



PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT
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Joint communique' of the Interparliamentary meeting between the Pan-African Parliament and the European Parliament

Meeting in videoconference from Midrand (South Africa) and Brussels (Belgium) on 20 November 2020, we, parliamentarians representing the Pan-African and European Parliaments, state the following:

Preamble

Covid-19 pandemic is reshaping our ways of life, our habits and our mentalities, changing the global landscape. Its long-term consequences on international relations and development cooperation remains to a large extent unpredictable, but what appears clear is that there is a concrete risk of exacerbating the already negative trends of closing the borders and increasing societal fragmentation. We, elected representatives of our peoples, stand united to fight against these risks and to give instead a new impetus to relations between our two

continents, in view of our common shared values such as human rights, democracy, solidarity, rule of law, peace and security and justice.

The joint role of the Pan-African Parliament and the European Parliament in fostering political dialogue between the EU and the AU should be consolidated by a people-focused partnership, nurtured by the voices of the civil society - including NGOs, youth and women's organisations, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentary assemblies, local authorities and the diaspora.

The AU - EU partnership and the way forward

The EU and the AU share the same fundamental values and principles. Their partnership, which is a great opportunity for both, is based on common values and it should be strengthened further, as the AU is becoming an entity with effective supranational powers by developing its institutional structure along a path similar to the one taken by the EU.

We notice that there are several co-existing cooperation strategies: on the one hand the new EU proposal for a comprehensive strategy with Africa, on which the European Parliament will soon adopt an own initiative report, and on the other hand, an African Union strategy for cooperation with the EU, that is in preparation and is inspired mainly by the African Union Agenda 2063 for an integrated, peaceful and

prosperous Africa. These two strategies need to be molded into one single programmatic document, adopted by both AU and EU, for joint ownership. This document needs to incorporate the achievements as well as address challenges of the longstanding cooperation in the framework of the Joint Africa Europe Strategy.

Migration, Displacement and Asylum Cooperation and Youth Mobility in Africa

We reiterate once again that the European Union should adopt a common migration and asylum policy, based on respect of human rights, solidarity and the principle of integration.

We reaffirm our common commitment to developing a coordinated joint approach and mutual support in ensuring well-governed migration and mobility, in order to provide safe and legal ways along the migration routes.

Furthermore, we strongly urge the African Union and the European Union to do everything in their power to protect migrants and to prevent situations of inhuman and cruel treatment of migrants, to combat human trafficking and smuggling.

Against this background, a more holistic approach, is required to tackle the root causes of migration, this remains an absolute priority. Job

creation, in particular for young people, is central and requires a panoply of tools, ranging from education and vocational training, to public investment in economy, micro financing, investment guarantee funds and energy and infrastructure development.

Our stronger partnership could provide solutions to support economic growth and create jobs, accelerating green transition and ensuring inclusive access to sustainable energy and energy efficiency in Africa. African industrialization requires a further transfer of technology and skills to enable raw materials to be processed locally, supporting African capacity at the appropriate national, sub-regional or continental level and within the available cooperation instruments.

The ILO core labor standards and corporate social responsibility should be respected. Intra-African trade and adding value to African products have great potential to create sustainable economic development, to reduce economic dependence and to create employment. In this context, advancing intra African trade would also be an opportunity to boost cooperation and trade between our continents, as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is a cornerstone of the EU's trade strategy with Africa.

Aid for development remains important in fast-tracking people-centered development.

Finally, Members highlight the role of the diaspora and the importance of the remittances as targeted and context-sensitive investments for the economic development of the continent. In this regard, Members urge the appropriate financial institutions to put in place mechanism for reducing the cost of sending remittances back home. Such costs should never go beyond 3 % of the remittance value.

Peace and Security in Africa:” Silencing the guns by 2020”

We express our strong support for this AU flagship initiative, and reiterate that it can only be efficiently accomplished through a multidimensional approach: on the one hand, by tackling the deep causes of conflicts, notably inequalities, exclusion and social injustice, ill governance and weak and fragmented power structures, and on the other hand, by reducing the number of weapons in circulation.

Building democratic and inclusive societies, based on rule of law, respect of human rights, social justice - guaranteeing an equitable distribution of resources - and good governance, is the only way to avoid armed conflicts.

We will strengthen our cooperation and partnership to address peace and security challenges building on effective, inclusive and accountable governance and on combatting corruption.

It is necessary to establish a control on the circulation of weapons efficiently complemented by a reduction of them. With this in mind, we call for the creation of a unique and publicly available database for all weapons traded between the EU and the AU, as well as for an effective tracking mechanism.

On the other hand, we call for the reinforcement of multilateral, AU controlled missions - with EU support when and where requested -, to reinforce and control disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes and support to truly democratic and inclusive governance.

EU-AU cooperation in the field of peace and security is a central element of our partnership. In this context, we call to further develop our cooperation regarding crisis prevention, crisis management and conflict resolution through inclusive peacebuilding, which includes the perspectives and contributions of youth, children and women and other marginalized groups.

Women's rights and equality for all

We commit ourselves to integrate human rights, the rule of law and gender equality in our action and cooperation.

We strive for building a European Union and an African Union where all society members, women and men, girls and boys, in all their

diversity, are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities, and can equally participate in and lead our societies. We commit to deploy our parliamentary roles to ensure the effective implementation of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and the African Union strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2018-2028 respectively.

We reiterate the common commitment at EU and AU level to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including female genital mutilation, femicide, child early or forced marriage and to reduce the level of poverty among women, economic and political inequality, by providing basic access to land and property, credit, health and education to all women and girls.

Conclusion

Mutual respect and understanding are at the core of any successful partnership, AU-EU partnership being no exception. The EU and the AU must reinforce their partnership with a continental approach in a multipolar context, to consolidate cooperation in building more democratic, fair and inclusive societies that will enable economic and trade development beneficial for both continents.

Africa and Europe need to listen more to each other, find the courage to revisit and analyse problematic moments of their relations and strengthen their relation equal partners, to pave the way towards an

international cooperation based on global public goods, to better respond to the global health and environmental challenges.

Africa must continue on its path towards unity, by overcoming existing divergences and obstacles of technical and political nature. It must speed-up on the delivery of the AU flagship projects and by reinforcing the competences of the Pan-African Parliament. The EU stands ready in supporting such endeavors.

In a multipolar context where some countries are promoting selective multilateralism rather than effective multilateralism anchored in universal values, the EU and the AU and their partnership, represent the strength of consensus and unity around common priorities and interests. Both parties are committed to leverage their cooperation with the United Nations, as an essential forum for a rules-based international order.

Together, the EU and the AU can be very strong in the international arena in promoting shared values and common visions, starting from multilateralism, the respect of human rights, climate governance, solidarity, democracy and a rules-based international environment whose aim is to reach a lasting peace, stability and prosperity.

Brussels - Midrand, 20 November 2020

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