



JOINT COMMUNIQUE
SADC-EU MINISTERIAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE
16 June 2021

1. In line with the 1994 Berlin Initiative and Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement, the 2021 Political Dialogue Meeting at ministerial level between the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the European Union (EU) was held on 16 June, hosted by the European Union. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the meeting took place in virtual format. The meeting was preceded by a meeting of Senior Officials.
2. The European Union opened the meeting by presenting its condolences to SADC on the loss of the late President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, and of the late Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini, H.E. Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini. In opening, the two sides highlighted the importance of the dialogue in providing a unique platform for discussing and engaging on global, continental and regional development matters, as well as major political issues, in the EU and SADC regions. Both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthen the existing cooperation through dialogue that will establish and maintain a constructive and enduring partnership at global, African and regional levels. Both sides recognised the negative socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and committed to work together in advancing effective mitigation and recovery measures.
3. In the framework of the commitment of both sides to support African integration and the EU's goal of supporting and working together with all African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the two sides reiterated their goal of achieving common understanding on issues that reinforce cooperation. The SADC-EU dialogue should be comprehensive and broad, with the aim of maintaining a constructive and enduring partnership at regional, continental and global levels.

Africa-European Union relations

4. The two sides recalled their joint commitment to strengthening the African Union-European Union partnership - based on shared values and mutual interests - and their interest in pursuing increased dialogue and cooperation with a view to agreeing an ambitious outcome, with joint strategic priorities for years to come, at the 6th African Union-European Union Summit. They noted the importance of building on the priorities agreed at the last Summit - sustainable growth and jobs, peace and governance, and migration and mobility - and also addressing emerging priorities such as health, the green transition and digital transformation. The African Union-European Union Summit provides an opportunity to work together to advance all these areas, both as part of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic as well as under longer-term strategic cooperation.

COVID-19: Impact and Recovery Strategies

5. The two sides noted the devastating socio-economic impact of COVID-19, including loss of

lives and livelihoods and disruptions in the implementation of regional and continental integration agendas. Notwithstanding the gravity and severity of the pandemic, both sides commended their Member States on the swift response measures undertaken to curb the infection and transmission of the deadly virus. Both sides applauded the commitment, courage and determination displayed by all front-line workers, particularly health care workers, in the fight against the pandemic.

6. As vaccination is critical in ending the pandemic, both sides agreed that an equitable and safe roll-out of vaccine is necessary to end the pandemic, and reaffirmed their united position in calling for a sustained global approach to addressing COVID-19, based on principles of multilateralism and international solidarity. As part of enhancing the global roll-out of vaccines, both sides commended the contribution from “Team Europe” of €2.5 billion for the COVAX facility and welcomed the mobilisation of a new €1 billion facility to promote local manufacturing and the establishment of resilient value chains in Africa, including by enhancing research and pharmaceutical manufacturing capacities, as well as the establishment of a vaccine sharing mechanism. Both sides noted that the EU has further mobilized additional humanitarian funding of €100 million to support the rollout of vaccination campaigns in Africa, in countries with critical humanitarian needs and fragile health systems, and to hard-to-reach populations.
7. The EU informed SADC on its contribution to accelerating debt relief and debt restructuring efforts, including by supporting the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative and the new Common Framework on Debt Treatment, and the EU’s €183 million contribution to the IMF’s Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust for debt relief in a number of low-income countries. Both sides noted a new general Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) allocation of USD 650 billion.

Political, Peace & Security, and socio-economic developments

8. Both sides shared information on the political situations in SADC and in the EU and expressed their commitment to collaborate in addressing global, continental and regional challenges to peace and security. Both sides agreed that the support provided through the 11th European Development Fund Support to Peace and Security in the SADC Region (SPSS) remains relevant in facilitating regional peace and security solutions, and agreed on the importance of further collaboration in this area in the future. Furthermore, both sides reiterated the importance of collaborating on the continued promotion and silencing guns initiative of the African Union, of women’s economic empowerment in the SADC Region, primarily through the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the Regional Strategy on Women, Peace and Security (2018-2022).
9. Both sides expressed their joint commitment towards good governance and enhanced democratic processes, through promoting inclusive, credible and transparent elections in a conducive political environment, and respect for international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Both sides noted the outcome of elections in both SADC and the EU, recognizing the presence of both SADC and EU Election Observation Missions in elections that were held since the last ministerial meeting. Both sides welcomed the invitation for SADC and EU to observe the general elections in Zambia, in August 2021.
10. The two sides discussed the security situation in the region, taking account of the mandated role of SADC as a guarantor of the Peace and Security Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Region, and of support by the European Union to peace and security in the Kingdom of Lesotho.
11. The two sides expressed concern on the situation in Eastern DRC, re-affirmed continued support to the DRC and encouraged neighbouring countries to foster their regional cooperation. In this context, both sides will continue to promote a stable Great Lakes Region, free of humanitarian

crises and on a path towards sustainable development, through regional integration, a green transition and with a responsible and sustainable management of natural resources, maximizing the benefits of their sustainable use to citizens.

12. Both sides condemned the acts of terror and extreme violence in Cabo Delgado Province, in the northern part of Mozambique, and expressed deep regret at the loss of life, the destruction of communities and the suffering experienced by about 800 000 internally displaced persons. Both sides reiterated their joint commitment to work together to promote peace and security, humanitarian assistance and socio-economic development in Cabo Delgado.
13. Both sides welcomed the ongoing development of an integrated response encompassing humanitarian, development, security, peace building and political components, and recognized the commitment of the European Union to align its response, in line with its competences, with Mozambican and regional approaches to addressing the crisis. With this goal in mind, both sides recognized the primary importance of locally-led coordination processes and structures, and of respect for the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity.
14. Both sides called for coordinated efforts in restoring humanitarian access to those affected by the conflict, including internally displaced populations and their host communities, while recognizing the importance of ensuring compliance with international human rights standards and respect of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
15. In the humanitarian context, both sides welcomed the acceptance by the SADC Council of Ministers of the offer by Mozambique to host the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC), which will be responsible for facilitating enhanced regional disaster risks preparedness, response and early recovery to support Member States affected by disasters.
16. In a broader discussion of security policy, the two sides expressed concern at cross-border security challenges affecting both regions, especially in relation to terrorism and transnational organized crime, and acknowledged the need to deepen cooperation on Countering Terrorism, Countering Terrorism Financing, Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, on countering illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and the Prevention and Countering of Violent Extremism, including by maintaining dedicated political dialogues. They further underlined the need to deepen cooperation in the fight against organised crime, including all forms of trafficking, smuggling, cybercrime and money laundering. They recognized the important political role of SADC to address and coordinate regional efforts in these areas. They undertook to strengthen coordination in relation to relevant multilateral fora. Both sides agreed to discuss further the implementation of the SADC Regional Counter Terrorism Strategy and the establishment and operationalisation of a SADC Regional Counter Terrorism Centre.
17. Both sides noted that Zimbabwe has taken steps on the economic and legislative front, and agreed to continue rendering support to Zimbabwe's reform agenda and its complete integration into the global economy.

2021-2027 programming Cycle: Policy Priorities for Regional Cooperation

18. The EU updated SADC on the initialing of the negotiated text for a new Partnership Agreement between the EU and the members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), opening the way for its signature. Both sides reiterated their commitment to the important role the Regional Economic Communities should play in the future Agreement.
19. SADC updated the EU that the region has adopted a SADC Vision 2050 and SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) 2020-2030, documents that set the strategic

direction of the region, including partnership with regional and international partners. Main orientation being to promoting sustainable economic growth, socio-economic development, and poverty eradication. SADC also noted the ongoing EU programming under the 2021-2027 Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP SSA) 2021 -27 (Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument- Global Europe Financing Instrument). Both sides agreed to uphold the role of RECs in providing the framework for policy dialogue and co-ordination, identification of priorities and implementation of regional programmes jointly identified and agreed upon between SADC and the EU.

20. With regard to climate change, both sides stressed the importance of achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, including strengthening climate change mitigation as well as adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change, providing means of implementation including finance and fully implementing them without delay. Both sides recognise the excellent potential of the region for renewable energy, including for decentralised electrification to ensure energy access for all, and will join forces to accelerate investments in renewable energy. Both sides recognise that UNFCCC COP26 is an opportunity to demonstrate progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement through the ambitious implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions and the development of Long Term Strategies. Both sides called for coordinated efforts to address the unprecedented biodiversity loss and depletion of natural resources. The two sides recognised that the transboundary nature of water and ocean resources and their ecosystems calls for interventions at regional level, through trans-boundary approaches around river basin, lakes, sea basin or coastal areas.
21. Recognising that climate change and biodiversity loss are exacerbating each other, both sides highlighted the urgent need to step up protection of biodiversity and working together towards restoring degraded ecosystems. They engaged to act jointly and decisively to combat global wildlife trafficking and halt deforestation in line with existing commitments. Both sides are committed to agreeing an ambitious and realistic Global Biodiversity Framework at CBD COP 15 as a crucial step towards the 'conventions' objective to live in harmony with nature.

Trade and Investment subjects of mutual interest

22. In the challenging context of COVID-19, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to use all avenues possible to strengthen and diversify their economic and trade relations, and to stimulate regional integration, with the aim to achieve sustainable growth and decent job creation, as well as promoting transformative, competitive, clean, circular and resilient economies. This co-operation would take place at a crucial moment for Africa's integration, with the start of trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the progress of the sub-regional economic integration processes through the implementation and widening and deepening of existing Economic Partnership Agreements - EPAs (with six SADC and five ESA states). The importance of COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), in which SADC is a member, was also noted, as significance stepping stone towards the operationalisation of AfCFTA.
23. The EU side informed of its intention to launch a sustainable investment initiative with African countries, to improve the investment climate and facilitate the mobilisation and retention of investment, including through a comprehensive and ambitious set of disciplines and commitments at multilateral level. Both sides confirmed their commitment to work closely together, and with the rest of Africa, on reform of the World Trade Organisation, notably in the run up to the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference in November 2021, and on reform of investment dispute settlement within the framework of Working Group III of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).
24. Both sides showed interest in cooperating to improve governance and sustainable production

and creating value addition in key economic sectors, as a means of driving economic and social development through legal and sustainable exports. They agreed to step up exchanges on transforming linear production models towards greater circularity, reducing waste and creating new business models and job opportunities.

25. Both sides agreed to take forward action on ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological resources. They will strengthen their activities against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and actively participate in relevant fisheries bodies to promote the sustainability of the stocks under their purview, improve fisheries management and contribute to the sustainability of food throughout the value chain. In order to improve fisheries governance and coastal development in the region, both sides will reinforce the cooperation through sustainable fisheries initiatives in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The two sides will seek to enhance their dialogue and cooperation on issues like ocean observation and research as well as the development of sustainable blue economies. Emphasis would be put on EU-SADC cooperation actions in Research and Innovation as efficient tools towards sustainable development and necessary pillars of the Green and Digital transitions.

Ministerial and SOM next Meetings

26. It was agreed that the next Ministerial meeting would take place in the SADC region in 2023. The next Senior Officials meeting would also take place in the SADC region, to take stock of the progress made within sector dialogues and in programme implementation, and to prepare future ministerial meetings.