

**Press Release _____/2017****African Union and EU delegations in meetings to discuss 3 important areas under their partnership**

Addis Ababa, 15 November 2017- Trade and Industry Commissioner Albert M. Muchanga, yesterday, received the President of Estonia, Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid, at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. Ms. Kaljulaid is also the President of the Council of the European Union (EU), while Commissioner Muchanga was acting on behalf of Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat, who is out of Addis Ababa on official business.

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on a wide range of issues, including peace and security, the Continental Free Trade Area, as well as digital economy and information and communication technologies (ICT).

Commissioner Muchanga lauded the partnership between the African Union and the European Union and the continued joint efforts by the two institutions to address common challenges. He looked forward to the successful holding of the African Union-European Union Summit in Abidjan on 29 and 30 November 2017. He briefed Ms. Kaljulaid on the Continental Free Trade Area, one of the Flagship Projects of Agenda 2063, under its First Ten-Year Implementation Plan.

Discussions also included the ongoing efforts by the G5 Sahel countries to fully operationalize their Joint Force, which offers a decisive path in the fight against terrorism and organised crime in the Sahel. The African Union delegation expressed appreciation for the support availed by the European Union and called for further efforts to mobilise additional resources for the Joint Force, especially in the context of the Donors Conference scheduled to take place in Brussels in mid-December 2017.

Regarding digital economy and ICT, the Estonian President was briefed about key African Union initiatives, such as the Pan-African e-Governance Academy, which will benefit from experience gained in Estonia, among other countries, and efforts in the

area of cyber-security, including the Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection, adopted in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014.

On her part, Ms. Kaljulaid expressed appreciation for the African Union Commission's efforts, and highlighted the importance of continued efforts to enhance co-operation between Africa and Europe. She pledged her country's commitment to share relevant experiences with the African Union, including on digital economy and ICT, adding that e-governance is the highway to development.

A Memorandum of Understanding to promote e-governance will be signed between the African Union Commission and Estonia on the margins of the 5th African Union-European Union Summit.

The meeting was attended, from the African Union side, by Economic Affairs Commissioner Victor Harrison, as well as by other officials. The Estonian delegation included Mr. Sander Soone, Ambassador of Estonia to Ethiopia and to the African Union, and Ms. Kristel Lõuk, Head of Foreign Relations Department, Office of the President, as well as by other officials.



Notes to the Editor:

The AU-EU partnership is based on shared values and aims at promoting common interests and achieving shared strategic objectives. It strives to bring Africa and Europe closer together through the strengthening of economic cooperation and the promotion of sustainable development, with both continents living side by side in peace, security, democracy, prosperity, solidarity and human dignity.

The 5th AU-EU Summit will take place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 29 to 30 November 2017 under the theme "Investing in Youth for a Sustainable Future".

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