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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: EU-Kenya Strategic Dialogue - draft joint declaration

Delegations will find attached a draft joint declaration that is intended to be signed by HR Borrell and Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs Omamo during the forthcoming visit of HR Borrell to Nairobi.

JOINT DECLARATION

An EU-Kenya Strategic Dialogue

Introduction

On 21 June 2021 the President of the Republic of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, launched the EU-Kenya Strategic Dialogue.

Kenya and the European Union (EU) have sustained a consistent and long-term partnership over many years, and share multilateral and global aims such as sustainable economy and social development, combating climate change, and fostering peace and security. Kenya and the EU are united by strong political, economic and cultural ties, and by a shared commitment to democracy, the rule of law and the protection and promotion of human rights, which are the basis for the strong relations.

Objective

The Strategic Dialogue underlines the solid bilateral and multilateral partnership between the EU and Kenya and our shared interest in strengthening it further. Building on past achievements and joint priorities, the new framework will create a sustained dialogue focusing on common policy aims with a view to future challenges and opportunities. The policy discussions and outcomes of the Strategic Dialogue is meant to inform potential EU support to actions agreed with the Government of Kenya.

Strategic Dialogue

The thematic pillars of the dialogue are intended to be developed and adapted over time, in accordance with Kenya's and the EU's shared interests. The thematic pillars should be grouped under three clusters:

- i) peace, security, and stability;
- ii) sustainable, inclusive development, and SDGs; and
- iii) economy, trade, and investment.

The three clusters of the dialogue are intended to inform high-level events, possibly Summits, alternating venues between Nairobi and Brussels; their frequency – at least biennial – will depend on the substance.

1. PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY

Kenya is a strong democratic partner in the East African region and in the Horn of Africa, as well as an important player in regional stability and has a constructive role in peace and security. Priorities for the EU-Kenya strategic dialogue in this cluster include the following: regional issues; cooperation in multilateral fora, public governance (e.g. fight against corruption, data protection), respect of human rights and non-discrimination including gender equality, rule of law, elections, media freedom, decentralization (devolution); migration and forced displacement; and areas concerning security (including countering terrorism; preventing and countering violent extremism; Justice and Security Sector Reform; fight against transnational organised crime; tackling illicit financial flows, including money laundering and the financing of terrorism; cyber security; maritime security; and defence cooperation).

The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European External Action Service (EEAS) should lead the strategic dialogue on this range of issues. A dialogue at the ministerial or senior officials' level could take place annually, supported by regular technical exchanges.

2. SUSTAINABLE, INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND SDGs

This cluster addresses a range of issues with the shared objective of jointly promoting sustainable, inclusive development and progressing toward the various SDGs in Kenya and across Africa. Priorities in this cluster would include inclusive job creation, decent employment, labour and social rights, social protection and health, durable solutions for the integration of displaced people; youth, education and academic exchanges, including skills for youth and lifelong learning, and culture and sports. Civil society cooperation would also be one of the priorities of the dialogue.

The EU and Kenya intend to work together to achieve and implement ambitious outcomes of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and their respective Nationally Determined Contributions and long term strategies that provide businesses, industry and the citizen predictability and direction. The EU and Kenya will work together to achieve an ambitious post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Our cooperation on a fair green transition should encompass climate change mitigation and adaptation, circular economy, and ocean governance, including sustainable blue economy and fisheries; as well as environment, agriculture, biodiversity, food and nutrition security, land and water issues, and disaster risk reduction. The support of the EU and its Member States in these areas is coordinated in the Team Europe Initiative “Green Transition”. Furthermore, infrastructure, urbanization, transportation, and energy, including renewable energy, should be prioritized, together with innovation, research, and the digital agenda.

Regarding the digital agenda, the EU and Kenya intend to keep building on existing strong commitments and joint initiatives, to support job creation (incl. SMEs), decent employment, and improvement of business environment in a human-centric perspective. The strong presence of Kenyan national players in digital economy and Kenya's recent contribution to joint EU-Africa strategic initiatives will be a key asset in our cooperation. The EU in coordination with its Member States offers support to Kenya for its digital agenda in the framework of the Team Europe Initiative on digitalisation in Kenya.

Kenya and the EU have committed to explore the possibility to establish a sectoral dialogue on labour and social topics, which could include, inter alia, issues related to jobs creation; decent work for all, including the elimination of child labour and the freedom of association; enhanced social protection coverage; occupational health and safety; alternative dispute resolution. This dialogue could also support Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and the development of skills for employability and entrepreneurship, as well as the promotion of youth employment. It could also extend to a review of the consistency of current labour laws with international labour standards.

The Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) should lead on this cluster of the strategic dialogue, with contributions from relevant Kenyan ministries and European Commission services. A high-level cluster meeting at senior officials' level could take place annually, supported by regular technical exchanges and dedicated fora and exhibitions.

3. ECONOMY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Trade relations between Kenya and the EU are an important underpinning of the strategic dialogue and the two partners will seek ways to strengthen their cooperation in this field. There are two critical priorities for this cluster. The first priority is to continue work on the modalities for the implementation of Economic Partnership Agreement's provisions. The Kenyan Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development and the EU Directorate-General for Trade (DG TRADE) are in the lead for this work.

The second priority should be a sustained dialogue covering a range of issues, including the following: trade and business climate, including a robust regulatory environment and quality infrastructure and standards; investment opportunities; development of sustainable and resilient value chains; business environment and SME development, including an enabling environment for tourism and the travel industry; participation of the private sector in development; macroeconomic cooperation, public finance management and development of financing instruments (blending, guarantees); and reciprocal legal security for investments. The Kenyan Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development and DG TRADE and DG INTPA should lead the strategic dialogue on this range of issues. A high-level cluster meeting at the senior officials' level could take place annually, supported by regular technical exchanges and dedicated fora and exhibitions.

Done at Nairobi, Kenya, on 28 January 2022, in two originals in the English language.