, H.E. Buyelwa SONJICA, Minister of Minerals and Energy, as well as H.E. Mluleki GEORGE Deputy Minister of Defence.

P R E S S

The EU Troika also included Mr Louis MICHEL, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission, Mr Matjaž ŠINKOVEC, State Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister of Slovenia, and Mr Koen VERVAEKE, Head of the Africa Unit, Council Secretariat.

Relations between South Africa and the EU continue to deepen. Building on shared values and common interests, relations have developed over thirteen years into a mutually beneficial and comprehensive partnership based on equality. Following the adoption of the Joint Action Plan at the SA-EU Joint Co-operation Council on 14 November 2006, South Africa and the EU are building on the strong and productive relations through the implementation of a Strategic Partnership that is based on an open and concrete dialogue and which is being pursued on the basis of mutual understanding and ownership of the process.

Report of the 8th SA-EU Joint Cooperation Council

Ministers heard a report from the SA-EU Joint Cooperation Council, held earlier today at Senior Officials level under the joint chairmanship of Dr Ayanda NTSALUBA, Director General of the South African Department of Foreign Affairs, and Prof. Manuel CORREIA, President of the Portuguese Institute for Cooperation and Development. The Report outlined ongoing cooperation in areas of trade, development, science and technology and the environment, as well as a progress report of the Revision of the TDCA.

Implementation of the Joint Action Plan of the SA-EU Strategic Partnership

Ministers also discussed new areas of cooperation being developed under the Joint Action Plan, including peace and security cooperation, customs cooperation, energy cooperation, as well as a transport and human rights dialogue.

Joint EU-Africa Strategy / EU-Africa Summit

The EU informed of progress in the preparation of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and its Action Plan which are to be presented at the EU-Africa Ministerial Troika Meeting in Accra, Ghana, on 31 October 2007 and agreed at the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon on 8-9 December 2007. Both sides expressed their expectation that the Summit and the adoption of the Joint Strategy will mark a step change to setting up a broad based political and strategic partnership between the EU and Africa. South Africa emphasised that the Joint EU-Africa Strategy should be supportive of Africa's larger development goals. Ministers agreed to cooperate within the context of the South Africa-EU Joint Action Plan to ensure the full implementation of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy.

Millennium Development Goals

Ministers noted that 2007 was the midpoint for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and called on all Parties to implement their global commitments in order to achieve the goals by 2015.

EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement

Ministers reaffirmed the urgent need for the Parties to conclude by the end of the year a mutually beneficial agreement which also addresses developmental needs in SADC EPA states and supports regional integration.

WTO/DOHA

Ministers underlined the need to conclude the WTO Doha Development Agenda (DDA) as soon as possible. They called upon the Parties to show flexibility and commitment to move the process forward to ensure that the DDA objectives are met.

Peace and Security/ AU and NEPAD

Ministers noted the positive developments in the area of peace and security and the growing democratisation of Africa. Ministers exchanged views on the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Security Council on “Peace and Security in Africa” held on 25 September 2007. Ministers also noted the progress of the African Peer Review Mechanism and, in this context, South Africa informed the Meeting of the status of its own review. South Africa welcomed the continued involvement of the EU and the UN in addressing the peace and security challenges in Africa. The EU reaffirmed its support for the AU, the establishment of the African Peace and Security Architecture and the AU’s socio-economic programme, NEPAD. It also expressed its appreciation for South Africa’s mediation efforts in Africa.

Great Lakes Region

Welcoming the important progress made in the Great Lakes Region, Ministers expressed their continued support to actively cooperate with the new Congolese authorities in consolidation of peace and democracy. Both sides confirmed their commitment to providing support for the reform process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in particular of the security sector, welcoming the initiative of organising a round table conference in Kinshasa in October 2007 to that purpose.

Ministers expressed their concern at the security situation in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the Kivus where the presence of foreign and Congolese armed groups continues to threaten the country's stability. They called upon all the parties to find peaceful solutions and abstain from all military action likely to aggravate the situation, particularly at humanitarian level affecting notably women and children. They welcomed MONUC actively supporting the ongoing efforts to that end. Ministers recognized that the relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda are crucial to resolving the crisis in the Kivus and would encourage both governments to continue their cooperation in that respect.

Burundi

Ministers encouraged the political leaders to continue their efforts to find a solution for the political crisis of the recent months. Ministers noted with deep concern the FNL's growing resistance to engage with the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and called on all parties to return to the JMMM process unconditionally which remains the only legitimate way to resolve outstanding issues. Recognizing the important contributions made by the Regional Initiative and in particular by the Republic of South Africa, Ministers stressed the importance of continuous international engagement including in the UN Peacebuilding Commission.

Sudan

In regard to the Sudan, Ministers expressed concern about the continued challenges to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the North and the South, especially the implementation of the Abyei Boundary Commission (ABC) Report.

Ministers welcomed the progress made towards a political settlement of the conflict in Darfur and expressed strong support for the UN and AU Special Envoys. Looking forward to the start of the peace talks on 27 October, Ministers urged all parties to participate constructively in the talks and contribute to an atmosphere conducive to peace, in particular through a cessation of hostilities. Ministers also expressed concern at the ongoing humanitarian situation.

Ministers commended the partnership between the UN and the AU, which made possible the decision to establish the UN-AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). They called on the AU, the UN and the Government of Sudan to cooperate to its rapid deployment.

Chad/ Central African Republic

The EU informed of the preparations for the possible deployment of an EU military operation to Eastern Chad and North-Eastern Central African Republic in support of the UN presence there with a view to improving security in those areas and contributing to the protection of refugees and IDPs. In this respect, Ministers welcomed UN Security Council Resolution 1778 (2007) authorising the operation. The Ministers stressed the need for effective co-ordination between the EU Mission and the UN Mission in Chad and the AU-UN Hybrid Force.

Somalia

Ministers stressed the importance of an inclusive political process as the basis for durable peace. In this regard, they urged the Transitional Federal Government to pursue an inclusive political process and urged all stakeholders in Somalia to ensure that the national reconciliation process is successful. Ministers welcomed the commitments made at the National Reconciliation Congress in Mogadishu and the renewed agreement in Djeddah on 16 September. They also welcomed further steps by the Transitional Federal Institutions to reach out to opposition groups that renounce violence. The EU and South Africa commended the role of the AU-mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and agreed that it needs additional troops and funding. Ministers expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in Somalia as well as the continued violence and insecurity in parts of the country.

Zimbabwe

Ministers discussed the current situation in Zimbabwe and expressed concerns about the socio-economic and humanitarian situation. Both South Africa and the EU share a commitment to working with the people and government of Zimbabwe to address the challenges of the current socio-economic and humanitarian situation. The EU continued to welcome the SADC initiative and the mandate to President Mbeki to continue to facilitate dialogue between the opposition and the government in Zimbabwe and expressed readiness to respond appropriately to tangible results of this initiative. Ministers welcomed the adoption by the Zimbabwe Parliament of the constitutional amendment and agreed that meaningful internal dialogue in Zimbabwe is crucial to the resolution of the current challenges.

Middle East

Ministers discussed current developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Ministers acknowledged the ongoing meetings between President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as a positive development in the quest for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The Ministers expressed concern over the recent declaration by Israel that described the Gaza Strip as hostile territory and the effect this declaration might have on the dire humanitarian conditions in Gaza. The Ministers expressed the hope that the US sponsored Peace Conference scheduled for November 2007 will lead to a framework agreement between Israel and Palestine that would result in the creation of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state, living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security and within internationally recognised borders.

Iran

Ministers expressed their commitment to finding a diplomatic solution to the Iranian crisis, guided by the decisions taken by the IAEA Board of Governors and in line with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. They also recalled the E3+3 Offer of June 2006. Ministers encouraged all Parties concerned to enter into a dialogue and negotiations in order to seek a comprehensive and sustainable solution. Ministers supported the calls for a “double time-out” of all enrichment related activities and of sanctions, thereby providing a window of opportunity for the resumption of these negotiations. South Africa encouraged all Parties to refrain from any actions that would hinder the implementation of the understanding reached and the continuation of cooperation between the IAEA and Iran.

Kosovo

Ministers exchanged views on the Kosovo Status process. They considered that status quo was unsustainable and underlined the necessity of rapidly finding a solution to the Kosovo Status issue. A sustainable solution to Kosovo status was key to lasting stability in the Western Balkans. Ministers expressed their support for the efforts by the Troika, comprising representatives by the EU, the US and the Russian Federation, and stressed the importance of Belgrade's and Pristina's full and constructive engagement in the renewed period of negotiations running until 10 December 2007.

Environment and Climate Change

Ministers welcomed the launch of the South African – EC Environment and Sustainable Development Forum and praised the fruitful discussions at the forums first meeting held in Brussels on 1 and 2 October 2007. The meeting provided the opportunity to exchange views on a variety of global environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity and international environment governance. Areas were identified which could be taken into account under the Joint SA-EC Multi- annual Indicative Programme. These include waste management, “working for wetlands”, “street lightning” and “clean fires”.

The meeting agreed to exchange information and to explore the possibility to hold a series of workshops for experts in areas such as Sustainable Production and Consumption, waste minimization, biofuels and climate change mitigation scenarios and modelling. With regard to joint cooperation under the CITES convention, South Africa undertook to examine the EU arguments for ratification of the Gaborone amendment to enable the EC to become full member of this Convention.

In terms of Pan-Africa and Regional cooperation it was agreed that we would explore the potential of hosting an EU-Africa Ministerial meeting on environment to be held back to back with the 12th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) to be held in June 2008 in South Africa. Both Parties agreed to hold their next meeting of the SA-EU Environment and Sustainable Development Forum in South Africa prior to the 2008 SA - EU Joint Cooperation Council.

Ministers exchanged views on the outcomes of the High Level Meeting on Climate Change at the UNGA as well as the Major Economies Meeting held in the USA. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to set out a comprehensive process in charge of coordinating the work with a view to agreeing by 2009 to a fair, flexible and inclusive climate change regime beyond 2012. Ministers also reaffirmed the UNFCCC is the appropriate forum for future negotiating future multilateral action on climate change.

Migration

Ministers agreed that migration is a common challenge for Europe and Africa and that collective policy responses must be found at national, regional and global levels, especially to enhance the development benefits of migration and reduce its possible negative political and human rights dimensions. It was further agreed that issues such as resource mobilisation, technology transfer and capacity building should be further discussed and strengthened where needed. In this context, they underlined the need to implement the Africa-EU Joint Declaration on Migration and Development adopted in Tripoli, Libya, in November 2006. Ministers also acknowledged the need for continuing and strengthening, at bilateral level, the dialogue on migration and development, as well as on migration and migration related issues between South Africa and the EU, with the objective of achieving closer cooperation between the Parties in all the areas concerned as outlined in the revised TDCA.

Non proliferation initiative

The EU informed about the upcoming symposium organised at the initiative of the EU SG/HR Solana in the context of the EU WMD Strategy.

The way forward

Ministers agreed that the next Ministerial Troika will take place under the Slovenian Presidency in the first half of 2008 and expressed the wish to hold an SA-EU Summit as soon as possible.
