AFRICAN BRAINSTORMING MEETING ON THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP

Concept Note
I. INTRODUCTION

It will be recalled that the Africa-EU Dialogue started in April 2000 and the partnership concretized with the adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007. The JAES, therefore, constitutes the formal framework for relations between the two continents and as such marked a turning point in relations between the two sides. Based on the principles of the unity of Africa, the interdependence between Africa and Europe, ownership and joint responsibility, among others, the strategy attempts to take the Africa-EU relationship to a new strategic level through enhanced cooperation in all spheres.

The JAES consists of eight (8) partnership areas: i) Peace and Security; ii) Democratic Governance and Human Rights; iii) Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure; iv) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); v) Energy; vi) Climate Change; vii) Migration Mobility and Employment; and viii) Science and Information Society and Space. It has been implemented through successive Action Plans:

- the first adopted at the Lisbon Summit; and
- the second adopted at the 3rd Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli, Libya in November 2010.

Among the key criteria for JAES activities are regional, continental and global dimensions and respect for the principles of subsidiarity. By implication, JAES activities are directly linked to Africa’s regional and continental integration as set out in key strategic documents such as the AU Strategic Plan and similar ones in the RECs, with some activities also reflected in the AU Minimum Integration Programme (MIP).

Five years on from its adoption in 2007 and in preparation for the forthcoming 4th Africa-EU Summit to be held in Belgium in 02-03 April 2014, time has come for both sides to honestly reflect on the nature of the partnership so far, its content, relevance to African realities and priories, achievements, coordination and architectural deficiencies and implementation bottlenecks, including those pertaining to finance and stakeholder engagement.

It is for these reasons that the 6th College to College meeting, held between the two Commissions from 25-26 April 2013, in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, agreed to convene a Joint Brainstorming Session from ‘20-21 June 2013 with relevant stakeholders to pursue discussion on the future of Africa-EU partnership in order to render the post 2013 cooperation more focused and make the implementation of the JAES more efficient.’

In order to ensure adequate preparation for the joint brainstorming it is important that the Africa side organizes itself to develop a common position that articulates its views and recommendations on how to strengthen the partnership. African stakeholders will need to reflect on key priorities of Africa’s development agenda and articulate how these priorities can be assimilated in the 3rd Action Plan of the JAES, so as to render the partnership
more efficient and value adding with the delivery of concrete and visible results. In addition, cross-cutting issues such as coordination and implementation architecture, financing and stakeholder engagement will be addressed.

In view of the forgoing, the AU Commission is organizing a brainstorming session at the level of the Africa side with the intention of providing a platform for free, frank discussions on Africa’s partnership thus far and chart a way forward on future engagements with the EU and implementation of the 3rd Action Plan of the JAES, as well as propose concrete recommendations to strengthen identified areas of weakness.

II. OBJECTIVES AND DISCUSSION TOPICS OF THE BRAINSTORMING

The objectives of the brainstorming session are the following:

- To discuss and make recommendations on:
  - Strengthening the coordination and implementation architecture for the Dialogue
  - Enhancing stakeholder engagement so as to ensure optimal ownership and influence in the Dialogue
  - Improving access to financing of EU financial instruments and ensure the mobilization of African resources
  - Identifying future priorities for the 3th Action Plan

- To foster dynamic, fruitful, frank interactions and exchange of ideas
- To direct the discussions on the above topics;

Participants will be given an opportunity to reflect deeply on the functioning and performance of each thematic group and thus:

- Undertake a self-assessment on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of each thematic group and make recommendations to enhance their performance and coverage of issues.

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of the session are the following:

- Self-assessment through a SWOT analysis conducted by each of the eight (8) thematic partnership
- Recommendations on how to strengthen the content, focus and delivery of each thematic partnership
- Proposals on the following cross cutting issues:
  - Enhancing stakeholder engagement;
  - Restructuring the coordination and implementation architecture;
- Improving financing; and
- Identifying key priorities for the 3rd Action Plan.

  ▪ Outcome document of key findings and recommendations

IV. PARTICIPANTS

Participants will include the following:

  ▪ Co-Chairs from Members States
  ▪ Follow-up Committee on Africa-EU Dialogue and Chef de fils for each thematic partnership
  ▪ Focal points from the African Union Commission for each thematic partnership;
  ▪ AU Organs: Pan-African Parliament (PAP), African Court of Human and People’s Rights (AfCHPR), the African Commission of Human and People’s Right’s (ACHPR) and NEPAD Agency, and AU Brussels office
  ▪ Regional Economic Communities (RECs)
  ▪ Other stakeholders: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Development Bank (AfDB) and the AUC-ECA-AfDB Joint Secretariat

V. DATE AND VENUE

The proposed date for the brainstorming session is 10-13 June, 2013 in Zanzibar. More detailed information regarding travel and logistics can be found in the Information Note.

VI. FORMAT OF THE BRAINSTORMING

In order to foster as much interaction and exchanges between stakeholders the format of the brainstorming session, which will be more of a working session than a formal meeting, will be the following:

  ▪ Plenary session:
    - Opening and Welcome Remarks

  ▪ Presentations:
    - Presentation on the background of the Africa-EU Partnership
    - Presentation on the AUC Strategic Plan 2014-2017 (highlighting areas of key interest of cooperation)
    - Critical Analysis of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)
    - Civil society perspectives on the JAES
- **Breakout sessions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakout Groups</th>
<th>GROUP 1: Peace and Security Partnership (thematic partnership) &amp; Financing the Africa-EU Partnership (cross cutting issue)</th>
<th>GROUP 2: Democratic Governance and Human Rights (thematic partnership) &amp; Financing the Africa-EU Partnership (cross cutting issue)</th>
<th>GROUP 3: Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (thematic partnership) &amp; Future priorities of the Partnership (cross cutting issue)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion Topics</strong></td>
<td><strong>GROUP 4:</strong> Trade, regional Integration and Infrastructure (thematic partnership) &amp; Coordination and Architecture of the Africa-EU Partnership (cross cutting issue)</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 5:</strong> Energy (thematic partnership) &amp; Coordination and Architecture of the Africa-EU Partnership (cross cutting issue)</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 6:</strong> Climate change and Environment (thematic partnership) &amp; Participation and engagement of stakeholders (cross cutting issue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP 7:</strong> Migration, Mobility and Employment (thematic partnership) &amp; Participation and engagement of stakeholders (cross cutting issue)</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 8:</strong> Science, Info Society and Space (thematic partnership) &amp; Future priorities of the Partnership (cross cutting issue)</td>
<td><strong>GROUP 8:</strong> Science, Info Society and Space (thematic partnership) &amp; Future priorities of the Partnership (cross cutting issue)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All sessions will be guided by a facilitator*

- **Plenary session** –
  - Presentation of breakout groups (thematic partnerships and cross cutting issues)
  - Wrap-up - Consideration and adoption of the outcome document of the meeting

**VII. CONTACT PERSONS**

For more information, please contact the following officers at the AU Commission:

- Mr. Fliss Liwaadine – Coordinator of the Africa-EU Dialogue
LIWAEDDINEF@africa-union.org

- Victoria Egbetayo – Coordinator of the Africa-EU Dialogue
  egbetayov@africa-union.org

- Mwila Kamwela – Coordinator JEAS Support Mechanism (Africa side)
  Kamwelam@africa-union.org