



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Luxembourg, 17 October 2006**

**14032/06**

<b>ACP</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>COAFR</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>FIN</b>	<b>476</b>
<b>RELEX</b>	<b>693</b>
<b>TRANS</b>	<b>264</b>
<b>ENER</b>	<b>237</b>

**NOTE**

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From : General Secretariat

On : 17 October 2006

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No. prev. doc. : 13617/06 ACP 153 COAFR 208 FIN 451 RELEX 649 TRANS 250 ENER 225

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Subject : EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure

- Conclusions of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council
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At its meeting on 17 October 2006, the General Affairs and External Relations Council, in its formation of Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers, and the Representatives of the Governments of Member States meeting within the Council, adopted the Conclusions set out in the Annex to this note.

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE COUNCIL  
AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER  
STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL  
on the EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure**

THE COUNCIL AND THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL:

1. EMPHASISE the importance of infrastructure, the related services and the regulatory framework for sustainable economic growth, trade, employment creation, continental and regional integration, food security and poverty reduction and RECALL the contribution that improved infrastructure can make to the achievement of the MDGs;
  
2. AFFIRM the ambition to establish an EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure ("the Partnership") to support programmes that facilitate Africa's interconnectivity at a continental and regional level as well as national programmes that contribute to that connectivity and UNDERLINE that the Partnership should be based on the principles of African ownership, sustainability, economic soundness and debt sustainability and should respond to the development goals and plans of the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Development Bank;

3. WELCOME the Commission's Communication "Interconnecting Africa: EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure" and NOTE with satisfaction that the Partnership represents a concrete step in the implementation of the EU Strategy for Africa, contributes to increased regional trade and a fuller integration of African countries into the multilateral trading system and should in particular support the implementation of EPAs and help the countries to reap their benefits;
4. WELCOME the Partnership's scope to focus on trans-boundary, regional, and national infrastructure in transport, water and sanitation, energy and ICT sectors that secures interconnectivity across the continent and its different regions and RECALL the opportunities that lie in the development of integrated regional markets for decentralised infrastructure systems;
5. NOTE that the Partnership supplements the EU's sectoral approach and support to infrastructure at national and local levels where the major bulk of assistance is channelled through partner countries' strategies supported through the National Indicative Programmes by the European Development Fund (EDF), the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, as appropriate, and by the Member States;
6. UNDERLINE that the Partnership should facilitate country-led efforts to improve access to market and basic services at national and local levels;

7. NOTE that the Partnership is complementary to the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, a joint effort of major IFI's, bilateral donors, multilateral agencies and African institutions actively engaged in infrastructure development; RECALL the role of the private sector and the important contribution public-private partnerships can make to the development of infrastructure and REQUEST proper coordination and cooperation with these actors as well as among the Commission's various instruments, the EIB and its Investment Facility and the Member States, in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness;
8. RECALL that the EU has extensive expertise and experience of the trans-European Networks (TENs) for transport, energy and telecommunications including related regulatory frameworks which can be shared with Africa taking into account local circumstances and conditions;
9. RECALL that the EU Water Initiative and EU Energy Initiative have provided valuable preparatory work for strategic sector dialogues for the Partnership and INVITE the Commission, the Member States and the other Partners to the EU Water Initiative, on which discussions on the way forward are ongoing, and the EU Energy Initiative to closely align the activities of those initiatives in Africa to the Partnership, especially where they are relevant to trans-boundary issues and regional integration;
10. EMPHASISE the importance of strategic sector dialogues between EU and Africa on infrastructure policies and priorities and INVITE the Commission, the Member States and relevant other partners to establish adequate fora where they do not exist;

11. NOTE that the development of infrastructure is capital intensive and requires substantial resources, both human and financial, to operate and maintain it; EMPHASISE the importance of capacity building and development of related services, markets and regulatory frameworks to sustain the benefits the investments deliver, while underlining the prime responsibility of partner countries and institutions to maintain them;
12. CONSIDER that, given the high costs of infrastructure projects, special emphasis shall be paid to good governance, accountability and anti-corruption issues;
13. RECALL the fact that the environmental and social impacts of large infrastructure projects can be severe and INVITE the Commission to establish sustainability criteria for selection of projects and to ensure application of environmental and social impacts assessment, paying special attention to education, health, conflict sensitivity, climate change, labour and human rights aspects, and to mainstream HIV/AIDS and gender concerns throughout the project cycle. The principles on integrating energy into development cooperation referred to in the General Affairs and External Relations Council conclusions of 10 April 2006 and the sustainability criteria provided by the World Commission on Dams Recommendations for large water infrastructure should, inter alia, be taken into due account when establishing the criteria;

14. LOOK FORWARD to the establishment of the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund giving all Member States and their institutions, the Commission and the European Investment Bank the possibility to support Partnership activities; UNDERLINE the importance for the Trust Fund to associate all interested Member States and STRESS the possibility of joint financing and co-financing infrastructure projects supported by the Trust Fund.

Furthermore UNDERLINE the need for the trust fund to be managed in an efficient and transparent manner and for all Member States to be informed regarding its activities and projects; STRESS the need to work closely with the African Development Bank and other African partners to ensure ownership and dialogue; WELCOME the contributions pledged so far to the Fund and LOOK FORWARD for further long-term financial contributions, which can be made by the Commission as well as, on a voluntary basis, by the Member States;

15. WELCOME this example of close coordination between the Commission and the EIB and CALL UPON both institutions to take further measures to further improve the coordination of their work in Africa and the rest of the world;

16. INVITE all parties to ensure the effective follow-up of these conclusions.

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In adopting these conclusions, the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council refer to the following conclusions and statements:

- The 2005 Joint Development Policy Statement: "The European Consensus on Development"<sup>1</sup>;
- The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2 March 2005;
- The EU Strategy for Africa: "The EU and Africa: Towards a Strategic Partnership", adopted by the European Council at its meeting on 15 and 16 December 2005<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C46 of 24.2.2006, p.1

<sup>2</sup> Doc.15961/05