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GHANA – EUROPEAN UNION HOLDS POLITICAL DIALOGUE

Ghana's Vice President, H. E. John Dramani Mahama accompanied by some members of Cabinet met with the European Union Ambassador to Ghana, H. E. Claude Maerten and eight EU Member States Ambassadors based in Accra on Thursday, June 2nd, 2011. The encounter was organized in the framework of the political dialogue defined in the Cotonou Agreement and saw a very fruitful meeting between long-lasting partners which allowed them to take stock of issues of mutual interests occurring both in Europe and Ghana. The Ambassadors at the meeting represented The Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK.

The organization of the political dialogue as defined in Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement is in line with the European Union's role which has always been a faithful development partner to Ghana but since the adoption of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000 and its two revisions (latest was signed in June 2010 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso) Ghana-EU relationships took another dimension.

Firstly, the revised Cotonou Agreement offers a coherent World Trade Organization (WTO) compatible framework to foster economic and trade relations, the EU being the most important economic partner for Ghana. Secondly, it provides a strengthened incentive to conduct regular political dialogue, which means that this is a commonly agreed commitment to discuss all issues of common interest.

The Last meeting (political dialogue) in October 2010 was more formal and technical and focussed on many different issues which were then dealt with by the relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Government of Ghana and by the European Union Delegation to Ghana.

During the current meeting, the Vice President John Dramani Mahama and the EU Ambassador Claude Maerten agreed on a more informal set up in order to talk about political and economic views in the context of a renewed partnership. The participation of eight Ambassadors of the European Union Member States resident in Ghana – in addition to the EU Ambassador, and representatives of different Ministries ensured that exchanges remained diverse and addressed major themes of political cooperation between Ghana and the EU.

On the side of the Government, the meeting was attended by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Hon. Alhaji Mohammed Mumuni and Minister of Trade and Industry, Hon. Ms. Hannah Tetteh. On the EU side, Member States were represented by Ambassadors Miloslav Machalek, Czech Republic, Stig Barlyng, Denmark, Francis Hurtut, France, Eberhard Schanze, Germany, Tullio Guma, Italy, Gerard

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Duijfjes, The Netherlands, Mad. Olga Carbarga Gomez, Spain and the new British High Commissioner, Peter Jones.

Next steps

The orientations defined during this meeting will be followed up at the technical level. Both partners agreed to meet again in six months.

For more information

Homepage of the EU Delegation to Ghana:

<http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ghana/>

Homepage Government of Ghana:

www.ghana.gov.gh

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