

# EU–South Africa Summit: Strengthening the Strategic Partnership

At the 7<sup>th</sup> European Union–South Africa Summit held in Brussels today Leaders agreed on a number of steps to reinforce bilateral and regional relations, focusing on the implementation of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership. This includes economic and trade cooperation and pursuing the improvement of business climate and opportunities for investment and job creation which are of mutual interest.

Leaders also discussed common global challenges, such as climate change, migration, human rights, committing to pursue close cooperation both at bilateral level and on the global stage. A number of foreign and security policy issues, including building and consolidating peace, security and democracy in the African continent and at multilateral level were also raised. Leaders finally committed to work towards a prompt resolution of trade impediments affecting smooth trade flows.

Jean-Claude **Juncker**, President of the European Commission and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, represented the European Union at the Summit. South Africa was represented by its President, Cyril Ramaphosa. EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica **Mogherini**, Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness Jyrki **Katainen** and Commissioner for trade Cecilia **Malmström** also participated, alongside several Ministers from South Africa.

President **Juncker** said: *“The European Union, for the South African nation, is a very important trade partner. We are convinced that as a result of today’s meeting we will find a common understanding on the open trade issues. South Africa and Africa are very important partners for the European Union when it comes to climate change, when it comes to multilateralism. It is in the interest of the two parties – South Africa and the European Union – to invest more. It will be done.”*

A [Joint Summit Statement](#) issued by the Leaders outlines amongst others commitment to:

- **Advance multilateralism and rules based governance**

Leaders recommitted to work together to support multilateralism, democracy and the rules-based global order, in particular at the United Nations and global trade fora. South Africa’s upcoming term as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council in 2019-2020 was recognised as an opportunity to enhance cooperation on peace and security. As part of their commitment to stronger global governance, Leaders stressed their support to the process of UN reform, including efforts on the comprehensive reform of the UN Security Council and the revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly. Leaders reiterated their determination to promote free, fair and inclusive trade and

the rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation at its core and serving the interest of all its Members.

Leaders agreed to step up collaboration in key areas such as climate change, natural resources, science and technology, research and innovation, employment, education and training including digital skills, health, energy, macro-economic policies, human rights and peace and security. The EU and South Africa will, amongst others, explore the opportunities provided by the External Investment Plan. Linked to this, Leaders committed to exploring opportunities for investment, technical assistance including project preparation, and the improvement of business and investment climates to promote sustainable development. Leaders welcomed the conclusion and provisional implementation in 2016 of the EU-Southern African Development Community (SADC) – Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

Leaders also committed to find mutually acceptable solutions to impediments to trade in agriculture, agri-food and manufactured goods. They agreed to work towards a prompt resolution of these impediments.

Leaders welcomed the new [Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs](#) put forward by the European Commission. They exchanged views on foreign and security policy issues, addressed a number of pressing situations in the neighbourhoods of both the EU and South Africa, and welcomed each other's contribution to fostering peace and security in their respective regions. Leaders agreed to explore opportunities to enhance cooperation on peace and security, conflict prevention and mediation.

Leaders confirmed common resolve to reform the future relationship between the EU and the countries of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. To this end they are looking forward to the successful conclusion of negotiations for a post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement, that will contribute to attaining the goals of both the United Nations 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the long-term vision for African continent – Agenda 2063.

## **For More Information**

[Joint Statement](#)

[EU-South Africa relations factsheet](#)

[EU-South Africa Summit website](#)

[Economic Partnership Agreement: EU-Southern African Development Community](#)

[Delegation of the European Union to South Africa](#)