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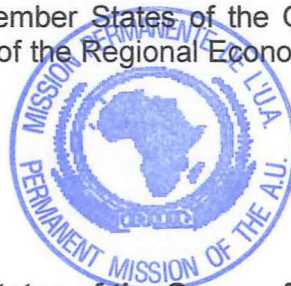
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Réf. : UA.BRU/EP/GR.AFR/PLEN./157.12

The Permanent Mission of the African Union in Brussels presents its compliments to all the Embassies of Member States of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities, and has the honour to inform the latter that **the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels will hold its 149th Ordinary Session on Wednesday 12 September 2012 at 300 p.m. at the ACP House**, to consider the following Draft Agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda;
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the 148th Ordinary Session
3. Briefing on the 19th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly
4. Preparation of the Coordination Meeting between the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the African Parliamentarians from the ACP parliamentary Assembly, Brussels 17 September 2012;
5. Establishment of a Joint Committee composed of African Parliamentarians and members of the Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels;
6. Commemoration of International Day of Peace;
7. Draft Programme of Work until December 2012
8. Preparation of the Group of African Ambassadors for the 7th ACP Summit
9. Any Other Business.

The Permanent Mission of the African Union in Brussels, avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all the Embassies of Member States of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities, the assurances of its highest consideration.



Brussels, 4th September, 2012

**TO: All Embassies of Member States of the Group of African Ambassadors
and the Representatives of the Regional Economic Communities in Brussels**



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149th Ordinary Session of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels

Item 4: Preparation of the Coordination meeting between the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels and the African members of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly

Draft Agenda

of the Coordination meeting between the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels
and the African members of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly

17 September 2012, ACP House

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Establishment of a Joint Committee composed of African Parliamentarians and members of the Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels
3. The Joint Africa-EU Strategy
4. The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)
5. Peace and security Situation in some African countries
6. Any Other Business

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Draft Minutes of the 148th Ordinary Session
of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels
ACP House, Tuesday, 26 June, 2012

Draft Minutes of the 148th Ordinary Session
of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels
ACP House, Tuesday, 26 June, 2012

1. The 148th Ordinary Session of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels (GAAB) was held on 26 June 2012 at the ACP House in Brussels, under the chairmanship of H.E El Tigani Saleh Fedail, Ambassador of Sudan in Belgium.
2. The following Agenda was submitted for consideration and adoption:
 1. Adoption of the Agenda.
 2. Adoption of the Report of the 147th GAAB Session, and Consideration of Matters Arising.
 3. Consideration of the Composition of the In-Coming Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels.
 4. Consideration of the Report on Coordination Workshop on EPAs negotiations (Arusha, 17-18 May 2012,).
 5. Consideration of the Report on Coordination Meeting Between the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the African Parliamentarians of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly (Horsens, 23 May, 2012,).
 6. Consideration of the Report on Meeting Between the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the European Union Political and Security Committee (EUCOPS) (Brussels, 29-30 May 2012).
 7. Consideration of the Report on the Meeting on Africa-EU Dialogue on Governance, Democracy and Human Rights (Geneva, 4-8 June, 2012).
 8. Consideration of the Report on Informal Consultations on European Union Aerial Carbon Tax.
 9. Consideration of the Report on the Celebration of 2012 Africa Day.
 10. Communication on the Venue of the 19th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government.
 11. Any Other Business.

I. Participation

3. The meeting was marked by the participation of the following delegations of Member States, Representations and Regional Organizations:

South Africa, Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe – COMESA.

II. Adoption of the Minutes of the 147th GAAB Session and Consideration of Matters Arising

4. The Minutes of the 147th session were adopted without amendment. No issue was raised under Matter Arising Item.

III. Consideration of the Composition of the In-coming Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels

5. In line with Article 9.2 of GAAB Rules of Procedure, the proposed composition of the new Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels, for the period from 1st July to 31st December 2012 was adopted as follows:

President:

Swaziland

Vice Presidents:

- Kenya (East Africa);
- The Gambia (West Africa);
- Central African Republic (Central Africa);
- Egypt (North Africa);
- South Africa (Southern Africa).

Ex-Officio Members:

- Benin, current President of the African Union;
- Dean of African Diplomatic Corps, H.E. Felix KODJO SAGBO, Ambassador of Togo in Brussels.

Troika Members :

- Swaziland (Current President);
- Sudan (Outgoing President);
- Tanzania (Incoming President).

IV. Report on the Coordination Workshop on EPAs Negotiations (Arusha, 17-18 May 2012,)

6. The Permanent Mission introduced the Report on the Coordination Workshop on the Economic Partnership Agreement's (EPAs) negotiations, held in Arusha, Tanzania on 17-18 May 2012. The effective participation as well as the substantial contribution of the Permanent Mission to the work of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels were stressed during presentation of this report. It was indicated that this workshop will be followed by the Conference of African Ministers of Trade likely to be held in November of this year in Angola. It was also indicated that an invitation will be extended to the African Group to attend this conference. It was finally recommended that the African Group makes the best use of the Workshop on Intra-African Trade the Permanent Mission is planning to organize next November to prepare for its participation to the Conference of African Ministers of Trade.
7. During the discussion that followed, the Ambassador of Botswana indicated that the European Parliament International Trade Commission adopted recently a report proposing to postpone until 1st January 2016 the entry into force of the proposed Amendment to Regulation 1528/2007, instead of January 2014, as initially proposed by the European Commission. He noted that lobbying actions carried out by SADC members played a major role and ended up in the adoption of this European Parliament's position. He added that a battle was won but not the war. Therefore, the Ambassador of Botswana launched an appeal for a general mobilization with the aim to enhance lobbying actions vis-a-vis MPs as well as vis-a-vis EU Member States, individually. A number of delegations expressed their support to this appeal and stressed the need to start reflecting on elaboration of a Plan B to face the situation in case the EPAs negotiations are not concluded successfully. In this regard, some delegations requested to explore, without delay, the ways and means to accelerate the implementation of the Abuja Treaty, and to strengthen intra-African trade and regional integration by the establishment of an African common market. It was indicated that it is imperative to convince the Europeans that Africa has its own agenda it is not intending to abandon to adopt the one of its external partners.
8. The meeting endorsed the proposal made by the AU Permanent Representative on the convening of a meeting between the various regions involved in EPAs negotiation to conduct in-depth exchange of views on viability of formulation of a Plan B and on the strategy to be adopted in this regard.

V. Report on the Coordination Meeting Between the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the African Parliamentarians of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly (Horsens, 23 May, 2012)

9. The Permanent Mission introduced the Report on the Coordination Meeting it organized between the members of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the African Parliamentarians of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly which was held on 23 May 2012 in Horsens, Denmark. It was stressed that the initiative to convene similar meetings was highly appreciated by the African Parliamentarians because it is enabling them to better articulate the positions they are expected to defend in the framework of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly, and to be in line with the positions advocated by the African Union on the same subjects. It was also indicated that the

African Parliamentarians expressed their wish that this type of meetings be organized at least one day before the opening session of the ACP Assembly. It was, therefore, envisaged to examine the possibility of ensuring arrival of Parliamentarians at least one day before the beginning of the ACP sessions so as to enable the African Parliamentarians to attend the coordination meetings.

10. During the discussions that followed consideration of this Agenda Item, the President stressed the need to seize this opportunity to conduct a true interaction between the Parliamentarians and the African Group, rather than limiting these initiatives to simple information sharing meetings.
11. In this regard, the Permanent Representative expressed his thanks to the ACP Group Secretariat for facilitating the organization of the coordination meeting.

VI. Meeting Between the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the European Union Political Security Committee (Brussels 29-30 May, 2012)

12. The Permanent Mission presented an oral report on the meeting between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the European Union Political and Security Committee, held in Brussels on 29- 30 May 2012.
13. In his comment on this Agenda Item, the President noted that the PSC should focus more on prevention rather than on conflict resolution only.

VII. Report on the Meeting on Africa-EU Dialogue on Governance, Democracy and Human Rights (Geneva, 4-8 June, 2012).

14. The Permanent Representative informed the meeting that he attended the Workshop on Africa-EU Dialogue on Governance, Democracy and Human Rights held in Geneva, on 3-8 June 2012. As the report on this meeting was circulated to participants, he stressed his presentation on the meeting on racism organized on the margin of this workshop. He indicated that exchange of views was rather timid and dull, which did not enable to reach a compromise on clear principles.
15. Addressing the workshop itself and its report, the Permanent representative emphasized the aspect relating to freedom of expression. He indicated that Africa is not against this principle, but there is need be cautious in this regard to avoid creating uncontrollable situations. He also indicated that a compromise was reached on inclusion of the archives within the list of cultural goods to be returned to Africa. This compromise was reached through the advocacy role played by the Algerian delegation.

VIII. Report on Informal Consultations on European Union Aerial Carbon Tax (Brussels, 19 June, 2012)

16. The Permanent Representative informed the meeting that, at the initiative of the AU Permanent Mission, an informal consultation meeting was held on 19 June, 2012 on the aerial carbon tax the European Union decided to put in place to encourage airlines to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases, in the framework of the fight against

global warming. He indicated that airlines flying to the EU countries are forced to buy some 15% of their CO2 emissions, and that the Act on this tax came into force in January 2012. He regretted that only 12 of the 24 Member States invited to participate to this consultation meeting were present. The report on this meeting was circulated to all participants.

17. During the discussion that followed, the Ambassador of South Africa, was of the view that ICAO should take the lead on discussions related to this matter. He was in favor of establishment of a Group of Experts, within the Group of African Ambassadors, to reflect on a response strategy to be adopted. He was also in favor of involving the AU Commission in this strategy. Some delegations were of the view that reciprocity principle should be applied by African countries in this case.

IX. Report on the 2012 Africa Day Celebration

18. The permanent Mission presented an oral report on the organization and the conduct of activities on the occasion of the 2012 Africa Day Celebration. It was recalled that celebration activities were conducted in line with the decisions of the Africa Day Organizing Committee, as stated in the decisions taken in its meeting held on 21 May, 2012.

19. During the discussions that followed, the presentation of this Agenda Item the following observations were made:

- The need to better manage the number of invited guests by the presentation of invitation cards at the entry of the premises hosting the reception and, if need be, by denying access to uninvited persons ;
- The need to revisit speeches address on this occasion because it is difficult to capture attention of guests on similar events;
- The need to revisit the format of the celebration of Africa Day to better respond to expectations of the various targeted guests and audiences (Diplomatic Corps, partners, civil society, diaspora etc.)
- The need to start well in advance the preparations for the 50th Africa Day anniversary, to be celebrated during the year 2013.

20. The Permanent Representative informed the meeting that the Permanent Mission received a communication from the Palais des Colonies indicating that this venue was already booked on the date of 25 May, 2013 for a wedding ceremony. He therefore suggested to try, as from now, to identify an alternative venue to accommodate Africa Day reception during the year 2013.

X. Communication on the Venue of the 19th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government

21. The Permanent Representative informed the meeting that the 19th ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government initially planned in

Malawi will be finally held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, because the Malawi authorities declined their offer to host this Assembly.

XI. Any Other Business

22. The President took the floor under this Agenda Item to formally announce that his term of office as GAAB President came to end, and that the President elect will take office as from 1st July, 2012. He expressed his highest appreciation to the outgoing Bureau members and to all members of the African Group for their significant contribution to the activities conducted during the last six (6) months, under his mandate. He also expressed his thanks to the AU Permanent Mission and the Permanent Representative for the support provided to the outgoing Bureau during its tenure. All protocols observed he introduced the new President of the Group, H.E. Joel NHLEKO, Ambassador of Swaziland. Finally, the outgoing President conveyed his best wishes of success to the President elect and the entire members of the incoming Bureau.
23. The President elect, H.E the Ambassador of Swaziland, thanked the outgoing President for his kind words and warm wishes. He commended the vision and the dexterity shown in the conduct of the activities of the Group under the chairmanship of the outgoing President. The President elect declared that Swaziland is honored by its election to chair the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels, and that it is fully aware of the heavy task entrusted to it. He stated that he will be counting on the support of the Bureau members, the entire members of the Group as well as on the AU Permanent Mission to discharge the mandate entrusted to Swaziland. He also indicated that the appointment, some six months ago, of a new AU Permanent Representative in the person of Ambassador Ajay K. Bramdeo is very encouraging. With the powers vested in the new Permanent Representative since his assumption of duty in this position, the African Group was able to regain some momentum.
24. The meeting was adjourned at 5.30 pm.

**H.E El Tigani Salih Fedail,
Ambassador of Sudan,
President of the African
Group of Ambassadors.**

**H.E Ajay K. Bramdeo,
Permanent Representative
of the African Union.**

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**CALENDRIER PREVISIONNEL DES REUNIONS
Septembre - Décembre 2012**

**INDICATIVE TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS
September - December 2012**

NB : Toutes les dates contenues dans ce calendrier ne sont pas définitives. Certaines sont susceptibles de changement ou de report.

NB: All dates reflected in this timetable are indicative. Some dates are subject to change or postponement.

MOIS MONTH	DATES DATE	HEURES TIME	REUNIONS MEETINGS	LIEU VENUE
SEPTEMBRE SEPTEMBER	11	15H-16H30	Réunion du Bureau du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Bureau Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	Mission permanente Permanent Mission
	12	15H-17H30	Réunion plénière du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Plenary Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	ACP ACP
	18-21	10H-18H00	29 ^{ème} Session de l'AP ACP et Réunion inter-session de l'APP ACP-UE 29 th Session of the ACP PA and Inter-sessional meetings of the ACP-EU Joint PA	ACP ACP
	19-21		Le Forum des Affaires UE-Afrique EU-Africa Business Forum	Addis Abéba Addis Ababa
	21	TBD	Célébration de la journée Internationale de la paix Commemoration of International Day of Peace	TBD
	TBD		Conférence des Ministres de l'UA en charge de l'Intégration Conference of AU Ministers in charge of Integration	Addis Abéba Addis Ababa
OCTOBRE OCTOBER	3	15H-16H30	Réunion du Bureau du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Bureau Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	Mission permanente Permanent Mission
	3-4		Dialogue de Haut Niveau sur le Partenariat Afrique-UE pour l'énergie Africa-EU Energy Partnership of the High Level Africa-Energy Dialogue	Addis Abéba Addis Ababa
	11	9H-17H	Atelier sur le Commerce Intra Africain et les négociations des APE Workshop on Intra African Trade and EPAs Negotiation	Bruxelles Brussels

	16-18		Forum de dialogue intercontinental de la société civile Afrique-UE AU-EU CSOs Intercontinental Dialogue	Bruxelles Brussels
	TBD		15 ^{ème} réunion de la Task force Conjointe Afrique-UE 15th Meeting of the Africa-EU Joint Task Force	Bruxelles Brussels
	24	15H-17H30	Réunion plénière du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Plenary Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	ACP ACP
	29 Oct.-02 Nov.		Conférence des Ministres de l'UA en charge du Commerce AU Ministers of Trade Conference	Addis Abeba Addis Ababa
MOIS MONTH	DATES DATE	HEURES TIME	REUNIONS MEETINGS	LIEU VENUE
NOVEMBRE NOVEMBER	6	15H-16H30	Réunion du Bureau du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Bureau meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	Mission permanente Permanent Mission
	7	15H-17H30	Réunion plénière du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Plenary Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	ACP ACP
	14	9H-17H	Atelier sur le financement des Plans d'action de la Stratégie conjointe Afrique-UE Workshop on the Financing of the Action Plan of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy	Bruxelles Brussels
	21-28		30 ^{ème} Session de l'Assemblée parlementaire paritaire ACP et 24 ^{ème} Session de l'Assemblée parlementaire paritaire ACP-UE 30 th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and 24 th Session of the Joint ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly	PARAMARIBO
	TBD		Conférence sur les voies et moyens de mobiliser la diaspora africaine et la société civile en Europe pour la mise en œuvre de la JAES Conference on ways and means of mobilizing the African Diaspora and civil society in Europe for the implementation of the JAES	Bruxelles Brussels

	TBD		Réunion sur l'état d'avancement de l'Intégration Régionale en Afrique Meeting on the state of Regional Integration process in Africa	Bruxelles Brussels
MOIS MONTH	DATE DATE	HEURES TIME	REUNIONS MEETINGS	LIEU VENUE
DECEMBRE DECEMBER	5	15H-16H30	Réunion du Bureau du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Bureau Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	Mission permanente Permanent Mission
	10-12 13-14		Conseil des ministres ACP / ACP Council of Ministers 7 ^{ème} Sommet des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement ACP 7 th Summit of ACP Heads of State and Government	MALABO
	19	15H-17H30	Réunion plénière du Groupe Africain des Ambassadeurs à Bruxelles Plenary Meeting of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels	ACP ACP

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2012

149th Ordinary Session of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels

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