



One Africa, One Voice



## **Declaration of the EP-PAP Parliamentary Summit to the IVth Africa-EU Summit**

Meeting in Brussels, Belgium, on 31 March and 1 April 2014, on the eve of the Fourth Africa-EU Summit, we parliamentarians representing the Pan-African and European Parliaments, invested with a supervisory and scrutinising role, have reviewed the progress achieved and stages completed in the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy since the last summit held in Tripoli on 28 and 29 November 2010.

We welcome the growing degree of cooperation between our two parliaments, enabling them to exercise increasing scrutiny over the Executives and their actions, and call for this parliamentary role to be strengthened further to enhance democracy and transparency in the field of Africa-EU relations. The importance of the role of all parliaments in this process needs to be emphasised and a clear distinction made between their role and the role of civil society,

which is to contribute to strengthening, but never to replace, the parliamentary role. The democratically elected parliaments of the African and European peoples remain the true representation of the will of those peoples and the trust and belief that they have in the cooperation between the AU and the EU.

Since the last Summit Africa and Europe have faced numerous new challenges which have further emphasised the importance of cooperation under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Political, ethnic and religious strife at national and regional level are on the increase, as is the threat of terrorism. It is also clear that state fragility, human rights violations and corruption remain among the biggest challenges for some African and European countries that jeopardise the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In this regard it should be noted that there are many countries where improvements are tangible, but more progress will depend on how to make economic growth and wealth more inclusive and how inequalities within countries can be reduced. In addition to this, the commitment to fight impunity should remain high on the agenda within the formal dialogue on human rights and democratic governance, which continues to be a strong and mutually agreed commitment to promoting these values on a global level and to strengthening cooperation in this field.

In order to avoid a dilution of efforts and to ensure relevance at a continental level, we parliamentarians call on the European and

African partners in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy to ensure regular and specific dialogue at high level and at ministerial level, focussing on a limited number of realistic flagship objectives. The following priority areas should be considered in this regard:

- **Peace and security**

The African Peace Facility has been enabling collective African solutions to crises over the past ten years of its existence, while supporting the setting up of the African Peace and Security Architecture. These achievements should be sustained and developed during the next Joint Africa-EU Strategy implementation period.

- **Macro-economic governance**

In order to allow people-centred inclusive development, attention to enhancing macro-economic governance should be promoted, starting at a continental level and trickling down to all state levels. Fair and effective taxation systems should be established and enforced to ensure sustainable state revenue for the provision of effective services to citizens. The principle should be respected that companies pay their taxes in the country where they operate and generate their profits. Ambitious efforts must be made in both Europe and Africa to combat tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows, which currently cost African countries billions of dollars every year. This should include, for example, extending

country-by-country reporting on financial and tax information to all European companies from all sectors, ensuring financial transparency through public registries of beneficial ownership, and including African countries as equal partners in discussions on international corporate taxation.

- **Economic development and trade**

The demography and the new dynamism in Africa are crying out for job creation, in particular for young people. A panoply of tools should be used to converge towards this objective, ranging from education and vocational education, public-private investment, micro-financing, investment guarantee funds, infrastructure development, and so on. Conclusions relating to the next Joint Africa-EU Strategy implementation period should propose concrete action for continental cooperation in this area, which should be supported by the necessary funding.

Intra-African trade and adding value to African products has great potential to create sustainable economic development, so as to reduce economic dependence and to create employment.

The issue of the industrialisation of Africa needs to be addressed inter alia through the transfer of technology and skills to enable raw materials to be processed in Africa. The ILO core labour standards and corporate social responsibility should be respected.

Aid for development remains important in fast-tracking people-centred development. Future aid support must conform to the broad principles of aid for development in the field of capacity-building.

Support for the EU-Africa Chamber of Commerce: boosting of trade on the two continents must take on board the EU-Africa Chamber of Commerce and Africans in diaspora.

- **Social issues**

While social security systems can vary according to specific country traditions, minimum standards should be defined and developed at a continental level in order to allow progress through peer review.

It is essential to improve living standards throughout the African continent with appropriate measures adopted at local, national, regional and continental level, making use of the interaction of best available technologies in the areas of food and water security, renewable energy, environmental protection and climate change.

The Millennium Development framework is the appropriate vehicle to eradicate poverty. The two parliaments will monitor the

commitments and implementation of the MDG Post-2015 Framework.

Ending child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation should also be among the priorities of policy makers, especially by ensuring that their root causes such as poverty, lack of education and cultural norms are addressed in order to tackle the societal inequalities faced by girls and women.

Concerns must also be expressed regarding recent developments in terms of increased tension, discrimination and persecution in certain parts of the African continent, on the base of race or religion, and the denial of minority rights. On the issue of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation, there was a divergence of opinion between Members of the European Parliament and their African counterparts.

Management of migratory flows must be undertaken in a dialogue and in cooperation with countries of origin, transit and destination. Measures must also be adopted to address the causes, and often fatal consequences, of migration and human trafficking from African countries to the European Union.

The delegation is of the opinion that the Western Sahara issue must be solved in the framework of the United Nations and

through dialogue with all parties concerned and calls on the African Union and the European Union to be helpful in this regard.

## **Conclusions**

The IVth Africa-EU Summit is taking place at a challenging time. It is important for progress and achievements already in place not to be adversely affected by budget cuts in the EU resulting in reductions for development cooperation. The Pan-African Parliament and the European Parliament, national and regional parliaments, as well as the civil societies on both continents, must be fully involved in decision-making at their respective levels in order to ensure that there is proper transparency and accountability to all citizens involved in the process. This can only enhance the development of the well-being of the African states in economic and social terms, while ensuring that the basic principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law are upheld.