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GROUP OF AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN BRUSSELS

**ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF THE BUREAU
H. E JOEL MUSA NHLEKO AMBASSADOR OF SWAZILAND IN BRUSSELS,
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1ST JULY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012**

**ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF THE BUREAU OF THE
GROUP OF AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN BRUSSELS, H. E JOEL MUSA NHLEK,
AMBASSADOR OF SWAZILAND IN BRUSSELS,
FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1ST JULY TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012**

1. The current report is covering the activities for the period from 1st July to 31st December 2012, conducted by the Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels I had the honor to chair, in line with Article 9.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Group.

2. The Bureau is composed as follows :

President: Swaziland

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

Ex-officio Members:

- Honorary President: **Benin**, Current President of the African Union,
- Dean of African Ambassadors in Brussels: H.E. Felix Kodjo Sagbo, Ambassador of Togo to Brussels.

Troika

- Swaziland (Current President)
- Soudan (Outgoing President)
- Tanzania (Forthcoming President)

3. In the discharge of its mandate, many activities were conducted by the Bureau of the African Group, *inter alia*, the following :

- Organization of two workshops on implementation of the Africa-European Union Strategic Partnership and on trade relating issues, respectively;
- Celebration in Brussels of the International Day of Peace (21st September);
- Establishment of an Organizing Committee for the celebration in Brussels of the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary and of the Year of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance.

I. Organization of Workshops on Implementation of the Africa-European Union Strategic Partnership and on Trade Relating Issues

4. In line with the work program of the African Union Permanent Mission in Brussels, the outgoing Bureau supervised the organization of two workshops in Brussels on implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and on trade relating issues,

respectively. The purpose of the workshops was to keep members of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels abreast of the latest developments relating to the joint strategy to better involve members of the African Group in implementation of the Joint Strategy, as stated in the 2nd Action Plan for the period 2011-2013, adopted by the 3rd Africa-EU Summit held in Tripoli in 2010.

a) Workshop on the Funding of the Joint Strategy

5. After the launching of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, a very ambitious Action Plan covering the period 2008-2010 was adopted by the 2nd EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon in 2007. It was followed by a second Action Plan covering the period 2011-2013 that was adopted by the 3rd Summit held in Tripoli in 2010. However, it was observed that absence of specific financial instrument to fund those Action Plans seriously hindered their implementation. It was, therefore, necessary to consider the best ways and means to put in place to address the funding issue. Consequently, the outgoing Bureau supervised, in close collaboration with the African Union Permanent Mission in Brussels, the organization in Brussels, in November 2012, of a workshop on the funding of the Joint Strategy, which recommended the establishment of a financial instrument specifically assigned to ensure a proper implementation of the Action Plans mentioned above.

b) Workshop on the of Economic Partnership Agreement's (EPAs) Negotiations and on Boosting Intra-African Trade

6. This Workshop was organized in Brussels in October 2012 and was focused on the Economic Partnership Agreement's (EPAs) negotiations and on best ways and means to put in place to boost intra-African trade. This workshop was attended by AU Member States, ECOWAS, COMESA and UEMOA representatives based in Brussels, the Permanent Representative of the African Union Permanent Delegation in Geneva, the African Coordinator of the WTO, the AU Commission officials and the South Centre representative in Geneva.
7. During this workshop, presentations were made on current status and challenges of EPAs negotiations, steps initiated by the African Union to boost intra-African trade, and on strategies to be put in place by Africa to better defend African interests in the WTO negotiations.

I. Celebration in Brussels of the International Day of Peace (21st September)

8. The outgoing Bureau supervised the ceremony organized in Brussels to celebrate the International Day of Peace. The Bureau seized the opportunity of the meeting of the Committees on Political Affairs of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in the European Parliament, to initiate the convening of a special session on the occasion of the celebration of the International Day of Peace.
9. In addition to the African and European parliamentarians, this ceremony was also attended by representatives of the EU and the United Nations.

II. Establishment of an Organizing Committee for the Celebration, in Brussels, of the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary and of the Year of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance

10. The outgoing Bureau initiated the establishment of an Organizing Committee in charge of the preparations for the activities to be conducted in Brussels on the occasion the celebration of the 50th OAU/AU Anniversary and of the Year of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. The five (5) African regions are duly represented in this Organizing Committee.
11. The purpose of this activity is to continue enhance involvement of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels in the implementation of the African Union Assembly decisions, *inter alia* the decision relating to the OAU/AU 50th Anniversary celebrations, in addition to enabling the African Group in Brussels to bring its contribution to the success of this celebration, as it was the case on the occasion of the OAU 25th and 30th Anniversaries.
12. The Organizing Committee is chaired by the Dean of the African Ambassadors in Brussels, H.E. Felix Kodjo Sagbo, Ambassador of Togo.

Motion of Thanks

13. I wish, on behalf of the outgoing Bureau and on my own behalf, to express my sincere thanks to all distinguished members of the African Group who spared no effort to bring, individually and collectively, their decisive contributions to all the actions conducted by our Bureau. I sincerely hope that our Bureau managed to live up to the confidence placed in it by the entire Group to defend and strengthen the African interests and solidarity.
14. I also wish to extend our thanks and encouragement to the Secretariat of our Group, the entire staff of the African Union Permanent Mission in Brussels, under the guidance of the Permanent Representative, Ambassador Ajay Kumar Bramdeo.
15. Finally our congratulations also go to the incoming Bureau members to whom we are particularly pleased to pass the powers on behalf of our Group. We wish them full success in the discharge of their mission which consists in the defense of the interests of our Group and of Africa in Brussels.

**H. E. Joel Musa Nhleko,
Ambassador of Swaziland in
Brussels.**

2013-01-02

Activity Report of the Outgoing President of the Bureau of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels, H.E. Joel Musa Nhleko, Ambassadors of the Swaziland in Brussels, from the period from 1st July to 31st December 2012

Permanent Mission of the African Union in Brussels

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