

Brussels, 1 June 2011

Joint Declaration - The 5th College-to-College meeting of the European Commission and the African Union Commission

Africa and the European Union are bound together by history, geography and shared values, such as the respect for human rights, justice, freedom, the rule of law, gender equality and democracy. Africa and the European Union are committed to bolstering democracy and working together on common and global challenges to pursue their mutual interests, especially in areas such as peace and security, democratic governance, regional and continental integration, food security, climate change as well as governance, transparency and regulation of the global economy.

The 2011 meeting between the EU and AU Commissions has been crucial to develop shared policy agendas. During two days, EU and AU Commissioners, as well as Chief Executives of African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) discussed concrete ways to enhance cooperation both on short-term challenges and on the long-term structural changes such as regional integration and sustainable, inclusive and green growth and the equitable transformation of the world economy.

Building on the soundly established relationship and the successful political, policy, technical and administrative cooperation the EC and AUC have cultivated, this 5th meeting once more demonstrated the maturity of our partnership. It reinforced our institutional and operational links, and enabled us to identify synergies and to further align our policies and initiatives so as to better address challenges and seize new opportunities in a rapidly changing environment.

Once again, the presence of the African Regional Economic Communities and NPCA has broadened the scope of the dialogue, contributed to the success of the meeting and was warmly welcomed.

In this spirit of the Strategic Partnership, the European and African Union Commissions have in particular agreed to the following:

A. PEACE AND SECURITY, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. We will pursue and deepen our cooperation in support of peace, security and democratic governance in Africa to further build on our intense and successful political dialogue in recent months. In this regard, we will promote national reconciliation and economic recovery in Ivory Coast, and work jointly to foster good-neighbourly relations between North and South Sudan following the latter's expected independence in July 2011.

2. To address challenges to democratic governance, human and people's rights as well as peace and security, we will pursue the consolidation of the African Governance Architecture and the full operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture. Furthermore, we will closely collaborate to address transnational threats to stability, peace and security such as terrorism, drugs trafficking and maritime piracy. We also agree to strengthen our efforts in fighting human trafficking and will take concrete joint initiatives to this end.

3. We will support broad-based national dialogues and support the strengthening of civil society organisations which can hold authorities accountable, in line with the people centred nature of our strategic partnership. We will continue to promote dialogue between young people and support activities to strengthen their capacity to actively participate in democratic processes and societal progress.

B. MIGRATION, MOBILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

4. We acknowledge the strong link between migration and development and therefore reiterate our commitment to further consolidate and strengthen our dialogue and cooperation. The EU stands ready to continue supporting African States in managing the flows of migrants and refugees, as well as providing adequate humanitarian assistance, especially in relation to Cote d'Ivoire and Libya. We also recognise that in order to reap the benefits of migration and mobility, a comprehensive and efficient policy is needed to address legal migration, the linkage between migration and development as well as concerns related to irregular migration.

5. With the growing young population in Africa, we acknowledge the importance of promoting employment and decent work for all as means of achieving an inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development. In this regard, we welcome the forthcoming AU Summit on Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development in Africa. In view of the International Labour Conference of June this year, we will pursue our dialogue on social protection.

C. TRADE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

6. We will continue to pursue regional integration and promote cooperation in the areas of trade, investment and infrastructure development. We re-affirm our strong commitment to regional and continental integration and agree to follow-up with concrete actions under the Joint Action Plan, building on the experience of the EU Internal market. The EU will, in particular, support Africa's integration initiatives, including the Minimum Integration Programme (MIP).

7. In the field of trade, we advocate for an increased pace of the negotiations in view of concluding Economic Partnership Agreements that support sustainable economic development and regional integration in Africa and strengthen Africa-EU ties. We will further improve bilateral fisheries agreements between the EU and African countries to ensure the sustainable and mutually beneficial exploitation of fish stocks, while effectively supporting the development of the fisheries sector in African coastal states. We will also initiate consultations with a view to developing regional perspectives on this matter and support capacity building efforts in this domain. We are mindful of the need to integrate small-scale fisheries into the value chain, and to pursue further processing.

8. We will also make joint efforts to promote cooperation on customs matters between the EU and Africa to facilitate trade, protect the security and safety of our citizens, and defend our financial interests.

9. In the area of investment, we will enhance collaboration in improving the business climate and facilitate engagement with the private sector through platforms such as the regular EU-Africa Business Forum.

10. With regard to infrastructure development, we commit to enhancing progress in the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), as well as the initiative for the provision of satellite navigation services (based on EGNOS) in Africa, including the preparation of the financing dossier and the definition of the governance structure of a future programme in this regard.

D. ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

11. We recognize the need to keep development in Africa as one of the priorities of the G20 agenda and agree to coordinate efforts on issues such the reform of the global governance system.

12. Moreover, we acknowledge the importance of good governance in the tax area and support initiatives that will lead to more transparency of payments, including payments to governments by the extractive industry. We stand firm in the fight against money laundering, terrorism financing and tax fraud. We are ready to strengthen our joint efforts in the fight against fake medicines and counterfeited goods to protect the health and safety of our citizens.

13. We agree to strengthen our cooperation on raw materials under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy Action Plan 2011-2013 around good governance, infrastructure and geological skills and knowledge base. We take note of the recent Communication on Raw materials by the EU Commission and look forward to the African Union Action Plan on the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision. We also agree on the importance of raising the issue of Raw materials at the G20. In this context, we also discussed the problem of excessive price volatility in commodity markets and agreed on the need for increased integrity and transparency of commodity derivatives markets.

E. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

14. We remain firmly committed to achieving the MDGs as a matter of priority and agree on the need for urgent and decisive action to accelerate progress. In this regard, particular emphasis will be placed on the promotion of inclusive and sustainable growth as an essential driver of development as well as taking steps to meet the commitments made at the September 2010 High Level Event on MDGs. Looking beyond 2015, we will work together, as well as with other development actors, to define and implement a continued and ambitious international development agenda which eliminates poverty within the shortest possible timeframe.

15. In the field of education, we will maintain and strengthen our joint efforts to achieve universal basic education, and reinforce institutional and professional capacities to achieve the objectives of the action plan of the Second Decade for Education in Africa. To promote education at all levels, we will launch the African Higher Education Harmonisation through the revised Arusha Convention and Tuning project this Autumn and will support the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, including the Ouagadougou conference of November 2011.

16. We will also strengthen our efforts for accelerated progress in the field of health, including women's and children's health, HIV/AIDS, and e-health. We emphasise our firm commitment to strengthening our cooperation in the fields of gender equality and women empowerment and take note of the African Women's Decade Implementation as the continental framework. We are also committed to reinforce the cultural dimension in our cooperation.

17. We recognise that generalised access to energy constitutes a pre-requisite to meet most MDGs and is a motor for growth. Therefore, we reaffirm our commitment to the existing initiatives such as the EU-Africa Energy Partnership and the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme.

F. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

18. We welcome the results of the Cancun Conference as a balanced package and need to continue negotiations so that the upcoming Durban Conference can fully operationalise the Cancun Agreements. We take note and support efforts aimed at the finalisation of the joint Africa-EU declaration on Climate Change initiated last year.

19. Alarmed by the recent figures showing increasing global emissions of green house gases, we call upon all parties with major emissions to step up their mitigation efforts in order to close the serious gap to reach the 2 degree objective as agreed in Cancun. We urge developed country Parties to increase the ambition of their economy-wide emission reduction targets and support developing countries to adapt to climate change by providing adequate and predictable financial resources as well as technologies. We also urge the developing country parties to enhance their mitigation actions.

20. As 2011 is the year of the African Conference of the Parties, special focus needs to be paid to the implementation of the Adaptation Framework, namely establishment of the Adaptation Committee and further progress on the work programme on loss and damage, which are important issues for both EU and Africa. We note that the EU is meeting its commitments on fast start funding and is making this funding available to Africa in accordance with the African Group's proposals presented in Copenhagen.

21. We welcome the progress on the Green Development Fund, which has great potential to mobilise climate funding efficiently and effectively for Africa. We note that African states account for most of the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements with the EU and look forward to their full implementation. We will also seek to maximise the synergies between FLEGT and REDD+ strategies.

22. On the environment, we recognise that biodiversity loss is one of the major challenges of the 21st century for both the African continent and the EU and agree to strengthen our co-operation to ensure that healthy ecosystems and biodiversity continue to provide goods and services essential for the prosperity and well-being of all nations.

23. We regard the Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio next year, with its focus on green economy and link to poverty reduction, as a unique opportunity for the world to advance its commitments to sustainable development and address today's environmental and social challenges.

G. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

24. We will continue our joint efforts in the fields of agriculture, food safety and food security and acknowledge their potential for promoting economic growth and sustainable development. In this context, we strengthen our resolve to accelerate the implementation of the Africa Land Policy Guidelines and support the process of establishing international guidelines on access to land and other natural resources. We express our satisfaction on the establishment of the Pan-African Farmers Forum and agree that a continuation and scaling up of EU support to African Farmers Organisations will be most useful to advance on Africa's agricultural agenda.

25. We agree that an increase in financing for agricultural research for development is essential and that such research needs to be driven by the needs of farmers and well linked to national agricultural research and extension systems. We recognise the importance of organic farming and we will build on the process to establish an African organic farming platform. In this context, we welcome the Organic Farming workshop in July 2011 as a good opportunity to exchange best practices and guidance in support of the development of sustainable organic farming systems in Africa.

26. Regarding geographical indications (GI), we welcome the first meeting in the second half of 2011 in Kampala, which allows us to disseminate knowledge, share experiences and address challenges to the GI system for African farmers, fishermen, and agri-food producers wishing to access the GI system.

27. Furthermore, in view of the upcoming G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting in June, the African Union Commission will pronounce that the international community must remain vigilant on price movements and their effects at local and regional level, and on small farmers in particular. The Action Plan, which must be endorsed by Agriculture Ministers, should also be sensitive to the realities of Africa. It should particularly address the question of how Africa can feed itself, support responsible agricultural investments, improve sustainable production systems, promote value chains and design risk management tools.

H. SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

28. We will cooperate to maximise the potential benefits of Science, Technology and Innovation for poverty reduction, growth and socio-economic development. In this context, we will secure substantial investments for strengthening African capacities in these fields. In addition, we welcome the first Senior Officials Meeting of the Africa-EU High level Science and Technology Policy Dialogue in Addis Ababa on 10-11 October 2011, which will further consolidate our joint scientific and technological cooperation.

29. We reaffirm our commitment to the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and Africa initiative, and agree on the importance to advance on the finalisation and adoption of the GMES and Africa Action Plan, reflecting the needs of African users. The AU Commission will drive this process forward in full consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the Coordination Taskforce. Since GMES and Africa initiative is focused on applications, the AU Commission confirms that all potential beneficiaries within the AU Commission, the RECs and the African Member States will be fully engaged in the GMES and Africa process.

30. Furthermore, we confirm our on-going support in principle for the African Space Agency project and for the establishment of a Space Sciences Institute in the context of the Pan-African University.

31. We remain committed to our cooperation in the Information Society domain, notably through scaling-up initiatives launched under the Action Plan 2008-2010, exploiting synergies between the EU Digital Agenda and the AU ICT development frameworks, and fostering deployment of innovative e-services to fast-track African development in all socio-economic sectors.

I. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING AND BILATERAL COOPERATION

32. We will foster our bilateral technical and administrative cooperation, including twinning and exchange arrangements between our services. In particular, we will advance our joint efforts in the fields of human resources policy, IT security, communication, financial management capacity –accountancy standards, internal control standards and internal audit– and budgeting. Our meeting allowed for the exchange of experiences and best practices in the field of administrative cooperation as well as strengthening our institutional ties, predominantly via the staff exchange program. In this context, we are pleased with the excellent and fruitful cooperation and progress made since 2006. The AUC and EC also signed a recently developed Aide Memoire that addresses current challenges and sets out joint measures to strengthen the AUC financial management and EU-AU cooperation.

ACHIEVING RESULTS

The political and operational impetus provided by the two Commissions remains instrumental for the success of the Africa-EU Partnership. But the Commissions cannot deliver alone - all other stakeholders from the two continents, Member States, RECs, Parliaments, private sector, civil society, local authorities and media are invited to join our efforts to foster the implementation of the Action Plan 2011-13 of the Joint Strategy and to deliver visible results to the citizens of our continents. Last but not least, our discussions addressed the issue of securing adequate and predictable resources for the effective implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and its successive Action Plans.

Finally, we agreed to meet again in 2012 in Addis Ababa