

**Joint Africa-EU Strategy
Joint CSO Steering Group Meeting
10 May 2011, ITUC, Brussels
NOTES**

Agenda item	Notes from the discussion	Action points
Introduction, Revision of the agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour de table for introduction and apologies for absence • Agenda accepted • EEAS expressed its interest in CSO feeding into JAES' processes 	
Short joint evaluation of the Cairo meeting (lessons learned including the outcomes and follow up in Tripoli)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The European side expressed it was pleased the meeting in Cairo took place and by the common declaration addressing heads of states in Tripoli • Since then, however, the follow up after Tripoli has been very slow from the Steering Group's side while on the European side the new institutional set up and the division of tasks between DG DEVCO and EEAS has prolonged involvement with the institutions • The African side welcomed the political changes in Northern Africa and underlined it had been important to be present as civil society in Tripoli despite and because of repressive measures of the Libyan regime which hampered the endeavour. It can be considered a success that the civil society statement could be read (though not completely) at all despite these challenges. • Joseph Chilengi could not get to Tripoli due to visa problems • AUC-CIDO underlined that in the face of the multitude of actors and the primacy of state actors in particular it was a success civil society participated at all. • The work of summits is usually finished before they begin and most of the documents have already been concluded. Therefore an impact at this point in time can only be very limited. There is a need to think how to better impact and how to follow-up now. • The EEAS suggested and encouraged CSO to follow-up in the form of a joint European an African CSO Annual Report which would allow EEAS to take recommendations into account . • The ASG recommends that time is taken to evaluate the Cairo declaration's impact and calls for resourcing civil society participation in these kind of events better and more predictably. • They want to ensure CSO become key partners in the process and would like to think about next steps to enhance this role. They express their willingness to work with other stakeholders (Parliamentarians, Trade Unions, Youth etc) and on national and regional levels. • AU-EU Troika decisions granted CSO participation in all meetings and so civil society needs to take up this space to the maximum • They question in how far the presence of the two commissions in their meeting could be limiting. • The EEAS explains it is now the main coordinator/driver of the 	<p>Prepare a common Action Plan among Steering Groups</p> <p>Make sure civil society gets engaged in processes early enough and less ad-hoc, use the space given to civil society more actively</p> <p>Monitoring the implementation of the Second Action Plan</p>

	<p>political process of the JAES and that it would like to be the contact point for CSOs to input into the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EEAS indicates that another ministerial meeting is likely to take place by the end of May • The ESG expresses it had neither been informed of nor invited to such a meeting whereas the EEAS replies that this was DG DEVCO's responsibility • The ESG expresses as lesson learned from Cairo that there is a need for the institutions to engage with civil society in time and not to rush for input under pressure of an upcoming summit. They see a need for a common action plan for the CSO Steering Groups. • They propose to monitor the implementation of the Second JAES Action Plan now that it is there • There is mixed perception of whether the JAES has gained momentum after Tripoli or not, though there are some indications it has 	
<p>Assessment of the relationship between the two steering committees (on basis of the document "Proposals on future modalities of the Intercontinental CSO Forum")</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESG explains that the "Proposals on future modalities of the Intercontinental CSO Forum" is based on the discussion in Cairo and that the current version integrated the European side's comments • The ASG wishes to find common principles and agrees to most of the text. They, however, would like to add the following: 'honesty', 'integrity', and 'reliability', the need to respect agreements to the principles, to have post-summit consultations and dialogues, add a minimum of three and a maximum of five participants to the Joint CSO Task Force meeting to ensure continuity, establish regional meetings as part of future operations, and the number of annual meeting need to be agreed • They also recommend to be more pushy to speed up the process and call for transparency to go beyond consultations • To increase transparency the ESG proposes to explain the mechanisms of how their members work on an individual basis • They propose to make transparent that African and European members of the Steering Groups work under different modalities • The AUC agrees to the importance of transparency and reminds CSOs of their obligation to consult with their constituencies before attending a meeting in order to act legitimately • The ESG stresses there is a need to find a better way of communicating internally and externally. A common website might be an opportunity and a cooperation with the official Commission's website will be explored. • The EEAS will provide contact details of those currently responsible for this website and expresses it would like to systematize CSO participation in the JAES. 	<p>ASG to send their written comments on the "Proposals on future modalities of the Intercontinental CSO Forum" to the European side</p> <p>Both Steering Groups to add a section on internal and external communication, possibly to be included in the proposal</p> <p>EEAS to let both Steering Groups know who is responsible for the Commissions' official JAES website</p>
<p>Assessment of the Civil</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESG has the impression that the JAES is a process where CSOs don't have a real impact. They feel they are often being 	

<p>Society participation in the JAES (including the partnerships)</p>	<p>consulted just so officials can check the CSO box. They don't feel CSO are taken into account in shaping policy as consultation takes place on an ad-hoc basis. Moreover the unpredictability of funding (Cairo meeting relatively easy to raise funding, because of the upcoming summit, now that the next summit is far away funding less reliable) hampers their involvement. Moreover it remains unclear to which meetings and partnerships civil society is invited and welcome to contribute and to which not. This seems to be dependent on the Chairs of the JEGs to a large extent, too. While the European side has the feeling it is consulted often it does not feel this has a large impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ASG agrees and hints at shortcomings in terms of covering all eight partnerships. Resources would be needed to adequately cover participation and time of civil society experts. They propose to calculate the required resources on the basis of meetings taking place. The ASG also sees its work on the JAES slowed down due to a lack of presence of members in Addis. However, due to the official place of ECOSOCC in the AU, the African side feels participation in the process is easier than for the European side. • The AUC encourages both Steering Groups to actively organize their participation in the structured process, to come up with a work plan, and to make a comparison with what other actors (eg business representatives, etc)are doing. • The EEAS suggests it is useful to establish procedures to overcome problems of ad-hoc consultations and hints at current organizational problems • The ESG cautions against over-formalization of its involvement and emphasises the informal approach of the European CSOs. They express their desire for the JAES to be flexible and inclusive and call for more information and funding of CSO engagement with the JAES. They express their willingness to organize themselves in a more structured way towards the institutions. <p>On the JAES partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ASG proposed to have common partnership working groups. • Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure Partnership: The partnership was generally felt to go its way and information is forthcoming and CSO input disseminated upon request. The ESG explained the EPAs are now mentioned in one sentence in the action plan, but still dealt outside of the JAES (question of how far it can be affected via the JAES). and would welcome an increased exchange with ASG on this partnership. • Democratic Governance and Human Rights Partnership: While both sides are invited to meetings, getting to know about meetings and documents is not that easy on the European side, on the African side the information flow works better. The very nature of the partnership opens up more space for civil society engagement and the Egyptian co-chair seems to be more receptive since the 	<p>Both Steering Groups to put an update on all eight partnerships into an annual report if it is agreed such a report will be produced</p>
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	<p>changes in North Africa. The African side reports that it had been invited to a meeting in Pretoria on the partnership by the EEAS while their European counterparts had not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate, Energy and Environment Partnership: The African side does not have a resource person on this partnership. The European side feels they have had an impact as some of their recommendations were taken into the Second Action Plan. They were provided with the draft action plans in time and the information flow is working well. However some meetings are ad-hoc and there are a number of other non-state actors involved, such as the private sector for example, with a range of different views. • Migration, Mobility and Employment Partnership: There is a no co-chair from Libya at present which blocks progress on the partnership. There is confusing communication and no funding for the CSO participation. The Steering Groups see a need to pay more attention to social protection as most of the money put into this partnership from the EU side deals with migration. Both steering groups see many potential for synergies with other partnerships (6, 7, 8) and recommend mainstreaming the issue of migration. • Peace and Security Partnership: The EEAS explains it is now in the lead and appreciates the clear, good and effective communication with the AUC on the APF and the ASF in this partnership. However, as the EEAS representative is not personally following the partnership she doesn't know whether CSO are involved or not. The ESGs members present explain that on their side EPLO (not present) follows the partnership closely but expresses there hasn't been any CSO consultation on this partnership since the change of responsibility to the EEAS. It is unclear who is the contact person and while it is the only partnership that has a financial envelope, yet no funding for CSO is foreseen. The ASG reports that on their side there now is a formal arrangement of the PSC meeting with CSO once a year. Their representative (Prof. Dipo Kolawole, Ekiti State Univ. Nigeria) is actively engaged. There are no such meetings between CSOs and the European PSC. • Other partnerships: were not reviewed as there were no representatives present with direct knowledge of them 	
<p>Funding the strategy: towards a joint statement? (Including a discussion on the funding of the Civil Society Participation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EEAS representative read out her colleague Charles Brasseur's notes which announce that the Commission intends to issue a proposal for a Pan-African envelope on 29 June 2011. The final regulation is expected to be discussed by the end of the year. As CSO engagement in this process is not formalized yet the EEAS representative encourages initiative from the CSOs' side. • Both Steering Groups agree they would like to ensure CSO are taken into account when establishing this envelope. • As information will first be available in Brussels, the European side will inform the African side. 	<p>ESG to contact Charles Brasseur to clarify when exactly which step on the establishment of an pan-African envelope will take place</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The European side proposes to have early assessment of the proposal first and then have input from the African side leading to a joint Steering Group statement Time wise it is decided to react with a joint statement after the proposal is published on 29 June though contacts should be followed earlier to keep abreast of the information. The EEAS states that there is an agreement with DEVCO that CSOs will be consulted and that their inclusion is planned in. 	Both Steering Groups to prepare a joint statement in reaction to the proposal of establishing a Pan-African envelope
<p>Preparing an intercontinental CSO Forum (ICF) during the second semester: funding, date, place contents, preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question is put whether there will be an Intercontinental CSO Forum (ICF) in 2011 or not The African side feels it is important to stick to what had been agreed in Cairo (annual ICF). The AUC reminds of the agreement of both Commissions to support an annual ICF. The European side feels there are funding constraints that could prevent the European side from having an ICF annually due to the EC stating there is no available funding. They believe EC funding might be possible through two alternative options: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Project proposal (statement explaining why ICF is needed) Financial instruments for ad-hoc activities planned (maybe available for 2012)) The European side argues that involvement in the JAES can perhaps take another form and more emphasis could first be put on consolidating the work on the partnerships. Organising an ICF takes time and effort to mobilize resource persons and prepare things properly for a productive meeting. They propose a solution could be to take the occasion of the European Development Days (EDD) in December, as a moment for CSOs to convene an ICF or alternatively, an extended joint Steering Group meeting. This has advantages as for the EDD funding is more likely to be available, logistics would be taken charge of by the EC and it is a good moment with a lot of actors and the media present. 	Both Steering Groups to approach the European Commission to clarify their commitment for funding an ICF in 2011
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The chair noted the following action points had been agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A joint CSO action plan would be prepared The paper on Modalities of the ICF would be finalised with the African side proposing some changes as discussed and a final agreement being reached. The two Commissions would be approached to look into the scope for having a CSO page on the joint JAES website for communication. A joint CSO Annual Report would be prepared A joint Statement on the Funding of the JAES would be prepared and agreed in reaction to the EC proposal in late June The possibilities for the financing and holding of the next ICF would be discussed with the EEAS and EC and on this basis a decision taken as to when to hold it. 	