

# Welcoming Remarks

By

H.E. Ambassador Kongit Sinegiorgis

Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the AU and  
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Representatives' Committee

At

The Africa-Turkey Senior Officials' Meeting

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Addis Ababa

*Excellency Ambassador Birnur Fertekligil , Deputy Under-Secretary at the  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey,*

*Senior Officials from Africa and Turkey,*

*Distinguished Participants,*

*Colleagues,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

At the outset let me extend my warm welcome to those who joined us from Turkey. The high level participation demonstrates the great importance both sides attach to the strategic partnership between Africa and Turkey.

As current Chairperson of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union, it gives me great pleasure to Co-Chair this Senior Officials Meeting, whose primary task would be to undertake the necessary preparations in the lead up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa-Turkey Summit scheduled to be held in October 2013.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

As you would recall, this meeting was supposed to be held in September 2012, in accordance with the decision of the First Ministerial Review Conference of the Africa-Turkey Partnership held in 2011. In this regard, I wish to indicate that the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> ordinary sessions of the Executive Council of the African Union have underlined the need to expedite the preparations for the upcoming Africa-Turkey Summit.

Therefore, I hope our meeting today will enable us to start the preparatory activities for the October Summit in full swing and afford us the opportunity to review the status of implementation of Africa-Turkey partnership projects.

In this connection, one of the key items for our discussion is the implementation of projects contained in the Joint 2010-2014 Implementation Plan, which was adopted during the Africa-Turkey Senior Officials Meeting in December 2010. While it is true efforts were made to to implement some projects, we all know that not much progress has been achieved to the level of our expectations. Tangible and concrete results are

not yet visible in most of the partnership pillars. We, therefore, need to agree on priority projects for implementation during the remaining few months before the October 2013 Summit. Even though they are short term projects, these priority projects could be regarded as the stepping stones towards more elaborate long-term strategic partnership programmes between Africa and Turkey.

I am sure you all agree that our projects and programmes should be results-oriented and mutually beneficial to the peoples of Africa and Turkey. These projects should also expand the visibility of the Africa-Turkey Partnership. We all know that Turkey and most of our countries enjoy excellent bilateral relations but ordinary citizens of Africa and Turkey as well as the rest of the world should know, appreciate and draw lesson from the strategic cooperation that exist between our continent and Turkey at multilateral level.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is indeed opportune that we will be discussing the future priorities of our partnership at a time when the African Union just finalized and adopted

the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan of the African Union Commission. For us, the Africa-Turkey partnership has all the potentials to be a long-term partnership and, therefore, we expect our next Joint Implementation Plan (2014-2018) to incorporate Africa's priorities and aspirations that are reflected in this long-term Strategic Plan.

Before I conclude my brief remarks, I would like to emphasize the need to institute a strong follow-up mechanism. The stronger our follow-up mechanism is the more tangible will be our result and, hence, the greater will be our achievements. In my view, we should agree at this meeting to set up the best follow-up mechanism for our strategic partnership before we depart.

Finally, I would like to wish all of us fruitful deliberations and pleasant stay to our visiting delegates. With these remarks, I now pass the microphone to my Co-Chair.

Thank you