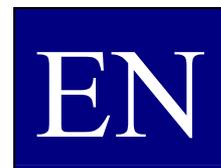




**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 19 December 2005
15961/05 (Presse 367)

THE EU AND AFRICA: TOWARDS A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The European Council, at its meeting on 15 and 16 December, adopted the following text:

"Introduction: Our Vision

1. Europe and Africa are bound together by history, by geography, and by a shared vision of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future for all their peoples.

P R E S S

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2. This strategy sets out the steps the European Union will take with Africa between now and 2015 to support African efforts to build such a future. It is a strategy of the whole of the EU for the whole of Africa. It takes into account regional and country-specific needs and African countries' national strategies. Its primary aims are the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of sustainable development, security and good governance, in Africa.
3. The strategy builds on important progress made by the Africans themselves. Its core principles are partnership based on international law and human rights, equality and mutual accountability. Its underlying philosophy is African ownership and responsibility, including working through African institutions.

Peace and security

4. Without peace there can be no lasting development. Without African leadership to end African conflicts there can be no lasting peace. So we will:
 - a) Work with the African Union (AU), sub-regional organisations and African countries to predict, prevent and mediate conflict, including by addressing its root causes, and to keep the peace in their own continent. In particular, we will strengthen the Africa Peace Facility with substantial, long-term, flexible, sustainable funding. We will help develop African capabilities, such as the AU's African Standby Force, and will build on existing activities by Member States to provide training and advisory, technical, planning and logistical support.
 - b) Provide direct support to African Union, sub-regional or UN efforts to promote peace and stability through Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) activities, and military and civilian crisis management missions, including potential deployment of EU battlegroups; continue implementation of the ESDP Africa Action Plan; and develop the dialogue with Euromed countries.
 - c) Enhance our support for post conflict reconstruction in Africa, so that we secure lasting peace and development. We will support in particular the new UN Peacebuilding Commission; the strengthening of fragile states; and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, and Security Sector Reform programmes in African states.
 - d) Redouble our efforts to stem the illicit flow of weapons, including small arms. We will encourage others to adopt minimum common standards and associate themselves with the EU Code of Conduct on arms exports, discourage transfers which contribute to instability, develop ways to share and act on information on illegal trafficking and support border management controls and an international arms trade treaty.

e) Join with African states to counter terrorism worldwide. We will provide technical assistance, enhanced information sharing and support to the AU Anti-Terrorism Centre in Algiers and continue to support the implementation of international counter-terrorism agreements.

Human Rights and Governance

5. Successful development requires; adherence to human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law; and effective, well-governed states, and strong and efficient institutions. We will:

a) Promote and protect human rights, including the rights of women, children and other vulnerable groups; help end impunity, including through the International Criminal Court; and promote fundamental freedoms and respect for the rule of law in Africa, including through capacity-building for judicial systems, national Human Rights Commissions and civil society organisations. The substantial funding under EC and member states' bilateral programmes will be maintained.

b) Support good governance programmes at country level and help build the capacity of the African Union and Africa's regional and national institutions, building on the € 35 million already allocated for this purpose under the Africa Peace Facility and the € 50 million under EDF 9.

c) Support, through political dialogue and consultations with African partners, African efforts to monitor and improve governance, including through supporting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)'s African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). This should result in their goal of four completed reviews a year from 2006 being achieved and the development of a Governance Initiative to support national reforms triggered by the APRM process. Develop a governance facility in the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument.

d) Support the fight against corruption, human trafficking, illegal drugs and organised crime and promote transparency to meet the aspirations of African citizens and to ensure Africa's wealth benefits its people. This will include helping improve public accountability and financial management systems in Africa, early ratification by all EU member states and African partners of the UN Convention on Corruption, assisting proper management of conflict resources including timber as well as mineral resources, support to the Kimberly Process and to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) so that eleven African countries begin implementation of the EITI by July 2006.

e) Support the growth of participatory democracy and accountability in Africa, including through support to African parliaments and civil society and an enhanced programme of election assistance and EU Electoral Observation Missions including a review of their remit in 2006.

Development Assistance

6. If Africa is to meet the challenge of development, sound policies and good leadership must be backed by increased, sustainable and predictable financial flows at a level consistent with our ambitions. We will:
- a) Increase our aid, by delivering on our collective commitment to give as official development assistance 0.56% of EU GNI by 2010, with half of the additional €20 billion going to Africa, and 0.7% of GNI by 2015 in the case of 15 Member States, whilst other MS will strive to increase their ODA to 0.33% by 2015.¹
 - b) Secure more effective and predictable EU financial assistance for Africa, including by reaching early agreement on a successor to the 9th European Development Fund as soon as possible and ensuring adequate resources for North Africa in future EC budgets.
 - c) In order to help to reach the 0.7% target for development assistance, implement on a voluntary basis, innovative financing mechanisms, such as a contribution on airline tickets or through financing the International Finance Facility for Immunisation.
 - d) Support the proposal, agreed in principle with the International Financial Institutions, to cancel outstanding debts owed by Heavily Indebted Poor Countries that qualify by helping to meet the costs. This is expected to deliver in total further debt relief of up to € 42 billion for African countries.
 - e) Reinforce EU humanitarian and disaster response capability by strengthening the EC humanitarian aid department (ECHO) so that it maintains its strong role in under-funded emergencies, in support of the UN's lead.
 - f) Make our aid more effective, by ensuring early implementation for Africa of our EU and international commitments, as agreed in Paris in March 2005.

¹ The full text, accompanied by the relevant minutes statements, is set out in the Conclusions of the Council of 24 May 2005 (Ref 9266/05).

Sustainable Economic Growth, Regional Integration and Trade

7. Rapid, sustained and broad-based growth is essential for ending poverty in Africa. We will:
- a) Facilitate a better-connected Africa, to itself and the rest of the world; including by establishing an EU/Africa Infrastructure Partnership, which will be complementary to the new Infrastructure Consortium for Africa and include existing initiatives on transport and to facilitate peoples' access to water and sanitation, energy and information technology.
 - b) Promote a stable, efficient and harmonized legal business framework in Africa, for example by convening a Euro-African Business Forum in 2006.
 - c) Help to integrate Africa fully into the world trade system, by pressing for a successful outcome to the Doha Round of world trade talks that is ambitious, maximises development gains, ensures special differential treatment, addresses preference erosion and makes trade work for the poor, and extends duty and quota-free market access for Least Developed Countries to all industrialised country markets.
 - d) Provide increased aid for trade, building on the Community's commitment of € 1 billion per year by 2010.
 - e) Agree Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with Africa's regional groupings by 2008 that are instruments of development, promote regional integration, improve African access to European and regional markets; support asymmetric and flexible implementation of EPAs; and reduce non-tariff barriers. We will closely monitor EPAs so that they help achieve development objectives; and also redouble efforts to complete by 2010 agreement on an EU-Mediterranean Free Trade Area.
 - f) Help African countries comply with EU rules and standards, establish clear rules for services, simplify rules of origin and make them more development friendly.
 - g) Support Africa in countering the effects of climate change in accordance with the EU Action Plan on Climate Change and Development; and in protecting its environment, through a range of policies, by combating desertification and ensuring the sustainable management of its forests, land and biodiversity fisheries and water. Such support includes, for example, € 500million for the EU Water Facility and € 220 million for the Energy Facility under EDF9.

Investing in people

8. A successful Africa requires a well-educated, healthy population and the full empowerment of women. We will:
- a) Support African efforts to ensure that all children have free primary education of good quality by 2015, including through the implementation of Africa's Education for All programme, with increased resources for the Fast Track Initiative, such as the € 63 million agreed under EDF9; and through the plan agreed at the 2005 Barcelona Summit.
 - b) Promote development of Euro-Africa networks of universities and centres of excellence, including through helping the AU establish a new exchange programme (the Nyerere Programme) for students in Africa.
 - c) Provide predictable, multi-year financing for health systems in Africa so that all Africans have access to basic healthcare, free where governments choose to provide this and in support of African governments' goal of allocating 15% of their public budgets to Health.
 - d) Enhance our support for the fight against infectious diseases, including by providing further EU contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and malaria, thereby maintaining the EU's share of global contributions (at least 50%). We will continue to support research and development of drugs for AIDS and other communicable diseases, and help countries deliver prevention strategies and universal access to HIV treatment and care for all who need it by 2010, through further support for the EU Programme for Action for AIDS, TB and malaria; and support fair access to drugs under WTO patent protection rules.
 - e) Improve food security for the most vulnerable, by helping lift 8 million Africans out of hunger by 2009 through country-led safety-nets for chronically food insecure populations who rely on humanitarian programmes.
 - f) Maximise the developmental benefits and minimize the negative aspects of migration and strengthen protection for refugees, through engaging in balanced dialogue and cooperation with the AU, other African organisations and states on a broad range of migration issues. In particular this means addressing the root causes of migration, fostering links with development and promoting co-development¹ and combating illegal immigration. We will take this forward through a series of concrete priority actions as agreed by the European Council.

¹ Co-development involves migrant communities in the EU contributing to the development of their countries of origin

g) Recognise the importance of women in all our policies towards Africa in view of their crucial role in economic growth, development, education and the disproportionate effects on women of conflict, poverty related diseases and lack of maternal health care; and give appropriate support to sexual and reproductive rights, in line with the International Conference on Population and Development Cairo agenda.

The future: an EU partnership with Africa

9. Europe has a strong interest in a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Africa. Our strategy is intended to help Africa achieve this. We commit to:

a) Deliver on this strategy. We will review progress on its implementation at the December 2006 European Council, and at least every two years thereafter. Our Ministers will discuss and oversee the development of detailed delivery and monitoring plans for this purpose, based on timelines and indicators proposed jointly by the Commission and Council Secretariat. In 2006, the Council will review implementation of the aid volume targets agreed in May 2005 and thereafter, on the basis of monitoring reports from the Commission.

b) Develop this strategy, in partnership with the African Union, NEPAD and other African partners, respecting the principles of African ownership, the importance of working more closely with Africans in multilateral fora, and in coordination with multilateral partners.

c) Building on the Cairo Summit, enhance the EU's political dialogue and broader relationship with Africa and its institutions, and hold the second EU/Africa Summit in Lisbon as soon as possible."
