

Check against Delivery

**Remarks**

**By**

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**Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the AU  
and UNECA and Chairperson of the Permanent  
Representatives Committee**

**At**

**The Africa-Arab Senior Officials Meeting**

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Kuwait City**

***Excellencies,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Government of Kuwait for the gracious hospitality accorded to us and the excellent facilities put at our disposal.

As you all know, our meeting is entrusted with the responsibility of preparing the ground work for the success of the Third Africa-Arab Summit, scheduled to take place on 19 and 20 November 2013. Our principals expect us to carry out an overall assessment of the Africa-Arab Partnership and submit a comprehensive report with appropriate recommendations with a view to strengthening our partnership for the mutual benefit of our peoples. In this regard, the Activity Report, which is jointly prepared by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary General of the League of Arab States will certainly facilitate our work and I wish to take this opportunity to thank both the Chairperson and the Secretary-General for their joint report.

***Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

You would recall that the Joint Africa-Arab Partnership Strategy and the 2010-2016 Action Plan adopted during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa-Arab Summit held in Sirte in 2010, identified four major areas of cooperation namely Political Cooperation, Economic, Trade and Financial Cooperation, Cooperation in Agriculture and Food Security as well as Socio-Cultural Cooperation. During this meeting, we are expected to assess the progress that has thus far been made in terms of implementing the related activities contained in the Action Plan and identify achievements and challenges so as to move our partnership forward.

The theme of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Africa-Arab Summit: “Partners in Development and Investment” is indeed very pertinent providing us with an overarching framework to exchange views on ways and means of strengthening our partnership on trade, investment and socio-economic development issues. These are indeed very important issues all the more so because of the ever increasing flow of goods, investments, capital and peoples between our two regions.

It must be emphasized that the increasing people-to-people interaction, development assistance, commercial transaction, investment flows and flourishing air links between Africa and the Arab world have contributed to strengthening our relations in recent years. This notwithstanding, however, we are cognizant of the number of challenges that our partnership faces and I hope this meeting will afford us the opportunity to have candid discussions on those challenges in order to find an amicable solution.

One of the challenges we face is, of course, the issue of 'Migration'. Today, an untold number of African migrants are passing through extremely difficult conditions and this is a matter of serious concern for both of our regions. Reports of various international organizations working on migration such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) continuously underline the contribution of international migration to the development of origin, transit as well as destination countries. In fact, the UN High-level Dialogue on Migration, which was held just last month on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, in New York, acknowledged that human mobility is a key factor for

sustainable development and agreed that it should be taken into consideration in the elaboration of the Post-2015 development agenda.

Therefore, we need to work together with a spirit of mutual partnership for the better management of migration in our two regions in a comprehensive and holistic manner. I believe now is the right time for Africa and the Arab world to take concrete steps and use international migration as an instrument of mutual prosperity. Both sides have to agree to end human suffering and take effective measures to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants regardless of their migration status, especially those of women and children.

***Excellencies,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen***

We will have the opportunity to extensively discuss the issue of 'Migration' when we start our first session in a few minutes, so I will not spend too much time on the matter.

But before I conclude my brief remarks, I would like to once again emphasize that, as Senior Officials, we have the heavy responsibility of ensuring that the preparations for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Africa-Arab Summit are done successfully. I am confident that our deliberations will pave the way towards achieving this endeavor. The Co-Chairs count on your cooperation and support to ensure that the Summit is crowned with success.

I thank you