3rd Africa Europe Youth Leaders’ Summit

1. In order for the joint African and European youth to present tangible recommendations to the 4th EU-Africa Heads of States Summit on the 2-3 April 2014, the 3rd Africa Europe Youth Leaders’ Summit convened this Monday and Tuesday in Brussels, Belgium. The Youth Leaders’ Summit brought together more than 100 youth leaders from both continents, including African Diaspora youth leaders.

2. The EU President, Mr Van Rompuy and the AUC Chairperson Dr. Dlamini-Zuma opened the Youth Summit, both stating strong support for reinforced Africa-EU youth cooperation as part of the future Africa-EU Partnership. The President of the European Commission Manuel José Barroso made a video message. Former EU Development Commissioner, MEP Louis Michel and UNECA Executive Secretary, Dr. Carlos Lopes made key speeches calling for enhanced involvement of and support to the youth within the inter-continental relationship. H.E. Anatole Collinet Makosso, Chairperson of the AU Ministerial Conference on Youth, Ambassador Jean Baptiste Natama, AUC Chief of Staff and Professor Joe Diescho, Executive Director the of Namibia Institute of Public Affairs, addressed the participants during the inter-generational debate. The closing remarks were delivered by the Chairman of the AU Ministerial Conference on Youth and Lord Boateng, member of U.K. parliament.

3. All presidents of the 5 organising Youth platforms addressed the meeting and praised the many achievements realised by the Africa-EU Youth Platform since 2007. Both Peter Matjasic (President of the European Youth Forum) and Yershen Pillay (President of the Pan-African Youth Union) called for a specific, dedicated EU-Africa Youth Initiative based on the principles of ‘youth finding solutions to youth problems’; existing achievements and the dynamic cooperation already existing among the 5 organisations.
4. The two Youth Presidents, Peter Matjasic and Yershen Pillay will address the Africa and EU Heads of States at the IV Summit. They will deliver the key messages and conclusions from the Youth Leaders’ summit, namely:

   a. Establish a dedicated, free-standing Africa-EU Youth Initiative/Facility to upscale the cooperation among the youths of the two continents;

   b. While recognising the diversity of both continents and the many differences between young Africans and Europeans, the Youth Leaders’ want to pursue joint activities in areas where they face common challenges in line with the principles of the Africa-EU Partnership. Discussions during the summit illustrated that much can be done and achieved by empowering the youth organisations and focusing on youth leadership, youth entrepreneurship and youth as building blocks in the strengthening of democratic and peaceful societies;

   c. Training, skills development, education and mobility were considered as necessary transversal components of any solution to youth challenges by the EU and African Youth leaders’;

   d. Promote the involvement of youth groups in policy development and implementation at the national, regional and continental levels in both Africa and the EU;

   e. Develop financing mechanisms to promote youth entrepreneurship in Africa and Europe;

   f. Change the perception of the youth towards certain business sectors, such as the agriculture sector;

   g. More active involvement of youth in the Africa-EU Partnership.

5. The Africa-Europe Youth Platform and the Steering Committee will continue to work on the launch of an Africa-EU Youth Initiative within the framework of the Africa-EU Partnership.