

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/ Ext 2558

Website: www.au.int.

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release

Cooperation between the African Union and Argentina: Commissioner Muchanga meets Amb. Jorge Marcelo Faurie, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina.



22 March, 2019 - Buenos Aires, Argentina. On the last day of the 2nd High-Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA + 40) that took place in H.E. Amb. Albert M. Muchanga, AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry and Head of the AU Delegation, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Amb. Jorge Marcelo Faurie, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Argentina. The Meeting, which started at 11:00 hrs and lasted for close to one hour, provided an opportunity to review the state of cooperation and relations between Argentina and the African Union as well as with the entire continent.

Commissioner Muchanga began by conveying to Minister Faurie the greetings of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat. He expressed his appreciation for the courtesy and hospitality afforded to the Delegation of the AU Commission since their arrival in Buenos Aires on March 18, 2019. Commissioner Muchanga stated that the recurrent message from the BAPA+40 Conference was that “the principles and spirit, which came out of the Buenos Aires Conference in 1978 were still alive and growing”. One of the initiatives through which the Africa Union Commission is operationalizing South-South Cooperation is by promoting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which will be officially launched in July 2019, in Niamey, Niger. The AfCFTA will in turn facilitate cooperation between Africa and other Regions of South. Commissioner Albert Muchanga concluded by recalling the cooperation between Africa and Argentina on the issue of the Malvinas Islands as evidenced in the Declaration of the Malabo Summit.

Minister Faurie thanked Commissioner Muchanga for the courtesy call and renewed the appreciation of the Government of Argentina for the statement in the Declaration of the Malabo Summit on the Malvinas Islands. In addition, he inquired about the status of ratification of the AfCFTA and indicated that one avenue for South-South cooperation, which should be considered and pursued, is the cooperation between Africa, through the AfCFTA, and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). In this regard, Minister Faurie informed Commissioner Muchanga that the current President of MERCOSUR is a national of Argentina and that the Government of Argentina could help facilitate the process. One action to be undertaken in the short term would be an invitation to the President of MERCOSUR to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to further discuss the issue with the Chairperson of the AU Commission.

AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry informed Minister Faurie that 21 National Parliaments have already approved the ratification of the AfCFTA and that the last one will be secured in the coming days. On cooperation with MERCOSUR, he pledged to bring the issue to the attention of H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the AU Commission and promised to work for the materialization of the visit of the President of MERCOSUR to the African Union Commission to take place as soon as the opportunity arises.

Attending the courtesy call were close aides of Minister Faurie as well as the Ambassador of Argentina to Ethiopia and to the African Union, H.E. Amb. Gustavo Teodoro Grippo.

For further information, please contact Mr. Jean Bertrand Azapmo, Regional Trade Advisor - Email: AzapmoJ@africa-union.org

Media contacts:

Patient Atcho, Department of Trade and Industry, Tel: + 251 929335250 - Email: atchop@africa-union.org and **Esther Azaa Tankou**, Directorate of Information and Communication, AUC Tel. +251 911361185, E-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>