



European Union – Republic of Seychelles

22 July 2015

Joint press release

The 2015 Political Dialogue session between the Republic of Seychelles and the European Union as provided for under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement was held today in Victoria.

The Republic of Seychelles and the European Union welcomed the significant progress of their partnership and affirmed their mutual commitment to the principles of Good Governance, Democracy and respect for Human Rights.

The objective of the dialogue was to engage in discussions on issues of mutual interest and share information on the actions and initiatives that both Seychelles and the European Union are undertaking in the economic, social and political areas. Both sides welcomed this important Dialogue as a step further in the deepening of their relationship, characterized by the quality and frankness of the discussions.

The parties reviewed the most salient aspects of the political situation in the Seychelles and in Europe, as well as the Indian Ocean region integration process.

The two sides paid particular attention to issues related to Governance, Democracy, the Rule of Law and Human Rights, with particular reference to the electoral cycle in the Seychelles. In this context, the Government of the Republic of Seychelles has expressed its firm commitment to make every effort to ensure that the upcoming elections are credible, free and transparent, based on an appropriate and consensual legal framework, so as to increase the trust and participation of citizens.

The protection and promotion of Human Rights was addressed and Seychelles was encouraged to develop all possible legal and societal action to achieve the best international standards in this field.

High on the agenda for the Dialogue were also issues relating to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fisheries; Regional integration and cooperation; and Climate Change and Natural Disasters.

The parties also addressed the issue of the international organized crime and the negative impact that this has on the region. The European Union provides directly military and civilian missions' assistance (such as EUNAVFOR *Atalanta* and EUCAP *Nestor*) and made provision in the regional programmes for Eastern and Southern Africa to help the region address the scourge of piracy at sea (namely the Maritime Security programme – MASE). This effort is highly appreciated by Seychelles and its commitment to counter piracy has been recognised by giving the country the Chairmanship of the international *Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia*. The parties expressed their satisfaction on the fact that the action against piracy is an example of highly successful structured international cooperation, allowing creating new capacities and tools in the region and particularly in Seychelles.

Referring to the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union, the Seychelles party reiterated its firm commitment to achieve agreed common goals on trade liberalization, in line with the recent accession of the country to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The parties also discussed the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between them and stressed the importance of ensuring the legal origin of catches and their sanitary phytosanitary quality. The parties also agreed on the need to respect mutual obligations in relation to the impact of the Marine Spatial Planning initiative on fisheries within Seychelles EEZ. This initiative is an important step to consolidate the country's capacities to deal with the critical issue of "climate adaptation", while alleviating the burden of the external debt ("debt for nature swap" agreed with Paris Club creditors).

Finally, in reference to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, both sides agreed on the importance that all participants of the XXI Conference of the Parties to be held in December 2015 in Paris (COP21) commit to achieve the objectives for a better global future.

Both Seychelles and the EU view the Dialogue as another indicator of excellent bilateral relations. They agreed to convene next session of Article 8 Political Dialogue in June 2016.

The EU Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Aldo Dell'Araccia, accompanied by the resident British High Commissioner (assuring the EU local Presidency), the French Ambassador and the non-resident Slovakian representative, led the EU party. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Transport, the Honourable Joël Morgan, led the Seychellois delegation.

For more information please contact:



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