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Africa and China meet to assess progress in the implementation of FOCAC Action Plan and Plan for the future

Beijing, China 29 July 2016- A coordinators' meeting on the implementation of the follow up actions of the Johannesburg summit of the Forum on China-Africa cooperation (FOCAC) was held in Beijing from 28 to 29 July. South Africa co-chaired the meeting with China on behalf of FOCAC. The African Union Commission was represented by H.E Fatima Haram Acyl, Commissioner of Trade and Industry, while Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat, Foreign Minister of Chad represented the African Union. Chad is the current chair of the AU. Over 300 delegates at ministerial and senior levels attended.

The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the implementation of the 2016- 2018 action plan that was agreed in Johannesburg in December 2015, and to give further impetus to the implementation of the FOCAC Action Plan's five pillars and the identified areas of cooperation within the 10 major economic and trade domains. Apart from the plenary session of all the partners on 29 July, the meeting also saw the holding of a business cooperation ceremony, the signing of various bilateral and business agreements, dialogue between African and Chinese financial institutions, as well as a visit by delegates, to Suzhou on a tour of the Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) in Jiangsu province.



The meeting appreciated the prompt action taken by both China and Africa in the implementation of the Johannesburg summit outcomes, with South African Minister of Foreign Affairs Honourable Maite Nkoana Mashabane declaring that “In a matter of months (since Johannesburg), we are busy with implementation, unlike past partnerships whose implementation would take a long time. By 2018 we shall have completed the first phase of action and ordinary Africans will be feeling the difference made by the partnership”. Minister Mahamat expressed Africa's hope to see greater synergy between the outcomes of Johannesburg and Africa's agenda 2063 and its ten year implementation plan. He called for the empowerment of women and better services among other things, and highlighted the need for support to combat terrorism and manage migration. The Chinese President Mr Xi Jin Ping meanwhile declared, in a statement read by State Counsellor Mr Yang Jiechi that “China's support for Africa's peace and development will never change”.



The head of the African Union Commission delegation, Commissioner Acyl had earlier told a business meeting that “as Africa develops its own productive capacities, it will seek partnership with Chinese entrepreneurs and businesses to provide material inputs, technology, production know-how, investment capital, and training”. She also reminded delegates to start preparations for the ‘Invest in Africa Platform’ and pledged the commitment of African countries and the African Union Commission to take trade and investment relations

with China to another level.

The meeting took stock of milestones already attained under the five pillars as follows; high level mutual visits; advancing mutually beneficial cooperation across the board; maintaining robust people to people and cultural exchanges; security cooperation; and cooperation in the international arena. A joint communique issued at the end of the meeting stated that both sides had reaffirmed their readiness to make joint efforts to promote industrialisation and agricultural modernisation in Africa through alignment of industry, transfer of technology and human resources capacity development cooperation; and to continue to push forward the implementation of the agreed action plan. Delegates agreed to adhere to five cooperative concepts for the implementation of the Johannesburg outcomes of the FOCAC i.e. common, intensive, green, safe and open development. They called on the international community to pay greater attention to, and increase investment for peace, security and development for Africa and urged developed countries to honour their commitment to provide aid, transfer technologies and support capacity building of African countries and support African countries to tackle challenges in peace, security and development affairs.

FOCAC was launched in 2000 in Beijing as a tri annual collective dialogue platform for cooperation between Africa and China. The 2nd Africa-China Cooperation Forum Summit, which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa on the 4th and 5th of December 2015, under the theme “*China-Africa Progressing Together: Win-Win Cooperation for Common Development*”, endorsed the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Action.

To drive the implementation of the action plan and the 10 major economic and trade domains, President Xi Jinping pledged 60 billion United States dollars in financial support to Africa distributed as follows: five billion dollars of free aid and interest free loan and interest free loans, 35 billion dollars of preferential loans and export credit on more favourable terms, five billion dollars of additional capital for the China Africa development fund, 5 billion dollars of initial capital of special loans for the development of African small to medium enterprises each, and 10 billion dollars for a China- Africa production capacity cooperation fund. **WZM/lm**

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