



Joint Press Statement African Union – Australia

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, met in New York on 23 September in the margins of the United Nations General Debate.

Mr Ping and Mr Rudd signed a Memorandum of Understanding which establishes a framework for close cooperation between Australia and the African Union Commission. The MoU envisages greater cooperation in relation to trade and investment; peace and security; achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; agriculture and food security; democracy, governance and human rights; and climate change.

During the meeting, Mr Ping and Mr Rudd discussed the growing role and leadership of the African Union across the range of critical issues that Africa faces. Mr Rudd said that the African Union is vital to building peace, security and prosperity on the continent.

They discussed Australia's growing engagement with Africa, which Mr Ping warmly welcomed. Mr Rudd advised that Australia's new Embassy in Addis Ababa was now fully operational and would facilitate enhanced coordination with the African Union. They discussed ways in which Australia and the African Union could cooperate for mutual benefit. Mr Ping welcomed the increasing level of Australia's trade and investment in Africa.

Mr Rudd outlined the growth in Australia's aid program to Africa which has increased by 200% increase in the last 5 years. An important part of this engagement is the Africa Maternal and Child Health initiative of \$140m over 5 years. Mr Rudd also outlined the Australian Government's commitment to work towards committing 0.15% of our Gross National Income in aid to the least-developed countries, in line with international targets.

The success of the bilateral meeting, and the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding, reflect the growing ties of cooperation, and the deepening of the relationship, between Australia and the African Union.

New York, 23 September 2010