



## REMARKS

# Opening remarks by HR/VP Mogherini at the African Union-European Union Ministerial Meeting ahead of the 5th African Union-European Union Summit

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*Check against delivery!*

Merci beaucoup.

Permettez-moi premièrement de vous [Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat] remercier personnellement, de remercier la Côte d'Ivoire, son Président [Mr Alassane Ouattara], son gouvernement, et l'Union africaine, sa Présidence et la présidence de sa Commission, et toute la Commission de l'Union africaine, pour la préparation de ce Sommet qui va s'ouvrir demain, pour cette réunion ministérielle que nous allons avoir aujourd'hui et pour tout le travail que nous avons réalisé ensemble pour en arriver là.

Je voudrais aussi remercier tous les Etats Membres des deux Unions qui ont si bien travaillé ensemble, dans un vrai esprit de partenariat et d'amitié, pour arriver jusque là;

et pour permettre à nos chefs d'Etat et de Gouvernement demain d'avoir un Sommet – je dirais – historique. Nous faisons toujours référence au 5<sup>ème</sup> Sommet entre l'Europe et l'Afrique, mais c'est en réalité le premier Sommet entre Union européenne et Union africaine et je pense que c'est le reflet d'une nouvelle réalité que nous avons construite ces dernières années et la première page d'une histoire, d'un véritable partenariat qui s'ouvre aujourd'hui et demain.

This is the first Ministerial Meeting we have since 2014 and the last Ministerial Meeting we had was in Brussels just before the last Summit.

I believe - and I start with something concrete to put on the table - that real partners, brothers and sisters as we are, deserve to meet a bit more regularly and often. And this is why I am very pleased that in our draft declaration, we make reference to regular annual meetings at Ministerial level, because we have work to do together.

It is important that we - as strategic partners - work together on a regular basis; that we are meeting more frequently, ideally annually as I said, to take forward the decisions made at the Summit, to discuss any urgent issue that come up. And actually we are seeing the developments globally require us to come together more often to shape the global agenda or to react to the global agenda or to regional issues that we share.

I am pleased that we have taken this up in our political declaration and that, hopefully, this will be adopted by the Summit tomorrow.

I see that we have a level of participation today at Ministerial level and tomorrow at the Summit, that is somehow a record level of participation. I think this reflects the political importance we attach to this event, and at the same time, we have a very concrete output-oriented work and discussion ahead of us, that - I believe - reflects the need to get to business and do things together on an even more intense basis.

Africa and Europe have never been so much linked as now. We are only 14 kilometers apart and finally, this is reflected in the way in which we take our political partnership seriously, in our reciprocal work.

Our strategic interest on both sides is today for real, that of deepening and strengthening what is a longstanding partnership and relationship but with a new sense of ownership and belonging. I think that both in Africa and in Europe, it is self-evident these days that being it on security, on economy, on climate, on migration, on all the issues we have on the top of the agenda internally, our partnership and our common work can bring results in a way that otherwise separately, we would not achieve, neither in Europe nor in Africa.

I think that the basis for this new partnership as we have defined it in the preparation of this Summit is, first of all, a partnership among equals, a respectful dialogue and cooperation, based on mutual ownership and mutual respect, and on the principle of shared responsibility to which many of you already referred.

If you think of what we managed to achieve in this last couple of years, together and only together, on the global level, you can think of the Agenda 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals or the Paris agreement on climate change, that would not have been there, if Africa and Europe were not coming together on the global scene.

If you look at our membership, we have 82 of the 193 countries in the United Nations. This means that if you put together Europe and Africa, we definitely can shape and determine the global agenda for good - and I say for good, because we are living times of complication and challenges and uncertainties. Times where especially multilateralism and multilateral institutions are put into question, and both in Africa and for sure, I can tell you, in the European Union, deep in our DNA, there is the strong belief that multilateral institutions and the multilateral system, starting from the U.N. system, are at the core of any rules-based global order that is sustainable.

We often refer to sustainable development. It is time to refer also to sustainable security and to have an inclusive approach that allows our societies to prosper in a sustainable manner.

We share interests, challenges and concerns, and I believe that with this Summit, we will also share solutions to face the challenges of today. I will not go into details, I think that this is for the debate today and for the Summit tomorrow, but a lot of work has already been prepared and done in a very relevant manner. I will just mention the main headlines where our strategic partnership and cooperation is vital, both for Europe and for Africa.

First of all, peace and security. I know that the European Union is often perceived as an economic player. We are increasing the level of cooperation on peace and security, we have always been there for Africa in this. But, I think that today, the security challenges we are facing, starting from radicalization and terrorism to trafficking and criminal organisations, are binding us together, and, there are only common solutions if you want to have effective solutions.

Economy - this is why we have put in place this [European] External Investment Plan that will mobilise private investments in the most fragile areas of the [African] continent.

This is probably what some refer to as the "Marshall Plan for Africa". We do not like the idea of a "Marshall Plan for Africa". We like the idea of a partnership that mobilises resources together and this is exactly what we are putting in place. But, I would like to remind us all that the European Union and its Member States already mobilise more than €20 billion every single year, when it comes to Africa and partnership with Africa. With this new External Investment Plan, we will bring in the private sector and try to have investments that create good and sustainable jobs especially targeting our young people - your young people - and improve the business environment.

Climate change - I know this comes always at last, but I think that, both in Europe and

in Africa, we realise that this is a common challenge we face and this is reality on which we need to act together, fast and globally.

Governance - where I believe we have to listen to each other and to find good solutions, sustainable solutions, but also solutions that guarantee democracy, rule of law, human rights and an adequate role for youth and women in our societies. Youth is the main centre, the main objective of our [African Union - European Union] Summit; tomorrow, we will be meeting the youth representatives. So, all of you, and your Heads of State or Government are invited to join myself and Moussa Faki [Mahamat] in meeting them, to listen to what kind of solutions - not only for the future but also for the present - they have to suggest for our decision-making. I believe this is extremely important.

And, last but not least, the issue of migration and mobility. I say "last but not least" because this is not a Summit on migration. This is a Summit on partnership and political and economic common work. But, we cannot close our eyes on the common responsibility we have, to protect lives, save lives, open also regular channels for migration and mobility, to offer economic alternatives to our young people in Africa.

But, first and foremost, to dismantle the criminal networks that are making money out of, sometimes, slavery - the images we have seen are shocking. But, as an Italian, I can tell you they are not new.

So, I think that we have, finally, the possibility together - African Union, European Union, Member States of the two Unions - to come together and solve this problem, in a sense of partnership and cooperation and respect for human dignity and international norms.

This is something that, as European Union, we have been doing together with our Libyan friends, but most of all with the UN agencies that are working now in Libya, thanks to the European Union support: the IOM [International Organisation for Migration] and the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees]. We count on the African friends, brothers and sisters, to join forces with us, with the UN system, to save lives of our brothers and sisters, who do not deserve to be in conditions that are inhuman.

We are there for this and we would expect this [African Union - European Union] Summit to send a very strong message of cooperation and partnership. Because I really believe that, if Africa and Europe come together to face this problem, for real and seriously, we can show an excellent example for the rest of the world. Helping also the UN system to define Global Compacts for migration and refugees, that are at the level of the human rights standards that we both want to see for our people.

With that, Mr. [Moussa Faki Mahamat] Chairperson, I thank you very much and I wish us all an excellent stay here in this wonderful country. Thank you.

Link to the video:

## Press contacts

Catherine RAY

[Catherine RAY](#)

Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

+32 (0)2 29 69921

+32 (0)498969921

[www.eeas.europa.eu](http://www.eeas.europa.eu)

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