

**Joint Statement  
22<sup>nd</sup> SA-EU  
Inter-Parliamentary Meeting  
23 – 24 July 2015  
Cape Town  
South Africa**

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The 22<sup>nd</sup> South Africa-European Union Inter-Parliamentary Meeting (IPM) between Members of the South African Parliament and Members of the European Parliament took place at the Parliament of South Africa on 23 and 24 July 2015.

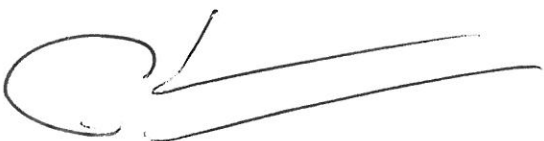
The objectives of the SA-EU Inter-Parliamentary Meetings (IPM) are to:

- utilise the SA-EU platform to share experiences and knowledge;
- develop a sound, informed Parliamentary position on Africa's and European Union's vision of regional integration, development and peace; support the processes for a democratic developmental country;
- strengthen relations with our traditional trade partners; and to
- fulfil Parliament's oversight mandate of ensuring accountability to the people; transparency and good governance is enhanced; and to ensure that Parliament remains the voice of the people.

The discussions focused on the strategic, bilateral relationship between the European Union and South Africa, and broader issues in the European Union and on the African continent as a whole. The discussions provided an opportunity for frank exchanges of views on a number of challenging economic, development and geo-political issues beyond South Africa and the European Union.

A lengthy discussion on the South-Africa-EU strategic partnership highlighted the importance South Africa and the European Union place on the partnership. South Africa expressed appreciation of the support provided by the European Union, through development cooperation and appealed for the reconsideration of an increase in the future, since South Africa is grappling with huge economic and social inequalities, notwithstanding the challenges experienced by the European Union.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda and the importance of Parliaments in playing a role in shaping the agenda was highlighted. Both delegations agreed that the sustainable development goals need to scale up and strengthen global partnerships, the



harmonizing of the existing financial commitment of the North and the development of capacity and relevant skills.

The South African delegation reaffirmed their commitment to implement the National Development Plan of South Africa, in line with Africa's Agenda 2063, and in part on the sustainable development agenda. The objectives of the Plan are to eliminate poverty and to reduce inequality through, amongst others, active citizenry, raising economic growth and building a capable and developmental state and enhance gender equality. The European Parliament delegation commended South Africa on the Plan and underlined that the successful implementation of the Plan would drive South Africa's economic growth. South Africa also expressed appreciation for the support of the National Development Plan from the EU, under the European Union Development Aid package.

There was an exchange of views with regards to the economic partnership agreements and both sides welcome the development towards the conclusions of the legal process. There was further discussion on citrus black spot and non-tariff barriers. Both sides have agreed to continue the dialogue to reach a speedy resolution.

On the matter of climate change Members of both delegations discussed the common but differentiated approach considering Africa only contributes about 5% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The European Delegation confirmed that it is taking responsibility to ensure a positive change very seriously. The South African delegation reaffirmed that addressing climate change requires a balancing of competing national interest and that, as Members of Parliament, the challenge is also addressed through the education of citizens and the protection of the natural environment.

Both sides called for cooperation in the context of the G20 on tax evasion and tax avoidance. The meeting also discussed opportunities for enhanced cooperation in the context of both parties participation in the work of G20.

The current political and security issues in Sudan, Syria, Libya, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Iran were discussed and both parties agreed that these countries need the support of the international community in seeking sustainable solutions. The delegation also discussed current developments around the International Criminal Court (ICC). Both parties expressed concern regarding the rise of extremism in Europe and,

although the challenge is complex, agreed that part of the solution might be found in ensuring continued dialogue and education of citizens.

This first meeting of the fifth Parliament with newly elected members from both South Africa and the European Union Parliament, affirmed its belief that, through participatory and active dialogue it is important to recognise that while we may not agree on everything, we respect each other's right to differ and listen attentively to the substance of each other's argument.

Both delegations reaffirmed their commitment to continued dialogue on strategic bilateral, economic and geo-political issues that impact on both Africa and Europe and the strengthening of the partnership. The two delegations agreed to work closely with each other in strengthening the rule of law, fairness in the world and avoid wars and bring about sustainable development and peace.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Inter-parliamentary meeting will take place towards the end of the year in Strasbourg.

**Issued:** 24 July 2015

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