



Press Release

The Chairperson of the AU Commission holds Series of Consultations on the Margins of the 66th UN General Assembly Session in New York 24 September 2011

New York-24 September 2011-The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Jean Ping has been in New York since September 19, 2011 where he is holding series of consultations and activities on the margins of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

High on the Chairperson's agenda is the recent developments in Libya, which he discussed with several African Heads of State and leaders of delegations present in New York, including the President of Equatorial Guinea and current Chairperson of the African Union, the Presidents of Gabon, Nigeria, Niger, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Kenya, Ghana, and Burundi. He also met with the Vice- President of the Gambia, the Prime Minister of Togo and the Foreign Minister of The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

During these meetings, the Chairperson briefed his interlocutors on the recent activities undertaken by the African Union to encourage the Libyan stakeholders to form an all-inclusive transitional Government that would work towards the promotion of national unity, reconciliation, democracy and the protection of all foreign workers, including African migrant workers.

In the same context, the Chairperson has briefed the 294th Meeting of Peace and Security Council, held in New York, on 21 September 2011 and participated, on September 20, 2011, in a High-Level Meeting on Libya hosted by the UN Secretary General.

The recent developments in Libya were also discussed with Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia. The three Ministers visited the AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN where they exchanged views with the Chairperson on the situation in Libya and expressed the support of their respective countries to AU endeavors to achieve a lasting peace in that country.

The situation in Sudan, Somalia and the Horn of Africa, along with bilateral issues were also discussed in these bilateral meetings. The Chairperson reiterated AU's commitment to continue working with its Member States and regional and international partners to bring peace and stability to the continent in order to achieve a sustainable development in Africa. The Chairperson's participation in a Mini Summit on Somalia convened by the UN Secretary-General was a key highlight of his political engagement on Somalia.

Other important meetings involving the Chairperson and his accompanying delegation in New York include, among others, the UN Secretary-General's Symposium on International Counter Terrorism, the Ministerial Mini-Summit on the Humanitarian Response to the Horn of Africa, the UN Alliance of Civilizations Group of Friends Ministerial Meeting, the High-Level Meeting on The Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases as well as the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action with the theme "Victims of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance: Recognition, Justice and Development.

On September 19, 2011, the Chairperson participated in the meeting of the Coordination Group of the Africa-South America (ASA) Summit at Ministerial level, to prepare for the upcoming Third Africa-South America Summit to be held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, from 22-26 November 2011. The meeting reviewed the state of cooperation between Africa and South America, the status of preparation for the Summit, what needs to be done, the expected outcome documents of the Summit and how to implement the ASA Implementation Plan that was adopted by ASA Foreign Ministers in September 2010.

Furthermore, the Chairperson had consultations with a certain number of partners and regional leaders to discuss issues of common interest and ways and means to enhance bilateral cooperation. In this regard, meetings took place with the President of Kyrgyzstan, Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan and China, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, as well as the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

The Chairperson also participated in the Diaspora Ministerial Conference on September 24, 2011, to prepare for the Diaspora Ministerial Summit that is scheduled to be held in South Africa in 2012.

The Chairperson is accompanied in New York by a high-level delegation that include the African Union Commissioners in charge of Political Affairs, Social Affairs, Peace and Security, Rural Economy and Agriculture, his Chief of Staff and the Diplomatic Adviser as well as the AU Permanent Observer to the United Nations.

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