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Subject:	Renewed impetus for the Africa-EU Partnership - Council conclusions (19 June 2017)
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Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on a renewed impetus for the Africa-EU Partnership as adopted at the 3551st meeting of the Council on 19 June 2017.

Council conclusions on a renewed impetus for the Africa-EU Partnership

1. As close neighbours, Europe and Africa share a common future and 2017 is an important year for their partnership. Both have much to gain from further increasing political and economic ties. The Council warmly welcomes the recent exchanges of views with the AU Commission Chairperson on his visit to the EU institutions and looks forward to working closely with African partners towards an ambitious and successful 5th Summit in Abidjan on 29 and 30 November 2017.
2. The EU is committed to build on the results already achieved by this partnership. It emphasises the importance of an equal, sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship with Africa in a spirit of shared ownership and responsibility, building on the Joint Africa EU Strategy established in 2007 and guided by political frameworks developed since then, notably the UN's 2030 Agenda, the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, the African Union Agenda 2063, as well as the EU's Global Strategy and the new European Consensus on Development.
3. The EU and its Member States are Africa's main partner in the fields of foreign investment, trade, place of origin for remittances, development and humanitarian assistance, and security and defence. The EU aims to remain Africa's main partner in those fields and beyond: the successor to the Cotonou Agreement will be an important instrument for the relationship post-2020, and the upcoming Summit could provide an opportunity to reflect upon European-African relations in that context.

4. The Joint Communication "Africa-EU Partnership: a renewed impetus" makes an important contribution to launching Summit preparations. As per its proposal, the agenda of the Summit could be structured around building more resilient states and societies and creating more and better jobs, especially for youth. The EU and its Member States are committed to contributing concrete actions at continental, regional and national level, to deliver on the joint way forward agreed upon in the Summit.
5. Delivering on this ambitious agenda requires a truly strategic and equal political relationship with Africa. The EU pursues three interrelated political objectives:
 - a stronger mutual engagement, including on global governance issues, through frequent political interaction and more people to people contacts, as well as increased cooperation in the international arena, based on common positions, values and shared interests;
 - security on land and sea, and the fight against transnational threats such as illegal arms trade, trafficking and smuggling, terrorism, and piracy, as an investment in security on both continents;
 - sustainable, inclusive and environmentally friendly economic development in Africa, creating more and better jobs on the continent and seizing the opportunities it offers to both Africa and Europe.

6. The Summit's central theme of "investing in youth" will allow Africa and the EU to jointly strengthen the partnership and address demographic dynamics in order to better meet the aspirations and hopes of future European and African generations. In all this work, it is crucial to closely associate with and focus on youth in the overall process leading to the Summit as well as at the Summit. The EU promotes their economic and political inclusion.
7. The EU emphasises the role of regional and sub-regional cooperation, which provide building blocks to pan-African integration efforts for both political objectives of security and combatting cross-border threats and for economic and social development. In addition, the Council underlines the important role of local authorities and civil society organisations in delivering on the shared objectives.
8. Peace and security will remain at the centre of the EU's cooperation with African partners, including the AU and Regional Economic Communities. The EU looks forward to the opportunity to reinforce and renew this partnership at the upcoming Summit, including through closer UN, AU and EU cooperation. To complement and facilitate African efforts, we support strengthening the capacity of African States and organisations, notably through the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and by making EU instruments more flexible, reactive and better adapted to support these efforts (e.g. Capacity Building in Support of Security and Development). Taking into account its long-standing and continuing financial support through the African Peace Facility, the EU looks forward to and welcomes the ongoing work to increase African funding for peace and security.

9. Recalling the intimate linkage between security, good governance, food and nutrition security, climate and sustainable development, the EU reiterates its commitment to maintain and strengthen its support to democracy and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law. The role of women in the work on peace and security is essential. The EU emphasises its intent to promote accountable, transparent and responsive governance, notably through the full operationalisation of the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and its close link to the APSA and including by means of strengthening confidence in democratic processes through enhanced cooperation on Electoral support, and through e-governance tools.
10. In order to implement the Paris Agreement, its objectives for climate mitigation and adaptation, and to better manage natural resources, European and African partnership will need to be strengthened. This partnership will be key to improve resilience to environmental degradation and humanitarian crises exacerbated by the impact of climate change at all levels. Such work should build on the reaffirmed EU – AU commitment to continue addressing the adverse effects of climate change on human health and livestock, natural ecosystems and other social and economic impacts that threaten our developmental gains as a global community.

11. The Council underlines that resilient societies are inclusive societies with equality between women and men and inclusion of persons in vulnerable situation as fundamental principles for their stability and development including through equal participation in decision-making processes. The EU underlines the need for further efforts to eliminate gender-based violence. It also underlines the importance of strengthening the resilience of individuals and communities against the appeal of violent extremism and radicalisation, including through fostering religious tolerance and interreligious dialogue.
12. The Council remains committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the outcomes of their review conferences and remains committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), in this context. Having that in mind, the Council reaffirms the EU's commitment to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of the right of every individual to have full control over, and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion and violence. The Council further stresses the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information, education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and health-care services.

13. Recalling European Council conclusions, in particular also those of October 2016, the Council emphasises the shared interest in migration and mobility management cooperation in view of its economic, security-related and social impact between and within our continents. It reiterates its commitment to existing policy frameworks guiding EU-Africa cooperation in this regard, while respecting EU and national competences, and also recalls the potential that African and European diasporas represent. Taking into account the EU's continuous dialogue and cooperation with African partners on migration and mobility in a spirit of partnership, including through the joint Valletta Action Plan, the Council fully supports the engagement under the Partnership Framework's holistic approach aimed at maximising synergies and making full and comprehensive use of all relevant EU policies, instruments and tools, including development and trade. The Council underlines the need for continuous and increased political buy-in from all parties in order to manage migratory flows in all their aspects, tackle related cross-border challenges, continue national work on regular migration and mobility, save lives, ensure protection, tackle root causes, prevent and discourage irregular migration, enhance cooperation on return, readmission and sustainable reintegration, and address vulnerabilities of people subject to forced displacements. The Council calls for global solutions under the overall framework of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and also stresses the importance of close cooperation and joint engagement between the EU and Africa with a view to finalising the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees by 2018.
14. As a long-standing partner in the area of education, the EU emphasises the importance of increasing investments in inclusive quality education and training at all levels. Girls and women in particular must have the skills to meet labour market requirements. In addition, special attention needs to be given to granting equal opportunities. Such investments must take place throughout the education cycle from early interventions at primary level to vocational and tertiary initiatives complemented by the delivery of key essential services, in particular nutrition, to maximise the potential of large youth populations.

15. The Council welcomes the initial proposals for actions focussed on "more and better jobs especially for Youth", underlining that this entails working with governments at all levels and with the private sector to strengthen entrepreneurship, investment and economic diversification. The EU strongly supports the investment in and the modernisation of African agriculture and agro-business, including small-scale food producers, in particular female and family farmers. It also supports blue economy including fisheries, as well as technological development particularly in the ICT sector. All those sectors play a key role for job creation, contributing to the emergence of Africa its countries seek. Enhanced social dialogue and sound industrial relations to ensure decent work and quality jobs contribute significantly to greater equality, gender equality and inclusive sustainable growth. The EU will continue to promote good governance in the economic area, notably in the management of public finances, including domestic resources mobilisation, and of natural resources.
16. The Council encourages and supports improvements in local African business environments, also through investment friendly and transparent regulatory frameworks, and agrees to strengthen efforts to boost responsible and sustainable investment in the continent in particular through the proposed European External Investment Plan; foster European and Africa trade and business relations, including through fulfilling the potential of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA); and support Africa's ambitions to build a true intra-African market through the Continental Free Trade Area.

17. Africa and Europe have both underlined the priority that access to sustainable energy represents for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development. The Council further supports efforts to spur public and private investment in renewable energy, including by supporting the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI), and to deepen strategic alliances and collaboration in the sector.
18. The EU welcomes the special attention devoted to Africa in 2017, notably with the G7 Outreach to Africa and the G20 Africa Partnership Initiative under Italian and German presidencies. The EU and its Member States will work closely together with the AU and its Member States to further refine concrete initiatives for the Summit in all these areas of common interest for the two continents, in synergy with bilateral as well as multilateral initiatives.