

13th EU-AU Ministerial Troika confirms commitment to Partnership

The 13th EU-AU Ministerial Troika took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 14 October 2009, under the joint chairmanship of Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation, Gunilla Carlsson (current President of the Council of the European Union (EU)) and Dr Ali Treki, Libya's Secretary for African Union Affairs and current chairman of the African Union (AU) Executive Council. Senior Officials and Ministers from both continents and from the European Commission took part in the discussions.

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the Strategic Partnership between Africa and the EU. In this context, Ministers welcomed the progress made since the last Troika in the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES). The JAES Mid Term Review report was presented and the various achievements and shortfalls of the thematic partnerships were discussed.

Ministers urged all stakeholders concerned to swiftly implement the recommendations of the Mid Term Review of the first Action Plan. The EU and AU Presidencies and Commissions, and the EU Council Secretariat, were also invited to present options for improving the implementation of JAES in view of the possible adoption of a Second Action Plan at the 2010 Africa-EU Summit.

A wide range of issues were addressed ranging from global challenges, such as the financial and economic crisis and climate change, to political and legal issues, including threats to peace and security, elections and the fight against impunity.

A call was made for greater involvement of civil society in JAES, in particular through participation in the Joint Experts Groups (JEG) and the early organisation of an Africa-EU Civil Society Forum. Attention was also given to the need to mobilise resources more widely. In this context, the organisation of the Africa-EU Experts Workshop on Resources for the Joint Strategy (Addis Ababa, 5-7 October 2009) was welcomed.

Ministers also welcomed the meeting between the AU Peace and Security Council and the EU Political and Security Committee (Addis Ababa, 12 October 2009) and encouraged the further intensification of cooperation between the two bodies. Particularly in light of the various crisis situations (Sudan, Somalia, Guinea, Madagascar....) which continue to pose a threat to peace and security in Africa.

Support was expressed for Africa's (AU) common position on climate change and progress being made towards implementing decisions in this field. In particular, Ministers welcomed the fact that Africa will field a team with full mandate to negotiate on climate change during the COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009. The need to provide ongoing support for institutional capacity strengthening was recognised and the EU reiterated its commitment to provide such support, including in particular support for the establishment of the Unit for Climate Change and Desertification Control and for development of national action plans to implement the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative.

Ministers agreed to hold the 14th Africa-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting on 27 April 2010 in Luxembourg.