



4.3.2024

## MISSION REPORT

following the ad hoc mission to Lilongwe, Malawi, and Lusaka, Zambia, from  
18 to 21 December 2023

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Members of the mission:

David McAllister	(PPE) (Leader of the mission)
Michael Gahler	(PPE)
Željana Zovko	(PPE)
Tonino Picula	(S&D)

## ***Introduction***

Members from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament visited Lilongwe in Malawi and Lusaka in Zambia from 18 to 21 December 2023 and met with representatives of the government, parliament, international organisations and civil society to discuss international and regional peace and security issues.

This was the third AFET mission to Africa in this legislative term and took place against the backdrop of the interest to strengthen partnerships with likeminded countries in Africa, who are not only active in international forums, but also align with the EU's positioning on the need to strengthen an international rules based order.

## ***Summary account of meetings***

### **Malawi**

The AFET delegation was warmly welcomed by the authorities in Malawi, including by H.E. Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi, Right Hon. Ms Catherine Gotani Hara, Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Harry Mkandawire, Minister of Defence, Hon. Sosten Gwengwe, Minister of Trade, and Mr Benard Sande, Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, as well as Members of the Malawi Parliament.

In discussions on the Malawi-EU partnership, Members appreciated Malawi's shared values as regards the defence of a multilateral rules based order. They welcome the long-standing stable partnership and good cooperation in multilateral forums. Members also underscored the EU's support given to Malawi, and highlighted that likeminded countries should be given adequate support for their commitment to upholding our shared values amidst geopolitical pressures and challenges. They noted the concept of 'more for more, less for less' when it comes to financial support.

When discussing Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in particular, Members welcomed Malawi's clear stance in condemning the war and expressing support to Ukraine, including at the United Nations. Malawi counterparts underlined their principled stance on this matter. Members also recognised the negative impacts of the war through the energy and food security crises amidst rising prices and inflation that have particularly affected African countries, and recalled the EU's support to mitigate these impacts.

In the context of the EU's bilateral cooperation, discussions focused on the need to ensure a prosperous future for Malawi. To this end, Members expressed high consideration for Malawi's ambitious political and economic reform agenda and underlined continued supports for its path to accomplishing its Vision 2063 programme. In discussions with the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Members underscored support given by the EU to this crucial component of a functioning rule of law. High-level meetings also focused on Malawi's plans to boost its agriculture, tourism and mining sectors. Malawian counterparts were appreciative of the EU's support to the country and called for further avenues for cooperation, including through conducive trade relations. Several interlocutors however expressed frustration over Malawi not being part of the strategic corridors under the Global Gateway. Malawian counterparts also called for increased

investments and resources for good governance, including enhanced parliamentary cooperation and capacity building, and economic resilience, and debt restructuring activities.

In discussions on regional security and dynamics, Malawian interlocutors highlighted the positive neighbourly relations, underlining in particular support and aid received in times of crisis, such as that in the aftermath of cyclone Freddy in 2023. Members acknowledged the active contributions by Malawi to peacekeeping missions in various conflict zones, and recognised the role of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in regional peace and security. Members and their counterparts also discussed shared concerns about growing insecurity and instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and underlined the importance of the December general elections in the country. Discussions also focused on the Cabo Delgado crisis in neighbouring Mozambique, with both sides recognising the importance of preventing spill over effects.

Malawian counterparts highlighted Malawi's active contributions to peacekeeping missions, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique. Speaking specifically about the Cabo Delgado crisis in Mozambique, Malawi underlines its commitment to the containment of the situation in the region under the SADC operations, while noting that spill over risks, especially with regions with a high degree of unemployment among young men prevail.

Members also met with representatives of civil society and think tanks and discussed the rule of law and human rights situation in the country, with particular concerns raised about the rights of refugees and migrants.

## **Zambia**

The AFET delegation was warmly welcomed by the authorities in Malawi, including by H.E. Mr Hakainde Hichilema, President of Zambia, H.E. Mr Ambrose Lwiji Lufuma, Minister of Defence, H.E. Mr Stanley Kakubo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and H.E. Ms Nelly Mutti Speaker of the National Assembly, as well as parliamentary counterparts.

On EU-Zambia relations and bilateral cooperation, Members underlined the stable partnership between Zambia and the EU. Members expressed support for Zambia's efforts on economic reforms, notably as regards the negotiations on the debt restructuring. Zambian governmental and parliamentary interlocutors showed appreciation of EU support through the debt-restructuring process under the G20 Officials Creditor Committee, while stressing that further efforts are still needed to strengthen Zambia's trade and export.

Discussions also focused on investments under the Global Gateway, particularly the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding on sustainable raw materials and the Lobito corridor, as a clear example of the EU's support and interest to boost infrastructure in Africa. Zambian interlocutors appreciated EU support, while stressing the importance of treating African countries as partners on an equal footing and not as a source of raw materials, and called for further support in capacity building and technology transfers, as well as cooperation in promoting global and regional peace and security.

Members welcomed Zambia's like-minded stance and support in condemning Russia's war of

aggression against Ukraine, demonstrating a commitment to shared values. Zambian counterparts underlined their firm stance on this issue, despite facing external pressures on this matter. Both sides recognised the negative impacts of the war through the energy and food security crises amidst rising prices and inflation, felt in particular by African countries. Members recalled the EU's support to African partners in this regard. Both sides called for further cooperation between the EU and Zambia on matters of promoting global and regional peace and security. Zambian counterparts also reaffirmed the country's commitment to resolving conflicts through dialogue.

Members recognised Zambia's positive contribution to regional peace and security in its Chairmanship of the Organ on Politics, Security and Defence of SADC. Members and Zambian interlocutors expressed shared concerns about the instability and insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo, also in light of the planned withdrawal of the MONUSCO forces. Zambian counterparts reiterated their commitment to active troop contribution in SADC peacekeeping missions and underscored the importance they give to election observation missions and the need to uphold democratic standards.

In discussions with think tanks and civil society representatives, Members and interlocutors discussed matters relating to human rights, fundamental freedoms and political dynamics in the country.

## **Conclusions**

The ad hoc delegation was of great value for the AFET Committee's work on Africa-EU relations and for promoting further engagement between the European Parliament and African countries through established means of parliamentary cooperation.

The high-level nature of meetings during the mission, particularly exchanges of views with the President of Malawi as well as the President of Zambia, provided an excellent opportunity to strengthen relations with two important like-minded partners in the South African region and discuss further cooperation opportunities, especially on geopolitical issues of mutual interest and on international and regional peace and security more broadly.

The AFET delegation received press coverage by outlets in both countries.

**Annex:**

**FINAL PROGRAMME**  
**MISSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**TO**  
**LILONGWE, MALAWI AND LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**  
**18-21 DECEMBER 2023**

**Monday 18 December 2023**  
**Lilongwe, Malawi**

*Individual arrivals of the delegation to Lilongwe, Malawi*

- |               |                                                                                   |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16:45 - 17:40 | Briefing with the Head of EU Delegation to Malawi, Ambassador Rune Skinnebach     |
| 17:45 – 18:45 | Meeting with representatives of civil society                                     |
| 19:00 - 20:45 | Cocktail with EU Member States and representatives of international organisations |

**Tuesday 19 December 2023**  
**Lilongwe, Malawi**

- |               |                                                                                                   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08:00 - 08:40 | Meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly, Right Hon. Ms Catherine Gotani Hara            |
| 09:15 - 10:00 | Meeting with the Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr Benard Sande                         |
| 10:30 - 12:00 | Courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Malawi, H.E. Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera      |
| 12:30 - 13:00 | Press point by the Chair                                                                          |
| 13:00 - 14:30 | Working lunch with Malawian parliamentary representatives (MPs) hosted by the European Parliament |
| 14:45 - 15:45 | Meeting with the Minister of Defence, Hon. Harry Mkandawire                                       |
| 16:00 - 17:00 | Meeting with Mr Hilary Chilomba, Deputy Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau                          |
| 18:30 - 20:00 | Working dinner with Minister of Trade and Industry, Hon. Sosten Gwengwe                           |

**Wednesday 20 December 2023**  
**Lilongwe, Malawi**

*Transfer to Lusaka, Zambia*

**Wednesday 20 December 2023**  
**Lusaka, Zambia**

- 13:45 - 14:45 Briefing by the Head of EU Delegation to Zambia and COMESA, Ambassador Karolina Stasiak
- 15:00 - 16:00 Meeting with Minister of Defence, H.E. Mr Ambrose Lwiji Lufuma
- 16:15 - 17:15 Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Stanley Kakubo
- 18:00 - 20:00 Working dinner with EU Member States Ambassadors and likeminded Ambassadors hosted by the European Parliament

**Thursday 21 December 2023**  
**Lusaka, Zambia**

- 10:00 - 11:00 Meeting with the President of Zambia, H.E. Mr Hakainde Hichilema
- 11:30- 12:30 Meeting with the Speaker of the National Assembly, H.E. Ms Nelly Mutti
- 12:30 - 13:30 Meeting with parliamentary representatives (MPs)
- 13:45 - 15:30 Working lunch with representatives of think tanks and civil society

*Individual departures of the delegation from Lusaka, Zambia*