



AU-EU HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE



10TH AU-EU HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE **20 NOVEMBER 2013, Brussels, BELGIUM**

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The 10th African Union (AU) - European Union (EU) Human Rights Dialogue took place on 20 November 2013 in Brussels Belgium. The Dialogue was led by the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Stavros Lambrinidis and by the European External Action Service Managing Director for Global and Multilateral Issues, Ms Mara Marinaki. On the AU side, the Dialogue was led by the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Dr Aisha L. Abdullahi. Other participants included EU Special Representative to the AU, Ambassador Gary Quince, as well as EU staff working on human rights-related issues. The AU participants included H.E. Ajay Kumar Bramdeo, Ambassador of the AU to the European Union, and other AUC staff.

Both parties discussed recent developments in Africa and Europe in the area of human rights, notably the progress and achievements on the implementation of the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights, as well as on the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights. The deployment of human rights observers in Mali and the forthcoming human rights mission to the Central African Republic were presented by the African Union. The AU also shared information on the progress made in implementing the African Human Rights Strategy and on the ratification of continental human rights instruments by Member States.

All parties reaffirmed their commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights on both continents and engaged in a wide ranging discussion on the universality of human rights to which they reaffirmed their strong commitment. The AU and the EU agreed to continue dialogue on this issue aiming at developing a mutual position in the near future.

The AU and the EU also discussed issues of common concern and the follow-up to previous recommendations made in the context of the Dialogue. On women, peace and security, participants welcomed the organisation in 2013 of two meetings on this issue, as well as on children in armed conflict. They emphasised the need to jointly implement the outcomes of these seminars. In this context, the EU reiterated its commitment to sharing the training modules for peace keeping operations on gender, human rights and child protection.

In line with last year's Dialogue, both sides recommitted themselves to organising a joint seminar based on the UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business involving the private sector, civil society and other actors in 2014.

Both organisations shared efforts made in the area of the death penalty. The EU reiterated its commitment to continue supporting the Working Group on the Death Penalty of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR). This to include the development of Optional Protocol to the African Charter on the Abolition of the Death Penalty, as well as potential future meetings on this subject.

Freedom of association was also discussed by both parties which agreed to cooperate further through the organisation of a workshop to promote this fundamental right. The EU pledged to support the activities of the ACHPR Working Group on Freedom of Association.

In light of the tragic events of Lampedusa, the rights of migrants were also stressed by both sides and welcomed previous proposals to include migration in the agenda of the forthcoming EU-AU Summit in April 2014.

The AU and EU also discussed cooperation in the area of electoral observation. They welcomed the progress achieved in improving the AU electoral capacities through EU support in the area of capacity-building and training. Furthermore, they discussed their cooperation in the field and exchanged views on follow-up missions. Both parties will continue and further intensify their cooperation in this area.

Both institutions decided to reiterate their commitment to fighting impunity of all sorts and look forward to constructive discussions at the Assembly of State Parties of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The AU expressed the desire to enhance the capacity of African judiciaries and the EU requested continued support for the ICC.

Another topic of discussion concerned the rights of persons with disabilities. Both parties shared their efforts to promote this right within the context of the post 2015 development framework. Moreover, they also agreed to organise a seminar involving civil society and member states to exchange good practices on this matter.

The two sides welcomed and took note of the recommendations presented by African and European civil society representatives resulting from the 4th AU-EU civil society seminar that took place on 18 and 19 November 2013. The themes discussed were land rights, the rights of domestic workers, and human rights and security. Recommendations were also presented on the enabling space of civil society participation. This last subject will feature as a standing issue in every CSO seminar. The AU and EU will explore ways and means to implement the recommendations. The EU also suggested including some of the themes discussed in the CSO seminar into the official Dialogue as a standard practice.

Both parties agreed to hold the next round of the Dialogue in late 2014 in Africa.