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ECOSOCC PRESIDING OFFICER PARTICIPATES IN CIVIL SOCIETY 20 CHINA 2016 CONFERENCE



Qingdao, China – 5 July 2016: Mr. Joseph Chilengi, Presiding Officer of the Economic Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC) participated in the Civil Society 20 (C20) China 2016 global conference held in Qingdao, China, from 4-6 July 2016.

The Civil Society 20, also known as the C20, as an engagement group of the G20 Summit, was launched in 2013 and has developed into a platform from which global civil society puts forward policy recommendations to governments and the broader society. Since its inception, the C20 has convened successively in Moscow (2013), Melbourne (2014) and Istanbul (2015).

The 2016 conference brought together over 210 delegates from 54 countries around the world to deliberate on the theme: “Poverty Eradication, Green Development and Innovation: Role of Civil Society”

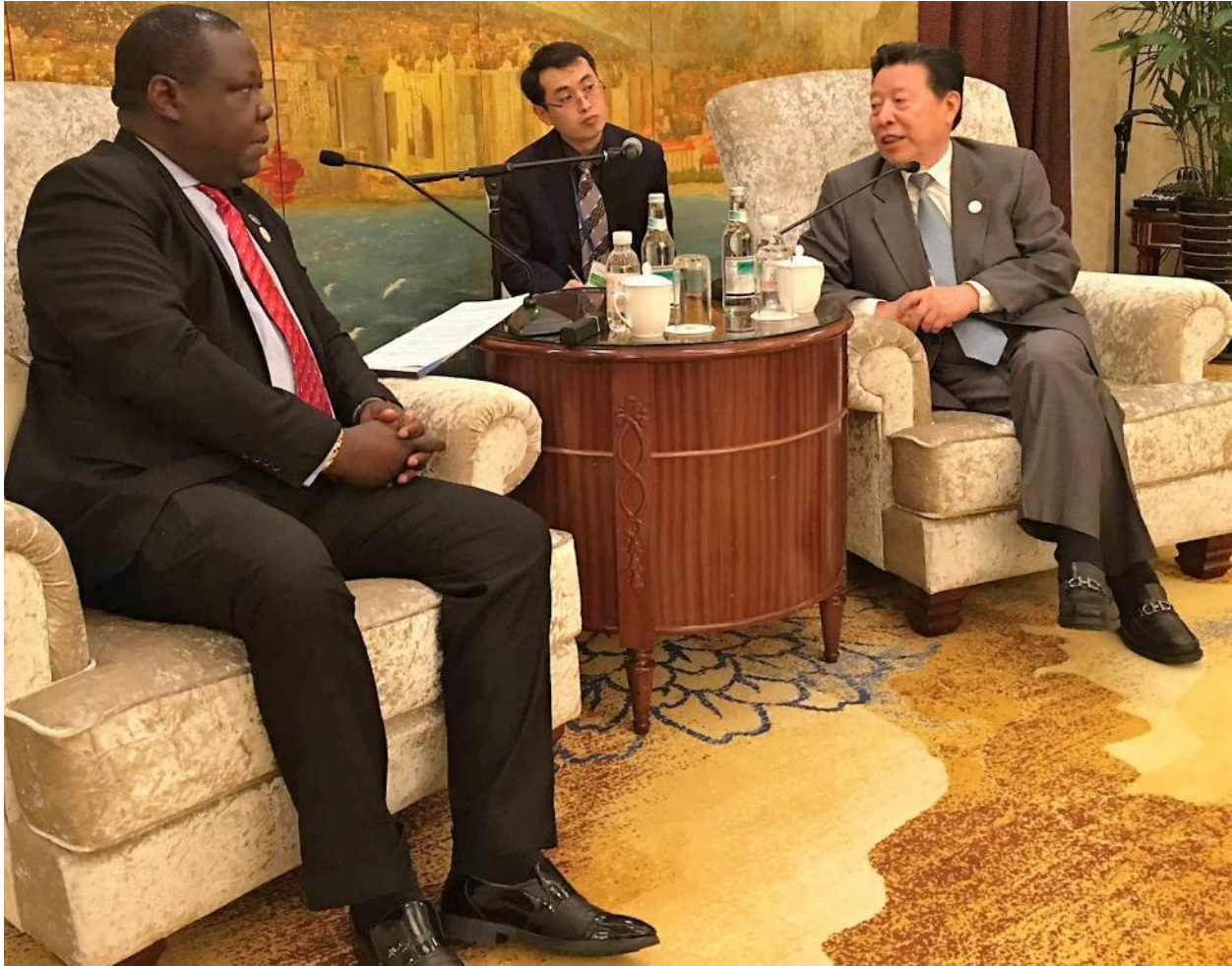
In a welcome note delivered on his behalf to formally open the C20 Summit, HE Xi Jinping, the President of the People’s Republic of China, highlighted the key role that civil society plays in the socio-economic development of countries and stressed the commitment of the Chinese Presidency of the G20 to incorporate the perspectives of civil society into the G20 Agenda.



In his address, Mr. Chilengi noted that civil society has always been a major partner in the global development process, and for this reason commended the Chinese Presidency of the G20 for providing a space for civil society actors from across the world to gather and collectively develop policy recommendations on the central development questions of our time: poverty eradication, green development and innovation.

The Presiding Officer emphasized that it is by pursuing a path of strategic and constructive partnership between governments, civil society, and international development actors that nations can achieve progress in the fight against poverty and establish a sustainable green economy fuelled by technological innovation. Consequently, he called on civil society from all regions of the world to embrace the responsibility of following up on the structures, mechanisms and processes of both the G20 and the C20 in order to organize an effective and meaningful civil society response to the key developmental challenges with which the world remains confronted.

Noting that civil society engagement was a strategic priority for the African Union, the Presiding Officer reiterated that the African Union's Agenda 2063 regional transformation priorities and the AU Commission's Strategic Plan both encourage the participation of civil society in promoting peace and security, good governance, democracy and human rights as a foundation for inclusion, security and the development of Africa and its people.



In addition to addressing the plenary session of the C20 Summit, the Presiding Officer also held bilateral meetings with the President of the China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) and Vice-Chairman of the 11th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Mr. Sun Jiazheng, aimed at strengthening the ties between ECOSOCC and CNIE. The meeting also served to follow up on previous partnership consultations between the two organizations. The two leaders re-emphasized the importance of China-Africa relations and renewed their commitment to work together towards a shared agenda based on mutual respect and people-to-people cooperation.

The meeting recognized that there was a need for an enhanced participation of ECOSOCC within the FOCAC process; and consequently agreed that ECOSOCC would be invited to attend the next FOCAC Summit. For his part, the Presiding Officer extended an invitation to Mr. Sun Jiazheng to address the next General Assembly of ECOSOCC scheduled for December 2016.

The two sides concluded with a renewed commitment to enhance their communication mechanisms in order to boost their working relationship.

For further information contact

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