

# EU-Ghana Newsletter

## Delegation

Issue 3 June—August 2012

### Editorial

#### Events:

2. Political Dialogue
3. Support—Eastern corridor roads and Elections
4. The future of EU-Ghana Partnership
5. Europe Day observed in Accra
6. Day Against Child Labour
7. Ghana, Beacon of Democracy

#### Focus—EU Cooperation

8. General Budget Support disbursed
9. Delegation staff remembers late President Mills
10. Europe Matters
11. Staff Issues



H. E. Ambassador Claude Maerten, Head of Delegation

### Editorial

**T**he President of the European Council, Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, on July 31, 2012, paid a courtesy call on Ghana's President, H. E. John Dramani Mahama in Accra. He also join several other diplomats in the country to pay his last respects to the demised President John Evans Atta Mills and signed a book of condolence opened in his honour. Mr Rompuy was accompanied by the Head of the EU Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten. This editorial is dedicated to the press statement by the President of the European Council after meeting with President Mahama.

#### Press statement by the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, following his meeting with John Dramani Mahama President of the republic of Ghana

It was with shock and deep sadness that I had learned of the sudden death of President John Evans Atta Mills. After my arrival in Ghana, I had the occasion to meet President Atta Mills and to congratulate him personally on many of his achievements. I wish to extend my most sincere condolences to the people of Ghana and to his wife and family. In these current sad circumstances for the country I am particularly grateful to have had the chance to meet President John Dramani Mahama. We have exchanged views on a number of bilateral and regional issues.

We confirmed the excellent relations between the European Union and Ghana and expressed our willingness to develop our partnership further, based on the shared values enshrined in the Cotonou Agreement. In many respects, Ghana is a model, which has inspired other African countries to strive for democracy, respect for human rights, poverty alleviation and economic success. Although the country is saddened by the passing of one of its great sons and statesman, its mature reaction to this loss and the quick implementation of constitutional provisions designed to ensure the continuity of democratic government, shows once again how far this country has moved forward.

Indeed, over the past 20 years Ghana has shown its democratic credentials, ensuring peaceful transfers of power through elections. As discussed with President John Dramani Mahama, the coming elections should allow Ghanaian citizens to exercise again their democratic rights through a free and transparent process.

On my side, I commended Ghana for its open and wide public debate on the Constitutional review process and encouraged further progress in governance, policy reforms and de-centralisation. The EU will continue to support these efforts.

Editorial continued on pg. 9



European Council President, Mr. Van Rompuy (left) and H. E. President John Mahama, (right) after a courtesy call on him in Accra

## GHANA, EU HOLDS POLITICAL DIALOGUE

**T**he European Union on Tuesday, July 3, 2012, engaged the Government of Ghana in a Political Dialogue in Accra, in line with Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. The Dialogue was co-chaired by His Excellency the Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, John Dramani Mahama, and the Head of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten.

Prior to the meeting, the two co-chairs met with the media and stressed the importance of the partnership between Ghana and the EU and hoped that the meeting will achieve a lot in deepening the existing relationship.

Both partners reaffirmed their ambition to maintain and develop a deep and long-term strategic partnership based on the shared values of the Cotonou Agreement, i.e. the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including respect for fundamental social rights, democracy based on the rule of law and transparent, accountable and good governance.

In addition to the main objectives of the political dialogue embedded in the Cotonou Agreement, Ghana and the EU exchanged views and arrived at some conclusions and recommendations on the specific issues of peace and security, democracy - human rights - good governance, migration and development, trade – investment – EPA, climate change – environment – energy, regional issues and Joint EU-Ghana programming of external assistance.

Ghana reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring free, fair and transparent elections in December 2012. Both partners called for a peaceful electoral process in 2012. The EU also recalled its support to the electoral process and reported on the economic and financial situation in Europe.

In addition to the specific issues below, the two partners stressed the convergence in positions on many issues on the international agenda.

Representing Ghana at the meeting were, the Hon. Alhaji Muhammad Mumuni, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Hon. Hannah Tetteh, Minister for Trade and Industry, Hon. Dr Joe Oteng-Adjei, Minister for Energy, Hon. Sherry Ayittey, Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, Hon. Seth Tekpe, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Planning who sat in for Hon. Dr. Kwabena Duffuour, Minister for Finance and Economic Planning.

On the European Union side, the Ambassadors of the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom and Ireland participated in the meeting.

Highlights of the conclusions can be found on the Delegation's website: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/>







## Eastern Corridor road project in Ghana given boost by EU

**G**hana's Eastern corridor road project has been given a boost with the provision of EUR 25.9 million (GHS 60.2 million) by the European Union under the European Development Fund (EDF) for the construction of the 46.6 km Dodo Pepesu-Nkwanta roads located in the Volta Region of Ghana. An agreement on the provision of the funds was signed between the European Union, the Government and the Contractor at a ceremony in Accra June 11, 2012.

Ambassador Claude Maerten, EU Head of Delegation to Ghana, Mr. Joe Gidisu, Minister of Roads and Highways and Mr. Kanazoe of Enterprise Oumarou Kanazoe, a Burkinabe company, signed the contracts for their respective organisations. The scope of work involves complete reconstruction of the entire section of the road into a two lane single carriageway, starting at the bridge at Dodo Pepesu and ending at Nkwanta Senior High School.



Ambassador Maerten and Mr. Gidisu signing the contract

Work is expected to be completed in 18 months, with the objective of improving access to markets in the

rural areas and improving delivery of transport services in Ghana within the context of regional integration.

Ambassador Maerten said the gesture by the EU is aimed at bringing prosperity to the country through infrastructural development by improving transport services in Ghana in terms of Regional Cooperation and to increase movement of goods from Tema to Burkina Faso and vice versa among others. He urged the need to fight against corruption at check-points and ensure axle-load control to protect assets.

Minister Gidisu expressed gratitude to the EU for the gesture of upgrading the road and appealed to the contractors to take the work serious in order to meet the deadline set. He also appealed to people along the corridors of the road to endeavour to endure the uneasiness that comes with road constructions and to lend their support.

The representative of the contractors, Mr. Kanazoe, said they were aware of the importance of the road and would deliver.



Mr. Gidisu (left) presenting the signed contract to Mr. Kanazoe

## EU launches EUR 7 million Electoral Support to Ghana for 2012 elections

**T**he European Union on June 12, 2012, officially launched a EUR 7 million support to three independent institutions playing critical roles in Ghana's 2012 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The Institutions are the Electoral Commission (EC), the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and the National Media Commission (NMC).

The support to the three institutions follows recommendations of the EU Electoral Observation Mission following the 2008 Elections on the need to further deepen and consolidate Ghana's democracy in line with the objectives of good Governance.

Among these recommendations are the provision of more extensive and

permanent voter and civic education through the NCCE; the revision of the media regulatory framework and the establishment of clear monitoring mechanisms through the strengthening of the NMC; and further enhancing the EC's capacity by providing more training to polling staff; promoting the participation of women and minorities

and further continuous dialogue between the EC and political parties.

The Head of the EU Delegation, Ambassador Claude Maerten, launched the support in Accra. The Chairman of the Electoral Commission, Dr. Kwadwo Afari Gyan, asked Ghanaians to have faith in the electoral process stating that the support will ensure free, transparent and fair elections in December. Mrs. Charlotte Osei, Chairman of the NCCE and Ambassador Cabral Blay Amihere also spoke about how they are utilizing the support.

The EU grant, aims at supporting capacity development for the institutions, to further strengthen their Constitutional mandate and to increase their overall operational capacity.



Dr. Afari Gyan, (left) conferring with Mrs. Osei (second left) NCCE Chairman, Ambassador Amihere (middle), NMC Chairman and Ambassador Maerten, Head of EU Delegation to Ghana (right)





## Conference on "the Future of EU-Ghana Partnership" – May 9 2012

**A** one day conference on the theme "the Future of EU-Ghana Partnership" was organized by the Delegation of the European Union to Ghana to mark this year's Europe Day on the 9 May, 2012 in Accra.

The conference offered the EU and participants the opportunity to spark off a free and open debate with stakeholders on the role of external assistance and the future of EU cooperation in the context of the economic transition of Ghana to the Status of middle income country (MIC) and the upcoming 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programming process.

It was attended by high level Government officials including the Vice President, John Mahama who delivered the Keynote Address, Ministers of State, Heads of stakeholder institutions, Heads of EU Missions, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Development Partners, Civil Society, Private Sector, Ghanaian think-tanks, students and the general public.

In an opening remark, the Head Of EU Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten, stressed the need for a broad agenda, with a focus on governance, peace security, which are core values; focus on prosperity, including trade, EPA, investments, trade in services, solidarity with the agenda for change, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), new EU joint programming cycle; regional integration and African Union, and security issues. "Ghana is now at the level of a lower middle income country, in the dialogue between the Government and the Development Partners we are considering a partnership for Ghana's transition into a middle income country in the next 10 years".

In his keynote address, Vice President John Dramani Mahama commended the EU past and ongoing cooperation with Ghana, with a specific focus on the MDG initiative on maternal health. He said for the future, priority should be given to projects with a productive return. "Ghana needs more investments from the EU private sector but also is opened to all partners for investments", referring to the US\$ 3 billion loan from China Development Bank, and other facilities from the second compact from the United States, Millennium Challenge Account (now under review) which is to be used for the development of gas infrastructure (provision of a Thermal Plant).

Among priorities he put forward was shortage of electrical power (distribution, access, gas generation in the making). He stated that during this election year the government will not sacrifice macro-economic stability and that efforts are underway to stabilize the country's currency. In support of



Speakers who addressed the conference

those actions, MDAs have been asked not to start any major programmes yet. Government, he said, is committed to a social contract to distribute the wealth of the country equitably. He spoke also on the increased government wage bill and the government's single spine salary structure

The Minister of Trade, Ms. Hannah Tetteh said the existing partnership between Ghana and the EU is important and needs to be strengthened and that regional integration was on the agenda of Ghana with the need to promote trade among neighbours. She said the EPA between Ghana and the EU has helped to promote exports but the partnership itself is not well understood by many Ghanaians.

Ms. Tetteh observed that as the regional basis of the EPA are discussed, other issues such as regulations that exporters have to comply with before their products get to the European markets, must also be considered. She said it was a surprise to Ghana of planned regulations in the cocoa sector stating that these have impact on the countries abilities to export cocoa and cocoa products to the EU. "Trade and enabling environment need to be looked at since they impact on our ability to export to the EU".

Two presentations were made in the morning: The "Agenda for Change" from the EU side by Mr. Kurt Cornelis, Head of Cooperation and Ghana's longer-term development policy by Mr. P. V. Obeng, Chairman of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC).

Two panel discussions were held in the afternoon on the topics: "A broader partnership between EU and Ghana" and "The EU's

perspectives and priorities in cooperation with Ghana until 2020". They were addressed by civil society representatives, the private sector, think-tanks, the World Bank, and government representatives.



Vice President Mahama (right) meets Ambassador Maerten, while Ms Tetteh looks on







## Europe Day Observed in Ghana with a Reception – May 9, 2012

**D**ellegation of the European Union to Ghana held a reception in Accra, to mark Europe Day May 9 2012. It was attended by European Union Member States Ambassadors, members of the Diplomatic Corps, Government officials, Civil Society Organisations and members of the general public.

Proposing a toast to mark the Day, the Head of the Delegation, Ambassador Claude Maerten, recounted the formation of the European Union and the history behind the Schuman Declarations which culminated into Europe Day aimed politically to bring peace after the two World Wars. “The aspiration at that time was forgiveness and future with an objective to build our future on the basis of peace, stability and solidarity”.

He said 2011 has been a year of many challenges in the world and with many promises adding that “The Arab spring has shown that it is not possible any more to rule without the consent of the citizens, without respecting democracy, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms, human dignity and the principles of equality and solidarity.



Ambassador Maerten (left) proposing a toast to Hon. Kumbuo, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General.

These are the core European and Ghanaian values which constitute the bedrock of Ghana-European Union Partnership” Ambassador Maerten stressed the four pillars of the partnership mainly peace and stability, prosperity, solidarity and global public goods in areas such as security, sustainable energy for all or environmental protection.

On Peace and Stability, The Ambassador stated that Ghana cannot fail in this crucial year in its history in which for the 6<sup>th</sup> time under the 1992 constitution, she will go the polls to elect a President and Parliament. “Ghana cannot afford to have unrest before, during and after the elections.

As proven during the last 20 years, once again, Ghana has to lead by example. On behalf of the European Union, I call on all political parties, all political leaders, the Ghanaian citizens and all friends to show restraint and to exercise their power as

voters in a peaceful, transparent and fair way”.

“We encourage all to refrain from the politics of insults as this does not work towards peace. We call also on the media to be moderate and not to propagate politics of insults”.



EU officials welcoming guests to the Reception.

He pledged the EU’s commitment not only to reducing poverty but to building prosperity in Africa and Ghana by designing common policies for the future that will benefit their individual peoples and societies, on shared community of values and interests.

He said in solidarity, the revamped EU development policy titled “Agenda for Change” is focused on High Impact Aid and so to get more added value and value for money from EU Development funds in sectors promoting governance and inclusive growth.

Responding to the toast, the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General, Dr. Benjamin Kumbuo, said Ghana’s association with Europe spans over 600 years stressing “our commonality of interests have always found us positively engaging European partners to tackle challenges related to human rights, terrorism, drug and human trafficking, and of late the emerging menace of piracy along coastal waters”.

The Attorney-General said President Mills is dedicated to ensuring peaceful, free, fair and credible elections come December 2012 as evidenced by the progression to the adaption of the biometric voters register in the upcoming elections based on experiences and best practices in the past.

He said Ghana is grateful to the EU partners for the tremendous support they have offered not only to Ghana but the African region in support of electoral processes and democratic development. “Apart from being Ghana’s major trading partner with 45% of Ghana’s exports going to EU member countries, the EU still remains Ghana’s major development partner as half of all Official Development Assistance to Ghana is contributed by EU Member States and the European Union”

Ghana Stands ready to cooperate with the EU in addressing the remaining obstacles to the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations so as to further boost trade and economic relations between the EU and Ghana.



## World Day against Child labour marked in Ghana by the EU and Plan Ghana

**T**he European Union joined the rest of the world to mark this year's International Day against child labour on June 12, 2012. The day coincided with the commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Day against child labour on the theme "Human Rights and Social Justice: Let's end child labour".

The Head of EU Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten and his counterpart the Dutch Ambassador, Mr. Gerard Duijfjes, and the Country Director of Plan Ghana, Mr. Prem Shukla, together with representatives of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the Ghana Prison Service and other civil society and child rights organizations, toured the Girl's correctional centre in Accra and later addressed the inmates.

They also stressed the need for the rights of the children in the centres and in the country to be protected from child labour and other forms of violations of their fundamental human rights.

The EU, in collaboration with Plan Ghana and other stakeholders also visited the juvenile correctional centres in Swedru to interact with the children and to create a platform to encourage them to realise their full potentials even while in the centres.

The visit to the centres was also to assess the extent and level of achievement gained from the support provided under the Juvenile Justice Project. The project is being implemented by Plan Ghana with funding from the EU in partnership with civil society organisations.

It seeks to enhance the protection of children in conflict with the law from all forms of violence, as well as strengthen the capacity of children to advocate and carry out campaigns on the rights of juvenile offenders going through the juvenile justice process.

The four inmates at the centre which is the only one for girls in the country include those on remand awaiting trial (2), and those committed to juvenile correction after trial (2). The director of the centre Mrs. Georgina Mensah said inmates receive vocational training while at the centre.

At the senior correctional centre in Swedru in the central region, there are 15 inmates serving sentences ranging from 3 months to 3 years on account of various crimes committed such as defilement and theft. The centre provides reformation services such as psycho-social services, health care and skills training for vocations.

The centre is plagued with numerous challenges such as inadequate staff, inadequate funding, and lack of health insurance cover for inmates, dilapidated accommodation and

office infrastructure among others. The visit by the EU and plan served as an advocacy initiative with the media to highlight these challenges for the relevant authorities to intervene.



Stakeholders including Mr. Shukla (right) being briefed on the activities of the girls correctional centre at Osu in Accra



Officials inspecting some vocational activities by the girls at the centre



Ambassador Duijfjes, interact with a girl at the centre to observe the Day



Ambassador Maerten decorates a girl with items donated by the EU Delegation to the centre





## Ghana to redeem image as beacon of democracy in Africa

**T**he Head of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten, on July 4, 2012 charged Ghanaians to ensure that this year's elections are not only peaceful, free and fair but that they surpass all the previous elections in the quality of their delivery.

Ghana's track record in organising free, fair, transparent and credible elections, he noted has been acclaimed worldwide. The international community has recognised the example demonstrated by Ghana in the management of elections. Ghana has thus become a beacon of hope for Africa. "There is a need for continues improvement. There is the need to strive to prevent or contain violence as essential security objectives for free and fair elections."

Ambassador Maerten was speaking in Accra at the Elections Semi-Annual Convention of STAR-Ghana, a civil society organization in Ghana (Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana – STAR-Ghana). The two-day convention was on the theme "Civil Society Organisations (CSO) engagement with elections 2012: Emerging lessons and opportunities"



Some participants at the convention

He said judging by the peaceful nature of the Ghanaian, "I am optimistic that we can all count on you to do this for yourselves, for each other and for all of us. Let me, however, emphasize that election security means more than having police officers stationed at polling centres. All candidates, women and the elderly need to feel safe enough to participate in the elections."

Ambassador Maerten stated that mechanisms designed to protect vulnerable social groups in conflict-prone areas should be apparent and clear to all stressing that the police have a key role in providing human security while civil society can empower marginalised people to take part in the elections through outreach and oversight. He stressed for instance that the participation of civil society in the December 2012 elections should foster the participation of women in the elections.



Speakers at the convention, from Right, Ambassador Maerten, Prof. Sawyer, Dr. Afari-Gyan and Mr. Tanko

Giving an overview of the 2012 Election Process, The Electoral Commissioner, Dr. Kwadwo Afari-Gyan, said everything was on course for the elections stressing that there will be biometric verification on Election Day. He spoke about the creation of new constituencies following the publication of the 2010 population census.

Mr. Amidu Ibrahim Tanko of STAR-Ghana said the organization has awarded grants of 5.4 million US dollars to 53 organisations in the country to implement projects (community-based and national-based programmes) towards the 2012 elections.

Professor Akilakpa Sawyer, Chairperson of STAR-Ghana called on all to join in condemning inflammatory language by politicians stressing the need to have issue based discussions in the media which will give less space for unpleasant political commentaries.

STAR-Ghana is a multi-donor pooled funding mechanism (Funded by European Union (EU), Danish Development Agency (DANIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), and the United States Aid Agency (USAID) to increase the influence of civil society and Parliament in the governance of public goods and service delivery, with the ultimate goal of improving the accountability and responsiveness of Ghana's government, traditional authorities and the private sector.

The EU has committed a total of EUR 4,500,000 to support civil society in Ghana under the European Development Fund through this funding mechanism.

Thematic windows under this mechanism include Oil and Gas, Education, Health, Project-based funding (Open calls), Sustainability grants, Strategic Opportunities fund, Urban Sanitation and Agricultural value chain in northern Ghana.

## Ghana receives EUR 24 million as General Budget Support from the EU

**The European Union (EU) in Ghana has disbursed a total of EUR 24 million to the Government of Ghana through the Ghana's Multi-Donor Budget Support (MDBS) framework.**

This disbursement is in the context of the Millennium Development Goals Contract (MDG-Contract).

This 2012 disbursement follows the satisfactory conclusions of the 2011 Multi Donor Budget Support (MDBS) annual review, conducted last May, as well as the demonstrated commitment by the Government of Ghana towards attaining macro-economic stability, implementing the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA) and in improving the country's public financial management.

The MDG-Contract, which is the EU's approach under the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) for longer term and a more predictable general budget support, was signed by the EU and the Government of Ghana in July 2009.

Under the financing agreement of the MDG-Contract, the EU is to provide a total of EUR 209 million as general budget support to Ghana over the years 2009-2014, with an overall objective of contributing to sustainable growth and poverty reduction in Ghana so that the country can attain middle-income status including the achievement of the MDGs.

General budget support is one of the three focal areas of cooperation between the European Union and Ghana.

Contrary to a project approach, budget support involves the transfer of financial resources directly to the Government treasury to complement Government's own domestically generated revenues to facilitate the implementation of the national budget and its associated public expenditure plans.

In the year 2011, the EU disbursed a total of **EUR 26.4** million as budget support to the Government of Ghana.

Further to this, the EU is also committed to providing more support in the strengthening of Ghana's institutions and systems with a key focus on Public Finance Management.

This is particularly in view of the increasing need for more robust national institutions and systems in order to improve the effectiveness of aid.

General budget support to Ghana is part of a broader EU aid portfolio of a total of more than € 450 million (about GHS 900 million) for the period 2008-2013.

Other sectors of intervention include Transport & Interconnectivity, Governance, and non focal areas such as trade facilitation, regional integration and support to Economic Partnership Agreement; natural resources management and migration, security and Diaspora.

## Council of Scientists call on the EU

The Chairman and some members of the Council of the Forum for Harnessing Research in Science and Technology on June 27, 2012, paid a courtesy call on the Head of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador Claude Maerten in Accra and to present to him a number of publications including a research book on "Tradition should seek Technology".

The Chairman of the Council, Emeritus Professor George Benneh of the Department of Geography and Resource Development of the University of Ghana who led the delegation invited officially the Head of the Delegation to a roundtable discussion on forging synergies between technology and indigenous agriculture and science for development in October 2012.

Emeritus Professor Benneh, was accompanied by Mrs. Georgina Quaisie, Head of Science Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service, a member of the Council and Mr.

Augustus Owusu Agyemfra, Secretary to the Council. Prof. Benneh called on the EU to lend support to the Secretariat of the Council and its activities and to also provide a consultant to speak on the issues raised in the publication presented to him. He said it was necessary for all to realise that the future of Ghana and Africa depends on using science and technology for development and hoped that the European Academy may be interested in the work being done by the Council in that direction.



Emeritus Prof. Benneh (left) and Ambassador Maerten, (right)

Mrs. Quaisie said the roundtable conference will explore how tradition and technology can be collaborated to help agriculture.

Ambassador Maerten on his part explained activities of the EU in Ghana and the support currently provided to the country. He said a new compact is being adopted by the

EU and the government which will include all the priorities for the country. He explained that to support the council, the request must come from the Ministry of Finance. He said the EU will honour an invitation to the roundtable conference to share its experiences in the issues to be discussed.





## EU Delegation staff mourns late President John Evans Atta Mills

Editorial continued from pg. 1—Statement by EC President, Rompuy

As Ghana's number one trading partner, major foreign investor and largest donor, I underlined the EU's commitment not just to reducing poverty but also to building prosperity. In this context, we agreed that all efforts should be made to conclude the Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and ECOWAS. In the meantime, we recalled the benefits accruing from the 2007 interim agreement, which grants full duty free and quota free access to the EU market to all products originating from Ghana. Full implementation of this agreement remains important to promote investments.

Finally, I listened attentively to President Dramani Mahama' views on current security challenges in the region. We highlighted the importance of African Union, ECOWAS and UN Security Council support to Mali in order to re-establish democratic order and the rule of law in its territory. This is also key in the fight against terrorism and organised crime. In this regard, I informed President Dramani Mahama about the EU's comprehensive efforts to contribute to the development of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Sahel region and our readiness to cooperate closely with other actors to avoid the spread of conflicts over the entire region.

I wish to conclude reiterating my heartfelt condolences to the people and government of Ghana as well as to the bereaved family for the recent passing of President John Evans Atta Mills. His leadership and contributions to the development of his country will be remembered. In this time of sorrow the links between the EU and Ghana remain strong. We will continue working even closer together to confront common challenges and for the prosperity and security of our citizens.



President Mahama welcomes Mr. Van Rompuy to his office

### Delegation staff observed a minute silence in remembrance of the late President

**T**he Staff at the Delegation of the European Union to Ghana on July 31, 2012 observed a minute silence in remembrance of the Late President John Evans Atta Mills at the premises of the Delegation. This is to mark one week of his death. H. E. President Atta Mills passed away suddenly on July 24, 2012 in Accra.

Staff recounted the first time and only day when the late President visited the Delegation on April 14, 2010 to sign the book of Condolence opened in memory of the late Polish President H. E. Lech Kaczynska, his spouse, Madame Maria Kaczynska, representatives of the Country's highest authorities among others who lost their lives in a tragic plane crash near Smolensk on April 10 2010.

They recalled how the late President extended a handshake to all who were present during his visit to the delegation.



Delegation staff in minute silence

A message of Condolence by the EU reads in part "President Atta Mills' contributions to rule of law, democracy and development in Ghana will be remembered, as they provide a solid basis on which to continue building a future of prosperity, freedom and security for all Ghanaian citizens. On this sad day, our thoughts are with the people of Ghana and the family of the President as they mourn their loss."



H. E. President John Atta Mills



## Europe Matters

### EU adopts Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy

**T**he Foreign Affairs Council adopted June 25, 2012, a **Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy with an Action Plan for putting it into practice. This is the first time that the European Union has had a unified Strategic Framework for this vital policy area, with such a wide-range plan of action for its implementation.**

"Human rights are one of my top priorities and a silver thread that runs through everything that we do in external relations. With this comprehensive package we want to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of EU human rights policy. In order to help put the Framework and the Action Plan into practice, I have also proposed the appointment of an EU Special Representative on Human Rights and I look forward to a swift appointment," said Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission, upon adoption of the package.

The Framework sets out principles, objectives and priorities, all designed to improve the effectiveness and consistency of EU policy as a whole in the next ten years. They provide an agreed basis for a truly collective effort, involving EU Member States as well as the EU Institutions. The Strategic Framework also anchors a commitment to genuine partnership with civil society. The Framework is also designed to be as readable as possible, so as to be accessible to all citizens.

The key messages of the Strategic Framework are:

- \* Human rights throughout EU policy
- \* Promoting universality of human rights
- \* Pursuing coherent objectives
- \* Human rights in all EU external policies
- \* Implementing EU priorities on human rights
- \* Working with bilateral partners
- \* Working through multilateral institutions
- \* The EU working together

The Strategic Framework builds on the joint Communication entitled 'Human rights and democracy at the heart of EU external action – towards a more effective approach'. This was adopted by the European Commission on 12 December 2011 following a proposal by Catherine Ashton. It was in turn

the result of a lengthy process of consultations, dating back to the informal meeting of the EU foreign ministers (Gymnich) at Cordoba in March 2010.

The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy brings together 97 actions under 36 headings, prepared on the basis of consultations by the European External Action Service, involving the European Commission and EU Member States, which are jointly responsible for implementation. Informal consultations have also been held with MEPs and NGOs. The Action Plan and covers the period until 31 December 2014.

One of the commitments of the Action Plan is that the EU should present its performance in meeting its objectives in its annual report on human rights and democracy in the world. This should give an opportunity to all stakeholders in EU policy, including civil society, to assess the impact of EU action and contribute to defining future priorities.

#### Background:

Adoption of the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy represents a watershed in EU policymaking. The EU has a long catalogue of statements on human rights and democracy, but these have tended to focus on particular issues or countries. Over time, the EU has also developed a range of 'guidelines' and other policy guidance, but it is the first time that a unified strategic document has been adopted. It shows the EU delivering on the promise of the Lisbon Treaty, which introduced the following commitment:

*"The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law."*

In order to contribute to implementation of the Strategic Framework and the Action Plan, the High Representative has proposed the appointment of an EU Special Representative on Human Rights. The aim of this is to enhance the effectiveness and visibility of EU human rights policy. For reasons of continuity, an initial appointment of 2 years has been proposed.

The EUSR should have a broad, flexible mandate, giving the ability to adapt to circumstances, and should also work closely with the EEAS, which will provide full support.

More information is available at [http://eeas.europa.eu/human\\_rights/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/index_en.htm)



Catherine Ashton, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Security Policy and Vice President of the EC





## Staff Issues

### Out-going staff:

**F**our Heads of Sections and one Programme officer have ended their work at the Delegation and have since left to pursue other assignments.

They are Head of Administration; Tina-Maria Senior, Head of Contracts and Finance; Bruno Duquesne, Head of Governance; Daria Fane and Head of Economic and Trade Section; David Domes and the Programme officer with the Infrastructure and Sustainable Development Section; Emmanuel Ansong.

They served between three to seven years at the Delegation. A ceremony to send them off, was held on June 14, 2012, to acknowledge their invaluable contribution to the work at the Delegation. Gifts were also presented to them by their various sections.

The Head of the Delegation, Ambassador Claude Maerten, commended them all for their contributions and wished them well in their future endeavours.



The departing officials, from left, Mr. David Domes, Mr. Bruno Duquesne, Mrs. Daria Fane, Mr. Emmanuel Ansong and Ms. Tina-Maria Senior (right)



Some members of staff at the farewell ceremony



The Head of Delegation, Ambassador Maerten (third left) in a group photograph with the departing officials,

### In-Coming staff:

The Delegation will welcome from the beginning of September 2012, three new members of staff to replace those who have since left. They are Mr. David Martinez de Prins, Head of Administration, a Spanish, Ms. Pilar Maria Palmero Vaquero, Head of Governance, also Spanish and Mr. Rene Sieron, Head of Finance and Contracts, a German.

Delegation of the European Union to Ghana

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