

AFRICAN UNION
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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE
ONGOING AFRICA-EUROPE DIALOGUE

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ONGOING AFRICA-EUROPE DIALOGUE**

1. On 2 April 2000, African and European leaders held their First Summit with a view to establishing a new type of relationship between Europe and Africa. At the outset, the European Union wanted emphasis to be laid essentially on political issues such as: **democracy, governance, human rights and conflict prevention**. However, at the insistent request of the Africans, the European Union agreed to include issues concerning **trade, debt and access to the European market** on the agenda. The Africans perceived this Summit as a sign of Europe's willingness to stop marginalizing their Continent. They believed that through the Cairo Summit, Europe wished to see Africa play a greater part in the management of global affairs. For the Africans, the European Union had realized that clearly, Africa's economic development would in fact serve European interests, inasmuch as Africa offered certain outlets for its agricultural and industrial products.

2. The African side wanted the Cairo Summit to mark the beginning of regular and egalitarian dialogue with Europe, on the one hand, and wished to see Europe open its borders further to Africa's exports, on the other hand. Africa expected concrete commitment on the part of Europe, stipulating that economic liberalization would be translated into increased access for African commodities on the European market. The «Africa-Europe» Summit, which was placed under the aegis of the OAU and the EU, culminated in the Cairo Declaration and the Plan of Action which recognize debt, among other things, as one of the crucial economic problems facing the African continent. The Summit also considered armed conflicts as the most pressing political problem.

3. However, the results seem to have fallen short of expectations ever since the historic Cairo Summit in April 2000. A series of bi-regional meetings and Ministerial Troïkas have been held and the consensual reports of these meetings have piled up, thus painting a picture of empty bottles with different labels. The preceding metaphor will become the hallmark of this Dialogue, if steps are no taken to move forward from the drawing board to concrete action.

4. From December 2004 to April 2005, the AU Commission, through the Economic Affairs Department, conducted activities within the framework of the Africa-Europe Dialogue; namely, the Ministerial Troïka preceded by the enlarged experts Troïka which met from 2 to 4 December 2004 in Addis Ababa. The Commission also participated actively in the Ministerial Troïka and the enlarged experts Troïka organized by the European Union from 8 to 11 April 2005, in Luxembourg.

A. Addis Ababa Ministerial Troïka

The African and European Ministers considered the usual issues on the agenda and made recommendations as follows:

❖ **Peace and Security**

5. Ministers exchanged views on matters relating to peace and security in Africa, including conflict situations, the Peace Facility, the operationalization of the AU Peace and Security Council, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the reform and restructuring of the UN Security Council, the illicit proliferation and trade in small arms and light weapons, landmines, terrorism, and mercenarism. In this context, the Ministers took note of the progress made and the challenges confronting the African Union in these different areas, underlining the importance of partnership in dealing with these issues.

6. Ministers discussed at length the crisis in the Darfur region of the Sudan and underscored the urgency to effectively manage the crisis and restore peace, security and stability in the whole of the Sudan. The two sides expressed serious concern over the continuous violations of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement signed in N'Djamena, Chad on 8 April 2004 and the protocols relating to security and humanitarian issues signed in Abuja, Nigeria. They strongly urged the Parties to refrain from the use of force and to seek peaceful channels to resolving their differences. The EU expressed its appreciation for the leadership role and efforts deployed by the AU to engage the Parties in a political dialogue, and particularly for the successful deployment of part of the African Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). On its part, the AU expressed gratitude for the vital support and cooperation provided by the EU to facilitate the peace process, and particularly for the funding under the Peace Facility as well as the financial, logistical and expert support. Furthermore, the EU reiterated its full support to AMIS II and indicated its willingness to offer expertise, if so requested. Both sides stressed the need for enhanced coordination and sharing of information between partners and donors, and to jointly consider the lessons learnt from the deployment of AMIS and the EU support to this operation.

7. With regard to the peace process in Southern Sudan, the Ministers welcomed the significant progress made thus far in the IGAD-led peace process and expressed the expectation that the Parties would remain committed to the agreements they have signed and that a comprehensive peace agreement would be concluded by 31 December 2004. In this regard, the two sides indicated their readiness to provide,, once peace is restored, diplomatic and material support to the post-conflict reconstruction of the Sudan.

8. Ministers condemned the escalation of violence in Côte d'Ivoire and expressed concern at the risk of their regional spillover. The Ministers also commended the AU and ECOWAS for their mediation efforts, particularly the efforts deployed by Presidents Obasanjo and Mbeki, and undertook to continue supporting them. They welcomed the initiative to convene, at the level of Heads of State and Government, a Peace and Security Council meeting on 10 December 2004 to discuss the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

9. The two sides welcomed the landmark achievements made in the Somali peace process, particularly the election of Transitional Federal Institutions including a Transitional Federal President, a Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) and its Speaker. The two sides undertook to lend full support to the new transitional

government in Somalia to overcome the hurdles ahead. The AU appealed to the EU to provide logistical and financial assistance to its efforts aimed at bringing about security and stabilization of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Both sides stand ready to contribute to the long-term stabilization and reconstruction of Somalia and look forward to start working with the new Government of Somalia, underlining the importance of inclusiveness and stability. The EU expressed its readiness to provide assistance to the AU's efforts aimed at promoting security and stabilization in Somalia.

10. Both sides expressed concern at the renewed tensions in the border regions of Eastern DRC and urged regional leaders to fully respect territorial sovereignty and to abide by the Declaration of Principles adopted in Dar-Es-Salaam on 19 November 2004.

11. Ministers warmly welcomed the announcement by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia of its Five-Point Proposals, which included its acceptance, in principle, of the decision of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC), as an important step towards the full implementation of the decision of the EEBC and towards overcoming the stalemate in the Ethiopian-Eritrean peace process. They look forward to a constructive Eritrean response to the Ethiopian proposals which will make it possible to engage in dialogue with Ethiopia. The two sides expressed their readiness to provide the necessary assistance to help the two countries move forward with the implementation of the EEBC decision and the normalization of their relations.

12. With regard to the other security challenges, the Ministers noted the progress made at the continental level in Africa, in the areas of small arms and light weapons and landmines. The EU pledged to strengthen its support to overcome the challenges in these areas, and particularly to build Africa's capacity to deal with the issues in a sustained and resolute manner. The EU indicated its willingness to provide support to the AU programmes on terrorism, particularly to the effective functioning of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, established in Algiers, Algeria. Ministers emphasized the need to combat mercenarism, which is one of the sources of destabilization in Africa.

13. It was also stressed that the two sides share a common approach to multilateralism, particularly within the framework of the United Nations. In this regard, the two sides agreed to hold consultations on the reform of the UN System, particularly the Security Council. The EU took note of Africa's position requesting for at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats at the Security Council. In order to promote effective multilateralism in the area of peace and security, it was emphasized that there is a need to establish cooperation between the AU Peace and Security Council and the EU.

❖ **Governance**

14. State of progress of the AU Governance Agenda and EU support, particularly implementation of the APRM/NEPAD. Africa recognizes that democracy and good governance are essential for the sustainable social, political and economic development of the Continent. Ministers acknowledged that since Dublin, Africa has

made steady progress in enhancing democratic principles and strengthening democratic institutions. The AU expressed its appreciation to the EU for the political and financial support to the AU's Governance Agenda and called for stronger financial support and partnership so that the momentum created is not lost. The EU welcomed the successful holding of the first two sessions of the Pan-African Parliament and took note of the forthcoming merger of the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Court of Justice. The EU will consider modalities for support to the Court, once established. Both sides noted the progress being achieved in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), as a New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme for good governance, democracy, transparency and broader issues such as the Millennium Development Goals. They underlined the importance of building the capacity of countries to implement the recommendations of APRM reviews. In this regard, the EU is considering financial support to the APRM Trust Fund.

Return of ill-gotten gains

15. Both sides underscored their joint commitment to an early entry into force of the UN Convention against Corruption. They agreed to cooperate in its implementation, including on measures to facilitate the return of illegally acquired public funds.

Election observation, human rights and humanitarian issues

16. Ministers agreed that human rights are an essential element of the EU-Africa partnership. The AU and the EU committed themselves to mutually enrich their understanding on these issues through an exchange of experiences, and to support the promotion of human rights and humanitarian issues.

17. Ministers agreed that the AU and the EU would increase cooperation to work towards a common approach to human rights in multilateral institutions, especially the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Commission on Human Rights. Both sides agreed to work together towards a more effective protection of women and children in conflict situations.

18. Ministers encouraged the enhanced role of the Au in electoral matters, and welcomed the recent adoption of the Guidelines on AU Election Monitoring and Observation Missions. The African side welcomed and expressed its appreciation for the commitment by the EU to support capacity building for election observation missions in Africa. Both sides acknowledged ongoing cooperation in the field between EU and AU missions, as well as between the respective Commission services, and called for its continuation.

Follow-up on the Dublin Declaration on Multilateralism

19. Ministers reiterated the need for an effective multilateral system. In this regard, the AU and the EU committed themselves to cooperating with regard to the reform and the revitalization of the United Nations system, and to promoting an open, equitable, rule-based, non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system. They emphasized the importance of respect for international human rights

and humanitarian law, particularly through strong support for the International Criminal Court.

❖ **Regional Integration and Trade**

20. Ministers welcomed the establishment of the Joint AU/EC Monitoring Mechanism on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) negotiations, which will serve as an important instrument in the Africa-Europe Dialogue for achieving common objectives in the priority area of regional integration and trade. The ministers recognized the potential contribution that EPAs can make to the strengthening of regional economic integration as well as trade and economic cooperation between Africa and Europe. Both sides agreed that EPAs currently being negotiated should serve as effective «instruments of development», aimed at rapid and sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and smooth and gradual integration of Africa into the global economy. In this regard, they acknowledged that African concerns regarding economic infrastructure and capacity constraints should be adequately addressed within the framework of the EPA process. They stressed the need for EPAs to be consistent with the vision of a strong, united and integrated Africa as set out in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. They also stressed that while ensuring that the EPAs are WTO-rules compatible, account should be taken of the significant difference in the level of development of the EU and Africa, and the imbalances against African countries in the existing global trading system.

21. The two sides recognized the need to speed up the integration process in Africa as a means to attain socio-economic development on this Continent and enhance its competitiveness at world level. The European Union stated its readiness to support Africa's integration process through continental programmes and projects, including by reinforcing the capacity of the AU Commission. The African Union informed the European Union that negotiations are underway to finalize the Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the RECs, and that once finalized, the Memorandum will be made available to partners for information.

22. The two sides recognized the catalytic role of the private sector in the promotion of trade and investment. The African side, acknowledging the importance of the private sector for development, pledged to deepen the reforms of the African economies in order to attract further private foreign investment. The European side reassured its African partners of its support in the reform of their economies and expressed its intention to motivate European economic operators to increase their investment in Africa and to facilitate the access of African goods and services to the European markets.

❖ **Key Development Issues**

EU-Africa cooperation on combating HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, including the issue of HIV/AIDS and security

23. Both sides expressed greater commitment to increase efforts to stop the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. To this end, they agreed to ensure allocation of adequate financial resources for the fight against HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis

and other related infectious diseases. Ministers also emphasized the need to adopt measures that should focus on meeting the targets and the commitments undertaken by all continents to provide support to developing countries in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis and other pandemics. They also stressed the need to support local production of generic and anti-retroviral drugs as a general way to reduced their prices and to facilitate access to these drugs by those who are critically in need.

24. Ministers underlined the importance of strong cooperation, coordination and partnership between all donors, Governments and NGOs. Both sides commended initiatives such as the « Europe-Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership» and « *Ensemble pour la Solidarité Thérapeutique Hospitalière Réseau* ». Both sides agreed on the need to address the linkage between HIV/AIDS and peace and security. The EU reaffirmed its continuous and comprehensive efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS through its different instruments.

Follow-up of the Joint Report on Africa's external debt

25. The Ministers recalled the endorsement given at the Dublin Ministerial Troïka meeting of 2004 to the Joint Report of the AU-EU Experts Meeting of February 2004 on the scale, nature and impacts of Africa's debt burden. The Experts' Report noted that the existing debt relief measures will not in themselves ensure long term debt sustainability and also recommended more active participation of creditor countries in appropriate fora for new discussions on external debt. The African Union, for its part, drew attention to the fact that, since the April 2004 Ministerial Meeting, developments in the international arena as well as findings reported in celebrated seminal presentations on international external debt studies lend credence to and are supportive of the conclusions of the report adopted by the 2004 Ministerial Troïka Meeting, including the desirability and feasibility of cancellation of Africa's debt, in line with paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Cairo Declaration of 2000.

26. The Ministers therefore were of the opinion that the Joint Report as approved by the Ministerial Troïka Meeting in April 2004 should be presented at the next Assembly of the Union for political consideration. The ministers also felt that pending the political consideration by the Assembly, both sides, particularly the two Commissions, should identify practical modalities to carry this dialogue forward, preferably in the first quarter of 2005, with a view to reporting on the follow-up to the findings of the Joint Report.

Food Security

27. The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress made on the issue of food security, particularly with regard to the study evaluating existing early warning systems, notably in West, Southern and Northern Africa, and expressed the wish to extend the project to include regions not yet covered. Within the perspective of the implementation of the Sirte Declaration on « Challenges for an Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa», the two sides reviewed other aspects whose development could help to ensure food security.

28. After a useful exchange of views on African and European approaches on food security, it was decided that both Commissions and the NEPAD Secretariat will continue more in-depth discussions within the framework of the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme.

Return of cultural goods

29. Following the recommendations of the Ministerial Meeting in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in November 2002, both sides agreed on Terms of Reference (annexed to this Communiqué) for the establishment of an inventory of ongoing cooperation activities with regard to cultural goods. They agreed to jointly determine the concrete modalities for the establishment of the joint inventory. The two sides will liaise to work out these modalities in the near future. The Meeting welcomed and accepted the offer of the EU to fund two jointly selected consultants to produce this inventory, in cooperation with UNESCO and other relevant international institutions. The African side renewed its appreciation to the Government of Italy for its commitment to return the Axum Obelisk and emphasized the need for its speedy return. The African side encouraged other countries to follow this positive example.

Migration and Plan of Action on Human Trafficking

30. The Meeting recognized the complex nature of migratory flows, linked, among other things, to development issues. The two sides acknowledged that the fight against clandestine immigration and human trafficking, particularly women and children, should be carried out in observance of the fundamental rights of the migrant, which is compatible with the legitimate objectives of security and sovereignty of States. Both sides encouraged European and African States to sign and ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants. Within the prospect of the establishment of this partnership, they agreed on the need to devote a special meeting of the AU and EU Commissions to the theme of migration.

31. The EU side commended Africa for its efforts in developing a continental policy framework for migration and to encourage free movement of people. Both sides underlined the need for respecting and protecting the human rights of migrants. The EU took note of the African proposal to address the issue of movement of labour within the framework of the EPA negotiations.

32. The two sides agreed to submit the Plan of Action on trafficking in human beings especially women and children for consideration by the AU and EU Ministers meeting with a view to its subsequent adoption by the AU and EU Heads of State and Government Summit.

Human Cloning

33. The two sides acknowledged that cloning human beings in particular, and bioethics issues in general, relate to human rights and the dignity of human beings. The African side briefed the Meeting on the decision of the AU Executive Council that Africa intends to develop and adopt a common position in this area together with a continental legal framework that will assist AU Member States to prepare laws and regulations aimed at protecting human dignity, human rights and freedoms in Africa.

34. The AU Commission explained that it would lead this process in collaboration with existing regional and global mechanisms on the issue, and therefore, appropriate machinery needs to be put in place to facilitate thorough reflection on all issues related to ethics in biotechnology and life sciences.

35. The EU took note with interest of all these developments and the Ministers agreed to revisit the matter in 2005, taking into account developments in the global debate on this issue.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

36. Ministers recognized the widening digital gap between Africa and the rest of the world as a serious setback in the efforts to bring about sustainable development, poverty eradication and integration of the Continent into the global information society. They acknowledged that strong ICT infrastructure and services are necessary for accelerating the continental economic integration process, territorial cohesion for peace and security, socio-economic development and regional and international cooperation. In this regard, they expressed their commitment to the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action adopted at the First World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva and to support the process and the outcome of the second phase of WSIS scheduled to take place from 16 to 18 November 2005, in Tunis.

37. They also welcomed the framework put in place by the AU through its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in the area of ICT which seeks to strengthen the policy and regulatory environment, enhance broadband connectivity, unify the continental telecommunications numbering space and expand the use of ICT in the delivery of socio-economic services, including public administration (e-government), education (e-schools), health (tele-medicine), business (e-commerce) and others. They pledged to support African endeavours in this regard. Furthermore, the EU took note of the request of the African side to provide support to the Digital Solidarity Fund.

B. Luxembourg Ministerial Troika

After considering the items on their agenda, the Ministers made the following recommendations:

❖ Peace and Security

a. Recent developments in conflict situations in Africa: Enhancement of EU-AU partnership in conflict resolution

38. Ministers exchanged views on matters relating to peace and security in Africa, including on specific conflict situations, terrorism and the progress made with regards to capacity building in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management, emphasising the objective of consolidating and further developing their partnership in this area.

39. Regarding the Sudan, Ministers welcomed the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement between the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), which should pave the way for the promotion of peace, post-conflict reconstruction and development of all parts of the Sudan, as well as for restoring peace, security and stability in the whole of the Sudan. The two sides encouraged the parties to work for the full and swift implementation of the agreement, expressing the hope that the principles set out in the comprehensive peace agreement, particularly those relating to power-sharing and distribution of wealth with a view to the integration of marginalized regions, would serve as a basis for restoring peace, security and stability in the whole of the Sudan, including Darfur. The two sides reiterated their readiness to provide support for the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement and for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and the EU its readiness to provide material and diplomatic support. They expressed the hope that the Oslo Donors' Conference, from 11 to 12 April, would result in substantial contributions to the development of the Sudan.

40. Ministers expressed their grave concern at the continuing conflict in Darfur and its consequences for the civilian population. The two sides condemned the violations by all parties of the cease-fire, particularly the assaults on the civilian population, humanitarian workers and on the personnel of the AU. They strongly urged the parties to refrain from the use of force and to seek peaceful channels for resolving their differences, as well as to fulfil the demands expressed in United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions 1556, 1564, 1574, 1590 and 1591. The two sides, looking forward to the resumption of the Abuja talks and welcoming the efforts made by the AU in preparation of the next round of negotiations, called on the parties to live up to their commitment to seek a peaceful and negotiated solution to the conflict in Darfur and to swiftly proceed with the negotiations. In this regard, the EU and the AU agreed on the need to coordinate and harmonise their efforts in supporting the negotiation process.

41. The EU expressed its appreciation for the leadership role of the AU in addressing the Darfur conflict and in particular congratulated the AU on its success and achievements in establishing AMIS and improving the security situation in Darfur. For its part, the AU expressed appreciation for the support and cooperation provided by the EU for AMIS, under the Peace Facility and in terms of expert support. The EU commended the AU for conducting the recent assessment mission, which, in an open and transparent manner, had provided an objective analysis of the current status of AMIS. In this regard, both sides stressed the importance of bringing AMIS up to full operational capability through addressing the organisational and logistical problems identified by the assessment mission. The EU offered its assistance in this regard, on the basis of a list of priority initiatives to be drawn up by the AU. Both parties emphasised the importance of the civilian component of AMIS and swift completion of the remaining phases of the deployment of the mission's police component. The EU reiterated its continuing support to AMIS and its readiness to strengthen it.

42. Ministers reiterated their support for the transition process in Somalia, emphasising the importance of inclusiveness and consensus-building in achieving peace and stability in Somalia. They urged all factions and militia leaders in Somalia to cease hostilities and to conclude a comprehensive and verifiable cease-fire

agreement leading to full disarmament. The EU commended the AU and IGAD for their efforts to promote security and stabilisation in Somalia and confirmed its willingness to examine requests for assistance in this regard. In addition, the EU stressed the need to sustain consensus within and among the transitional institutions in pursuit of the peace and reconciliation process in Somalia. It also underlined the need for careful planning of any peace support mission. Ministers also recognized the importance, of moving the transitional institutions to Somalia, in the restoration of peace and stability in this country.

43. On DRC, the two parties welcomed the progress realized in the peace and transition process. They called on the Congolese leaders to relentlessly pursue their engagement in preparing for the impending elections. The EU welcomed the African Union's efforts aimed at the operationalization of the joint verification mechanisms agreed on by Rwanda and the DRC as well as the restoration of confidence between the two countries. The EU also welcomed the efforts of the AU to contribute to the disarmament of the Ex-Far/Interahamwé and other armed groups present in Eastern Congo. In this regard, the two parties encouraged the FDLR (Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda) to live up to the commitments made in Rome, Italy, on 30 March 2005, in which the movement undertook to refrain from armed action, condemned the 1994 Rwandan genocide and announced its decision to join the DDRRR process. Moreover, the AU expressed its appreciation for the EU's efforts in support of the transition in the DRC. The two parties agreed to maintain their ongoing efforts and to reinforce their partnership in order to support the entire regional process.

44. On Côte d'Ivoire, Ministers expressed appreciation and support for the mediation efforts of the AU under the leadership of President Thabo Mbeki and expressed their satisfaction with the Pretoria Agreement. They urged the Ivorian Parties to respect their commitments and to implement all provisions included in the Pretoria Agreement. Both sides reiterated their support to the Neutral Forces and welcomed the decision of the Ivorian parties to request the United Nations to be involved in the organisation of general elections. They recalled that a solution to the crisis has to be found in free, democratic and inclusive elections. The two parties reiterated their engagement to support the efforts underway to implement the Linas-Marcoussis, Accra III and Pretoria agreements.

45. The two sides expressed their satisfaction with the important role played by the AU and ECOWAS in ensuring the return to constitutional legality in Togo. The action taken by these two organisations served to underscore the resolve of African organisations to refuse unconstitutional seizure of power and promote good governance. The importance of supporting the electoral process in Togo and the long-term consolidation of democracy in the country was stressed. The AU welcomed the EU's support to the efforts of the AU and ECOWAS, and both parties underlined the need to further increase their cooperation in this regard.

46. The EU welcomed the AU's efforts in Burundi, the Comoros, Liberia, the Central African Republic, and Guinea-Bissau. Both sides stressed the need to continue supporting the ongoing peace processes in these countries and reiterated their commitments to work towards achieving permanent and irreversible peace.

b. Terrorism

47. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment and determination to continue to cooperate in the global fight against terrorism. The AU briefed the EU on the status of operationalization of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, and welcomed the EU's contribution in this regard. The EU expressed appreciation for the AU counter-terrorism policies, and in particular the AU appeal to its Member States to ratify and implement all relevant international instruments to combat terrorism. The AU stressed the need to cooperate in the area of information exchange. The two sides undertook to cooperate in achieving a common position on the UN Convention against Terrorism.

c. Progress report on the capacity building agenda in the area of peace and security

48. Ministers reviewed progress made by the AU and other African organisations regarding strengthening capacities in the area of peace and security, as well as European-African cooperation in this respect. The AU underlined the contribution of the Peace Facility to the substantial progress realised in the area of conflict resolution in Africa, as well as in the strengthening of the AU's capacity in conflict prevention, management and resolution. The AU presented a progress report on the ongoing programmes aimed at the completion of the Peace and Security Department, the establishment of the Continental Peace and Security Architecture and deployments in the field. The AU called upon the EU to replenish the Peace Facility in view of its numerous activities in the areas of conflict prevention, management and resolution and the need to strengthen the capacity of the Peace and Security Department and Sub-regional organisations.

49. The EU informed the AU of the adoption of the Action Plan within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in support of African peacekeeping capacities and expressed its readiness to assist in this regard.

50. Both parties recognised the importance of post-conflict reconstruction in the consolidation of peace and stability. They underlined the need to draw lessons from the past and to enhance coherence between peace and security, and economic reconstruction and development. In this context, both sides noted with interest the UNSG's proposal on the creation of a Peace-building Commission.

❖ Governance

a. Progress report on the governance agenda of the AU and the support provided by the EU

51. The two sides exchanged views on the current state of play in the field of governance in Africa based on the AU's priority activities in the area of enhancing more transparent, participatory and democratic practice in public life. The two sides welcomed the progress made in operationalizing the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and looked forward to the first APRM review. The EU offered to support the APRM, including through the APRM Trust Fund, as well as through the implementation of APRM recommendations in future.

52. The two sides welcomed the contribution of the Pan-African Parliament to improving good governance in Africa. The two sides also noted the efforts of the AU with assistance from the international community, including the EU, to set up a Governance Unit at the AU Commission to strengthen the capacities of African States in dealing with governance issues. The two sides stressed their shared responsibility in fighting corruption, including through the return of illegally acquired assets to their countries of origin, capacity building to address corruption, public service reforms, improving budget and fiscal transparency, improving public procurement policy and administration, and increasing transparency in extractive industries. The two sides agreed to report on progress made in these areas to a forthcoming EU-Africa Ministerial Troika meeting. This would include addressing legal obstacles to the return of illegally acquired assets to Africa. The two sides agreed to work together to encourage Member States to ratify the UN Convention against Corruption.

b. Election observation

53. The two sides welcomed efforts by the AU at sending regular electoral observer missions to Member States, at the invitation of such States, in accordance with the AU Durban Declaration on the Conduct of Democratic Elections, and to establish an AU Election Monitoring/Observation Unit. The African side expressed its gratitude for the EU contribution of Euro 2 million to support the AU governance agenda, including electoral observation. The two sides welcomed the AU's efforts to ensure systematic election observation, through, *inter alia*, the setting up of an Electoral Assistance Unit and an Electoral Assistance Fund and looked forward to the publication in 2005 of AU Guidelines on Election Monitoring and Observation. The two sides agreed to cooperate in carrying out their respective mandates when observing elections. Both sides exchanged views on electoral processes in Africa. The EU expressed its position on the electoral process in Zimbabwe. The AU restated its position on the matter.

c. Human rights

54. The two sides welcomed the entry into force of the Protocol establishing the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and noted the decision of the AU Heads of State and Government on the merger of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights with the African Court of Justice for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness. They also agreed to work together to improve the work of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in supervising the implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Ministers reiterated the importance of the International Criminal Court in the global fight against genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

55. The African side stressed the importance of providing adequate support to facilitate voluntary repatriation of refugees and internally displaced persons and to ensure the sustainability of democracy and good governance through their full participation in elections and socio-economic development.

❖ **Regional Integration and Trade**

a. Regional Integration

56. The EU reiterated its readiness to assist Africa in accelerating its integration process. In this respect, the EU stressed the need to use the EPAs to enhance Africa's efforts in the area of regional integration. The AU welcomed this commitment, and highlighted the measures it has taken to speed up the integration process which included the review of the new protocol on relations between the AU Commission and the RECs, evaluation of the implementation schedule under the Abuja Treaty, and the rationalization of the RECs.

57. Furthermore, the AU Commission drew the attention of the EU to the importance of supporting the capacity building of the RECs and the AU Commission. The AU appealed to the EU to prioritize the provision of economic assistance targeted at addressing the root causes of poverty linked to conflict. The EU took note of this appeal and welcomed the convergence of actions between the two Commissions in addressing this issue.

b. Trade

58. In recognising the EPAs as a development instrument, the AU emphasized the need to contribute to the improvement of Africa's capacity in international negotiations and to enhance the access of African products into European markets. Furthermore, the AU Commission launched an appeal to the EU side to call upon the private sector to increase its investment in Africa.

59. The EU provided information on the state of play of the negotiations in the six regional groupings. Both sides agreed on possible dates for meetings of the joint EU-AU mechanisms in May/June 2005. Configuration of the negotiating groups in Africa was mentioned as a possible agenda item.

❖ **Key Development Issues**

Environment, including desertification, drought, natural calamities and locusts

60. Ministers noted the need to strengthen the cooperation between Africa and the EU on critical environmental issues facing Africa, such as land degradation, desertification and drought, poor water supply, the deterioration of the coastal and marine environment and the loss of biodiversity. They also noted the need to collaborate in fighting the locust plague. While highlighting their own efforts in this area, the African side also recognised the EU's contribution during the recent locust outbreak by providing funds through the FAO. It also expressed appreciation for the establishment of the EU-ACP Water Facility. Both sides expressed the hope that an agreement would be reached on operational principles within the framework of the 13th session of the UN Committee on Sustainable Development (11-22 April 2005), allowing for progress on the objectives the international community set itself, notably within the framework of the Johannesburg Summit of 2002.

❖ **Preparation of the UN Summit to be held in September 2005**

61. Ministers exchanged views on the UN Secretary General's proposals for a UN reform. While recalling that these proposals were still under consideration, the EU expressed its determination that the reform process should result in devising common responses to the main development, security and human rights problems.

62. The EU side noted the African Common Position on the proposed reform of the UN as set out in the "Ezulwini Consensus", and undertook to share its positions with the AU before the Summit.

63. The Ministers considered that a parallel reading of the African Common Position and the priorities of the EU shows that it is possible to continue and step up the Dialogue in order to foster convergence of positions.

64. The EU agreed to share, prior to the Summit, its proposals for speeding up the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly with regard to coherence, financing, and effectiveness of aid, with a specific focus on Africa.

❖ **EU-Africa Dialogue**

a. Follow-up to the EU-AU Ministerial Troika meeting in Addis Ababa in December 2004 including date and venue of the second EU-Africa Summit

65. Ministers recalled their decision taken at the Ministerial Troika meeting in Addis Ababa in December 2004 on the key development issues, namely: HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other related infectious diseases; food security; Africa's external debt; migration and the Plan of Action on Human Trafficking; Information and Communication Technology; and gender mainstreaming. They took note of the progress report made by senior officials on these issues and encouraged them to pursue their activities through appropriate expert mechanisms and present regular technical reports.

66. The two sides reiterated the need to submit the agreement already reached on Africa's external debt for endorsement at the highest political level as soon as possible.

EU-Africa Strategic Partnership

67. The EU side presented a non-paper on a strategic partnership between the EU and Africa. The non-paper makes a number of recommendations on the format and linkages of the EU-Africa Dialogue as well as its content. Both sides agreed to examine the recommendations at the next Ministerial Meeting.

Second Summit

68. Ministers reaffirmed the need to convene an EU-Africa Summit in the spirit and letter of the Cairo Declaration. In this regard, the EU reiterated its position that there are political circumstances that are currently impeding the holding of the

Summit. The AU on the other hand, reiterated the need to hold the Summit as soon as possible, noting that there are no political impediments to holding a summit.

C. Observations and Recommendations

Observations

- i) The Commission observes that the Africa-Europe Dialogue was continuing outside the monitoring organs provided for by the Cairo Plan of Action, which are: the bi-regional organs (at experts and ministerial levels) and the Summit of Heads of State and Government. Since 2003, the Dialogue has only taken place within the framework of the Troïka proposed by the Ouagadougou Bi-Regional Ministerial meeting, which was supposed to be temporary.
- ii) Europe seems to be practising a policy of double standards vis-à-vis Africa.

We note here that with Africa, Europe does not give the same substance and the same importance to the dialogues it is engaged in with developing continents. The following facts are eloquent proof:

- a) **Implementation of commitments.** From Cairo 2000 to Luxembourg 2005, a series of meetings have been held which all have a common denominator: they all end with final communiqués (virtually similar in terms of contents), which contain commitments that are rarely given concrete expression. With the exception of Europe's relatively appreciable actions in the area of Peace and Security, European commitments in the economic and social domains are not fulfilled. Among the relatively satisfactory results is the eligibility of the AU Commission to the FED.

b) Europe's instruments of intervention in Africa

We note that for Africa alone, Europe has three instruments of interventions, namely:

- MEDA intended for Mediterranean African countries and Middle East States.. The idea here is to create a security belt along the Mediterranean shoreline.
- TDCA intended exclusively for South Africa.
- The Cotonou Agreement with the ACP.

Insofar as each of these instruments is governed by its own logic or philosophy and has its own financial mechanisms, it appears extremely difficult for the European partners to find a channel that would enable them to provide effective support to the integration projects initiated by the African Union Commission. The consequence of the activation of these three

instruments is the strewing over, or even dispersal of European actions whose effects on Africa's development are very limited. Focusing actions through the use of a single instrument of intervention would certainly yield the expected results.

c) The unilateral and *sine die* postponement of the Lisbon Summit

For the record, we recall that the European side took this decision without prior consultation. Since then, it appears to be satisfied with the Troika formula, the limitations of which were mentioned earlier. The main reason put forward by Europe for its refusal to convene the Africa-Europe Summit lies essentially in Zimbabwe's domestic policy. However, and surprisingly, Europe effectively and actively participated in Europe-ASEAN summits attended by Burma whose leaders are accused by the international community, including Europe, of trampling on human rights on a daily basis. However, while waiting for the acquisition of this unique instrument, it is desirable to undertake joint AU-EU initiatives aimed at ensuring the coherent and coordinated implementation of these instruments.

Recommendations

In the light of the above, we propose the following:

- i) Convening of a Troika at the level of Heads of State and Government to resolve pending issues with a view to setting the Dialogue back in its original structures provided for under the Cairo Declaration. We strongly recommend that Africa take the initiative of convening such a summit.
- ii) The activation of other organs of dialogue, especially the bi-regional ones at experts and ministers' levels.
- iii) Dialogue between the two Commissions should be based more on meetings between the technical departments, which could promote the implementation of the many commitments contained in the final communiqués.

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