

## **JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ TURKEY-AFRICA ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS FORUM**

Istanbul 2-3 November 2016

Under the auspices of H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey and H.E. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the First Africa-Turkey Economic and Business Forum was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 02-03 November 2016.

The Forum was organized by the African Union Commission (Department of Economic Affairs) and the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Turkey.

The Forum was honoured by the presence of H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey and H.E. Idriss Déby Itno, President of Chad, and current Chairperson of the African Union.

In the spirit of closer relations between Turkey and African countries, and considering the substantial momentum in Turkey-Africa relations particularly since the declaration of Turkey as a strategic partner of the African Continent in 2008 and the First and Second Turkey-Africa Partnership Summits held in İstanbul in 2008 and in Malabo in 2014 respectively, it was agreed that it is prime to advance the African-Turkey cooperation and build on what has been accomplished thus far.

The following countries, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and financial institutions were in attendance:

- Republic of Algeria, Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Republic of Burundi, Republic of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of Djibouti, Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Gabonese Republic, Republic of The Gambia, Republic of Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Republic of Kenya, Kingdom of Lesotho, Republic of Liberia, State of Libya, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Mali, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Kingdom of Morocco, Republic of Mozambique, Republic of Namibia, Republic of Niger, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Rwanda, Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, Republic of Senegal, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Republic of South Sudan, Kingdom of Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Tunisia, Republic of Uganda, Republic of Zambia.
- Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

During the Forum, discussions touched upon issues related to “Business in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges” and “Financing of Investment Projects in Africa: Infrastructure, Transportation, Energy” among others.

The Forum noted with satisfaction that the Turkey-Africa Partnership is growing, strengthening, deepening and getting diversified and the readiness of the Turkish Side to further intensify the economic and commercial ties with African countries.

The Forum pledged that Turkey-Africa partnership should be affected within the context of Agenda 2063 first ten year implementation plan.

The Forum underlined the role of the RECs in promoting regional cooperation, consolidation of peace and stability in their region and supporting enhancement of political and economic relations with other regional and international organization. The Forum therefore expressed satisfaction about the establishment of the institutional relations between Turkey and the RECs.

The Forum noted the increased cooperation in several fields envisaged by the Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit of 2008 which, among others, included;

- Increase in trade volume (16.8 billion USD in 2008; 19.5 billion USD in 2015),
- Increase in direct flights by Turkish Airlines to African destinations (10 in 2008; 48 in 2015),
- Increase in the number of Turkish diplomatic representation in Africa (12 in 2008; 39 in 2015),
- Increase in the number of African diplomatic representation in Turkey (10 in 2008; 32 in 2015),
- Increase in the number of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) offices in Africa (3 in 2008; 15 in 2015),

With a view of enhancing lasting partnership between Turkey and Africa for development and economic integration;

1. The Forum reaffirmed continuing to strengthen the current platform for collective dialogue, consolidate Africa-Turkey traditional friendship, deepen strategic collaboration and enhance the mechanism of practical cooperation between Turkey and Africa.
2. Turkey and the African Union reiterated their commitment to implement workable solutions that will increase economic resilience, sustain economic diversification

and growth and decrease disparity, while improving the welfare of the people in Africa.

### **Trade**

3. The Forum underlined the importance of trade as one of the key engines of economic growth and a strong private sector would be a driving force in this respect. The Forum acknowledged the importance of signing trade agreements, and promoting closer business to business relations through regular business forums, trade exhibitions and missions etc., in order to strengthen mutual trade and economic relations.
4. With a view to further enhancing commercial and economic cooperation between Turkey and African countries, they reiterated their strong intention to initiate joint action to examine possibilities of removing tariffs and other obstacles to trade through potentially concluding Trade and Economic Partnership Agreements that would be based on asymmetrical model enabling African countries to protect their sensitive sectors.
5. Taking into consideration that Turkey has shown remarkable performance with its steady growth over the last decade and being a major economic power in the region, the Turkish Side expressed its readiness to share its development experience in different fields with African counterparts in order to broaden and strengthen the cooperation and trade relations among themselves.

### **Cooperation with the RECs**

6. In cognizant of the fact that fostering and deepening economic integration will contribute in making the African Continent more resilient against the effects of internal and external economic shocks, the Turkish Side expressed its readiness to institutionalize its relations with the RECs through concluding cooperation agreements, starting the negotiations for Trade and Economic Partnership Agreements, and its willingness to strengthen the RECs through capacity building efforts such as training programs and technical assistance.

### **Private Sector**

7. The Forum underlined the critical role of the private sector as indicated in Agenda 2063 in economic growth and development by seating with generating decent employment in order to create greater opportunities for all, reduce inequalities, raise basic standards of living and ensure environmental protection. In this regard, The Forum affirmed the necessity of supporting the private sector activities in

Turkey and the African countries in order to foster mutual investment and trade in each other's countries.

### **Infrastructure**

8. The Forum agreed to prioritize infrastructure cooperation within the Turkey – Africa Partnership and strengthen cooperation in transport, electricity, energy and other areas of infrastructural development within the framework of Agenda 2063 and its flagship projects.
9. To support African Countries in reducing energy costs and increasing access to electricity, decreasing transport costs, boosting intra-African trade, ensuring water and food security and increasing global connectivity; Turkey and African Union will work together towards establishing a partnership in design, inspection, financing and management of projects under the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and The Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICl).
10. The Forum recommended the participating countries to take necessary measures to encourage Turkish enterprises and financial institutions to expand investment and participate in infrastructure projects through various means, such as Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT).

### **Investments**

11. The Forum stressed the importance of ensuring legal protection for investors and their investments in host countries. The Forum called upon the participating countries to conclude agreements on reciprocal promotion and protection of investment as well as avoidance of double taxation.
12. Recognizing the importance of investments in strengthening multilateral economic relations and realizing its increasing role in developing their economies, the participants decided to encourage their related business associations to work closely.
13. The Forum agreed to promote the establishment of special economic zones/logistics centers by Turkish enterprises in African Countries, and encourage Turkish enterprises to engage further in processing and manufacturing, ensuring decent local employment, technology transfers and human capacity development in Africa.
14. The Turkish side expressed its willingness to explore possibilities to invest in agriculture, electricity production, transmission and delivery facilities and

services, aviation, maritime, education and health as priority areas, especially in small and medium scale enterprises development.

### **Financing**

- 15.** The Forum called upon Turkish and African financial institutions to enhance their cooperation and exchanges, including opening more branches in their respective countries.

### **Acknowledgement**

- 16.** The Forum expressed its satisfaction on the achievements of mutual beneficial results and agreed to hold the next Turkey-Africa Economic and Business Forum in 2018 in Africa.
- 17.** The Forum expressed its gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Turkey for the warm hospitality extended to all participants during the event.
- 18.** Finally, the Forum commended the partnership between the African Union Commission (Department of Economic Affairs) and the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Turkey for successfully organizing this important event.

Done in Istanbul on 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, 2016.