

José Socrates Carvalho Pinto de Sousa  
Prime Minister of Portugal  
Presidency of the European Union

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Ref: B728

Dear Mr Socrates,

**EU – Africa summit: fulfilling the promises on concrete outcomes**

During the consultation process on the development of the EU-Africa Strategy, Amnesty International has made a number of written and oral contributions regarding regional human rights priorities and the need for reciprocity in the human rights discourse between Europe and Africa. Some of these are reflected in the final document, namely:

- the need to strengthen African regional architecture for the protection of human rights, such as the African Court for Human and People's Rights and the African Commission for Human and People's Rights;
- the need for more effective inter-regional co-operation on human rights in the UN Human Rights Council and other international fora; and
- the need for the EU and the AU to work together to build the effectiveness of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Nevertheless, the final document is disappointing, in that it appears to have missed the opportunity to bring greater coherence in the wide range of EU policies on Africa that, directly or indirectly, all concern human rights. Seen from outside, the EU's activity in different, but linked, fields such as foreign policy; trade; development; security, and migration, is confusing and can sometimes appear contradictory. This lack of complementarity and coherence compromises the impact of policies undertaken in all these areas, both individually and collectively.

The EU-Africa summit will adopt the final EU-Africa strategy and mark the beginning of the process of implementation. With support and commitment from both sides, implementation of this new phase in the EU-AU partnership still represents a chance to improve policy co-ordination and coherence.

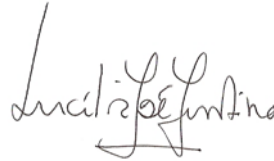
However the forthcoming summit cannot simply be a milestone in the development of a new agreement. With so many European and African leaders around the table, it must also deal with substance. Amnesty International will hold a public event, today in Lisbon, highlighting the crises in the Darfur region and in Zimbabwe, which should be addressed by the EU-Africa summit two days later. The EU has a clear commitment, set out in the EU guidelines on human rights dialogues, to raising human rights concerns with third countries in all relevant fora.

The credibility of this commitment is put to the test by this unique opportunity to push for progress in situations where gross and systematic human rights violations are taking place in the full knowledge of the international community. In particular, given the reference in the new EU Africa strategy to better co-operation on building an effective ICC, as an absolute minimum, the failure of the Sudanese government to surrender key ICC suspects must be raised.

Yours sincerely,



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Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations

Riina Kionka, High Representative's Personal Representative for Human Rights