



Africa-South America

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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

## **PRESS RELEASE N.02**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> AFRICA - SOUTH AMERICA SUMMIT : MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE TWO REGIONS REITERATE THEIR COMMITMENT TO STRENGTHEN THE PARTNERSHIP**

**Malabo 21 February 2013** – Ministers of Foreign Affairs from Africa and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) gathered at their 5<sup>th</sup> session today, Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2013, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, to ensure the proper functioning of the Africa-South America Partnership . The meeting is within the framework of the 3rd Africa-South America Summit (ASA) scheduled to start tomorrow 22<sup>nd</sup> February at the Sipoppo Convention Centre, Malabo, under the theme: *“Strategies and Mechanisms to strengthen South-South Cooperation”*.



Implementation of the Africa-South America Action Plan for the period 2013-2016; the setting up of the presidential strategic committee; establish institutional mechanisms required for the financing of ASA project/programmes are some of the issues on the agenda to be discussed by the Ministers.

Contextualizing the ASA partnership in his opening remarks, Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), explained that the partnership falls within the framework of the South-South Cooperation, underpinned by political solidarity and inspired by the shared historical background and common

aspirations of the two regions. “The success of our common desire is translated into concrete projects to be realized and areas of mutual interests clearly defined to propel the partnership to greater heights for mutual benefit of our peoples of the two Continents”. He noted.

Mr. Mwencha highlighted the areas of mutual interest including: improving trade and investment prospects between Africa and South America; education; agriculture; energy and Infrastructure; social justice; inclusive social policies by mainstreaming the effective participation of youths, civil society and gender groups. Both regions, he said, recognize the need to join hands in fighting common challenges such as drug trafficking and human smuggling, terrorism in all its forms, piracy, mercenarism, and other transnational organized crime, in order to promote peace and security across the continents.



The AUC Deputy Chairperson concluded by recalling that this meeting is taking place at the time when the African Union is celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 2013. He called on both sides to work towards the objective of transformation, which the AU aspires for in the coming decades. “In this regard, ASA as our strategic partner and the Diaspora will play a major role, reflecting our shared background and close ties through their contributions for a better world by engendering peace and prosperity”, he underlined. Complete speech of the AUC Deputy Chairperson is on the AU website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)).

Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the Executive Council of the African Union, underscored the importance of strengthening the ASA partnership which he said “is imperative in addressing poverty and inequality, bring about economic transformation and ensure prosperity for our peoples”. He explained that the partnership offers enormous potential to expand cooperation in sharing experiences and know-how in a number of areas including trade, investment, agriculture, energy, health, education, information communication and technology, culture and tourism. (See complete speech of Minister Ghebreyesus on the AU website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) ).

Mrs. Viola Adaku Onwuliri, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Coordinator of the African Group of the ASA Partnership Forum (ASACOF), recalled the common historical and cultural background uniting the two regions. She said for centuries South America has been home to the African Diaspora, many of whom have successfully retraced their roots and family lineage to Africa. One of the main goals of the ASA partnership, she said, is to cement the already existing bond between the people of both continents. Mrs. Onwuliri called on her peers to recognise and salute the vision of the founding fathers of the ASA, Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria and Mr. Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva, former President of Brazil.

Other key speakers during this meeting were: Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the South American Coordinator of ASA, and Mrs Ana Jara Velasquez, Minister of Women's Affairs of Peru, representing the Secretariat of UNASUR , they both reiterated the need to reinforce the existing Africa- South America cooperation.

Mr. Agapito Mba Mokuy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, recalled the engagement taken by both regions in the previous ASA Summits in Abuja (2006) and Margarita (2009) and hoped that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Summit will generate ideas with a strong political will to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan of Action.

The report of the Ministers will be submitted to the Heads of State and Government of ASA scheduled to take place tomorrow 22nd February 2013 in Malabo.

EAT/HMC