



Press Release

Chairperson receives Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce



Chairperson Ping (far left) addresses the Chinese Delegation led by Vice Minister Jiang Yaoping (far right)

Addis-Ababa, 16 November 2011 -- The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Jean Ping, on Tuesday, 15 November 2011 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, received H.E. Mr. Jiang Yaoping, Vice Minister of Commerce of the People's Republic of China.

Welcoming the Chinese Member of Government and his delegation, the Chairperson stated that China is an important friend and partner of the AU and Africa and pointed out that both parties enjoy cooperation ties at two levels: bilateral and multilateral. Most African states have enjoyed strong and excellent bilateral relations with China for decades, especially in the areas of trade, investment and political/diplomatic relations, he added.

"The African Union Commission supports and encourages bilateral cooperation between China and African states. Multilateral relations between the AU and China are complementary to these bilateral ties and should not be viewed in any other light," he stated.

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to China for its assistance to the AU in the domain of peacekeeping and cited as a commendable example, the participation of Chinese peacekeepers in the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Dr. Ping further renewed the expression of his gratitude to the Chinese Government and People for donating and constructing the nearly completed AUC Office Complex and Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, and announced that for the first time and thanks to Chinese assistance, the African Union will host its Summit at AUC Headquarters next January.

On the issue of Taiwan, the Chairperson reiterated AU support for the Chinese Government's "One China" policy, adding that the African Union is working with China to promote global governance and human rights, particularly within the framework of the United Nations.

Dr. Ping noted with satisfaction the convergence of views between China and the AU on the situations in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, Somalia and elsewhere on the Continent, and underscored the collaborative efforts by both parties to promote peace and security in Africa and beyond, as well as address the important issue of global climate change.

With regard to trade and investment, the Chairperson stated that as a developing region, Africa has much to learn from the Chinese experience. He thanked the Chinese Government for its recent decision to drop all tariffs and completely open its market to African products.

Recalling that the African Union is now part of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), Dr. Ping commended the Chinese Government for its assistance in infrastructure development all across Africa and reiterated AU interest and commitment to promote the construction of energy and communication infrastructure – hydro-electricity dams, roads, railways, etc. – as part of the organization's policy to enhance sub-regional and regional integration.

On his part, the Chinese Vice Minister thanked the Chairperson for the warm welcome accorded to him and his delegation and extended the high regards of China's Minister of Commerce.

Vice Minister Jian Yaoping commended the AU for its pivotal role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding on the continent and expressed admiration and support for AU efforts to promote peace and security in Africa, within the framework of seeking African solutions to Africa's problems.

He further expressed China's appreciation for the constructive role played by the AU within the UN Security Council, the Doha Talks, climate change and other fora and issues on which both parties have achieved a common position.

Mr. Jian noted with satisfaction the trade boom between Africa and China, reiterated China's commitment to the development of sustainable energy sources in Africa and called on Chinese companies and banks to invest in infrastructure development in the Continent.

On the issue of Taiwan, the Vice Minister expressed the appreciation of the Chinese People and Government for AU support.

The Chinese Vice Minister was accompanied by the Charge d'Affaires of the Chinese embassy in Addis Ababa, the Vice President of China's Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Machinery and Electronic Products, as well as several Senior Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese embassy in Ethiopia.

On the AU side, the Chairperson was accompanied by his Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff, the Political and Diplomatic Advisor, the Economic Affairs Advisor, the Military Affairs Advisor and several Senior Officials of the Commission.

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