



JOINT PRESS RELEASE
13TH SOUTH AFRICA – EUROPEAN UNION MINISTERIAL POLITICAL
DIALOGUE (MPD) MEETING HELD ON 26 FEBRUARY 2016, IN PRETORIA,
SOUTH AFRICA

1. The South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, Ms Federica Mogherini co-chaired the 13th Session of the Ministerial Political Dialogue in the context of the Strategic Partnership, on 26 February 2016, in Pretoria, South Africa.
2. At the Ministerial Political Dialogue, both South Africa and the European Union welcomed progress regarding the ongoing co-operation in a wide variety of areas covered by the Strategic Partnership and the Joint Action Plan.
3. Both sides re-affirmed their commitment to continue expanding the Strategic Partnership by placing emphasis on achieving concrete deliverables to the mutual benefit of both parties.

Exchange of views on internal developments

4. Both sides shared their views on internal developments. South Africa highlighted the National Development Plan 2030 as a mechanism to support the country in its quest to overcome inequality, poverty and unemployment. The European Union and South Africa took note of the prevailing global economic challenges and the need for greater engagement in this regard. They recognised the importance of working towards social inclusion.
5. South Africa and the European Union recognised the support of the Strategic Partnership and development cooperation programme to the main priorities of the 2030 National Development Plan through innovation, pilot programmes, capacity development, and the sharing of skills and knowledge.

Trade Relations

6. South Africa acknowledged the importance of the European Union as its largest trading partner, largest foreign direct investor and significant contributor to job creation.
7. Both sides expressed appreciation at the conclusion of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA's) between the European Union and the SADC EPA States and remained committed to its signing and ratification in the coming months.

8. Both sides noted the growing levels of citrus exports to the European Union and the importance of the Citrus Industry for job creation in South Africa; they confirmed their commitment to enhance co-operation to address the Citrus Black Spot issue.

Regional Cooperation

9. South Africa and the European Union agreed to continue co-operation on peace and security in the continent. South Africa welcomed the European Union's significant political and financial support to the African Peace and Security Architecture as a means to deliver African solutions to African problems. South Africa and the European Union discussed a range of current security issues affecting the region and the continent and stressed the importance for elections to be held in correct conditions respectful of legal frameworks. Both sides also discussed the impact of El Niño in the region causing intense drought.

International Cooperation

10. Both sides noted the growing challenges of international terrorism, and agreed to continue to work together to tackle the issue. On the Middle East Peace Process, both sides re-iterated the two-State solution. With regard to Syria, South Africa and the European Union remained concerned with the impact of political developments on human rights and the displacement of Syrians. South Africa and the European Union agreed that negotiation and dialogue remains the best way to find sustainable solutions to international conflicts. South Africa welcomed the role played by the European Union in brokering a nuclear deal with Iran.

Multilateral

11. Both sides agreed to enhance their interaction and cooperation at multilateral fora to jointly work towards the realisation of a more equitable and inclusive global order. The UN adopted 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) and the Paris Conference on Climate Change reflected the potential and opportunities of deep cooperation for a better world. Both partners welcomed the adoption of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They stressed the need to work on the implementation of the Agreement by 2020, and emphasised the need for enhanced climate action in the pre-2020 period.