



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Téléphone : 5517 700 Fax : 5511299
website : www.africa-union.org

Directorate of Information and Communication

Press Release No. 10 /2013

African and EU Officials call for more coordination at Joint Strategic Partnership Meeting



Addis Ababa, 14th February 2013: With the aims of reviewing the partnership between the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), the Joint Africa-EU Task Force met at its 15th session today, 14 February 2013, at the New AU Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the European Commission (EC), the two-day meeting will discuss key deliverables of the Joint Africa-EU (JAES) Second Action Plan (AUC/EC) as well as the AU Strategic Plan 2014-2020, and future perspectives of the Africa-EU partnership in line with emerging global issues among others.

Officially opening the meeting, AUC Chief of Staff Ambassador Jean-Baptiste NATAMA commended the results achieved by the AU-EU cooperation including development of an innovative African Peace Facility as well as the implementation of the EU Support Program to empower the AU Commission.

The Chief of Staff notes that, while there are considerable achievements in the implementation of the Joint Strategy, some works still needs to be done to improve the efficiency of some of the partnerships in both dimensions operationally and technically.

He highlighted some challenges faced by the partnerships including lack of funding to ensure an effective and efficient implementation of the joint

activities under the cooperation. He urged both parties to joint efforts in finding a mechanism that can support the partnership to achieve its goals. He also reaffirmed the AU Commission's unflinching commitment to the success of the partnerships. (See complete speech of the Chief of Staff on the AU website: www.au.int).

Affirming the Commitment of EU towards JAES, Mr. Marcus Cornaro, Deputy Director General for Development and cooperation –EuropeAid (DEVCO), Co-Chair of the meeting, said that JAES remains the political framework for relations between the two continents, based on principles of equality, mutual interest and shared responsibility.

He highlighted the need to focus on shared priorities. *"In order to achieve more and better outcomes, we suggest concentrating our energy on those shared priorities where we can be the most effective* and this will also imply to further improve our synergies, including between our actions, being them undertaken at continental, regional, national or local level" he said.

Mr. Nick Westcott, Managing Director for Africa at the European External Action Service (EEAS), Co-Chair of the meeting, stressed in his opening remarks that the coming year is a watershed not just for the African Union, but for EU- Africa relations as well by having a fresh look at whether we are achieving the ambitions we set ourselves in the 2007 Strategy, and whether we can focus our efforts more effectively to deliver the results", he said.

He emphasized on the need to review the progress for the existing activities between the two sides, the African and the European and how we are matching up to our ambitions, and look for deliverables for the EU-Africa Summit early next year.

Commending the meeting as a demonstration of mutual desire of AU-EU to nurture and strengthen their strategic partnership, Amb. Kongit Sinegiorgis, Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the AU and Chairperson of the AU Permanent Representatives' Committee, said the 25th ordinary session of the PRC last month evaluated the progress made and the challenges encountered with regard to the Africa-EU Partnership. It come to understand that more work needs to be done in order to implement the Joint Action Plan in the eight thematic partnerships to realize the full potential of the Joint Strategy, in light of the upcoming Africa-EU Summit due to take place in the last quarter of 2013, she added.

She noted the main challenges that encounter the implement of the Joint Action Plan. " I call upon the two commissions and all other stakeholders to seriously reflect on these issues and come-up with appropriate recommendations, which will help us in addressing those challenges and

move forward our strategic partnership" she added. (Full speech of the Amb. Kongit Sinegiorgis on AU website: www.au.int)



The 15th Joint Africa-EU Task Force meeting will consider the cooperation in all eight partnerships and will begin a process or reassessment that will culminate in the fourth Africa-EU summit, to be held in Brussels in April next year. The meeting will also present financing avenues to foster the implementation of the Second

Action Plan and discuss the future of the Africa-EU dialogue.

The 15th Joint Africa-EU Task Force Meeting was attended by Representatives from Africa, European Union, civil society, private sector and the Joint Expert Groups (JEGs) Co-chairs among others. It will conclude tomorrow 15 February.

For further information, please consult AU website: www.au.int

AMT/ EAT