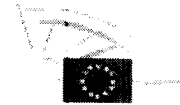




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Ad-hoc committee for relations with the European Parliament

Ad-hoc delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament

Note for the attention of:

- the Presidencies-in-office of the African Union and of the European Union
- the Members of the African Union Commission and of the European Commission responsible for the Joint Africa-EU Strategy

On:

THE ROLE OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY

Through the Pan-African Parliament's ad-hoc committee for relations with the European Parliament and the European Parliament's ad-hoc delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament, the two Parliaments discussed their role in the implementation and monitoring of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the "First Action Plan (2008-2010) for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership".

In a correspondence between the Chairs of the parliamentary delegations and the Member of the European Commission and of the African Union Commission responsible for the Africa-EU strategy, several suggestions for the involvement of the parliaments in the implementation and monitoring were made, both by the Parliaments and by the Commissions.

This exchange of views culminated in an informal meeting between the EU and AU institutions on the role of Parliaments in the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, in Addis Ababa on 31 January 2009.

At this meeting, the institutions decided to continue their exchange of views on the basis of the joint PAP-EU note of 17 December 2008, which had also served as the basis for their exchange of views on 31 January. Participants, however, requested the EP and the PAP to adapt their first note to include the agreements reached during the Addis Ababa meeting. The Pan-African Parliament's ad-hoc committee for relations with the European Parliament and the European Parliament's ad-hoc delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament therefore suggest that the present revised note serve as a basis for the next meeting between all institutions, which – as agreed – will in principle take place at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 23 March 2009.

I. Principles

1. For all AU and EU institutions, the starting point is the recognition of the fact that the Pan-African and the European Parliament are part of the institutional architecture of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership¹ and that, in line with their specific commitments in relation to the joint Africa-EU Strategy², this reality should be reflected in the manner in which the two Parliaments are involved in the implementation and monitoring of the Action Plans established under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.
2. All institutions also recognize that the success of the Strategic Partnership requires the commitment from all European and African stakeholders involved. All stakeholders should therefore actively contribute to the implementation of the Strategy and the Action Plan, in line with their institutional role and competencies and with their capacity to mobilize the necessary resources.

II. Specific role of the Pan-African and the European Parliaments in the implementation and monitoring of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy and the First Action Plan

Paragraphs 116 and 117 of the Joint Strategy lay down the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms:

“116. The two Commissions and the EU Council Secretariat will – on an annual basis and in cooperation with the AU and EU Presidencies – coordinate the preparation of a joint report on the progress made in the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, focusing on the policies and actions outlined in the Action Plans and using clear indicators and concrete benchmarks and timetables to ensure that implementation is on track. These reports will be presented to the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika meetings which will monitor progress and ensure that implementation is on track: every third year, these reports will be presented to Heads of State and Government, meeting at Summit level, alternately in the EU and in Africa.

117. In parallel, the European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament are invited to organise joint hearings and to prepare political reports on progress made.”

In conjunction with the mandate established in paragraph 96 of the Joint Strategy for the two Parliaments, together with the EU Council and the AU Executive Council and the Commissions, to “review progress and provide political guidance to the partnership”, this leads to the following concrete proposals for the involvement of the Pan-African and European Parliaments and their relationship with the other institutions of the Joint Africa-EU strategy:

¹ As acknowledged in paragraph 104 of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy

² See inter alia paragraph 96 of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy: “The political momentum and visibility of the new partnership will also require political engagement and commitment of the leaders of Africa and the EU in the period between the Summits. To this end, the Presidents of the EU Council and the AU, of the European and the Pan-African Parliament and of the European and AU Commissions, will – in the period between Summits and on a regular basis – meet their institutional counterparts, alternately in Africa and the EU, to review progress and provide political guidance to the partnership.”

1. Participation in the informal Joint Expert Groups

The European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament identified jointly four priority partnerships for their initial parliamentary involvement³, and both Parliaments are keen to participate at an adequate level in the meetings of the corresponding Joint Expert Groups (JEGs).

The work of the Joint Expert Groups is prepared on the European side by Implementation Teams bringing together technical experts from the Commission, the Council Secretariat and interested Member States. The African side is setting up a similar structure as the basis for the African contributions to the Joint Expert Groups.

The European and Pan-African Parliament therefore propose that they be also represented at an adequate level in these preparatory teams for the partnerships which are of particular interest to each Parliament.

The JEG co-Chairs, the EU Council Secretariat and the two Commissions are therefore requested to ensure that Parliaments' representatives receive the agendas, minutes and all other documents related to the work of the JEGs and the respective Implementation Teams (or equivalent bodies on the African side) at the same time as the other members of these bodies, and well enough in advance to allow for internal consultations and for an informed participation by the Parliaments in the meetings of these bodies.

2. Annual progress reports

Parliaments propose that the main "political report on progress made" should consist of the analysis, recommendations and suggestions relating to the annual joint progress reports on the implementation of the Strategy. The following format and timing are proposed:

(Parliaments request to receive in advance the relevant preparatory documents for the annual joint progress report, allowing them to prepare for an informed dialogue with the members of the Troika.)

i) The starting point is the adoption of the annual joint progress report by the ministerial Troika (normally during its second meeting of the year). It is suggested that the chairs of the competent parliamentary bodies from the PAP and the EP for the follow-up of the Joint Strategy (in principle the chairs of the ad-hoc delegation committee for relations with the other parliament) be invited to an informal meeting with the members of the Troika immediately before the adoption of the joint annual progress report.

ii) After its adoption, the annual joint progress report will be formally forwarded to the Pan-African and European Parliaments;

³ Peace and security, Democratic governance and human rights, Trade and regional integration, MDGs.

- iii) Parliaments can react in the form of a parliamentary report or resolution by each of the two parliaments, or – whenever feasible – a joint report or resolution by both parliaments, indicating Parliaments' assessment of the progress made as well as recommendations and suggestions for the continuation of the work on the Joint Strategy;
- iv) The individual or joint parliamentary report(s)/resolution(s) will be presented by the chairs and/or rapporteurs of the appropriate parliamentary bodies from the PAP and the EP at an informal meeting with the members of the ministerial Troika, immediately before the subsequent Troika meeting; an exchange of views on the follow-up to give to the parliamentary report(s)/resolution(s) will be included in the agenda of that ministerial Troika meeting;
- v) The next joint annual progress report should reflect how Parliaments' suggestions and recommendations have been taken into account.

Whenever necessary, Parliaments will also draft joint reports, resolutions or any other form of joint parliamentary document containing recommendations and suggestions on specific subjects or actions pertaining to the partnerships for the consideration of the ministerial Troika.

3. Participation in the AU-EU Task Force

The First Action Plan describes the AU-EU Task Force as a part of the institutional architecture and as the body in the framework of which monitoring of progress in the implementation of the Action Plan will take place. Parliaments indicated that, if this is the case, they feel that they ought to be represented in this Task Force.

As pointed out by the Commissions, the Task Force has until now been functioning as a working body in charge of promoting the technical and administrative cooperation between the two Commissions. At the Addis Ababa meeting it was indicated that this discrepancy will be rapidly resolved.

Parliaments feel that there is a need to ensure greater coherence between the work of the eight thematic Joint Expert Groups as well as better coordination between the technical and the political / decision-making level. They suggest that this function could be carried out by a reformed Task Force and therefore propose that the function of the Task Force be adapted to the reality of the Lisbon arrangements and the requirements on the ground, and that all bodies with a mandate to "review progress and provide political guidance to the partnership" be duly involved in its work.

4. Parliamentary involvement in the Africa-EU Summits

The Summits are the supreme policy setting bodies for the Africa-EU Partnership. It is therefore only logical that all relevant institutions be able to attend these Summits.

The Parliaments therefore suggest that, following the precedent set at the 2007 Lisbon EU-Africa Summit, and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of

the African Union⁴ and in line with the established practice for the European Council, the Presidents of the Pan-African Parliament and of the European Parliament be invited to attend the solemn opening of these Summits and to present to the participants in the Summit their Parliaments' conclusions on the implementation of the Action Plan and their suggestions for the future orientations of the Strategy.

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The necessary alignment of procedures between the Pan-African and the European Parliaments in order to enable them to take joint action will be examined at the next joint meeting of the two competent parliamentary bodies in Strasbourg on 23 March 2009.

Following the adoption by the European Parliament of the report by Mrs. Martens on "One year after Lisbon: The Africa-EU partnership at work" the ad-hoc delegation for relations with the PAP will submit to the EP's competent bodies proposals to ensure that the follow-up of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy is mainstreamed in the work of the relevant parliamentary committees and delegations and in Parliament's administrative bodies.

16.2.2009

⁴ "Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the African Union, adopted at the First Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Durban (South Africa), 9-10 July 2002, Rule 17 ("Attendance and participation")