

AFRICAN UNION
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AFRICA-EUROPE DIALOGUE
THIRD MEETING OF THE TROÏKAS
04 DECEMBER 2004
ADDIS ABABA (ETHIOPIA)

COMMUNIQUE

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INTRODUCTION

1. In the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue, the Third Ministerial Meeting of the African and European Troikas met at the Headquarters of the African Union, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 4 December 2004. The meeting was preceded by that of Senior Officials, held from 2 to 3 December 2004. The Meeting of Ministers was co-chaired by the Honourable Bernard Bot, Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands, current President of the Council of the European Union (EU), for the European side, and by H.E. Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria and current Chairperson of the AU Executive Council, for the African side.

2. The EU Troika was also composed of Mr. Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development Aid and Humanitarian Affairs; and H.E. Ambassador Alain de Muysers, Africa Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg.

3. The AU Troika was also composed of H.E. Leonardo Santos Simão, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mozambique; H.E. Dr. Maxwell Mkwezalamba, Commissioner for Economic Affairs; H.E. Ambassador Said Djinnit, Commissioner for Peace and Security; H.E. Mrs Elizabeth Tankeu, Commissioner for Trade and Industry; H.E. Adv. Bience Gawanas, Commissioner for Social Affairs; H.E. Mrs Rosebud Kurwijila, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture; and H.E. Prof. Nagia Mohammed Essayed, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology.

4. During the deliberations, Ministers considered the following issues and made recommendations thereon.

I. PEACE AND SECURITY

5. Ministers exchanged views on matters relating to peace and security in Africa, including on conflict situations, the Peace Facility, the operationalisation 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, 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 Cease-fire 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 for 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 altogether jointly addressing the lessons learned 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 remain committed to the agreements they have signed and that a comprehensive peace agreement will 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 Sudan.

8. Ministers condemned the escalation of violence in Côte d'Ivoire and expressed concern at the risk of their regional spill-over. 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 also 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 security and stabilisation of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Both sides stand ready to contribute to the long-term stabilisation 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 stabilisation 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-Points Proposal, which included its acceptance, in principle, of the decision of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC), as an important step toward the full implementation of the decision of the EEBC and to overcome the stalemate in the Ethiopian-Eritrean peace process. They look forward to a constructive Eritrean response to the Ethiopian proposal by engaging 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 EEBC decision and the normalization of their relations.

12. With regard to 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 the capacity in Africa 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, and particularly, to the effective functioning of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism, established in Algiers, Algeria. Ministers emphasised the need to combat mercenarism, which is one of the sources of destabilisation 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 emphasised that there is a need for establishing cooperation between the Peace and Security Council of the AU and the EU.

II. GOVERNANCE

State of play of the AU governance agenda and EU support, particularly implementation of the APRM under NEPAD

14. Africa recognises 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 the 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 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 co-operate 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 EU-Africa partnership. The AU and the EU committed themselves to create a mutual enrichment and exchange of experiences and support the promotion of human rights and humanitarian issues.

17. Ministers agreed that the AU and the EU would increase co-operation 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 co-operation in the field between EU and AU missions, as well as between the respective Commission services, and called for its continuation.

Follow-up to 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 revitalisation of the United Nations system and to promote an open, equitable, rule-based, non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system. Ministers also emphasised the importance of respect for international human rights and humanitarian law, particularly through strong support for the International Criminal Court.

III. REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND TRADE

20. Ministers welcomed the establishment of the Joint AU/EC Monitoring Mechanism on the 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.

21. Ministers recognised 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 the 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.

22. The two parties recognised the need to speed up the integration process in Africa as a means to attain socio-economic development on this continent and to enhance its competitiveness at the world level.

23. The EU stated its readiness to support Africa’s integration process through continental programmes and projects, including by reinforcing the capacity of the AU Commission.

24. The AU informed the EU that negotiations are on-going to finalise the Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and RECs, and that once finalised, the Memorandum will be made available to partners for information.

25. The two sides recognised 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 foreign private investment. The European side reassured its African partners of its support in the reform of their economies and expressed its intentions 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.

IV. KEY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

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

26. 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.

27. Ministers also emphasised the need to adopt measures that should focus on meeting the targets set and the commitments undertaken by all continents to provide support to developing countries, in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and other pandemics. They also stressed the need to support local production of generic anti-retroviral drugs as well as the establishment of a global tiered pricing system and to facilitating access to these affordable drugs by those who are critically in need.

28. Ministers underlined the importance of a strong co-operation, co-ordination and partnership between all donors, Governments and NGOs.

29. Both sides commended initiatives like the “Europe-Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnerships” and “*Ensemble pour la Solidarité Thérapeutique Hospitalière Réseau*”.

30. Both sides agreed on the need to address the linkage between HIV/AIDS and peace and security.

31. The EU reaffirmed its continuous and comprehensive efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS through different instruments.

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

32. Ministers recalled the endorsement given at the Dublin Ministerial Troika 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 Expert’s report noted that the existing debt relief measures will not in themselves ensure long term debt sustainability and also recommended more active participation of the debtor countries in the appropriate fora regarding further discussions on external debt.

33. The AU side drew attention to the fact that, since the April 2004 Ministerial Meeting, developments in the international scene as well as findings reported in seminal presentations and celebrated international

external debt studies all lend credence to and are supportive of the conclusions of the report endorsed at the 2004 Troika Ministerial 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.

34. Ministers therefore agreed that the joint report, as endorsed by the Troika Ministerial Meeting of April 2004, be submitted to the next Summit of Heads of State and Government for its political consideration.

35. Ministers also agreed that, pending the political consideration by the Summit, both sides, in particular 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

36. Ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress made on the issue of food security particularly with regard to the study for the evaluation of existing Early Warning Systems, notably in West, South and Northern Africa, and expressed the wish to extend the project to include regions not yet covered.

37. 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 parties reviewed other aspects whose development could help to ensure food security.

38. 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 (CAADP).

Return of cultural goods

39. 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 co-operation 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.

40. The African side renewed its appreciation for the Government of Italy for its commitment to return the Aksum Obelisk and emphasised 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

41. The meeting, recognised the complex nature of migratory flows, linked to, amongst others, development issues. The two parties 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.

42. 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 in the framework of the EPA-negotiations.

43. Both parties 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

44. The two parties acknowledged that cloning of human beings in particular and bioethics issues in general, relate to human rights and dignity of human beings. The African side informed 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.

45. The Commission of the AU informed that it would lead this process in collaboration with existing regional and global mechanisms on the issue, and in this way appropriate machinery needs to be put in place to enable a thorough reflection on all issues related to ethics in Biotechnology and life sciences.

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

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

47. Ministers recognised 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 in 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 outcome of the second phase of the WSIS scheduled to take place on 16-18 November 2005 in Tunis.

48. 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.

V. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT AFRICA-EUROPE SUMMIT

49. Luxembourg, as incoming Presidency of the EU, extended an invitation to hold the next EU-Africa Ministerial Troika in 11 April 2005 in Luxembourg, on the basis of the working procedures agreed at the Rome Ministerial Troika in November 2003.

50. The African side reiterated its position requesting a Summit as soon as possible, and asked the EU to consider all possible options to allow the holding of such a meeting.

51. Both sides welcomed the ongoing dialogue between the two Commissions, which should be instrumental for carrying the EU-Africa dialogue further.

VI. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Gender Mainstreaming

52. Ministers underlined that women's role and contribution are absolutely critical to Africa's development, while recognising at the same time that, to date, African women continue to lag behind men in terms of, among other things, access to education, economic opportunities and decision-making structures.

53. The two parties further acknowledged that the issue of gender should be systematically tackled in each of the focal areas covered by their agreement and should receive leadership and advocacy at the highest level. The EU side commended the AU on the position taken by the AU Heads of State and Government on the issue of gender equality and women's empowerment, and on the steps already taken by the AU in this area, especially the adoption of the AU Heads of State and Government Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. The two sides pledged to promote and support gender mainstreaming, gender equality and women's empowerment in the AU as crosscutting issues, within the framework of the Africa-EU dialogue.

Accreditation of EU Ambassadors to the AU

54. The EU reiterated its request for the accreditation of EU Ambassadors in Addis Ababa as permanent representatives to the AU to further strengthen the relationship between the EU and the AU.

Vision, Mission and the Strategic Plan of the AU

55. The AU Commission briefed the Meeting on the progress with respect to the development of the AU vision, mission and strategic plan. The EU took note of this development, and both sides agreed to hold further dialogue on the subject.

DONE IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA ON 4 DECEMBER 2004

FOR THE AFRICAN SIDE

FOR THE EUROPEAN SIDE