



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**EU-AU HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE  
Addis Ababa, 20 NOVEMBER 2009  
JOINT COMMUNIQUE**

The fifth successful round of the EU-AU Human Rights Dialogue shows that the Dialogue has become a valuable and useful part of the EU and AU cooperation in the human rights area, and brings about concrete common conclusions, recommendations and commitments. The open and constructive discussions held demonstrate that the dialogue has reached maturity and allows exchange on a wide range of human rights issues of interest to the two parties.

The African and European sides noted that although since the preceding meeting in April 2009 some encouraging developments had taken place both in the EU and Africa, such as the abolition of the death penalty by Burundi and Togo, challenges remained and needed the full attention and cooperation of both parties. Notably, it is necessary to further encourage member states to ratify international human rights instruments and to increase the efforts to abolish the death penalty in Africa. The rights of the child, particularly of children affected by armed conflict, were identified as another topic of mutual concern on which joint efforts should be undertaken. Both Sides commend efforts made by Members of the European Union and the African Union to protect the human rights of migrants and asylum seekers, however, challenges remained and more efforts are needed.

**P R E S S**

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The two sides agreed on the importance to further EU-AU cooperation in multilateral fora, particularly the UN, notably by sharing information and enhance coordination.. The parties will seek to enhance coherence of actions and positions, notably by continuing their exchanges prior to the Human Rights Council and UNGA Third Committee sessions.

The African and European sides welcomed the joint high level coordination took place in New York on Women, Peace and Security and stressed the need to continue collaboration and to jointly push for the further implementation of the relevant UNSC resolutions, for example by the organisation of joint events at the UN, as well as by continued cooperation in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889. In addition to the Africa-EU Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights, the possibilities offered by the Partnership on Peace and Security and the African Peace Facility should be thoroughly analysed and utilised, and the EU should support the AU in its endeavours to mainstream gender aspects into its peace keeping activities. It also was agreed to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) with a joint declaration.

The African and European sides agreed on the need to take action to respond to the April 2009 Civil Society seminar recommendations in view of next seminar due in spring 2010, in particular

- i) by working on an EU/AU joint declaration on the fight against torture, directed principally to the respective member states and touching upon issues such as the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture; by exploring the possibility of a project, supported by the EC, that would facilitate the exchange of experiences between the Council of Europe and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights on the fight against torture, possibly with a component of capacity building of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights to help AU MS to develop the national protection mechanisms requested by OPCAT;
- ii) To pursue further cooperation on the issue of civil society legislation, including follow-up to the mapping of the ongoing and planned reviews of legislation on civil society organisations agreed at the human rights dialogue in April 2009."

The African and European sides underlined the need of continuing the good interaction with the mechanisms of the Africa-EU Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights, and called for the Partnership to support concrete actions linked to the EU-AU cooperation in multilateral fora, such as the organisation of a EU/AU member states seminar to exchange experiences on the preparation of the UPR and the implementation of its recommendations.

The next EU-AU dialogue should take place before the end of May 2010.