



JOINT AUC / LAS STATEMENT

of the

8th General Cooperation Meeting between the African Union Commission and the League of Arab States

At the invitation of H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), the Eighth General Cooperation Meeting between the African Union Commission and the League of Arab States (LAS) was held on 22 July 2019 at the headquarters of the AUC in Addis Ababa, under the co-chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of AUC and H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, with the participation of senior officials from both organizations.

H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat and H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit reaffirmed their mutual commitment to advancing the multiple areas of cooperation between the African Union and League of Arab States and further promoting the Arab-Africa partnership which is underpinned by the strategic relationship, historic ties and shared priorities between both sides.

The two leaders discussed a broad array of political developments and security challenges in the African and Arab regions, and exchanged views on how AUC and LAS can further strengthen their cooperation and complementary activities in support of regional peace, security, stability and development.

They especially reiterated their call for an immediate de-escalation of the situation in Libya and cessation of hostilities among the parties to allow for the resumption of an inclusive political process aimed at reaching a peaceful, broad-based consensual resolution to the Libyan crisis. The AU and LAS committed to pursuing their joint complementary efforts in order to accompany the Libyan parties to reach a comprehensive peaceful settlement of the conflict. They welcomed the conclusion, through the African mediation and support of LAS, of the Political Agreement between the Transitional Military Council and Forces of the Declaration of Freedom and Change in Sudan, and encouraged the parties to pursue their efforts to agree on and implement all the arrangements and modalities to ensure the success of the democratic transition. The AU and LAS agreed to intensify their coordination in support of the implementation of the transition agreements. They reiterated their support to the Federal Government of Somalia towards consolidating security and stability throughout Somalia, and agreed to intensify their efforts in support of regional peace, security and cooperation in the Horn of Africa.

H.E. Mr. Aboul Gheit expressed his gratitude to the AU for its steadfast positions in support of the Palestinian people and their legitimate right to establish their own independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. The two sides reiterated their rejection of all unilateral measures that undermine the prospects for a just and lasting negotiated settlement based on the two-state solution. They agreed to further their cooperation in support of Palestine, including at the United Nations and through the trilateral mechanism on Palestine established between AUC, LAS and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The two sides reviewed the ongoing counter-terrorism efforts, initiatives and operations in the region, including in the Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel and other areas of African-Arab geographical convergence, and expressed their resolve to pursue their efforts in a complementary manner to address these threats and emerging challenges to the security and stability of the region.

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit congratulated the African Union on the successful launching of the operational phase of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The two sides expressed their confidence that this important development, along with LAS efforts to further operationalize the Greater Arab Free Trade Area, will contribute to the promotion of inter-Arab African economic cooperation, investment and trade.

The two leaders agreed on the importance of advancing the institutional cooperation between the African Union and League of Arab States vis-à-vis all issues of mutual priority both at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. They decided, for this purpose, to elaborate a Protocol to the General Agreement on Cooperation between the AU and LAS and for their endorsement and signature.

The two sides reviewed the progress attained thus far in the implementation of the declarations and resolutions adopted by the 4th Arab-Africa Summit held in Malabo in November 2016. They especially agreed to swiftly finalize the elaboration of the Joint Arab-Africa Action Plan for submission and endorsement by African and Arab Ministers of Foreign Affairs in accordance with the conclusions of the Malabo Summit.

They also resolved to pursue their joint efforts to advance the other areas of cooperation within the Arab Africa partnership, including the consolidation of the activities of the Afro-Arab Cultural Institute, the organization of the Arab Africa Trade Fair, the establishment of the Arab Africa Disaster Response Fund, and addressing the shared challenges of migration.

The two sides expressed their determination to advance their cooperation towards convening the 5th Arab Africa Summit to be held in Riyadh in November 2019. In this regard, H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat and H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit agreed to accelerate their joint efforts for the entirety of the preparatory process to ensure the successful convening of the Summit and its outcomes that would further elevate and afford added momentum to the strategic partnership between the two sides.

The two sides agreed to convene the 9th General Cooperation Meeting between AUC and LAS in Cairo in 2020.