

Communiqué EU-Africa Ministerial

Dublin, 1 April 2004

In the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue, the EU–Africa Ministerial meeting, in troika format was held in Dublin on April 1, 2004 under the Co-chairs of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of Mozambique, the Honourable Leonardo Santos Simao, current Chairperson of the AU Executive Council and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ireland, the Honourable Brian Cowen, President in exercise of the EU.

The EU Troika was composed of the Secretary General/High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy of the Council of the European Union, Mr. Javier Solana, the Minister for Development Co-operation of The Netherlands, Ms. Agnes van Ardenne, and the member of the European Commission Poul Nielson. The AU Troika was composed of the South African Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. N.C. Dlamini Zuma, outgoing Chairperson of the AU Executive Council, the African Union Commissioners Mr. Said Djinnit, Ms. J. Dolly Joiner and Ms. E. Tankeu.

Ministers focussed their discussion essentially on the following key issues:

1. Peace and security
2. Governance
3. Regional integration and trade
4. Key development issues
 - Debt
 - Food security
 - HIV/AIDS
5. Effective Multilateralism
6. Way forward
7. AOB: ICC

1. Peace and security

The European Union welcomed the progress made by the African Union in establishing a continental architecture for peace and security. In this respect, the meeting noted with satisfaction the election of the members of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and adoption of its rules of procedure as well as the progress made in relation to the establishment of the African Stand-by Force and the Early Warning System. The Peace and Security Council will make a significant contribution to strengthening Africa's capacity for the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

Following the declaration of the AU Summit in Maputo requesting the EU to examine the possibility of setting-up a Peace Support Operation Facility to fund peace support and peacekeeping operations conducted under the

authority of the AU, ministers noted the establishment by the EU of the Peace Facility for Africa, which will become operational by mid-2004. The African side reiterated the principle of solidarity among African countries underlying the AU Maputo Summit decision for the setting up of the Peace Facility for Africa and stressed the need to fund peace support and peacekeeping operations conducted under the authority of the AU.

Ministers welcomed continuous commitment of the EU and Africa in furthering peaceful transition in the Great Lakes region. Ministers highlighted the importance of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), which will be followed by a UN peacekeeping operation. Ministers underscored the useful EU and UN support for the transition in the DRC, including in the fields of police and justice. Ministers also welcomed the contribution that ECOWAS, in co-operation with the United Nations, has made to the restoration of peace and security in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Ministers further acknowledged the invaluable role played by IGAD in furthering the peace processes in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Sudan and Somalia and also recognised the contribution played by SADC in working to resolve conflicts in its region. Ministers underscored the need for an integrated approach to post-conflict peace-building and economic recovery in the Mano River area, Côte d'Ivoire, and in the Great Lakes area.

Ministers highlighted the importance of the electoral process in Burundi and the DRC and requested both Commissions to co-operate in support of preparation of elections in these countries.

Ministers restated the necessity of a continued dialogue on issues of continental implication as well as on the different country situations foreseen in the Rome Communiqué. A permanent dialogue between the HOMs and the respective Commissions in Brussels and Addis Ababa on these issues would do much to enhance political understanding between both sides.

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment and determination to continue to co-operate in the global fight against terrorism. Ministers expressed concern with recent events involving mercenaries in Africa and emphasised the need to combat mercenarism, which is one of the sources of destabilisation in Africa.

Ministers expressed their sympathy and solidarity with the government and people of Spain on the horrific bombings that took place in Madrid on 11 March 2004.

2. Governance

Ministers noted the positive efforts being made by African countries aimed at consolidating democratic principles, good governance, as well as respect for the rule of law and human rights. In this respect, both sides welcomed the coming into force of the Protocol for the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the holding of the inaugural session of the Pan African Parliament on 18 March 2004. Ministers believe that both institutions will make a significant contribution in safeguarding and ensuring

observance of human rights throughout Africa as well as in promoting democracy, the rule of law and good governance.

The African side expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by the EU side to strengthen institutions involved in the promotion of good governance, human rights and respect for the rule of law. In this respect, the African side urged the EU side to continue and to expand the assistance in view of the critical role of these institutions.

Ministers also recognised that civil society organisations have an important role to play in the success of these efforts and therefore, called for their continued support.

Ministers acknowledged that the aforesaid governance issues are important to the maintenance of peace and stability in Africa which itself is a pre-requisite for economic and social development.

Ministers welcomed the outcome of the recent APRM (African Peer Review Mechanism) forum in Kigali (13-15 February 2004). Ministers believe that the APRM, an African-owned and African-led process, will contribute to ensure that good governance becomes a reality in Africa.

The EU side expressed its concern at the continuing deterioration of human rights in Zimbabwe. It stressed that restrictive measures do not target the general population. The African side underscored the importance of the resolution of the land issue in Zimbabwe in addressing the historic injustice that resulted in skewed land ownership. Ministers acknowledged the need to encourage meaningful internal dialogue in Zimbabwe as the way forward.

3. Regional integration and trade

Ministers agreed that, in order to promote open, equitable, rule-based and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system that benefit all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development, the EU-Africa dialogue will favour co-ordination and co-operation towards the successful completion of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations. The first priority should be to make all joint necessary efforts to resume the work after the Cancun World Trade Organisation ministerial meeting. In this context, the EU and Africa will work in accordance with the Doha Ministerial Declaration, which placed the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of the Doha work programme.

Ministers recognised the importance for the European Commission and the African Union Commission to work together to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement between the Regional Economic Communities engaged in the Economic Partnership Agreements negotiations and the establishment of the African Economic Community. With the launch of EPA negotiations with Western Africa, Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa, a joint EU-Africa monitoring mechanism should be put in place as a priority. This mechanism, together with the co-ordination between the AU and the RECs, should work informally at ensuring a better flow of information.

The EU welcomed the role of the AU Commission in co-ordinating, monitoring and harmonising the efforts of the RECs in the integration process of Africa. As proposed in the AU Declaration adopted in Maputo in 2003, the informal joint monitoring mechanism should allow to follow the implementation of the EU regional support programme in Africa and to assess their contribution to the integration process at continental level, as well as their coherence with the priorities and objectives of the AU. The European Commission is ready to support the AU Commission in this exercise.

4. Key development issues

4.1. Debt

Ministers noted that, following the directives of the 2nd Ministerial Conference in Ouagadougou, the experts on debt from the EU and African side met in Dublin, Ireland, on 16-17 February 2004, in the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue meeting at senior official level.

Ministers welcomed the joint report prepared by debt experts from the African and EU sides on the scale, nature and impact of Africa's debt burden.

Ministers feel that the report represents a shared understanding and analysis of external debt in African countries on the following areas:

- (i) the structure and magnitude of Africa's debt burden;
- (ii) adverse impacts of excessive debt on Africa and creditor countries
- (iii) recent developments of debt initiatives for African countries, including a review of the traditional approaches, the HIPC initiative and the Evian approach.
- (iv) progress towards a new framework to maintain long-term debt sustainability in Low Income Countries.
- (v) beyond debt relief, the link with the future financing of development in Africa and the need for a broader development policy.

Ministers therefore endorsed the joint report and mandated both sides, including both Commissions, to consider the modalities to take the process forward.

4.2. Food security

Ministers welcomed the renewed commitment of African Heads of State and Government as expressed in the Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development in Agriculture and Water in Africa. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to improving food security in Africa and welcomed the joint assessment study, which will evaluate the main national and regional food security early warning systems in place in Africa. This joint study will be undertaken in close coordination with the FAO.

4.3. HIV/AIDS

Ministers welcomed the considerable progress made in the fight against HIV/AIDS and other pandemics since the first EU-Africa Summit in 2000 and expressed appreciation for the priority accorded by the Irish Presidency of the European Union to this issue. Ministers were briefed on the three major events being organised by the Irish Presidency in relation to the HIV/AIDS issue.

5. Effective Multilateralism

The two sides agreed that an effective multilateral system, including a rule-based international order and strong international institutions, is essential to addressing the interrelated problems of conflict, poverty, underdevelopment and the absence of human security. Ministers confirmed their strong belief that a strategic EU-Africa partnership and strengthened EU-AU relations will contribute to the reinforcement of such a multilateral system. To this effect, they agreed on an EU-Africa Joint Declaration (attached as annex I).

6. Way Forward

Ministers agreed to continue their dialogue in the interest of intensifying their cooperation. The next meeting will take place in the second half of 2004 with a venue to be decided at a later date.

7. AOB

The European side raised the issue of the International Criminal Court and urged ratification of the Rome Statute by those countries that have not yet done so.

European Union/Africa Joint Declaration on Effective Multilateralism

The European Union and Africa share a core belief in the multilateral system of collective security enshrined in the United Nations, and share the premise that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the United Nations Security Council, in accordance with the UN Charter. The European Union and Africa are also committed to achieving international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights. They recognise the need to make the multilateral system more responsive and effective in meeting global threats and challenges.

The European Union and Africa are agreed that an effective multilateral system, including a rule-based international order and strong international institutions, is essential to addressing the inter-related problems of conflict, poverty, underdevelopment and the absence of human security. They regard such a system as essential in confronting threats such as HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, the proliferation of small arms, poverty, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, and environmental degradation.

The European Union and Africa are committed to the continued reform and revitalization of the United Nations system and noted the establishment by the UN Secretary General of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. The European Union took note of the position of Africa on the reform of the UN Security Council, including permanent representation of Africa in the Council.

The European Union and Africa are committed to the implementation of the Millennium Summit Declaration and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In this context, they are determined to implement the results of recent UN global High-Level Conferences and look forward to a comprehensive review of progress at a high-level plenary meeting within the 60th United Nations General Assembly in 2005.

The European Union and Africa will continue to promote open, equitable, rules-based and non discriminatory multilateral trading and financial systems that benefit all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development. They support the successful completion of the work programme contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the implementation of the

Monterrey Consensus and of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. They welcome the decision contained in the Doha Ministerial Declaration to place the needs and interests of developing countries at the heart of the work programme of the Declaration, including through enhanced market access for products of developing countries. The EU and Africa encourage ongoing efforts by international financial and trade institutions to ensure that decision-making processes and institutional structures are open and transparent.

The European Union and Africa are agreed on the importance of the primary objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the socio-economic programme of the African Union - poverty eradication, sustainable growth, bridging the digital divide and halting the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process - and of the structured basis for the attainment of those objectives, especially peace and security, good governance and regional co-operation, and economic partnership agreements. They welcome the decision of the AU Assembly in Maputo to integrate NEPAD into the AU structures and processes within a period of three years. They recognize the important role played by the regional economic communities, as building blocks of the AU in the implementation of NEPAD.

The European Union and the African Union are agreed that their shared response to issues of human security should be based on the concepts of responsibility, prevention, capability and partnership. They recognise that the European Security Strategy and the African Common Defence and Security Policy enshrines these concepts, and the determination of the European Union to develop a more active, capable and coherent response to key threats can be of particular value in addressing problems of human security in Africa, in particular those of regional conflicts and state failure.

The European Union welcomes the progress made by the African Union in establishing of a continental architecture for peace and security and the operationalisation of the Peace and Security Council, which will evidently make a significant contribution in strengthening Africa's capacity for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in the continent.

The European Union and Africa are agreed that good governance and respect for human rights and humanitarian law, along with economic development and the alleviation of poverty, are central to the prevention of conflict. They welcome the establishment of the African owned mechanisms – the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Conference on Security,

Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa to promote these objectives. They acknowledge the central role of the United Nations in promoting observance of and respect for human rights and agree to work more closely within the UN Commission for Human Rights in order to strengthen the effectiveness of its decision-making process. They are agreed that the accelerated empowerment of women presents a key opportunity for progress and recall the provisions of UN SCR 1325 of 31 October 2000 on women, power and security which urges, inter alia, an increased decision-making role for women in relation to the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.

The European Union and Africa underlined the strong commitment to end impunity and agreed on a speedy ratification and implementation of the Rome Statute. They also welcome the coming into force of the protocol for the establishment of the African Court on Human and People's Rights and believe that this Court will make a major contribution to safeguarding and ensuring observance of human rights throughout Africa.

The European Union and Africa are committed to reinforcing their cooperation with each other and with the United Nations in identifying threats to peace and security and in developing preventive actions, in supporting multilateral actions aimed at dealing with global threats such as terrorism and various dimensions of conflicts such as arms trafficking and illegal exploitation of natural resources, in enhancing their support to crisis management, including by supporting United Nations peace-keeping operations and by participating in peace-keeping operations authorized by the United Nations, and in cooperating with the UN in affording assistance to states emerging from conflict.

The EU and Africa will continue to cooperate in the UN and elsewhere, in order to support the global fight against terrorism.

They recognise the role that regional and sub-regional organisations, can play in the maintenance of international peace and security. They particularly stress that such transboundary problems as armed groups, refugees, child soldiers and arms trafficking need to be dealt with at the regional level.

The need to strengthen African peace support operation capabilities, in cooperation with the UN, is recognised. The European Union and the African Union are united in their determination to make the African Peace Facility, established by the European Union,

operational without delay. They also look forward to further progress being made towards the establishment of the Early Warning System and deployment of an Africa Stand-By Force.

The EU and Africa agreed to continue to develop their co-operation in the interest of effective multilateralism and to intensify their co-operation in the UN and in other international organisations.

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