
Press Release

Chairperson Receives the Credentials of the First Permanent Observer of Greece to the African Union



Chairperson Ping (R) receives the letters accrediting Ambassador Nicolas Protonotarios as the first Permanent Observer of the Hellenic Republic to the African Union (Photo AUDIC)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 18 June 2012 --- The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Jean Ping, received in his office at the AU Headquarters on Friday, 15 June 2012, the credentials of H.E. Mr. Nicolas Protonotarios, the first Permanent Representative of the Hellenic Republic (Greece) to the African Union.

Welcoming the new Permanent Representative, the Chairperson recalled that Greece has had a long history of contact with Africa since antiquity and paid tribute to the Greek people for their role in founding democracy, which has over the centuries asserted itself and is today recognized worldwide as the only legitimate form of government.

He observed that many of the Greeks who fled to Africa during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) chose to settle in Africa and today constitute an important segment of the successful business community in many African countries.

In view of these historical ties and other areas of common interest, the Chairperson stated that the fundamentals of a good partnership between the African Union and Greece are strong and reiterated the commitment of the AU to work with the Greek Government to further strengthen the relationship.

On his part, Ambassador Protonotarios thanked the Chairperson for receiving his credentials and commended the African Union for its pivotal role in maintaining peace and security and promoting good governance in the Continent.

He recalled that Greece recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the African Union on Climate Change worth USD12 million. With regard to the future of relations between Greece and Africa, the Ambassador said:

“We all know that Greece is going through one of the biggest economic crisis in our modern history. In spite of that, our relations with Africa are and will remain a priority.”

Both personalities exchanged views on the Euro crisis and the future of the Eurozone, as well as the latest developments in some African countries, notably: Mali, Somalia, Sudan/South Sudan and Guinea Bissau.

END