



## **SEMINAR ON THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICA-EU STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IN THE RUN-UP TO THE THIRD SUMMIT”**

A Casa Africa Seminar, February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>

Venue: Casa Africa, C/ Alfonso XIII 5, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain)

In the run-up of the III EU-Africa Summit in Sirte (Libya) to be held by the end of 2010, *Casa Africa* contributed to the on-going preparation within the institutions with an informal seminar on the future of the Joint Africa Strategic Partnership.

In order to ensure a frank and open dialogue, the seminar was held under the Chatham House Rule of non-attribution. Thus, the participants spoke as individuals and expressed views that may not be those of their organizations or countries.

A report containing the discussions and main conclusions follows below:

### **The III EU-Africa Summit – Calendar and way ahead.**

#### *Creation of a small steering group*

The seminar started with an introduction by a European expert on the challenges posed by the III Summit and the roadmap to Sirte.

In Lisbon 2007, Africa and Europe decided to work together on the basis of “the three beyonds”: The first beyond was *beyond Africa*, that is to say, cooperation on global issues, such as climate change. The second beyond was *beyond cooperation*, so as to surpass the traditional post-colonial donor-recipient relationship. The third beyond was *beyond institutions*, which means that civil society in all its forms and shapes has to have a stake in the process. The 1<sup>st</sup> Action Plan was then launched.

In the last three years, the Africa-Europe relationship has grown thicker, richer and more complex. To state a few examples, the contacts between commissioners have become very frequent, reciprocate electoral observation

missions are carried out normally, the Joint Declaration in Copenhagen showed that we are on the same wavelength concerning climate change and the revision of the Cotonou Agreement has created a new relation with a life of its own. Finally, regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> Action Plan of the JAES, with its eight partnerships, the Midterm Review has proven to be a very detailed assessment of the state of play. We are now ready to draw the necessary conclusions. We know it has produced some achievements, even if many of them are still being implemented. We need to discuss how to unearth the full potential of the JAES in a future 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan. The real question now is to determine our level of ambition for the next Summit. How do we take all this to a further level.

The roadmap towards the Summit was brought up: The enlarged Joint Task Force will have a meeting in mid March. The next step will be the Ministerial Political Dialogue (former Troika) due the 27<sup>th</sup> of April in which an options paper on the adoption of a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan must be presented. The Commissions will probably meet again in June. In this context, the French Africa Summit will be held during the Summer. Another Ministerial Dialogue meeting under the Belgian Presidency before the Summit will take place.

To achieve a successful Summit, a number of questions must be addressed: the main themes and deliverables, the side events, and the controversial issues. The idea of creating a small **steering group** was proposed. It should be an informal body, of flexible composition. The rotating Presidency (Spain and Belgium), the Commission, the EU Delegation in Addis, and the Member States that have a leading role in the eight partnerships, would be part of the European team in the Steering group. The African side will discuss the composition of its delegation.

The creation of the steering group to prepare the III Summit met the general approval of the table.

In the opinion of another participant, a steering group is needed because the current JAES architecture lacks a transversal forum in which to discuss all the matters in a horizontal fashion. The JEGs were thematic and too informal, while the troika was too formal. An intermediate body was thus needed to feed good ideas or initiatives into the higher formal levels. The proposed steering group would be a suitable **working body below the Ministerial level**.

One participant stressed that such a steering group must have a very clear mandate, so as to avoid overlapping with existing bodies. Another expert pointed out that the group should have continuity in its members.

The notion of “*informal*” was also discussed. It was agreed that “informality” implies that no conclusion by the steering group is to be made formal until it has been approved by formal superior bodies.

It was also requested that pre-Lisbon errors be avoided. At that time, artificial disputes and controversial issues consumed too much time and resources. The

III Summit is intended to give fresh impetus to the JAES. Partners have to concentrate on delivering, not quarreling.

### **The III EU-Africa Summit – Issues and deliverables.**

#### ***What the Summit should and should not be.***

This second session started with opening remarks on behalf of one European speaker. In Lisbon 2007, Europe and Africa, he said, were able to establish a strategic partnership that has no parallel in the international arena. No alliance between two regions is as global as ours. We succeeded in overcoming our colonial past and endowed our relationship with a coherent approach and structural framework institutions. The III Summit is our opportunity to show willingness at both sides to push this partnership forward. In the III Summit we have to sit together and decide on whether we update the structures in place or strengthen our partnership using the advantages other partners don't have.

However, **we need to be clear on what we do not want the Summit to become: The Summit will neither be a pledging opportunity nor a forum where possible irritants surface** and distract us from the true goal of carrying forward our partnership.

In the first place the Summit should be seen as an opportunity to fulfil the motto of the JAES, that is to say, to carry our relationship *beyond institutions*: we need to find ways and means of **mobilizing more countries (both African and European), getting the private sector on board, and putting people-to-people initiatives in place.** The Summit will constitute a success if we go beyond the bureaucratic approach. Secondly, the Summit is the opportunity for the European side to show the African partners and ourselves how the new architecture designed by the Lisbon treaty effectively works. Europe should not fail to deliver in this regard.

#### ***An overarching theme***

Participants discussed in depth the way of nurturing «flesh and meat» to the strategic alliance between Africa and Europe. The purpose of committing the III Summit to an overarching theme was discussed. It was agreed that an overarching theme was necessary for the following reasons: first of all, it would **rationalize the discussions** by the leaders; second, it allows us to **follow-up** after the Summit, and third, it will **avoid a purely bureaucratic Summit**, and finally, it will help **capture the attention of the media.**

Various participants brought up different topics which could serve as a guide to the Summit.

**Energy**, it was said, is something Africa and Europe are craving for. Huge projects to install a solar energy belt in the Saharan desert are already underway; the European Investment Bank is providing financial support to install wind farms in various areas. There is a rising number of climate-friendly business plans across Africa involving renewable energies. If we task a group of experts with piecing together all these fragmented initiatives we will be surprised by how coherent these efforts can be. We do not need more funding but a more efficient use of private sector initiatives. If we do so, we could link the energy sector to the necessities of the people, i.e.. bringing more electricity to local communities. Energy catalyzing ends up being beneficial for food production and thus combats child hunger. Bringing in the private sector could galvanize potential Europe-Africa cooperation in the field of renewable energies and maybe provide us with a lighthouse project that drives the JAES forward for the next ten years.

One speaker reminded us that the Energy Partnership within the JAES was about to come up with a detailed mapping of activities and the definition of goals relating to energy needs in Africa. The IEB loans are already targeted at building local energy industry. If synergies with the private sector were searched, deliverables would not be difficult to find e.g. by the year 2020 a certain amount of Africans will have access to energy. The High Level Meeting on Energy planned for April in Vienna provides a good occasion to prepare the Summit if energy was picked as a carrying theme.

African participants shared the view of energy as a trigger to take the Partnership to a higher level. However, they made some remarks nuancing the role of the private sector. Instead of a one way export-oriented approach, we need to ensure it is in the benefit of all parties, e.g. linking the renewable energies to rural communities. Private sector means profitability and return of investment. African companies cannot compete with the Western private sector. If it is going to be a partnership we need to somehow assure the participation of the public sector. If not, it will continue to be a one side show. In response to this, one participant hinted that there are very important industrial groups in Africa better placed than Europe based companies, capable of competing successfully. Another motive for concern is that concentrating efforts on renewable energies might contribute to widen the gap between Saharan and Sub-Saharan African countries, a tendency the JAES needs to avoid, admitted the European side.

One participant reminded that President Wade from Senegal had presented different proposals to develop alternative sources of energy in the last AU summit.

A European attendant rightly pointed out to the table that a certain number of issues will be unavoidable during the Summit, in light of the international calendar ahead.

Considering, for instance, that the Mexico follow-up conference on **climate change** would take place just two weeks after the Africa-EU Summit, we could hope that a joint position emerges that enables Africa and Europe to go hand in hand to Mexico. It was reminded that both Africa and Europe had managed to speak with one voice in Copenhagen and that both were marginalized.

In the same line the **UN General Assembly MDG review meeting** scheduled for September provides an opportunity to deliver on MDG by adding a supplementary effort to the conclusions adopted in New York. The EU and AU are yet to prepare their respective position and there is time to make the AU and EU converge on this matter. One participant said that if one particular MDG had to be singled out, maternal mortality should definitely be the one on which to focus. It is by far the MDG faring worst in Africa.

2010 has been designated by the UN as the year of '**Peace and Security in Africa**'. **It is indeed** a critical issue that should be added to the agenda. The developing of a joint AU-RECs-EU roadmap for the operationalisation of the **APSA** could be a clear deliverable.

In 2010 the **financial crisis** and economic growth should continue to be on the table. Some African participants correctly observed that the financial crisis may result unattractive as a topic for discussion to African leaders, since most of them are under the impression that the crisis has not affected their countries. However, **economic growth** could be an appropriate umbrella theme; it would encompass energy, infrastructure and ICT, with a special emphasis on renewable energies. One participant suggested that the theme could be taken to an even higher level: e.g. **improving the quality of life**, which will then have subcategories.

An African guest justly observed that guiding topics tend to die off after every Summit. To maximize our leaders' time, the topic of the Summit should be aligned with the objectives of the JAES, for instance, with one of the partnerships or objectives of the Action Plan. Maybe different Heads of State could be asked to introduce different topics. Other participants expressed the same concern: it is not about the theme we choose, but how we translate it into action.

As far as side events are concerned, an African speaker suggested that no more than two or three should take place, since too many would steal protagonism to the Summit.

One speaker proposed that one of the topics on the sidelines of the Summit be the **Diasporas**. The announcement of the launching of the African Remittances

Institute could constitute an excellent deliverable. The suggestion was greeted by the table. Talking Diasporas enables a genuine people-to-people, two-way, dialogue. It is both a civil society and a pan-African issue. It was agreed that a side event led by civil society on the theme of Diasporas could easily be brought into the mainstream Summit afterwards. It appears that the EC is trying to launch a European Diaspora Platform or Network. At this moment, the European citizens with African origins are organized on a national basis, which complicates the dialogue at a European level. It happens that the AUC has undertaken a similar effort, trying to establish a similar network of representatives of the Africa Diaspora in Europe. Diaspora also has a place reserved in the African Union ECOSOCC but it is difficult to make it active. Such platforms could be the ideal interlocutors. Both organizations should speed up their dialogue with the Diaspora representatives before the Summit. The table was also reminded of the need to associate the European Diaspora in Africa.

**Decentralized cooperation between local and regional authorities** could be the feature issue of another side event.

Both African and European experts frequently stressed the need for a good communication campaign before the Summit. In order to achieve more visibility, one participant suggested to associate some known faces to the Summit (artists not to be ruled out) that could introduce one of the topics.

### ***Africa, Europe and China***

During the seminar, the comparison between Europe and China and their respective stances and wagers in Africa was often brought up.

Europe, it was said, is uneasy with the rising presence of newcomers in Africa. The companies coming from Brazil, China or India are usually cheaper, faster, more competitive and attractive than European companies.

Both African and Europeans participants agreed that a new scramble for Africa has started. One African expert explained that, while Europe focuses on trade and development, the most pressing need in Africa is to develop infrastructure. All across the continent, Chinese and Indians are building roads and railways, which are the kind of enterprises that obtain greater visibility.

Another African guest alleged that China and India put more emphasis on cultural activities, so “people see the Chinese around”. China approaches Africa bottom-up, from the “grassroots”; they export as much as possible to show that China cares for Africa; they do not care much for the Summits.

However, other speakers at the table expressed their opinion that the comparison with China is much hyped by the media. The current state of development of the JAES does not do justice to the complexity of Europe-Africa

relations, which have existed long before the Lisbon Summit. A partnership, rich and fragmented, has been in place for the past fifty years. Even if it's only at a linguistic level, Europe share ties with Africa that no other continent enjoys. At any rate, more investment by other global players is beneficial for everybody. It is a kind of competition that should not be seen as a zero-sum game.

### **The JAES in 2011-2013 – Priority domains and lessons learned from the past.**

The session kicked off with an introduction by one the African experts. Africa and Europe have engaged in a far-reaching, long-lasting, relationship. It is out of the question whether we need a 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan or not. We definitely need one. First we have to look at the existing one and revise where necessary. It should be a partnership by partnership examination.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Action Plan is like a large shopping list. In the lifespan of three years is impossible to develop so many activities. One of the lessons learned is that we need to **focus on regional/continental initiatives**. There are a lot of national activities that do not contribute to the JAES visibility. In order to select projects the 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan has to abide by the African Union principles: added value, subsidiarity and complementarity.

Another issue that has become obvious to everyone is that the JEGs are not delivering much. We have found that other similar mechanisms were already doing the job, and the JEGs are not feeding into them. Thus, we equally need to **revisit the guidelines and mandate of JEGs**. The speaker did not want to delve into the JEGs since another session had been specifically programmed to discuss the JAES architecture.

Third, one of the principles behind the JAES is to have a **balance between political dialogue and the development dimension**. Right or wrong, the African side has the perception that a lot of emphasis is put on the dialogue and that the development angle is being neglected. This perception paves the way for comparisons with China, which delivers more tangible results and cares less for dialogue. Thus, we should manage to strike the right balance between political and development facets.

The next Action Plan should be drafted in the context of the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan of the AUC which has set **four strategic pillars** or areas for broad intervention: 1) Peace and Security, 2) Integration, development and cooperation; 3) Shared values 4) Institution and Capacity Building. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan must be in alignment with these strategic pillars.

Another issue we cannot lose sight of, however irritant it might be, is the question of resources. Last year at the resources workshop in Addis we

confirmed our persistent differences over resources. One African expert said that he understood the EU position; it is a very delicate matter for Europe. However, there is a compromise on the progressive setting of a **Pan-African envelope**. For the time being, we have to focus on what is possible within the IX and X EDF.

Shortfalls have also been detected regarding **ownership**. RECs and the private sector do not know of the JAES or do not find it worthwhile. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan should address this issue as well.

A European guest picked up the question of political dialogue versus development. He was in agreement with the previous speaker that a right balance should be struck between both elements. He considered building on the African documents a good idea. In regard to the question of bringing in more stakeholders he stressed the need to not become obsessed with it. In the end much of the implementation corresponds to the institutions.

Another European participant stressed the necessity to turn towards the regions. There is a lack of commitment of regional and national stakeholders with the continent as such. He said that “sometimes one has the impression of struggling with the void”. (*The role of RECs was further discussed in another session*).

At this point one African attendant pointed out to the European side that, after all, the EU wants to work individually with the countries at the national level. “You don’t want to mix dimensions. You have signed regional strategic alliances”. It is small wonder then, that African Member States lose interest in working at a continental level.

Another European expert agreed that a long list of things to do was not needed. Regional and continental level gives the JAES more visibility.

Regarding the thorny **issue of financing**, a European expert came up with a fortunate image to describe the current funding situation. The EU has endless drawers from where to draw out the money, such as the African Peace Facility, the successive EDF, the Infrastructure Trust Fund, etc. Not always is this conglomerate of resources a coherent one. It has ended up being a sort of “Chinese cupboard”, difficult to understand both to Europeans and Africans. Maybe the new European architecture born in Lisbon could help to clarify the funding mechanisms. In this sense, the new EU delegations could serve as a one stop door for African partners, so that irrespective of where the money comes from, for the Africans it will be a single European window.



## **The political importance of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership in the EU's new external action setup.**

This session was devoted to explain to the table how the EU's new external action set up could influence the JAES. Some novelties were explained to the African interlocutors, which were reminded that some time had to pass before the new bodies were fully-fledged.

It was explained that from now on there will be just one person representing the EU as a whole, with its single legal personality. The disappearance of the troika raised doubts in the African side. Since the African formal troika was created to mirror the EU Troika, the new composition of the EU delegation at the Political Dialogue meeting could entail a rearrangement of the African delegation. The African side will discuss the new composition of their delegation. The next AU-EU Political Dialogue due to take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April in Luxembourg will constitute the first opportunity to see these changes in action.

It was reminded that, for the time being, the changes applied only to the Ministerial level. For the senior level the EU delegation in Luxembourg would be the same as in the previous troikas; however, it is envisaged to have a single service in the future.

An EU participant expressed his hope that the new framework would ensure a much more comprehensive approach. Both the military and civilian aspects will be dealt with by the same politician. The delimitation of responsibilities in regard to development was still under consideration (an African guest feared that this may lead to a slow progress of the JAES). The EU foreign policy will become more personal and less bureaucratic. The African side will probably perceive a shift of the gravity point from the EU Member States to the European institutions.

At the capitals level, the former European Commission Delegations have been replaced by reinforced EU delegations. The tasks and the staff of the Delegations will remain more or less the same in the near future. The African partners need not to worry about this.

## **The JAES in 2011-2013 – A revised institutional and operational architecture.**

***Same Partnerships, less and better-oriented priorities.***

The functionality of the current architecture of the JAES was discussed at length. The *Non Paper* by the Spanish Presidency “*EU suggestions to improve the implementation of the Joint EU-Africa Strategy in view of a possible updated Action Plan beyond 2010*” was produced at the meeting and served as a guide to the discussions.

There was a broad consensus that a new improved **Action Plan was needed**. The question of reducing or not the number of thematic partnerships was posed to the group. Everybody accepted that partnerships are faring unevenly, being the Peace and Security one the most successful to the date. It was acknowledged that some Partnerships are of no interest to African and European countries. However, it was accepted that eliminating one or two partnerships would complicate the draft of the new Action Plan. Accordingly, **the eight thematic partnerships in place should remain as main areas of cooperation**. On the contrary, the current 22 priority actions (and many more activities within) were excessive. They should be reduced to a more manageable number. A reiterative demand by many speakers was that priority should be given **to projects of continental or regional scale**.

### ***The role and reform of the JEGs.***

The **reform of the Joint Expert Groups (JEGs)** was unanimously deemed to be key to the success of any 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan. Both African and European agreed that the JEGs had achieved little in the course of the last three years. Even when **valuable achievements** had existed, these **could not really be ascribed to the JEGs**. The JEGs are in most cases mere spectators of what is already being carried forward “elsewhere”, they do not feed into other processes and are disconnected to mainstream activities.

Despite their informality, JEGs shoulder alone much of the responsibility for carrying forward the JAES. In the practice, **JEGs cope with too many tasks**: They are expected to 1) Do the “clearinghouse”, that is to say, the mapping of all activities already going on –a task that ties up much of their time 2) Discuss and identify the gaps where demand does not meet an appropriate supply 3) Make programming decisions 4) Provide the chance of people-to-people encounters 5) Report of all the abovementioned activities to the upper level. The JEG is at the same time a mechanism for preparing and programming policies, and a forum for dialogue and discussion. Some are monitoring, others are more operational. In the future the mandate could be differentiated. Moreover, the chairpersons cannot rely on any logistic or administrative support. The accumulation of duties amounts to “a mission impossible”. It would take a whole team of full time devoted officials to the JAES to successfully conduct a JEG.

One participant narrated his rather **frustrating experience as co-chair** of one of the JEGs. In fifteen months he had managed to convene only two meetings. They started considering thirty-three activities from which they had selected just five with true pan-African value, and of those five they had barely touched upon two of them. Most of the time he could not even reach his fellow co-chair by telephone or e-mail. There had been no communication among counterparts whatsoever. Some countries did not even show up at the meetings. *Implementation Teams* inside one of the Partners did not work much better.

Another guest that had co-chaired one of the groups expressed his **JEG-weariness** in similar terms.

One of the subjacent problems, explained one participant, is that JEGs were made informal to assure their inclusiveness. The idea then was to bring in experts. This informality has proven to be detrimental to the overall performing of the JEGs. The quality of attendants had been below the expected. Member States do not care to send true experts to what are perceived to be mere workshops without real importance. They prefer to delegate on Embassies to cover the meetings. Unfortunately, the expertise lies at the national level. A speaker suggested that the 1M USD fund allocated to financing the travel expenses of African experts was not being appropriately administered by the AUC.

For such reasons it seemed evident to all participants that **reviewing the mandate and guidelines of the JEG is key to any 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan**. Ensuring a very fluid and regular communication of the co-chairs with both Commission services was important. A small secretariat team based in Addis and Brussels can unload the chairs from administrative chores and warrants a good preparation of the meetings. As to participants, it is crucial that eager experts from different countries engage in the meetings.

An innovative angle was opened when a participant suggested that **some Partnership could make do without a JEG**. In some areas the existence of a JEG does not seem to show added value. This is the case of the Peace and Security partnership where the Joint Cooperation Committee within the APF could do the job. Three conditions must concur prior to suppress a JEG: a) An existing alternative body must exist 2) This body can deliver on the JAES 3) It has to include all relevant stakeholders. In the medium term each partnership should be examined to see if there is a body capable of performing better than the JEGs. In the meanwhile, a better defined mandate, complementary to other mechanisms, was needed.

Some experts suggested promptly tasking the JEGS with inventoring the structures in place in their respective domains, so as to work out how the JEGS can fit in. It is an urgent job since we only have nine months ahead of us to discuss the peculiarities of each partnership.

A speaker expressed a less gloomy view of the JEGS. Quite a number of results achieved by JEG came down to the national level. There are activities that not many people knew about, not even experts. Many projects have started but are still underway. A small secretariat is already in place in three partnerships.

In conclusion, no expert disputed the need to **reduce the scope of the JEGs**. Instead of 90 activities, JEGS should stick to two or three activities that are not already being implemented. These should be aligned with African priorities and linked to the “show in town”, that is to say, the normal processes within United Nations, African Union or NEPAD. Finally it should be decided whether the JEG is a policy supplier, in charge of defining the gaps in a determined field, or a forum for discussion.

### **The JAES in 2011-2013 – Mobilizing Member States, RECs and Civil Society.**

It was the spirit of the Lisbon Summit to take EU-Africa relations “beyond institutions”. During the next session the table entertained a frank and fruitful discussion on how to overcome the lack of commitment of non-institutional stakeholders to the JAES.

One African speaker said that to lure the **RECs** into the JAES we had to persuade them that it is their interest to join the Strategy. The RECs must have a reason to adhere to the JAES. This is the reason why the Action Plan should pursue regional initiatives which can attract the RECs. For the AU, he added, the RECs are not a goal in themselves, but a means towards continental integration.

The European side regretted that RECs were absent from most of the meetings and structures. RECs are a reality. They have genuine competences in fields like immigration or peace. Nothing regional could be achieved without the RECs on board.

The potential contradiction on wanting to treat Africa as one, and at the same time signing strategic individual alliances with the RECs, was underlined. Additionally, RECs and the AU tend to compete and distrust each other. The way to overcome this dichotomy is for the institutions to abide by three principles: competitive advantage, complementarity and subsidiarity. Good will is required in both ways.

Involving the **private sector in the JAES** is essential. Europe and Africa will not have succeeded in transforming their relationship until they get the big investor on board, it was said. The question of the private sector is a win-win equation. For Africa, the private sector was needed mostly to develop

infrastructure. The European locomotive can make Africa advance, and then Europe will have a return from Africa development.

It was admitted that the last Europe-Africa business forum in Addis was a fiasco. The principal flaw of the forum is that it only included sub-Saharan countries. An African guest said that Europe should not encourage divisive fora. All the African countries should be part of it. Maybe a side event gathering the principal business leaders and private investors in Africa could be organized on the sidelines of the Summit so they can give some hints on how to make business more attractive in Africa. It was also reminded to the table that the topic of the 2010 France-Africa Summit was precisely private investment.

A European expert pointed out the difficulties of European companies operating in Africa, and their usual complaints regarding legal security and political interference. The table recognised that Africa is not a homogenous economic market. The economic philosophy of countries varies substantially even in the same region. Some of them are liberal business friendly economies while other nations are more prone to public intervention. An African guest mentioned an African Union study that showed that usually the countries willing to reform along the IMF or WB guidelines were not the ones awarded with more investment.

A European participant advocated for a wider concept of **civil society**. Up until now, the European civil society has been “NGO dominated”. A wider concept is needed in order that “the civil society whose job is not to be civil society” (e.g. the professional associations) has a stake in the improvement of the JAES.

It was added that some times “professional” civil society considers that its duty is to lobby the institutions. It should not be this way. Their role is to contribute with their professional capacity to the partnership. They can tell us what the institutions are doing wrong or what important aspects are being neglected.

On the African side, the participation of the civil society is channelled through the ECOSOCC. It is the ECOSOCC who selects the representatives of the civil society attending the Summit. Members of the ECOSOCC are required to meet certain criteria laid out in the statutes. Non-members of the ECOSOCC can work in different working committees, but only ECOSOCC members attend the Summit. A discussion on the inclusiveness of the ECOSOCC ensued. An African guest expressed his opinion that restrictions are imposed “because certain Member States do not want to see certain players in the institutions”. As a result the European civil societies sometimes do not have the right African counterparts. The legitimacy of ECOSOCC and the need to respect each partner’s structures was reiterated.

A European guest said that the problem is not who participates on behalf of the civil society, but rather that they do not participate enough. The challenge is how to enhance more active participation.

### **The III Summit– Possible challenges.**

The Seminar was wrapped up with some swift remarks on the possible challenges (which some speakers preferred to call irritants). Everyone remembered how the attendance of Mr. Mugabe to the Lisbon Summit had complicated the preparations of the meeting.

When it comes to irritants, there are two approaches, it was said: 1) Trying to avoid them 2) Tackling the problem. In the road to Lisbon the issue of Mr. Mugabe and the EPAs were on the table. Europe and Africa discussed them and that alone constituted a deliverable.

One European participant brought up the possible attendance of the President of Sudan to the Summit and the problems it could entail. It was not worth trying to convince each other, but to know the consequences in advance and avoid a lose-lose situation. Surely universal jurisdiction will reappear in the Summit and so will the EPAS.

An African guest said that partners don't shy away from irritants. If problems are foreseen they should be tackled in advance. However, brainstorming in a friendly setting did not have much sense. We have to decide at what level it is best to discuss these matters.