



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**SOUTH AFRICA-EU
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
from the Ministerial Troika Meeting
Ljubljana, Slovenia
3 June 2008**

Within the framework of the South Africa-European Union Strategic Partnership, the third Ministerial Troika was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on 3 June 2008. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E Dr Nkosazana DLAMINI ZUMA, Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, and H.E. Mr Dimitrij RUPEL, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, President of the Council of the European Union.

P R E S S

The South African delegation included H.E. Dr Rob DAVIES, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry.

The EU Troika also included Mr Louis MICHEL, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid of the European Commission, Mr Jean-Christophe BELLIARD, Personal Envoy to Africa of the SG/High Representative, and Ms Caroline DUMAS, Deputy Director for Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France.

The meeting of the Ministerial Troika, the third since the adoption of the SA-EU Strategic Partnership Joint Action Plan on 14 May 2007, and held less than two months before the first SA-EU Summit, is a manifestation of the strengthening of relations between South Africa and the EU, based on open and concrete dialogue aimed at addressing the challenges being faced by both partners.

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

Ministers welcomed and discussed areas of cooperation being developed under the Joint Action Plan, including peace and security cooperation, environment, science and technology, customs, energy, migration as well as transport. Both sides welcomed the progress made in the existing cooperation and policy dialogues and agreed that new areas for structured dialogues would be formalised during the first SA-EU Summit in Bordeaux, France, on 25 July 2008.

Economic Partnership Agreement

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to continue negotiations with a view to reaching a mutually beneficial agreement on a final SADC EPA with the most inclusive membership that addresses the concerns expressed by both sides and supports regional integration, including with respect to SADC and SACU. The EU recalled that the Interim EPA provides for the completion of negotiations of the full EPA by the end of 2008. South Africa noted that it was not a party to the Interim EPA and therefore was not bound by this timeline. South Africa further informed the EU of the Addis Ababa Declaration of the African Ministers of Trade and Finance of April 2008.

Implementation of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy

Both sides welcomed the adoption of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and its first Action Plan at the Second EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon, Portugal, in December 2007, and looked forward to early progress in the implementation of the Africa-EU Partnerships agreed in Lisbon. The importance of effective and concrete implementation of the Joint Strategy and related Action Plan by all stakeholders, including non-state actors, was highlighted as crucial for a successful and mutually beneficial Strategic Partnership between the two continents. It was urged that all outcomes of the Summit should work towards this end. Strong monitoring, evaluation and review mechanisms of the Action Plan should be established as soon as possible to ensure concrete goal-oriented outcomes aimed at achieving the objectives set out in the Action Plan. Lastly, actions undertaken within the Joint Strategy should complement other international development agenda objectives.

UN Charter Chapter VIII issues

Both sides emphasised the importance of strengthening the relationship between the UN Security Council and regional organisations, in particular the African Union, in terms of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The convening of a high-level Security Council meeting on 16 April 2008, under South Africa's Presidency, to discuss this theme and specific African conflict situations was noted as an important contribution in this regard.

Both sides welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1809 (2008). The Parties further welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to set up within three months an AU-UN panel consisting of distinguished persons to consider in-depth the modalities of how to support such peacekeeping operations, in particular start-up funding, equipment and logistics and to consider in-depth lessons from past and current African Union peacekeeping efforts.

African Diaspora Summit

South Africa informed that the AU Summit of February 2008 had reaffirmed South Africa as the host of the African Diaspora Summit to be held from 7 to 11 November 2008. The Summit is expected to adopt a plan of action and implementation mechanism to address the tangible contribution of the diaspora to the socio-economic development of Africa as well as discuss how Africa, through the AU, can assist in the plight of the African Diaspora.

Great Lakes Region

Both Parties welcomed the important progress made in the Great Lakes Region.

Ministers expressed their willingness to continue cooperating with the DRC authorities in consolidation of peace and democracy. Both sides confirmed their commitment to providing continued support for the reform process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in particular in the security sector.

Both Parties 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 continue to threaten the country's stability. In this regard, they expressed their support for Security Council Resolution 1804 (2008) of 13 March 2008 calling for the disarmament of armed groups and militias in the eastern part of the DRC. 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 in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Both Parties recognized that the relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda are crucial to resolving the crisis in the Kivus and encouraged both governments to continue their cooperation in that respect.

Both parties expressed their satisfaction with the outcome of the Goma Conference on Peace, Security and Development that was organised by the Congolese authorities, involving all Congolese armed groups and civil society. The EU and South Africa agreed that the international community would need to keep supporting this process and the reconstruction of the East of the DRC. Both sides recognised that continued development cooperation is essential to sustainable peace and security in the region.

On Burundi, both sides welcomed that the standoff between the Government and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was resolved through the intervention of the Regional Initiative Foreign Ministers in Abuja on 4 May 2008. It was noted that the Chairperson of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, Mr Agathon Rwasa, returned to Burundi on 30 May 2008 after the cessation of hostilities was formally signed. The opportunity now exists for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement leading to the conclusion of a lasting peace agreement. The EU paid tribute to the ongoing South African efforts in Burundi as part of the general stabilisation of the Great Lakes region.

Sudan/ Darfur/ Chad/ Central African Republic

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the stability and integrity of Sudan.

Ministers condemned the recent fighting in Abyei and recalled the importance of the CPA implementation. Ministers further condemned the recent attack on Ondurman.

On Darfur, Ministers called for the full deployment, on the ground, of the hybrid force, for the relaunch of the peace process and for the improvement of relations between Sudan and Chad, within the framework of existing agreements.

With regard to Eastern Chad and CAR, EUFOR Chad/CAR is an important EU contribution to improve in particular the security for refugees and IDPs.

Concerning Chad, the recent reshuffle of the Chadian government, opening up to opposition members, was welcomed as a contribution to the reconciliation process. The Inter-Chadian Agreement of 13 August 2007 is the cornerstone of this process.

Zimbabwe

Both Parties discussed the situation in Zimbabwe and commended the people of Zimbabwe for the peaceful manner in which the elections were conducted. They noted that the SADC Extraordinary Summit held in Lusaka on 12 April 2008 reaffirmed its support for the facilitation process being undertaken by President Mbeki. Noting the release of the presidential election results, both Parties look forward to a peaceful presidential run-off on 27 June 2008 and condemn acts of violence that undermine the credibility of the forthcoming run-off election. In this context, both sides underlined the importance of continued monitoring of the elections by African institutions and civil society organisations. Ministers expressed concern about the socio-economic and humanitarian conditions.

Comoros

Both Parties discussed the latest developments in the Comoros. Ministers welcomed the commitment by the Union Government in Moroni to hold legitimate and transparent presidential elections in Anjouan in June 2008. Both parties agreed to continue monitoring developments in the Comoros, to remain seized on the issue and to consult each other.

Somalia

The EU and South Africa expressed firm support for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia. They commended the continued efforts of the TFG to advance an inclusive political process and encouraged all stakeholders in Somalia to renounce violence and engage constructively in the ongoing Djibouti process. Both sides were pleased with the efforts of SGSR Ahmedu Ould Abdallah and encouraged him to continue. The EU and South Africa deplored the humanitarian situation in Somalia and called on the parties to the Somali conflict to take all necessary measures to protect civilians and respect international humanitarian law and human rights. The EU and South Africa expressed support for the African Union Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and called for more contributions to the mission. Finally, the EU and South Africa welcomed the increasing engagement by the UN in Somalia in the political, security and humanitarian field.

Kenya

The Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the announcement of a Grand Coalition Government for Kenya, following the post election violence and wish to commend both President Kibaki and Prime Minister Odinga for reaching consensus and displaying true statesmanship. Both Parties fully support the Grand Coalition Government, and urge all stakeholders to ensure its success during the next five years.

The Ministers also called a continuing commitment from both the PNU and ODM for the successful conclusion to the ongoing Kenyan National Dialogue and Reconciliation negotiations. They agreed that continued support is needed to maintain the momentum for implementation of the agreement and to encourage national reconciliation and dialogue.

The Ministers expressed their concern about the ongoing plight of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the various camps, and urge the Government to urgently resolve the issue of resettling the IDPs and assist them to resume normal lives in safe environment.

Middle East Peace Process

Both Parties continued to urge that the negotiation process inaugurated at the Annapolis meeting continue so that the goals outlined at the meeting can be realised, with the aim of creating an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian state, living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security and within internationally recognised borders.

The Parties condemned the continued violence in the region and urge restraint to avoid greater civilian casualties on both sides.

Western Balkans

The EU briefed on the situation in the Western Balkans. The confirmation of the European perspective and the definition of supporting measures remained the overall message sent to the region. As for the political situation in Serbia, all options in the coalition formation process are still open following the elections, but the EU continues to underline its strong commitment for a European future for the country. On Kosovo, the EU underlined that it is regarded as a *sui generis* case, not forming a precedent for other cases. The EU intends to play a leading role in Kosovo. The EUSR office in Pristina is now fully functional and the deployment of EULEX is under way. South Africa noted the briefing by the EU and reiterated that it would have preferred a negotiated solution in Kosovo, in line with international law and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. South Africa further noted that the issue is still on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

EU-China-Africa

The EU informed South Africa of a forthcoming communication that proposes to establish trilateral EU/AU/China dialogue and cooperation.

ESDP

The EU briefed on the evolution of the ESDP and its future role.

Concerning ESDP in DRC, the role of past and existing ESDP missions was acknowledged. Concerning EUSEC, Ministers welcomed the continued good cooperation between South Africa and EUSEC in the reform of the Congolese army.

On EUFOR Chad/CAR, the EU informed that Initial Operational Capability had been reached on 15 March and that currently 2800 troops are operating on the ground. Preparations are underway for the mid-mandate review that will make recommendations for the post EUFOR arrangements to be discussed in the UNSC.

WTO / DOHA

Both Parties remain committed to concluding the Doha Round in line with the developmental mandate and objectives set out in the Doha Declaration. Ministers recognized the importance of the Doha Round to promote global economic growth and further integration of developing countries into the global trading system on a fair and equitable basis. South Africa emphasised that an equitable and proportional outcome of NAMA that does not undermine industrial development is integral to a successful outcome. Both sides signalled their willingness to engage further in the process in order to resolve the remaining differences among WTO members in a constructive manner.

The way forward

Ministers discussed the agenda of the first SA-EU Summit to be held in Bordeaux, France, on 25 July 2008.
