



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 23.6.2003
COM(2003) 316 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

The EU-Africa dialogue

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

The EU-Africa dialogue

Introduction

Three years after Cairo, the Second EU-Africa Summit was to take place in Lisbon on 5 April 2003, under the co-chairmanship of Greece and South Africa. The proposal made by the European Union earlier this year to postpone the Lisbon Summit does not put an end to the EU-Africa dialogue. On the contrary, the EU presidency has informed the Presidency of the African Union of the EU's intention to "pursue discussions with its African counterparts in order to ensure the holding of the Summit at the earliest possible date".

Despite the persisting uncertainty concerning the date of a possible resumption of the EU-Africa dialogue at summit level, this Communication intends to contribute to continuing discussions and cooperation between the EU and Africa, with a view to paving the way for a resumption of high level political dialogue meetings. At the same time, this Communication should allow for a substantive discussion on the likely prospects, most promising avenues and future modalities of EU-Africa dialogue and cooperation, with a view to establishing an operational EU-Africa Agenda. After recalling the long-standing context of partnership that exists between the EU and Africa, the Communication looks briefly at the objectives and focus of the EU-Africa dialogue to date and discusses the new context created since the Cairo Summit by the launching of NEPAD and the African Union (Sections 1 and 2).

Section 3 reviews the state of the dialogue between the EU and Africa on each of the eight priority themes, highlighting the main issues that have come up for discussion and the positions that the Union could take.

The final section attempts to outline objectives and orientations for future dialogue with Africa, in the light of the discussions that have already taken place within the Council and during the last EU-Africa Ministerial Conference held in Ouagadougou in November 2002.

Section 0. The EU and Africa: a long-standing partnership and a new challenge

Dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Africa go back to the very beginnings of the EU. The EU has concluded association agreements with practically all African countries, which are based on three main pillars: political dialogue, trade and development cooperation.

The dialogue at continental level between Europe and Africa should complement and add value to the frameworks for dialogue and cooperation that already exist between the EU and African States at country and regional levels, which take place first and foremost within the context of the Cotonou Agreement and the Barcelona process. In the case of the North African countries, the new concept of 'Wider Europe' is gaining in significance.¹

In spite of globalisation trends that have diversified Africa's economic relations, the intensity of EU relations with Africa remain strong in many areas: 41% of EU development assistance

¹ The Communication 'Wider Europe – Neighborhood: A new framework for relations with our Eastern and Southern neighbors' was issued on 11/03/2003. (COM(2003-104))

goes to Africa, and 45% of Africa's foreign trade is with the EU, accounting for €144bn a year in 2000, or 5 times more than intra-African trade (€29bn a year).

Only in the late 1990s and with the first EU/Africa Summit in 2000 did this partnership acquire a full continental dimension. This EU-Africa Summit, held in Cairo in April 2000, saw the participation of every single African country together with all EU Member States. Since then, the launching of NEPAD in 2001 and the establishment of the African Union in 2002 have drawn attention to the pan-African level of initiative and increased the capacity of Africa to interact as a group. This renewed pan-African momentum enables Africa to play a more substantive role on the international scene, as illustrated last year at the WSSD in Johannesburg.

By deciding to deepen its own integration, Africa opened itself to broader partnerships with the rest of the world. The EU and Africa can therefore base their partnership on shared objectives and common values that can be found in the Treaty of the European Union, the Cotonou Agreement and the Barcelona process, as well as in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and in the NEPAD manifesto.

In preparing the second EU-Africa Summit, which will be held in Lisbon, and in the light of the forthcoming enlargement of the Union, both sides have expressed their intention to reassess their dialogue and to strengthen their partnership at continental level.

Section 1. The EU-Africa Dialogue

1a. Objectives and focus of the EU-Africa dialogue

Despite a number of success stories, like democratic transition and economic achievements in some countries, Africa's increasing poverty, its daunting health and education problems, and its growing list of crises, conflicts and stories of failed states call for innovative strategies to help the continent meet these formidable challenges.

The dialogue should help to:

- strengthen political, economic and socio-cultural ***EU-Africa relations***, in line with EU external policy, paying particular attention to the new Pan-African context;
- eradicate ***poverty*** and attain the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, as well as implementing commitments recently made in international conferences (Doha, Monterrey and WSSD).
- promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Africa, given that these ***“essential elements”*** of EU external policy are also the central values of the AU and NEPAD;

To meet these objectives, this interaction with Africa should entail a comprehensive political dialogue with the newly set up pan-African Structures. The dialogue should address issues such as peace and security, governance, sustainable development, democracy, rule of law, and human rights in a comprehensive way. In this context, given the level of instability that characterises most African regions, ***preventing conflicts and peace building*** is an absolute prerequisite for development, and must be a top priority for political dialogue with Africa at the highest level.

- The EU-Africa dialogue should focus on *political and global issues of common interest* and help rebuild functional governmental structures and contribute to the emergence of viable regional structures which would foster *structural stability* of African societies.
- The dialogue should also take into account the *political dimension of development issues* on a continental basis. This comprises questions of regional integration and trade, debt, health and food security. For the African side, it is essential that these questions remain on the agenda of the political dialogue with the EU, even if practical EU support is discussed and implemented in various existing and mandated frameworks.

1b. The AU and NEPAD: a statement of African Ownership

- The transformation of the OAU into the *African Union* in July 2002 provides a new institutional framework that should facilitate Africa's dialogue with the rest of the world. It also calls for stronger and better governance throughout Africa and at pan-African level. The Constitutive Act of the African Union enshrines the principles of human rights, democracy and governance. Through the launching of the AU, African leaders are placing greater emphasis on continental issues and pan-African integration. The EU, which has so far developed its cooperation with Africa mostly at national and regional levels, should respond to this pan-African ambition as appropriate.
- The launch of *NEPAD* in October 2001 was a major step and a clear statement of *African ownership*. With NEPAD, African leaders spell out the values and objectives around which Africa intends to organise the renaissance of the continent. NEPAD core values are very similar to the “essential elements” of the EU external relations policy that are central to all EU-Africa agreements. NEPAD sectoral and thematic priorities are practically the same as in the Cairo Plan of Action and tie in with the recently established country and regional cooperation strategies under the Cotonou Agreement. The EU thus finds itself naturally equipped to support the implementation of NEPAD by African countries and regions
- *The African Union* and *NEPAD* are closely interrelated. While they originate in separate initiatives, much effort has been made by African leaders to make them dovetail and eventually converge. Since the Durban summit in July 2002, *NEPAD finds itself subsumed within the AU framework*. The AU (the institutional framework for Africa’s integration) and NEPAD (the socio-economic programme of the African Union) can only be supported together. Together, the African Union and NEPAD create a new basis for EU-Africa relations, and call for a *strengthened dialogue between the EU and Africa as a whole*.
- In view of its own integration experience, *the EU is seen as a reference by those who are building the African Union*. The AU is keen to better understand and learn from European integration and Europe's methods and institutions in order to build its own pan-African project.
- Together, the creation of the AU, equipped with a sharper mandate, operational programmes and innovative institutional arrangements, and the launching of NEPAD will establish a new **pan-African level of governance**. This pan-African level, which will address key issues for the sustainable development of Africa, now offers a more appropriate and structured framework for EU-Africa dialogue.

Section 2. Treating Africa as one

The Commission acknowledges that the existence of different agreements between the EU and various parts of Africa does not make it easy for the Community to respond to pan-African initiatives nor to support regional activities that take place across African regions.

To improve EU support for continental integration in Africa, the Commission is prepared to consider practical measures that would build bridges between the different agreements that already exist between EU and Africa (Cotonou, Euro-MED agreements and the TDCA with South Africa). This could apply to the area of trade, to procurement rules for EU-funded projects, and to the programming of aid.

- In order to facilitate and encourage **intra-African trade**, the Community should carefully analyse the impact of all trade-related instruments that are already in place or that are being envisaged under its agreements. This applies in particular to the ongoing reviews of the Euro-Med agreements with the North African countries, and to the Economic Partnership Agreements that will constitute the Cotonou trade régime with the ACP. This analysis should allow to identify any additional instruments or mechanisms that could further favour pan-African trade.
- Similarly, the **procurement rules** applicable to the EDF and to various budget lines (notably MEDA and the EPRD) generally limit the eligibility to suppliers from countries covered by the same instrument. As a result, North African countries are not eligible to tender for EDF contracts, and vice-versa. When the relevant legal bases are renewed, the Community should be prepared to reform its eligibility criteria under EDF and MEDA regulations (as well as the EPRD), so as to allow for reciprocal tendering rights, as has already been achieved between the EDF and the EPRD. Broadening eligibility to the whole continent would contribute to the overall objective of aid untying in line with the recent Commission Communication ("Untying: Enhancing the Effectiveness of Aid").
- EU support for pan-African initiatives is currently assessed on a case-by-case basis, and the ability of the EU to respond is constrained by the need to call on different financial instruments. If pan-African activities are to develop in the future, the Commission proposes that the Community would be prepared to set them in a coherent framework. Consideration should therefore be given to how EU aid may be pooled in support of **an operational EU-Africa Agenda**, subject to the agreement of the countries and regions concerned. If such pooling can be achieved, one of the first applications could be to help establish a continent-wide Facility for peace support operations that could help stabilise those areas in Africa that are hindered in their development by recent or long-standing conflicts.

Beyond these three specific proposals, the Commission is convinced that the broader efforts that have been undertaken to increase aid effectiveness in Africa will make it simpler and easier to address pan-African and cross-cutting issues. This will also be considered as part of the study on budgetisation of EDF resources, which will be presented in a separate Commission Communication before the end of the year. Meanwhile, studies will be undertaken on the possibilities of reviewing the provisions contained in Annex IV to the Cotonou Agreement.

Section 3. Results of the EU-Africa dialogue: progress on priority themes

The “Cairo Declaration and Plan of Action” was quite ambitious and encompassed all subjects of development cooperation. In the follow-up to Cairo, the First Bi-Regional Group of Senior Officials decided in October 2001 that the EU-Africa dialogue should be organised around eight priority themes in order to achieve concrete outcomes: 1. Human rights, democracy and good governance; 2. Prevention and settlement of conflicts; 3. Food security; 4. HIV/AIDS and other pandemics; 5. Environment; 6. Regional integration and trade; 7. External debt; 8. Return of Illicitly Exported Cultural Goods. Since Cairo, two ministerial conferences have been held:

- At the *1st Ministerial Conference* (Brussels, October 2001) a reasonable measure of agreement was found on six of the eight priority topics, but further work needed to be accomplished on *debt* and on the *return of stolen cultural goods*. The Brussels ministerial conference also adopted a Joint Declaration on *terrorism* and declared its *support for NEPAD*, following an EU initiative to host a special meeting with African leaders.
- The *2nd Ministerial Conference* (Ouagadougou, Nov 2002) adopted (i) a communiqué confirming substantive progress in the preparation of the summit, and (ii) a further declaration on the common fight against terrorism. It dealt with issues of peace and security, governance, cultural goods and a plan of action on human trafficking. Follow-up actions were outlined on trade and regional integration, environment, food security and the Global Health Fund.
- A discussion on the *future of the dialogue* was launched in Ouagadougou. Both sides expressed the need to improve the format, focus and procedures of the bi-regional dialogue and to make it more interactive, without at the same time making it too cumbersome. The Cairo process was seen as *a unique framework* bringing together the whole of Africa and the EU. It was agreed that proposals should be prepared in this regard for consideration in Lisbon (see section 4).

Section 3. Area A. Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance

Dialogue on the theme of Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance has been conducted around three main topics: human trafficking, support for African institutions and the fight against corruption, including investigation and return of illegally acquired public monies.

On the first topic, *trafficking in human beings, especially women and children*, a step forward was made with the drafting of a Plan of Action. The Plan of Action contains general principles as well as proposals for concrete measures to be taken in the field of prevention and awareness raising, victim protection and assistance, legislative framework, policy development and law enforcement and cooperation and coordination on the ground. The Plan of Action should be adopted at the Summit in Lisbon, if a solution to universal jurisdiction can be found. Actions developed within the Action Plan should, as far as possible, be made known to law enforcement stakeholders, so as also to be reflected in activities supported through existing EU funding programmes in the area of Justice and Home Affairs.

On the second topic, *support for African institutions*, a preliminary Programme on democracy, governance and human rights for the period 2002-2003 has recently been presented to the European side. This programme, which will soon be adopted as a follow-up to the AU Summit in Durban, aims first of all to implement the various commitments made

by the AU Member States in a number of legal and policy documents, such as the Constitutive Act of the AU or the AU Declaration on the Principles governing Democratic Elections in Africa. The second aim of the programme is to provide support to strengthen the institutions dealing with democracy, governance and human rights, such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, to help them meet their responsibilities more effectively. Strengthening these institutions is all the more important as they are called upon to assume greater responsibility within the framework of the African Peer Review Mechanism. At the Ouagadougou Ministerial Conference, the programme received support from the European side and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) has provided for the possibility of supporting some of these activities in the EIDHR Programming Update 2003. The Commission is currently working on the details of possible support.

The third topic, *the fight against corruption, investigation and return of illegally acquired public monies lodged in foreign banks*, is part of the broader theme of economic governance. On this issue, considerable efforts have been made by the Africans since the Cairo Summit to establish a legal and policy framework with the adoption by the African Union of the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and the solemn declaration of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA). The AU Convention against Corruption, which has been recently adopted, and the Algiers Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism containing provisions on the financial aspects of terrorism, provide more specific legal measures. At the same time, a number of initiatives are under way at regional level to set up and develop regional anti-money laundering initiatives linked to the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Finally, at global multilateral level, further progress is also expected through the future UN Convention against corruption (signing conference scheduled for December 2003), which will adopt a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach by balancing the need for the establishment of a functional mechanism for the recovery of assets with the need for institutionalisation of effective preventive measures. At the Ouagadougou Ministerial Conference, the African side expressed its "readiness to deal with corruption" and called on the EU side "to cooperate on the implementation ofAfrican decisions" and "to engage in concrete cooperation action in this field and propose specific actions".²In view of this new framework, the issue of illegally acquired money, estimated to equal more than half of Africa's external debt and lodged in essentially foreign banks, is therefore an integral part of the progress to be achieved in the field of economic governance and mutual accountability. The Bi-Regional Group should therefore take concrete steps to increase cooperation in this field. The European Commission is determined to assist African countries in their continued efforts to curb and to prevent corruption through technical advice on the basis of general principles as being part of a forthcoming Communication on a comprehensive EU policy against corruption.

Also, in the light of the policy framework set out in Ouagadougou, and in the interests of promoting good governance, the EU is preparing a series of measures to address illegal logging. Illegal logging has in some countries grown to become such a serious problem that it undermines the rule of law and principles of good governance, and thus jeopardises the wider objectives that we hope to achieve through our overseas trade relations and development cooperation programmes. To support African efforts to combat illegal logging, the European Commission is providing substantial support to the Africa Ministerial Process for Forest Law Enforcement and Governance. This initiative is designed to build a strong political

² Agreed Minutes of the Bi-Regional Group (Ouagadougou, 25-26 November 2002)

commitment to address the underlying causes of illegal logging in Africa, and to develop a remedial programme of action. The European Commission is also currently developing a complementary Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade, which will outline a package of measures designed to restrict the import of illegal wood and wood products into the European Union. The EU looks forward to fruitful cooperation with Africa on this matter.

The EU is also committed to deepening co-operation with Africa in the area of human resource development, especially universal primary education for both boys and girls, which is an essential element of the promotion of good governance. As outlined in the recent Communication on “Education and training in the context of poverty reduction in developing countries”, ‘the provision of education of literacy and basic skills for all has a significant positive impact on health, social and political participation, equal opportunities, economic growth rates, income, productivity...[Education]...has positive effects in terms of good governance.’ (Sections I.I and II.I) The proposed ERASMUS MUNDUS programme has been designed to include participation by students, scholars and higher education institutions from EU partner countries including the AU”.

The Commission’s Communication on integrating migration issues into the EU’s relations with third countries offers scope for the launch of an EU-Africa dialogue on the topic of migration which is an integral part of existing contractual frameworks with African countries and sub-regions.³ Among the subjects that could be discussed with priority are the facilitation of efforts of migrants residing in the EU who intend to contribute to the economic and social development of their country of origin, facilitation of sustainable return of migrants to support local development, the consequences from recruiting highly skilled labour from African countries by industrialised countries and the efficient utilisation of remittances in the macro-economic development of countries of origin.”

Section 3. Area B. Prevention and Settlement of conflicts

This has been an area of consensus building between Europeans and Africans over the course of the two last years. The landmark AU decision in July 2002 to set up a Continent-wide **Peace and Security Council** and the adoption of a work programme on peace and security (October 2002) by all AU Member States underscored the priority focus put by the AU on addressing conflicts. This programme aims to increase cooperation with regional African organisations (ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, etc.), which can also play their part in the implementation of conflict prevention activities and peace support operations agreed upon or endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council. The adoption by the EU in May 2001 of its common position on conflict prevention in Africa underscored the EU's resolve to enhance its political partnership with the AU and to move its various instruments more towards the area of conflict prevention and peace building.

Labelled (in Ouagadougou) as a **“model case” for enhanced Europe-Africa cooperation**, identified areas for dialogue and cooperation range from enhanced dialogue (for instance, the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security has held regular meetings with the Council and the Commission over the last 15 months), the establishment of an inventory of institutions and the strengthening of African capacities in the area of early warning and preventive diplomacy (to

³ Similarly, the recent EC Communication on ICTs (Information and Communications Technologies) and Development offers a tool with which to flag the cross-cutting impact of ICTS on most aspects of development, and notably in the area of good governance, as noted by African leaders, who have identified the development of the ICT sector as one of the priority programmes of NEPAD.

which a number of Member States and the EC are contributing at regional and pan-African levels). A number of actions geared to combating Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and anti-personnel landmines (APL) are also under way.

As a first contribution from the European side to the new peace and security agenda of the AU, an ***EC programme in support of AU peace building and transition activities*** was signed in Addis Ababa on 2 April. This programme's prime objective is to fund the operational activities of the Peace and Security Council, and secondly to work on AU capacity building in the transition period. This support programme is based on the AU's indicative work programme on peace and security issues and will first and foremost finance AU mediation and peace monitoring activities. Urgency and AU resolve have already led the EC to support and fund AU-led peace efforts through the EC Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM), as in the case of Burundi (AU observation mission).

This EC programme also entails a dimension of ***regular, Addis Ababa-based dialogue and coordination between donors and the AU Commissioner for peace and security***, which should be conducted at expert level in an enlarged "technical working group" in order to increase the effectiveness of donor assistance in this domain and streamline donor's procedures and requirements. This process should also make it easier to identify gaps, needs and priorities for donor support programmes. It would be equally appropriate to ensure a regular Addis Ababa-based exchange of views between the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, the Chair of the Peace and Security Council and Ambassadors of the donor community on AU action and upcoming priorities in the field of conflict prevention and their relevance with regard to donor support. Similar donor coordination arrangements on African peace and security matters should also be established at sub-regional level in the respective African capitals.

This would enable donors, starting with the EU, to ***identify and mobilise a more sizeable support package for the new AU peace and security mechanisms***. The AU tentatively estimated the costs at around USD 100 Million for a 3-year period. It would be appropriate for Member States to consider sizeable contributions in this context. As regards the types of donor support to be envisaged, they could encompass the full spectrum of either capacity building or operational support for conflict prevention and resolution activities, ranging from early warning systems and mediation activities through to Peace Keeping (PK) training, logistical and financial support for the deployment of African peacekeepers. The aforementioned facility for peace support operations (see Section 2 - page 5) should enable African partners to cover the costs of both peace support operations in Africa and African capacity building efforts in this domain. In order to enhance the means available to support African peace support operations, it would be appropriate to build consensus within the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) so as to widen the range of assistance considered eligible as official Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to encompass assistance in support of African capacities to undertake peace support operations and related activities.

Access to natural resources, and the risk of water, soil and air pollution can be a cause of conflict because of the transboundary nature of environment and natural resources. For example, water scarcity can be a source of conflict.

The (mis)management of natural resources must therefore be considered in the context of violent conflict in Africa. Natural resources, which could legitimately be exploited to raise money for the public purse, have frequently been used to fund and prolong armed conflict. Wars are also waged to gain control of valuable resources for the purposes of private gain,

enriching a small elite at the cost of death, misery and the impoverishment of millions. This phenomenon is now acknowledged as being a major cause of conflicts in Africa. Successful mobilisation of the international community has resulted - as regards “diamonds of war” - in the innovative diamond certification scheme of the Kimberley Process, which should significantly reduce world trade in “blood diamonds”. Comparable cases have now been documented in connection with reserves of timber, diamonds, oil, and many other valuable resources, most recently in a resolution of the UN Security Council in January in connection with the plunder of the resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Many other countries have suffered from similar plunder. It is essential that the role of natural resources in driving conflicts is acknowledged, and that this is reflected in strategies for restoring peace. Measures should therefore be included to improve governance of natural resources within the framework of the EU-Africa dialogue on conflict prevention.

Section 3. Area C. Food Security

In Ouagadougou, the EU/Africa dialogue adopted a joint document reflecting a shared understanding of food security and the role of food aid and providing a basis for developing common positions in the areas of biotechnology, sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards, animal diseases and agricultural research. Acting on the basis of a proposal presented by the EU, the Ministers agreed that as a first concrete step a joint team would be set up to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of existing early warning systems in Africa.⁴ As regards biotechnology, a commitment was made to ensure the entry into force, as soon as possible, of the Cartagena Protocol and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the Ministers expressed their common will to strengthen African capacities for the implementation of these agreements.

Within the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the World Food Summit target, the EU-Africa dialogue could help to increase the political will to fight against hunger.

The future dialogue should focus more on the political dimensions of food security, tackling such issues as access to productive resources (land, water) and equity. This also includes identifying synergy and coherence between the national, regional and continental levels. Equally important is to review policies with a bearing on food security, such as fisheries, trade and environment. The EU/Africa dialogue could also help to bridge differences and bring the African and European sides closer together in international forums, the UN in particular (FAO, IFAD, WFP), where regional constellations still prevail.

The current food crisis in Southern and Horn of Africa is the occasion to further develop the dialogue and to identify with the African side the needs to be addressed through long-term development strategies to eradicate poverty, including access of the poor to key resources, assets and services and better governance.

⁴ Communiqué of the Ministerial Conference (Ouagadougou, 28 November 2002)

Section 3. Area D – HIV/AIDS and other pandemics

Both sides have had extensive and frank discussions on the devastating impact on Africa of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and on the need for urgent action.

In October 2002, the Bi-Regional Group agreed that there is a need to strengthen health systems in African countries within a comprehensive framework of prevention, treatment and care and to increase health financing by the national governments (as agreed in Abuja in April 2001) and the international donor community. There was further agreement on the need for a joint approach in the areas of tiered pricing arrangements, technology transfer and local production towards increased access to affordable medicines. At the Ouagadougou meeting, the African side welcomed the recent adoption by the European Commission of a draft regulation to prevent trade diversion of tiered priced drugs. The commitment from the AU towards reducing/removing taxes and tariffs which undermine these efforts⁵ is essential and an area for further discussion.

The African side requests support in the field of information, education and communication programmes targeting the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other pandemics, and the EC continues to prioritise prevention and improved health and education sectors to this end. The African side is also requesting support for a network of exchange of information and data by means of new information technologies, which was programmed under the 8th EDF intra-ACP fund and is in the process of identification.

Discussions focused essentially on two questions: on the one hand, the difficulty of access and the slow disbursement of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM), and the need for a specific health fund for Africa; and, on the other hand, the conversion of part of Africa's debt into a programme for the fight against HIV/AIDS and poverty reduction. Follow-up discussions will be organised between the two Commissions on these issues.

At the Ouagadougou Ministerial meeting, the African side stressed the need for EU assistance in the mobilisation of adequate funds for polio eradication in 45 African countries where polio cases still exist. The EC is looking into the possibilities within country and regional programmes.

Section 3. Area E. Environment, including combating drought and desertification

Within the Africa-EU dialogue, this was one of the initial areas of consensus (see also above: 3B). For the African side, in particular, the fight against drought and desertification was considered to be very important, and a draft joint paper on environmental issues was agreed at the 3rd Bi-Regional meeting held in Brussels. The priorities of this draft paper include international environmental governance, cooperation in preparing national strategies for sustainable development, poverty and environment, the transboundary and regional dimension of environmental issues, strengthening the capacity of the African countries to negotiate and implement international environmental agreements as well as jointly looking for ways to improve the Global Environmental Facility. Integrated water management and the prevention of natural disasters are also highlighted as priorities for the dialogue. In October 2002 the African Union submitted a proposal on priority environmental issues requiring consideration in the context of the Cairo Plan of Action and the outcome of WSSD. At the Ministerial

⁵ A recent study carried out by DG Trade in 57 developing countries concludes that the total amount of duties collected for AIDS/malaria/TB medicines is roughly 3 billion USD.

meeting in Ouagadougou in November 2002, a “covering note” to the joint paper on environment was approved which aims to reconcile the different elements with respect to environmental priorities.

Two issues need to be addressed more specifically in preparation of the Lisbon Summit. The first is the follow-up to the Johannesburg Summit. In this context, the Initiatives for Water and Energy need a special focus, which goes beyond the context of environment, especially as NEPAD also treats these issues separately. The second is the consolidation of an African Action Plan based on an NEPAD/AU framework and taking account of the follow-up of the WSSD. This Plan should identify the different stakeholders and institutions involved, including their need for capacity building and their respective roles and responsibilities. At the same time, it would act as a strategic and coherent framework for donor support. The Commission is looking forward to working actively with all the respective stakeholders

Through the **Water Initiative**, the European Union confirms its commitment to helping to meet the Millennium Development Goals and targets agreed at WSSD.⁶ The initiative focuses on halving, by the year 2015, the number of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. The second thrust of the initiative is to support the development of integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water efficiency plans by 2005, promoting the adoption of river basin-scale policy, planning and management, particularly for transboundary catchments. The EU believes that IWRM with strong public participation, transparency and accountability is a key approach to reaching these targets.

The EU Water Initiative is committed to providing strategic support towards this objective, coordinated between EU Member States, the EC and the EIB. Engagement at country level needs to be an early objective, involving governments, private sector and civil society.

Under the water initiative, the EU will work with its partners to:

- reinforce political commitment to action and raise the profile of water and sanitation with a view to poverty reduction
- promote better water governance arrangements, including stronger partnerships between public and private sectors and local stakeholders and build institutional capacity
- improve coordination and cooperation moving towards sector-wide approaches, and promoting south-south collaboration and cooperation
- develop regional cooperation by assisting in the application of integrated water resources management to contribute to sustainable development and conflict prevention.

In addition to better coordination of water-related activities, the Initiative will also develop innovative funding mechanisms to attract additional resources and partners, as a basis for sustainable financing for water

The **African component** of the initiative was endorsed at the highest political level with the signature of a joint declaration for a new **Africa/EU strategic partnership on water affairs and sanitation**.

⁶ In this context, it is to be recalled that a Communication to the Council and the Parliament proposes the establishment of an EU Water Fund financed by the European Development Funds.

Following on from WSSD, two working groups have been established to address priorities related to the provision of water and sanitation, and integrated water resources management issues (IWRM). The EU's partners are working with the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW), central and local governments, civil society, private stakeholders and multilateral agencies in an attempt to contribute to the achievement of water-related Millennium Development Goals and targets in Africa.

The 'EU/Africa partnership on water and sanitation' has been endorsed under the EU/Africa Dialogue. At national level, this means establishing appropriate policies and developing activities for the provision of water and sanitation, and for integrated water resources management. Water management is also an issue of regional integration when it concerns transboundary river and lake basins. The political commitment therefore also needs to be reinforced at regional level.

A Mediterranean component of the EU Water Initiative is being prepared, under the leadership of Greece.

The **EU Energy Initiative** for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development demonstrates the commitment of the EU to supporting those parts of the WSSD Plan of Implementation which highlight the importance of improving the provision of adequate, affordable, sustainable energy services. Such improvements in energy services for the poor are a necessary condition for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. For the EU, 'energy services' span a broad menu of activities, including improved management and use of biomass, rural/peri-urban electrification, use of LPG for domestic purposes, etc. NEPAD's focus on inter-connection of existing networks should be discussed, where the benefits target bringing energy services to poor populations currently without. A key aspect of the Initiative will be support for development of appropriate energy policies, and suitably strong institutions. The Initiative will seek active partnerships with stakeholders from the private sector, financing organisations and civil society

Ownership of partner countries in future activities of the Initiative will be the key to its success, with partnerships being developed at national and sub-regional levels, including working with EIB at country level. To date, 15 of the 22 countries associating themselves with the Initiative are from the continent of Africa; more African countries are becoming involved as the Initiative progresses. To take forward the Initiative in Africa, the Commission is sponsoring a high-level energy event, to be held in Nairobi, later in 2003. This will enhance dialogue between the EU and Africa on energy, and on partner countries' priorities for the EU Energy Initiative in particular. Both the Commission and EU Member States will support preparations for the event. One of the topics of discussion should be the role of AU/NEPAD in developing strategies for improving access to energy services on the continent of Africa, and the expected role of the proposed Africa Energy Commission (AFREC).

Mainstreaming of environmental issues into poverty eradication efforts should be a basic principle in the EU-Africa co-operation considering that environmental protection is not a limitation to development but the base for sustainable livelihoods. In this context, it is important to recognise the cross-cutting nature of the environment, in particular with respect to food security, international trade including illegal logging, settlement and prevention of conflicts, and regional integration.

Section 3. Area F. Regional cooperation and integration/Integration of Africa into the world economy/trade

Since the Cairo summit, the EU has given prominence to and stepped up its support for regional integration by contributing to the integration of African countries into the world economy and playing a decisive role in consolidating peace and preventing conflict. The EU-ACP Partnership Agreement signed in Cotonou in June 2000 gives high priority to support for regional cooperation and integration. Today, all the regional indicative programmes have been signed and the mandated African regional organisations will have the benefit of a global amount of €600 million over the next five years, of which close to €300 million has been allocated to economic integration. The importance of regional integration in the context of the Barcelona process has also been acknowledged, in particular the need for South-South integration. The Mediterranean regional process will receive about €400 million for the period 2000-2005.

In September 2002 the EU and the countries of the Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) launched negotiations for “Economic and Partnership Agreements” (EPAs). A key element of this new partnership is regional integration among ACP countries. Creating larger markets will contribute to attracting both local and foreign investors. At the same time, the harmonisation of policies and rules at regional level will offer a more transparent and stable economic environment. Partnership also means that the trade agreements must be designed in a way, which takes account the specific economic, social and environmental constraints of each ACP country and region, as well as of their capacity to adapt and to adjust their economies to the new trading environment.

Negotiations are conducted on the basis of a two-stage approach: a first phase of all ACP-EU discussions which is ongoing and a second phase of negotiations with ACP regional groupings. The EU is fully committed to engage the negotiations with the regions and to accelerate the preparations for these negotiations, notably with those SSA sub-regions which have already indicated their commitment to open negotiations by September 2003 at the latest.

Within this context, at the 2nd EU-Africa ministerial meeting in Ouagadougou, both sides emphasised the importance of ensuring coherence between the regional economic groupings engaged in Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations with the EU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) set up with a view to establishing the African Economic Community as provided for in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Consultations are foreseen between the EC and the AU Commission to examine the coherence and synergies between the different regional integration processes in Africa and the EPAs negotiations.

The EU and Africa will continue their co-operation and regular dialogue on WTO matters notably in the context of the Doha Development Agenda with a view to mainstreaming the development dimension in all areas of negotiations. The EU is fully committed to make significant progress during the 5th WTO ministerial conference in Cancun in all areas of negotiations. In the DDA negotiations, the EU takes fully account of the preferential trading relations it has developed with Africa, in a way that the multilateral trading system and the bilateral trading agreements are complementary and mutually supportive. This is of particular importance in areas such as market access, agriculture, TRIPs and access to medicines, Special and Differential Treatment, as well as in the so-called Singapore issues (investment, competition, trade facilitation and transparency in government procurement). The EU is also

fully committed to continue its support for enhancing the capacity of African countries and regions to participate fully in WTO and EPA negotiations. In that context, the EU is by far the biggest source of trade related assistance/capacity building in Africa with a strong regional emphasis.

Section 3. Area G: External Debt

The First Ministerial Conference held in Brussels in October 2001 decided that a group of experts from both Africa and EU would prepare a joint report on the debt crisis in Africa and on its impact on the development prospects of the continent. Both sides have presented their own draft report, with diverging views, and even if there are some areas of consensus, it has so far not been possible to reach a common understanding on a joint report.

At the Ouagadougou Ministerial meeting it was agreed to continue talks within the framework of an expert meeting which would advance work on the joint report. The Commission hopes that this meeting will take place in time for it to feed input back into the preparations of the second Summit.

Whenever the second EU-Africa Summit takes place, it should be possible to obtain a formal political commitment to continuing discussions on possible ways of ensuring the successful implementation of debt relief under the HIPC framework and of deepening and/or broadening debt relief within the appropriate forums (G8, IMF/WB Boards, Paris Club, etc.).

As a contribution to the dialogue on debt, the Commission has decided to finance a study that will investigate the sustainability of the HIPC initiative and the arguments in favour and/or against the options for further debt relief. This study will be financed under the responsibility of the Commission, which will ensure that it reflects the views of the Member States, African countries, World Bank/IMF and other interested partners. Once this study is completed, the Commission is willing to table the relevant elements as a contribution to the EU-Africa dialogue.

It is recalled that, so far, the **Commission** has **pledged** more than € 1.275 billion to the HIPC initiative: € 734 million as a donor to the HIPC Trust Fund, € 485 million, as a creditor - including the recent € 125 million decision of the EC-ACP Council of Ministers - and an additional € 60 million, again as a creditor, to alleviate all the **special loans** granted to least developed ACP HIPCs that would remain after the full implementation of the enhanced HIPC initiative. Moreover, the Commission remains committed to covering, on a fair burden-sharing basis, the potential cost of “topping-up”, i.e. the additional debt relief that may be needed on a case-by-case basis by individual countries suffering particularly from exogenous shocks caused by the global economic downturn and the fall in commodity prices. In this perspective, further support of € 335 million is expected to be approved by the Council of Ministers at its meeting of 16 May.

Section 3. Area H: Return of stolen or Illicitly Exported Cultural Goods

The dialogue on cultural goods has added a significant dimension to the political relationship between Africa and the EU. The issue of the return of stolen or illicitly exported cultural goods has to be seen against the context of systematic theft, clandestine excavations and illegal trafficking, which continue to cause serious damage to the cultural heritage of both African and European countries. For African countries, the retrieval of cultural goods also carries high symbolic value in building a cultural identity, as well as ensuring moral rehabilitation from the colonial past.

Awareness is growing as to the need to better protect cultural heritage against illicit trafficking and the recognition that every country should possess at least an adequate representative collection of its cultural heritage. Major art market countries have recently taken steps to adhere to relevant international conventions and ethical considerations are increasingly part of the debate.

A breakthrough in the EU-Africa dialogue on cultural goods was achieved by an *ad hoc* group of experts convened in Addis Ababa on 13-14 November 2002, which drew up a set of guiding principles and concrete recommendations for action. Following the experts' report, the Ministerial Meeting in Ouagadougou requested the establishment of a preliminary inventory of all relevant ongoing cooperation activities between EU and African stakeholders, with a view to developing concrete proposals for cooperation. The EU is currently working on this inventory and hopes a first draft can be discussed with the African side before the Summit.

Working on the confidence-building steps achieved, the dialogue on cultural goods should:

- place greater emphasis on ethical and cultural arguments, raise awareness of the damage caused by theft and illicit export of cultural goods and promote the relevant professional codes of ethics;
- foster adherence by all countries in the EU and Africa to the relevant international conventions, in particular the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects; concerted measures at EU level under the 1970 UNESCO Convention in favour of particularly endangered archaeological or ethnological materials from certain African countries could be considered;
- develop and support capacity-building measures in African countries, in particular providing targeted cultural assistance packages addressing specifically the issue of stolen and illicitly exported cultural goods in areas such as inventories and information exchange, conservation, training, development of archaeological sites, research, security and police/customs;
- support the activities of UNESCO in this area and involve experienced cultural professionals from both sides.

Section 4. Beyond Lisbon: a new Dialogue

At the Ouagadougou ministerial meeting, the European side proposed a “Platform on future relations between Africa and the EU”,⁷ which calls for a more flexible, simplified, direct and political dialogue ensuring more interaction with existing dialogue and contractual formats.

The African side made concrete proposals to improve the dialogue, in particular expressing the need “to mandate the Commissions ... to strengthen the interaction and explore all possibilities for cooperation.”

⁷ Annex 1

Within this context, there is scope for an increased role of EU Heads of Missions (HOM) in Addis Ababa. There is also a need to reflect on workable arrangements for regular dialogue with Africa at senior official and political levels.

A. Dialogue at political and senior official level:

- EU/Africa Summits could be considered every three to four years and preferably be organised in conjunction with either a European Council meeting or an AU Summit meeting.
- In between Summits, a stocktaking Ministerial Meeting could be staged, also in conjunction with planned EU or AU Ministerial meetings.
- Regular political and senior official level contacts should take place between the two Commissions and through the respective troikas, as appropriate.

B. Bi-regional working group of officials.

The current system of a bi-regional working group of senior officials gradually bringing together practically all AU and EU Member States has not proven to be an efficient vehicle for dialogue and coordination. A smaller group of officials (say, 5 to a maximum 10 from each side) meeting regularly could be a more effective way of ensuring coordination and stocktaking of the dialogue.

For this coordinating working group to become operational and the dialogue process to be really kept in motion on a permanent basis, there is an obvious case for strengthening a dialogue first and foremost at the level of the EU Missions in Addis Ababa with the AU.

C. Regular dialogue between AU and HOM in Addis Ababa.

Regular dialogue should be ongoing between donor Ambassadors and the AU Commissioner in charge of peace and security/Chair of the Peace and Security Council within the framework of an ambassadorial level AU/donor working group, which is likely to encompass most EU HOM in Addis Ababa (see section 3 area B – page10). There is also a need to ensure regular EU coordination in advance of these meetings (for both technical and ambassadorial level meetings). Yet, a regular EU HOM dialogue with the AU Commission and the local Chair and/or troika of Permanent representatives would be called for and should tackle the broader scope of the AU agenda (including the peace and security agenda and beyond). This regular dialogue should feed into the work of the above-mentioned bi-regional working group.

D. Brussels-based dialogue with African HOM.

Without duplicating the above-mentioned Addis Ababa-based dialogue, regular meetings between the EU and African Ambassadors in Brussels, including meetings between the EU-Africa Working group troika and a troika of African Ambassadors, could also be envisaged.

E. The AU/EU Commissions

As agreed in Ouagadougou, the two Commissions should be instrumental in preparing the work and maintaining the momentum of the coordination process in the EU/Africa dialogue.

ANNEX

EU-Africa Ministerial Conference,
Ougadougou, 28 November 2002

EU Platform On Future Relations Between Africa and EU

1. The EU/Africa Summit in Cairo in April 2000 meant the historic start of an enhanced EU/Africa dialogue and set in motion a process that leads up to the EU/Africa Summit in Lisbon planned for 4 – 5 April 2003.

Stressing the importance of a common vision on the dialogue, it is now time to start the deliberations on the dialogue after the Lisbon Summit - the “Post-Lisbon Agenda”, also with a view to follow-up on work done under the Cairo Action Plan. It will be up to Heads of State and Government to decide in Lisbon about the future of the dialogue.

2. In view of the major landmark events at pan-African level that have occurred since the Cairo Summit in 2000, the EU finds that the Summit should develop a framework for the future EU/Africa dialogue after Lisbon, taking account of the creation of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development - NEPAD.

The EU considers the African Union to be the central organisation for peace, security and regional integration on the African continent. The EU furthermore considers itself to be a natural partner to the African Union, in view of its conception, structures and roles. The AU has a long and difficult task ahead of it, and the EU will endeavour to support the AU in particular areas as well as with capacity building in general.

The EU takes note of the roles and responsibilities assigned to the AU and NEPAD, as a programme of the AU. The EU considers this to be a new basis for EU relations with Africa. In this sense, NEPAD provides a framework that should contribute to a strengthened EU/Africa dialogue.

The EU/Africa dialogue is the only forum where Africa and Europe can discuss issues with global continental implications. Taking the importance of the AU and NEPAD into account, the EU looks to the African side for input on how dialogue and cooperation can continue in its current Africa-wide format.

In the view of the EU, the dialogue should have a stronger focus on political and pan-African issues around a limited number of common priorities. Within this context, clear objectives should be set which are geared to demonstrable progress on desired outcomes.

3. The EU considers that the Lisbon Summit should strengthen the dialogue between Africa and the EU with a view to making it more flexible, more efficient and fully complementary with the dialogue and cooperation in other existing structures.

Flexibility and efficiency

More flexible and efficient working methods should be established. Smaller meeting formats should be envisaged, adapted to the topics to be discussed and taking due account of the varying responsibilities of the bodies involved. The guiding principle would be to determine the appropriate format as a function of the topics.

To enhance the efficiency of the dialogue, provision should be made during preparations for meetings in smaller groups representing the two sides. Where appropriate, the EU would envisage greater use of coordinators (presidency and the EU Commission) or the EU troika, representing the EU. In this way, coordinators could help to provide greater continuity and more focus in the preparations for the dialogue, improving on regularity, efficiency and flexibility.

The main formats of dialogue would be meetings (1) at the level of officials, in smaller formats representing each of the two sides as well as in full format, and (2) meetings of a more specific nature in *ad hoc* groups. There should also be the possibility of forums involving NGOs and civil society as well as Government representatives.

The full EU/Africa format would remain the overall framework for this dialogue. Agendas for the meetings should remain flexible with a view to retaining pertinence and the ability to respond to opportunities and developments.

Complementarity

It is essential that the EU/Africa dialogue is fully complementary and adds value to the dialogue and cooperation in other existing structures (not least EU-ACP, EU-MEDA, EU-SADC, and EU-ECOWAS; UN; WTO; WB/IMF and HIPC). In this sense, the EU/Africa dialogue could play a useful complementary role at Pan-African level to the cooperation between the EC and Africa through the Cotonou Agreement, for Sub-Saharan Africa, the EU-MED Partnership Agreement (MEDA) for North African countries, and the EU-South Africa Trade Development Cooperation Agreement, which all have their focus at national and subregional levels.