



PRESS RELEASE

AU ECOSOCC HOLDS PARTNERSHIP DISCUSSIONS WITH EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (EESC)

The Presiding Officer of the African Union Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) welcomed a delegation from the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on Tuesday July 15, 2015 at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa.

The EESC delegation was led by Mr. Xavier Verboven, President of the ACP-EU Follow up Committee and also included Ms. Dilyana Slavova, President of the Specialized Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment; Ms. Brenda King Chair, IT Group and Rafael Bellon Gomez, Administrator of External Relations and EU ECOSOC Secretariat

The meeting, held on the margins of the Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa, aimed to strengthen the ties between the AU ECOSOCC and its counterpart organ within the EU.

Mr. Chilengi and Mr. Verboven exchanged information about the structure and programs of their respective committees and highlighted a number of issues and challenges common to civil society in both Africa and Europe.

The meeting further identified areas of potential cooperation and synergy between the two civil society organs and committed to a plan of action in the coming months to solidify an institutional partnership through a memorandum of understanding.

Ambassador Mussie Hailu Special Advisor to the AU ECOSOCC on Interfaith, inter-religious and inter-cultural issue; and Mr. Kyeretwie Osei from the ECOSOCC Secretariat, also participated in the meeting.

Concrete outcomes of the Meeting:

1. Solidify an institutional partnership through an MOU between AU ECOSOCC and EU ECOSOC

2. Agreed to have leadership of each organ address each other's policy organs. ECOSOCC Presiding Officer will address the EU ECOSOC twice a year and the EU ECOSOC President will do the same for Africa
3. Share experiences on how the EU ECOSOC generates its advisory opinions. They generate about 200 advisory opinions every year to the EU and about 2000 meetings per year
4. Agreed to start discussing the Post Cotonou Agreement and reign cooperation frameworks.
5. Agreed to have some members of AU ECOSOCC to undertake attachment for one month to two at their secretariat to share and learn generation of advisory opinions, declarations etc.
6. 6. Agreed to have AU ECOSOCC Staff attachment to EU ECOSOC Secretariat at External Services to share and learn how secretariat services EU ECOSOC , communication strategy, policy engagement etc. for up to 3 months depending on circumstances as they use 24 languages at the Secretariat
7. Agreed to work together in the evaluation of EPAS, on programme of food security and safety and on activities on international year of the soil

Standing Committee members should note the quantitative deliverables for the meeting enroute to Nairobi

Thank you

Joseph CHILENGI

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