

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

P. O. Box 3243
5517844

Telephone: 5517 700

Fax:

Website: www.Africa-union.org

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Fourteenth Ordinary Session
26 - 30 January 2009
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

EX.CL/462 (XIV)

REPORT OF THE MULTILATERAL COOPERATION
SUB-COMMITTEE

**REPORT OF THE MULTILATERAL COOPERATION
SUB-COMMITTEE**

1. It will be recalled that during the last session of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC) that preceded the Executive Council Session, it was agreed that the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee should, from this session in January 2009, submit its own report to the PRC. It is therefore in implementation of that decision that this report is submitted.

2. Accordingly, the report will cover the activities of the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee since the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit within the context of Africa's subsisting partnership arrangements.

I. Preparation for the First Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit

3. The First Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit took place at Ciragan Palace, Istanbul, Turkey, from 18 to 20 August 2008. Before the summit, a sixteen member African Union delegation comprising seven members of the PRC Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation, including one official from the capital of a Member State and nine staff members of AU Commission, participated in a follow-up preparatory meeting with Turkish officials in Ankara, Turkey, on 7-8 July 2008 to further discuss the arrangements for the Summit.

4. The delegation was led by H.E. Dr. Mohamed Maundi, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee and Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania, and included the Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Chief of Staff, Office of the Chairperson of AU Commission. The Turkish delegation was led by Amb. Kenan Tepedelen, the Coordinator from African Affairs at the Ministry of foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

5. The objectives of this last preparatory meeting were as follows:

- i. To examine and review the outcome documents of the Summit;
- ii. To support the process of the preparation for the Summit by reviewing and updating logistic and other related associated arrangements; and
- iii. To explore and consider other related matters that could facilitate the successful conduct of the Summit

6. The joint PRC - AUC delegation also visited the Ciragan Palace, the venue of the summit including the facilities that had been provided there, as well as the accommodation locations for the African delegations to the summit. In addition, the delegation held a meeting with the Group of African Ambassadors/Heads of Missions in Ankara. The Group was briefed on the outcomes of the earlier preparatory meetings

with the Turkish side to consider the expected documents of the summit and the logistic and the other associated arrangements.

II. First Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit

7. The First Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit was held at three distinct levels – the Senior Officials, Ministers and Heads of State and Government. Importantly, the format of the Summit did not conform to the model that was approved by the Assembly during the Banjul Summit on Africa's representation at summits with a single-country partner. This was because Turkey invited all African countries and most that were not covered by the Banjul Summit Decision, did attend the summit.

8. The Summit was attended by seven (7) African Heads of State and Government, Vice Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers. In all, fifty (50) African countries were represented at the meeting, which also had in attendance His Excellency Jean Ping and His Excellency Erastus Mwencha, Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, respectively. The Summit established an Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit that would meet every five (5) years in Africa and in Turkey, on a rotational basis in addition to the establishment of a follow-up mechanism at several levels. In this context, the second Africa-Turkey Summit will be held in Africa in 2013.

9. A full report of the Summit has already been circulated by the Commission. Suffice it therefore to indicate that the summit adopted two outcome documents, namely the Istanbul Declaration and the Framework for Cooperation.

10. Among other things, the Summit agreed that the Partnership should meet at Summit level every five years with meetings at Ministerial and Officials levels in between. The Framework of Cooperation spelt out the areas in which Africa and Turkey could cooperate but the details are to be worked out in a plan of action. This is to be done within one year, which the Sub-Committee and PRC will work together to achieve. On the whole, the summit was a huge success in that it clearly showed the genuine desire by Africa and Turkey to further intensify and deepen their relations. This renewed commitment agrees with Africa's aspiration to make the 21st century the century of Africa's renaissance and transformation.

11. The success of the summit, on the African side, could be attributed to the excellent working relationship that existed between the Sub-Committee and the Commission, both of which worked tirelessly in the preparatory process and during the summit. It is hoped that the same candor will continue to prevail in the future both in this process and in similar other engagements that Africa is involved in.

12. Nevertheless, the Sub-Committee wishes to highlight two important issues. The first relates to the issue of participation in single-country partnerships. Whereas India strictly followed the Banjul format as communicated to it by the African Union, Turkey did not because it invited all Member States and went further to even invite all Africa's Permanent Representatives to the UN while it did not specifically invite Members of the

PRC in Addis Ababa. This issue was discussed at the level of the PRC and the consensus was that, in the final analysis, it was the responsibility of Member States to respect and implement decisions they have taken at the highest level. A review of the partnership policy of the Union can help deal with this thorny issue.

13. The second issue concerns the fact that during the last meeting of officials with Turkish officials in Istanbul, the African side re-opened many issues on which a final position had already been agreed in Addis Ababa by the PRC. Regrettably, this portrayed Africa in a very bad light in view of the fact that there were ferocious arguments between African delegations. This happened also in New Delhi during the Forum with India. The Sub-Committee recommends very strongly that every effort should be made to avoid such in the future. This will require, perhaps, more consultation and communication between Addis Ababa and Headquarters so that decisions reached by the PRC after extensive preparations should not be re-opened when meeting with partners.

III. Africa-South America Summit Process

14. The First Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of the Africa-South America Summit (ASA) was held at the Itamaraty Palace, Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of Brazil, in Brasilia on 10-11 June 2008. This was preceded by the Third Coordinators' Meeting of ASA on 9 June 2008. The outcomes of these two meetings have already been reported to the PRC. However, since far-reaching decisions were taken during the meetings they are briefly reiterated here.

15. These decisions include agreement on ASA terminology; ASA structure; the follow-up mechanisms and the establishment of eight (8) Working Groups. It also defined the role of the Pro-Tempore Secretariat and the Focal Points in the work of the Working Groups. Other areas that were agreed upon were the composition of the Consultative Committee of Ambassadors, the official languages, symbols and flag of ASA.

16. In the implementation of the decisions of the 1st SOM, the African and South American sides had taken steps to constitute the 8 Working Groups including the designation of their co-chairs. The details are as indicated in the attached Annex.

17. After being set up, the African Working Groups have commenced work in preparation for the 2nd ASA Summit. Some of them have already held meetings in order to consider the project proposals that were received from Brazil, Venezuela, Nigeria and the AUC, for each area of cooperation in order to come up with concrete proposals for the African side. This process was ongoing before the announcement of the postponement of the 2nd ASA Summit that was to have taken place in Venezuela on 28 and 29 November 2008. It is hoped that the Summit will now take place towards the end of the first quarter of 2009. It is to be noted that the Venezuela Summit was postponed at the request of a number of African Heads of State and Government who wished to participate in the UN-organized Follow-up Conference on Financing for Development in Doha, Qatar, which coincided with the ASA Summit.

18. In order to ensure the success of the Summit, the Sub-Committee wishes to encourage the African co-chairs and members of the Working Groups to accelerate the process of determining Africa's concrete project proposals in order to discuss them with the South American side ahead of the summit and to participate actively in preparations for the summit.

IV. The Africa-India Forum Summit

19. As earlier reported to the Executive Council in its report EX.CL/421(XIII) in June 2008, the First Africa-India Summit that was held in New Delhi, India, from 8-9 April 2008 was a huge success in terms of the large attendance by African Heads of State and Government and the economic package that was unveiled by India during the summit.

20. However, a major challenge that now exists is the development of a plan of action, which would underline the concrete benefits that Africa wishes to derive from the partnership. The Sub-Committee has mandated the Commission to come up with a draft plan of action and it is hoped that the relevant Departments of the Commission would hasten the process and submit a draft that will be considered by the Sub-Committee and the PRC in that sequence. Thereafter, we will engage with India in order to agree on a joint plan of action and an implementation mechanism within the one-year period provided for the conclusion of the process in the framework for cooperation.

21. To this end, the Commission is once again reminded of the urgency of this mandate and encouraged to forward, at the earliest, a draft for the consideration of the Sub-Committee.

V. China-Africa Forum (FOCAC)

22. As would be recalled, the Executive Council at its last January Session in Addis Ababa decided, among other things, that the African Union Commission should play a coordinating role with respect to all partnerships between Africa and others, including single country partnerships. This decision EX.CL/374(XII) should therefore have applied to the China-Africa Forum (FOCAC)

23. However, the Sub-Committee notes that neither it nor the Commission has been informed about any activities on FOCAC since the Summit took place in Beijing in 2006. It was brought to the attention of the Sub-Committee by the Commission that a meeting of experts took place in Cairo, Egypt in October 2008. The Commission was not involved in the preparation for the meeting and was in fact invited as an observer. This means that the Banjul and Addis Ababa decisions are not being respected with regard to FOCAC even though they were officially communicated to China, and Egypt as the next host of the Ministerial meeting. The Sub-Committee agrees with the Commission, which did not attend the Cairo meeting, as it is not tenable for the Commission to continue to be treated as an observer in a process, which affects the majority of its Member States.

It recommends that this issue be re-visited with a view to implementing the Addis Ababa decision. The same action should be taken with respect to the TICAD process.

VI. The Global Review Process

24. It will be recalled that the Executive Council in January 2008 directed action to be taken to conduct a global review of all existing partnerships in order to effectively implement strategies and action plans agreed upon between Africa and its international partners, rationalize the number of summits, identify the criteria for such partnerships and make necessary recommendations to Council and Assembly. In this regard, the PRC was required to submit its recommendations on the aforementioned study before initiating any new strategic partnership.

25. In the implementation of Council decision, the Commission, it is understood, has concluded the process of the global review and the outcome will be submitted to the appropriate organs of the Union as a measure of informed assessment that would guide policy decisions. It is hoped that the Commission will discuss its findings with the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee and the PRC in order to formulate a common position for onward submission to the next Ordinary Session of Council in June 2009 for consideration and adoption.

VII. Conclusion

26. In conclusion, it is apt to underline the fact that Africa's Strategic Partnership with the rest of the world is on the upward move within the context of the framework of the African Union. However, there is need to harmonize its institutional framework with a view to ensuring synergy and a coordinated approach to the partnership. By so doing, these partnership arrangements will attract benefits and concrete outcomes to Africa and its people and further elevate the profile and prestige of the African Union in an ever-globalized world. There is therefore an explicit need for Africa to take maximum advantage of the partnerships in order to accelerate the growth and development of the continent.

27. The Sub-Committee takes this opportunity to express appreciation to the Commission, particularly the Office of the Chairperson, for the close working relationship between them. It hopes that this will continue in the future.

AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE

African Union Common Repository

<http://archives.au.int>

Organs

Council of Ministers & Executive Council Collection

2009

Report of the multilateral cooperation sub-commi

African Union

African Union

<http://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/4937>

Downloaded from African Union Common Repository