



Building International and Regional Consensus

Policy Dialogue Report:

1st BIC Sudan and South Sudan On the Occasion of the Visit of the EU's Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan Amb. Rosalind Marsden 27 July 2012

FIRST SESSION

EU perspectives & engagements on Sudan and South Sudan, with Ambassador Rosalind Marsden, EU Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan



(From Left to Right): Clever Chikwanda (SALO researcher) making welcoming comments; participants at the BIC; and Ambassador Roeland Van der Geer (EU Ambassador to South Africa) introducing Ambassador Rosalind Marsden

SALO convened a Building International Consensus (BIC) meeting attended by 83 participants focusing on the Sudan and South Sudan on the 27 July 2012 at Burgers Park Hotel, Pretoria.

SALO researcher Clever Chikwanda welcomed everyone to SALO's first BIC workshop on Sudan and South Sudan. Ambassador Roeland Van der Geer (EU Ambassador to South Africa) then introduced the first speaker, Ambassador Rosalind Marsden, European Union (EU)'s Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan.

Ambassador Marsden began her talk by affirming that the EU and South Africa have many shared concerns in terms of peace and security in Africa, and that for the EU, Sudan and South Sudan are one of the top priorities on the African continent. By way of background, she highlighted four reasons why Sudan and South Sudan are important for the EU:



- Conflict between Sudan and South Sudan could cause instability in the wider region. The long civil war in Sudan has had very negative spill-over effects on virtually all Sudan's neighbours, and also prevented regional integration;
- There are devastating humanitarian consequences. In the civil war between the North and South, some two million people are estimated to have died, and many more were displaced. Even today there are nearly two million people living in IDP camps in Darfur, and another three and a half million dependent on some form of humanitarian assistance. Since the conflict started last June in the Southern Kordofan State of Sudan, subsequently spreading to Blue Nile State in September, 200,000 people have fled as refugees into South Sudan and Ethiopia. In addition in South Sudan there has also been continuing inter-communal violence, particularly in Jonglei State earlier this year.
- The EU and some of its member states were witnesses to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005 and therefore try to invest heavily in supporting the implementation of that agreement, through political, financial and technical support.
- Some EU member states, particularly the United Kingdom, have got long historical connections with the Sudans, which have created strong people-to-people links and there is a significant Sudanese diaspora in Europe.

On the EU's engagement with Sudan and South Sudan, for a long time the EU had been providing and currently continued to provide humanitarian assistance, its programme for the two Sudans being one of the EU's largest humanitarian operations. In 2011, the EU provided some 140 million Euros in humanitarian assistance, and this year 87 million Euros (with that amount being likely to increase).

Following the CPA's signing in 2005, the EU also resumed development assistance to Sudan. However with the Government of Sudan deciding not to ratify the revised Cotonou Agreement, the main framework for the EU's development assistance to the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, she stated that this has caused a complication in the development relationship, "but we are continuing to provide some development support for vulnerable populations in conflict affected areas, particularly in Eastern Sudan, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and Darfur."

In South Sudan, the EU and its member states are collectively one of the largest donors - the EU has committed 280 million Euros, with this amount likely to increase this year in the light of growing humanitarian challenges. The focus of this development assistance is on basic services, education, health, rural development, food security, and rule of law. The EU is also interested in strengthening civil society organisations in both Sudans.

Ambassador Marsden explained that in the run-up to the secession of South Sudan in 2011, the EU decided to adopt 'a comprehensive approach, which meant continued engagement with the governments of both countries to pursue its policy objectives, including supporting a negotiated settlement to outstanding CPA issues. To this end the EU decided to try to use all the instruments at its disposal - political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, stabilisation, and support for human rights - in a coherent and joined-up fashion.

To operationalise this approach she regularly briefs the EU Peace and Security Committee in Brussels composed of Ambassadors from the twenty-seven EU Member States on the latest developments in Sudan and South Sudan. They can then collectively discuss and decide the EU's policy response. The High Representative for European Foreign Policy and Security Policy, Baroness Ashton, regularly issues policy statements on Sudan and South Sudan, which set out EU positions on specific issues, and reflect the views of member states.

The EU has also been actively engaged in international efforts to try to resolve the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan. They have been providing political, financial and technical support to the African Union (AU) High Level Implementation Panel led by the former President of South Africa Thabo Mbeki.

Some of the challenges that the EU faces, she explained, involve firstly, that Sudan and South Sudan were very rapidly approaching the 2 August 2012 deadline set out in the AU roadmap of 24 April 2012, and endorsed by the United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 2046 on 2 May 2012. Although,

“...we currently have an unprecedented degree of international consensus in support of the roadmap. The fact that the African Union adopted the roadmap with a clear set of timelines and very specific steps that the parties should take, was a significant step forward, and the fact that the Security Council unanimously endorsed that roadmap by fifteen votes with no abstentions, was also evidence of this consensus, and I think a remarkable achievement, and I would like to acknowledge South Africa’s role in this...The European Union stands strongly behind the roadmap of the African Union and the Resolution 2046...The experience that we have had to date suggests that the international community is most effective on the Sudan and South Sudan dossier when we can speak with one voice and when we have a united approach.”

She believed that underlying this consensus was a profound concern by the international community about the escalation of tension in the volatile border area between the two Sudans, particularly in April this year; and a feeling that after two years of negotiations under the auspices of the AU High Level Implementation Panel, the parties would not by themselves be able to reach agreement without firmer encouragement from the international community.

Ambassador Marsden informed the group that when European Foreign Ministers met at the Foreign Affairs Council in Brussels on 23 July 2012, they agreed on a clear set of conclusions urging both Sudans to implement the roadmap fully and unconditionally before the 2 August deadline.

She acknowledged that the roadmap had so far produced some positive results. This included a significant reduction in cross-border security incidents, the withdrawal of Sudanese and South Sudanese forces from Abiye - with the exception of the Sudanese oil police - and also the resumption of talks between the parties in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the panel. However, the parties were still a long way from full implementation. The Government of Sudan for example, had not yet accepted the map defining the safe demilitarised border zone, which was stipulated in both the AU Roadmap and Resolution 2046.

The Ambassador stated that within the last few days there was possibly some encouraging movement in the talks in Addis Ababa. South Sudan produced a detailed comprehensive proposal on friendly relations and cooperation; Sudan responded on a number of issues, and the talks finally started, not only regarding security but on a wider range of issues including the disputed border area of Abiye and others. The Mbeki Panel was also hoping to be able to bring the two Presidents, Presidents Bashir and Salva Kiir, together again to meet before the end of the month.

She stated that another important priority for the EU is to end the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States. Fighting there has been on-going for over a year and the humanitarian situation is extremely grave. Refugees from Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States were fleeing across the border into South Sudan and into Ethiopia in tens of thousands.

It is also imperative that Sudan and the SPLM North re-start political talks to try to address the underlying causes of the conflict and the outstanding political and security arrangements. An agreement was reached between the National Congress Party and the SPLM North in June 2011, but the Government of Sudan had backed away from the agreement.

“We hope that we can get back to the basic principles underlying that. We strongly believe and made clear to both sides that there can be no military solution to this conflict...It’s difficult to see how there can be a resolution to the conflict and the problems between Sudan and South Sudan as long as the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States continue.”

Her latest reports indicated that discussions have now started on the issue of humanitarian assistance based on the tri-partite proposal put forward in February by the UN, the league of Arab States and the AU. It was very much the EU’s hope that this will lead to rapid agreement on implementation modalities and that it will be possible for humanitarian assistance to be delivered to the rebel-controlled areas by neutral and impartial humanitarian agencies.

Turning then to Darfur, she noted that there were large numbers of people still living in displaced people’s camps, with high levels of banditry by unarmed groups, and still some clashes between the government and rebel forces. Humanitarian access continued to be restricted particularly in rebel-held areas including the Jebel Marra.

The EU supported the efforts made by the UN, the AU and the Government of Qatar to promote and negotiate a political settlement between the Government of Sudan and the Darfuri armed movements. The Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (DDPD), signed one year ago between the Government of Sudan and one of the Darfur Rebel groups - the Liberation and Justice Movement - was seen as a positive step towards reaching a comprehensive and inclusive peace settlement.

As the EU representative on the Implementation Follow up Commission, which oversees the implementation process, Ambassador Marsden observed that:

“the pace of implementation has been disappointingly slow and the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur has not yet brought any peace dividends for the people of Darfur, which is of course what we most want to see. At the moment the prospects for making the Doha Document more comprehensive and inclusive by bringing the other main Darfuri rebel groups on board are not looking good, because the three main rebel movements who are non-signatories, the Sudan Liberation Army led by Abdul Wahid, the Sudan Liberation Army led by Mini Minawee, and the Justice and Equality Movement, these three groups have united with the SPLM North in the Sudan Revolutionary Front. They are insisting on regime change and so there seems to be no immediate prospect of turning the DDPD into a comprehensive peace agreement, so that is the situation on Darfur.”

On the internal situation on Sudan and South Sudan, she recognised that both countries are facing very serious economic difficulties, including rapidly rising inflation and food prices; depreciation of their currencies; a wide gap emerging between the official and the black market exchange rates; and a shortage of foreign exchange. Hence both governments in recent weeks introduced austerity measures, which in turn resulted in a wave of anti-government demonstrations in Khartoum and other towns in Sudan over the last month.

The Government of Sudan has said that it plans to hold an inclusive National Constitutional Review process. She explained that it is not yet clear how this will be taken forward particularly with the on-going conflicts in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur, and also the existence of a state of emergency in a number of areas in the country.

In South Sudan there is an extremely serious economic crisis following the decision of its government at the beginning of the year to shut down all its oil production. This followed steps taken by the Government of Sudan to confiscate South Sudanese oil exports at Port Sudan. The Ambassador felt this was a very drastic step, because oil accounts for 98% of the South Sudanese government's overall revenue.

Q&A on the First Session

Ambassador Van der Geer then opened the floor for comments and questions:



Braam Hanekom (PASSOP) posed the question of whether the EU, SADC, and the UN have a common position on how to resolve the crisis and to what extent are those who are trying to play the role of advisory partners in the situation working well together? Are there any elements that could be strengthened in terms of partnership in the region or globally around what position to push for in Sudan and South Sudan?

Salah Ali (Embassy of Sudan, Chargé d'affaires) commented that: Sudan had refused to ratify the revised Cotonou Agreement for reasons which are known to the EU and the AU, because that fund was politically conditioned; the Sudanese government has ever been ready to talk and to negotiate; they have accepted Resolution 2046, although it is not 100% clear and are therefore negotiating; they have also accepted the AU roadmap despite their reservations on all the maps that were presented by the AU High Level Implementation Panel; and that discussions were being held on the tri-partite initiative of the UN, the Arab League and the AU, as well as on the tariff around the passage of oil.

Sabil Ibrahim (SPLM North) commented that the day before yesterday the Sudan People's Liberation Movement North sent a delegate to Addis to implement the roadmap of the humanitarian crisis in the Blue Nile and Nubba Mountains, but that the Khartoum Government refused to meet with them, saying that they need to impose a political solution first. He also posed the question that whereas the "Responsibility to Protect" was abused by NATO's entry into Libya, can it be implemented as a peaceful way in which people's lives can be saved?

James Ernest Onge (Representative from the Embassy of South Sudan) commented that: the first priority is to prevent a return to war, and therefore there must be a cessation of hostilities; South Sudan has totally accepted the AU roadmap proposal and also talk about the need for a time-bound final international arbitration process for the peaceful resolution of the remaining outstanding issues; they also suggest that the AU and the UN conduct a referendum by the end of the year for Abiyei; South Sudan wants the oil to flow immediately, has proposed this in Addis Ababa, and are waiting for Sudan to accept with a reasonable transit rate. Furthermore he stated:

Otherwise we in South Sudan want to live in peace, because we have suffered a lot and we want development, we want development in our place rather than war...We also request our brothers in the Sudan to think of the common population, a lot of people are dying...yesterday I heard from the representative of the SPLM North that 150 people are dying per day in Kordofan and Southern Blue Nile. Is it helpful to us?...I think a peaceful

solution is better, and we want the EU to put pressure on us - on both sides - so that we reach a peaceful solution in the Sudan and South Sudan, for comprehensive peace, not partial peace. We want peace with the Sudan...then there'll be peace in the entire surrounding area.

Ambassador Marsden reiterated that the AU roadmap and the Security Council Resolution provide an extremely strong platform for the EU, UN and the African partners – such as the AU, SADC as well as “another particularly relevant sub-regional organisation...which was closely involved in the negotiation” of the CPA, the IGAD – to work together.

In response to the Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Sudan, she responded that the EU's understanding was that the issue of the map which is specified in the roadmap is still posing an obstacle in operationalising the establishment of the safety militarised border zone and the establishment of joint border verification and monitoring mission.

On humanitarian access and the discussions in Addis, the Ambassador took note of what the SPLM North representative said about the current situation, and added that:

“I think as far as we are concerned, we saw the tripartite proposal put forward by the UN, the African Union and the League of Arab States as an attempt to address some of the concerns of the Government of Sudan, and we would've hoped that this could've been accepted and implemented a lot sooner. However, now that the delegations are in Addis, we very much hope that without any further delay, it could be agreed to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all civilians in conflict affected areas, to start by, as I said earlier, independent and neutral humanitarian agencies...as far as we're concerned this is probably one of the most urgent issues because so many lives are at stake.”

The Ambassador thanked the representative of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan for his remarks:

“In particular, I very much welcome your emphasis on your commitment to live in peace with your neighbours in Sudan...We particularly hope that these negotiations in Addis Ababa will succeed so that both governments will be able to reduce the very high proportion of their budget which they currently spend on military and security expenditure and will be able to redirect that towards improving the wealth and services made available to their respective populations.”

SECOND SESSION

The role of external actors and conflict resolution in Africa, with Ambassador Lindiwe Zulu, International Relations Advisor to the South African President Jacob Zuma



Carmen Smidt, the African National Congress (ANC)'s International Relations Manager for South-South Cooperation introduced the second speaker, Ambassador Lindiwe Zulu. Ambassador Zulu is the International Relations Advisor to the South African President and member of the ANC's NEC as well as the ANC's International Relations Subcommittee.

Ambassador Zulu gave her talk from the perspective that since 1994, South Africa's foreign policy position has been that

“without peace, security and stability on the continent it is very difficult to speak about development”.

In the pursuit of the creation of peace, security and stability on the continent, the process of assisting countries that are in conflict cannot be done in isolation; and neither can South Africa impose solutions on other countries. She explained that,

“[w]e have always moved from a point of view that the best that we can do is work with the local people, to work with the people of that country, but more than anything else, try and bring together those that are in conflict around a table...we have always believed that the best way of resolving conflict is to sit around the table and talk about those challenges.”



She recalled the historical turn in the ANC’s decision to take up arms in the 1960s, while simultaneously “never clos[ing] the door for possibilities of peaceful solutions”. In the mid-1980s,

“...the leadership of the African National Congress at that time reminded us in no uncertain terms that the route to a peaceful solution - when the African National Congress decided to take up arms - was never closed and now the opportunity for us to come and sit around the table and find a peaceful solution to the South African conflict had come. And I think what is important for us to note with this kind of approach, is that even when we were in Angola doing our military training, the African National Congress always made sure that political education of the cadres who were training in the camp was much more important than holding of the gun...”

Ambassador Zulu emphasised the point that a very strong political commitment and political will to create peace, security and stability is essential in order to resolve conflict:

“I’m bringing this element here today, to this discussion, simply because I have in my thinking...that if you have a very strong political commitment, a very strong political will to decide on certain processes, you need to stick to processes.”

The issue of the lack of leadership, political commitment and political will in terms of implementation of agreements that have been signed, and individual or narrow interests usurping broader national interests was seen as an all too common occurrence:

“It is usually the challenge on the continent, where you have to make the separation between an agreed roadmap to solving a particular process and individual interests of leaders in those conflicts. As South Africa, we insist and we keep on pushing this point that, when leaders sign off agreements, they do not sign off on those agreements on their own behalf and for themselves. They sign off on those agreements on behalf of the people...who have confidence in them, and it is up to the leaders to maintain that confidence, and the only way that they can maintain that confidence is by making sure that they implement those decisions...I think that this is one of the biggest challenges that Africa faces. It’s an issue of leadership, and an issue of leadership that remains committed to decisions that they make.”

She identified another major challenge facing the continent as the ability to create space for ‘African solutions to African problems’. In this she differentiated between ‘external interference’

and ‘international support’, the latter having been the “fourth pillar” of South Africa’s liberation struggle. For example, although South Africa received international support in its negotiations with the apartheid state,

“we were very clear about the fact that the end product of our negotiations is going to be informed by our own internal engagements...The whole process of negotiations was done by South Africans for South Africans, it was an African solution to an African problem, but that didn’t mean that we didn’t get international support.”

When South Africa engages in conflict areas, she explained, it also strives to ensure that either of two kinds of processes are involved: South Africa is requested by a particular country to assist in the peace process; or South Africa, through organisations such as SADC or the AU, is requested to assist in the peace process, often in collaboration with other African countries, in some instances with the international community or within individual bilateral relationship frameworks.

“[W]henever we engage ourselves in assisting in any conflict area, we must be informed by the conditions of that particular country. We must be informed by what the people of that particular country want. We must be informed by agreements which those particular countries also decide they are going to take their process through....we do not go in there and impose what we think the solution should be of any given conflict...Also, in that process, we respect processes of other institutions on the continent, regional institutions under SADC...other regional bodies within the continent, we are also informed by and respect the decisions which are taken by those regional bodies in assisting those countries which are in conflict, to make sure that there is implementation of the agreements that they have signed.”

In terms of external players, Ambassador Zulu distinguished between those who want to assist for humanitarian and/or developmental reasons, and those who do so because they have their own separate agendas. She gave the example of the recent election of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as the Chair of the African Union Commission.

“...we did come across from time to time, situations where because some of our countries are entirely dependent on external role-players, they were finding it very difficult to take a very principled position that says we are voting for this person because we want to vote for this person. They had to weigh up the options, if we vote for her are we still going to be able to get what we’ve been getting from some role-players. We did come across even leaders themselves saying this is not a very easy thing...from the point of view of the fact that we need to look at the external role-players.”

Another example was the role of the AU - an institution with structures specifically designed to assist in finding solutions to conflicts on the continent - and external players in Libya:

“...there were quite a number of external role players who were not just looking at resolving the conflict through the eyes or through the plan or through the roadmap of the AU. They were looking at resolving the conflict where at the end of the day, they would benefit more than the AU itself or the country. That is why we are finding ourselves in a situation today, where we thought the intervention of external forces in Libya would bring peace. It did not bring peace....we believe that had the AU also been given an opportunity to implement its roadmap, maybe we would not be in the situation which we are in today.”

Other examples and experiences she mentioned involved processes around conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda, and the DRC.

“...it is important for external role-players at all times when engaging in the continent, particularly in conflict areas, it should be an involvement on the basis of what the people on the ground want, first and foremost. Secondly, it should be on the basis of what the regional bodies are saying about that conflict. Thirdly, it has to also be about what the African Union is saying about how we can resolve those conflicts.”

At the same time, she acknowledged that there are also capacity challenges and weaknesses within the continent’s and region’s institutions. And this was an area where support, not interference, would be welcomed:

“So the role of external role-players is to assist us in capacitating the institutions that are supposed to assist in finding solutions, particularly in conflict countries...The role of external players is also, once there is peace in a given country, to help us in the reconstruction and development of that country.”

In conclusion Ambassador Zulu thanked the international community, “for any positive role that they play in Africa, particularly in finding peaceful solutions to conflict,” while reminding them in the advice that:

“Having said so, we also would like to say it would be much more effective, much more useful if that external input that is coming from the outside is informed, more than anything else, by Africans themselves. If it is also informed by the very institutions that Africans have tried to put together to assist the situation, when it is also informed by general principles which are enshrined in the United Nations Charter and enshrined in many other international agreements, if it is informed by that, it is highly appreciated. When it is informed by individual countries’ sole interests, it becomes a big problem for the African continent and I hope that from time to time we will come back again, and have these kinds of discussions and even go deeper and begin to take individual countries, take individual organisations, and deal with them and look into how they are assisting, if at all they are assisting.”

Q&A on the Second Session

Ms Smidt then opened the floor for comments and questions, including the following amongst other:

A guest from the University of Witwatersrand commented, “[i]s it not time for us to strongly communicate to the world, in words and in action, our desire to make Africa and its resources benefit Africa primarily, then maybe the world?”

Olivier Richard (French Embassy) posed the questions of whether it is not possible that some of the African countries may have used alleged outside influence as an excuse to cover up the fact that they did not want to back Ms Dlamini-Zuma for AU Chair; and whether Ambassador Zulu believed there are some states which truly behave or act on the international scene only for humanitarian aims?

Braam Hanekom (PASSOP) queried about the treatment of homosexuals on the continent and of refugees in other countries in the region in terms of regional and cross-border solutions, and whether South Africa was advocating enough for those human rights violations to be respected

beyond its borders? He also wondered whether the AU, SADC and leaders in the region are accountable enough to civil society and to people themselves or only to each other in some contexts?

Sabir Ibrahim (SPLM North) enquired about South Africa's position after the 2 August 2012 deadline, and about any policy alternatives to avoid sanctions such as under the UN Security Council?

Richard Smith (Action Support Centre & SALO Board) asked about what some of the key priorities will be for South Africa in terms of the next few months and the next couple of years with respect to strengthening the AU.

In response, Ambassador Zulu agreed that while there is not a country in the world that does not look at its own internal interests, or have its own agenda, what is needed and being called for is a mind shift and change, because if countries continue to work only for themselves, given the state of interdependencies on the continent and internationally, the whole world was at risk.

On the question of external interference, the Ambassador stated that the bottom line question is:

“how do we deal with it in order to change it? How do we ensure that finally at some point Africans will feel that we are free to take this decision because it's the best decision for us as Africans? How do we make sure that this relationship that is being spoken about with these former colonial masters – how do we change that?...let us be realistic about the fact that the relationship between Africa and Europe and America has always been a one-sided kind of relationship, where it's them against us, it's them wanting to come in and get what they want and go, leaving gaping holes. That has been the reality of the situation. It is them imposing what they think should happen in your country rather than saying to you, let's work together, let us accept that this is what you as Africans want for yourselves.”

At the end of the day, Africa is still grappling with the day-to-day reality of neo-colonialism:

“there are some countries, there are some leaders on the African continent, who still think, ‘I can't take this decision unless I make the call, I've got to make that call, unless I've made this call I can't take this decision'. This is the reality, this is what we experience on a day-to-day basis...”

However, this did not absolve responsibility on the part of African leaders of states and institutions that are meant to serve the people:

“the fact that ourselves as Africans have for many times, there are many places where we have not been good to our own people. We have not respected human rights in our country, we have not given space to our own people where once I'm in power, I'm in power, it's my power and I don't want anybody else to come in and disturb my power. We cannot run away from that factor...”

Ambassador Zulu also spoke about the importance for governments to build strong institutions where not only states but “ordinary people can have recourse”:

“...if something happens to you out there, you must have the confidence that there's a court, a police station, a place to which you can go and at least say that this is my

challenge. The issue is, in most of our countries on the continent, there is a weakness of institutions...”

Ambassador Welile Nhlapo (National Security Advisor in the Presidency) observed that ultimately, “the responsibility for the resolution of any conflict lies in the parties that are involved”. He agreed with Ambassador Zulu that for conflict transformation to take place there must be a commitment from the parties involved in the conflict to create the necessary conditions. Otherwise, the process degenerates into a “blame game”.



On the question of avoiding sanctions past the 2 August deadline, he stated that these measurements are what must also motivate the parties to resolve their conflicts. Although support will be forthcoming, “it’s your responsibility, it’s your people.” He suggested that:

“At times conflict can be an addiction, it’s like colonialism, it can be an addiction, it’s very difficult to be weaned from it because there are certain things that come with it and it presents a particular difficulty if we have to work around them. So in the transformation of society, the transformation of conflicts, you can only succeed, and you can only succeed as a continent, if the parties in conflict are willing to deal with the issues.”

With respect to the rights of LGBTI and refugees, Ambassador Nhlapo’s response was that “we also have to talk to fellow South Africans”, because these issues are happening right here, “we must solve the problems here first.”

On the AU and key priority areas, Ambassador Zulu responded that one would need to identify where the weaknesses are within the institution, and particularly within the commission itself. What is hoped for is a stronger and freer platform where:

“leaders begin to talk about the challenges of the continent today. They must be able to deal with the challenges of the African continent openly and honestly amongst themselves...We also want to see how we can assist in ensuring that the institution stands independently.”