



African Union Commission and European Commission meet to address shared EU-Africa challenges

Brussels, 5 April 2016

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The African Union Commission and the European Commission will hold their annual College-to-College meeting in Africa's political capital, Addis Ababa on 7 April. The two Commissions work together as the engine of EU-Africa relations, collaborating on tackling challenges that the two continents are facing together. This annual meeting is the biggest EU-Africa political meeting of the year. Discussions will focus on key themes such as migration, peace, security and sustainable growth, as well as other policy areas enshrined in the [Joint EU-Africa Strategy \(JAES\)](#).

Ahead of the event, High Representative and Vice President Federica **Mogherini**, who will be heading the EU Commission delegation, said: *"Europe and Africa are long standing and close partners. We share many of the same priorities and challenges: terror has targeted both continents, we all deal with unprecedented flows of people, we have a common interest in fostering growth and creating new opportunities for the African youth. Our present and future bind us together. This is why this high level meeting of the two Colleges – of the European Commission and the African Commission - is both crucial and timely. This will be my second visit to the African Union in just a few months, and I expect our work will foster common activities in many areas such as economic and social development, migration, fight against terrorism and international and regional issues."*

Besides High Representative Mogherini, Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, Andrus **Ansip**, Vice-President responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven **Mimica**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne **Thyssen**, Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides** and Commissioner for Transport, Violeta **Bulc** are also expected to attend the meeting.

The topics for discussion will cover various themes across the five priorities of the [Joint Africa EU-Strategy \(JAES\) Roadmap 2014-17](#) with a focus on peace, security and migration, as well as the two continents' responses to the need to ensure sustainable economic growth and development to the benefit of Africa's and Europe's populations.

A joint communiqué/declaration will be adopted within the respective competences of the two Commissions at the end of the meeting.

Background

The annual College-to-College meetings are held to provide regular political guidance to the Africa-EU Partnership through political and policy dialogue, on an alternating basis in Brussels and Addis Ababa. The last meeting was held in April 2015 in Brussels.

Africa-EU relations are framed by the [Joint Africa-EU Strategy](#) which was adopted at an EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in 2007 and reaffirmed at last year's Summit.

A road map (2014-2017) implements the Strategy in five areas for dialogue and cooperation: peace and security; democracy, good governance and human rights; human development; sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration; global and emerging issues. The annual College-to-College meetings take stock of the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy Roadmap 2014-17.

Africa is the EU's most important continent for EU development assistance. From 2007 to 2013 the official development assistance (ODA) disbursed to Africa by the EU and its Member States is estimated at around €144 billion (around €20.6 billion Euro on average per year).

The EU and AU hold a yearly human rights dialogue. The last one took place on 24 November 2015 in Rwanda. 2016 happens to be Africa's Year on Human Rights, with Special Focus on the Rights of Women. The EU agreed to support the AU with its plan to expedite the ratification of international and continental human rights instruments at the national level.

EU cooperation with the AU

Collectively, the EU (including its Member States) is the African Union Commission's main financial contributor providing more than 80% of its budget.

The European Commission alone provided approximately €1.7 billion to the African Union since 2004 until 2015. In 2015, cooperation between the European Commission and the African Union Commission amounted to €337 million. Cooperation between the two covers mainly peace and security operations, capacity building activities as well as cooperation programmes in different thematic areas, involving a wide range of actors such as Member States, Institutions and implementing partners.

An arrangement will be concluded between the European Commission and the European External Action Service on the one hand and the African Union Commission on the other hand aimed at renewing administrative cooperation between them, intensifying staff exchanges and cooperation in a number of priority areas of mutual interest.

For more information:

[MEMO/16/1208](#): The Africa-EU Partnership

Website of the Africa-EU Partnership: <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/>

DEVCO website: https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/home_en

IP/16/1226

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