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**STATEMENT BY H. E. JEAN PING  
CHAIRPERSON AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION  
AT THE OPENING OF THE MEETING OF FOREIGN  
MINISTERS AT THE 2<sup>ND</sup> AFRICA-INDIA FORUM SUMMIT**

**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA  
23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2011**

**YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA, CHAIR OF  
THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE AFRICAN UNION;**

**YOUR EXCELLENCY, MR MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA;**

**YOUR EXCELLENCIES,**

**AMBASSADORS;**

**SENIOR OFFICIALS;**

**DISTINGUISHED PARTICIPANTS;**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN;**

It is indeed a great honour and privilege for me to address you at the opening of the Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa-India Forum Summit. Allow me from the outset, to express on behalf of my Commission and on my own behalf, our sincere welcome to Your Excellencies for finding the time to honour this meeting with their presence. I also would like to thank our Senior Officials for their invaluable role and for their immense contributions to the preparatory process of this Summit.

## **Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

The theme of this 2<sup>nd</sup> Forum Summit “Enhanced Partnership: Shared Vision” is both eloquent and timely. The challenges facing our continent are diverse and require our joint and concerted efforts in tackling. The underlying problem remains poverty, the solution of which would undoubtedly require a multi-faceted approach. It is painful to observe that despite Africa’s huge endowment with abundant natural resources, majority of its people paradoxically continue to live below the poverty line.

Allow me therefore, to express our appreciation and satisfaction with the achievements and success registered so far under the Plan of Action of the Framework for Cooperation that was adopted in New Delhi in March 2010. In this regard, I note, with satisfaction, plans for the establishment of four Institutions in Africa by India; the location of ten Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), two each in the five regions of the continent; the Human Settlement Projects in each region of the continent; the Scholarship offered by India to African post-graduate students in Agriculture in Indian Universities. I must also mention the Duty-Free Tariff Free Scheme, which many African countries have so far accessed; the E-Network Project and various support

programmes offered by India to Africa within the context of our cooperation. We salute India for these strides and look forward to more advancement in our cooperation!

### **Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen**

Our partnership has in store more potential. It is hoped that the adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Framework for Enhanced Cooperation which highlights areas of strategic importance for the development of Africa; ranging from Economic Cooperation; Political Cooperation; Cooperation in Science, Technology, Research and Development; Cooperation in Social Development and Capacity Building; Cooperation in Health, Culture and Sports; Cooperation in Tourism; Cooperation in Infrastructure, Energy and Environment; and Cooperation in the area of Media and Communication, would propel us to greater height for the mutual benefit of our peoples. Africa would honor its commitments to ensure that this common objective is attained.

In conclusion, I wish to commend the Follow-up mechanism of our partnership and to advocate for a more structured and patterned relationship that encourages regular contact and dialogue at various levels, as well as exchange of visits at the highest political

level in order to promote discourse and understanding. Much has been achieved thus far but more needs to be done to consolidate and push forward our cooperation.

Finally, I wish to, once again, welcome Your Excellencies and all participants to the AU Headquarters and to look forward to a successful session. We pledge that the Commission would do all within its mandate to ensure that the overarching objectives of our partnership are achieved to the satisfaction of both sides.

I thank you for your kind attention and wish the meeting success.