

AUC NEWS



The newsletter of the African Union Commission

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ELECTION OF NEW CHAIRPERSON; SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; AND CLIMATE CHANGE FEATURE AT 8TH SUMMIT OF THE AFRICAN UNION



Ghana's President Mr. John Kufuor is the Chairperson of the African Union for 2007. He was elected by consensus at the 8th Ordinary Summit of the AU in January. Here he meets the AU Commission Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare on his first visit to the Commission as AU Chairperson on 8th February

The 8th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union took place at the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 29-30 January 2007. It was preceded by meetings of the Permanent Representatives Committee and of the Executive Council.

The main themes were Science, Technology and Scientific Research for Development and Climate Change in Africa.

Election of AU Chairperson

Of major importance was the election of the Chairperson of the Union to take over from President Denis Sassou Nguesso of Congo who had served his one year term.

This honour went to Ghana which was appointed by consensus. Its President Mr. John Kufuor therefore became Chairperson of the Union for 2007. He subsequently paid a visit to the Commission on 8th February, where he met senior management and staff.

Members of the bureau

The following member states comprise the Bureau of the 8th African Union Summit:

President; Ghana: First Vice-President; Libya: Second Vice-President; Angola: Third Vice-President; Tanzania: Rapporteur, Congo.

The 5th to 14th Vice Presidents are Sudan, Tunisia, Swaziland, Mali, Burundi, Madagascar, Lesotho, Nigeria, Gabon, and Cote d'Ivoire

Summit round up

Science, Technology and Scientific Research for Development

The Summit welcomed and supported the declaration of 2007 as the launching year of building constituencies and champions for science, technology and innovation in Africa. It supported the establishment of a Pan African Intellectual Property Organisation.



Commissioner Essayed of Human Resources Science and Technology, introduced the Science and technology theme

The Summit strongly urged member states to allocate at least 1% of Gross Domestic product (GDP) to Research and Development by 2010. It also endorsed the need for South-South and North – South cooperation in science, technology and innovation.

At an mounted during the Summit, Scientists and researchers, as well as companies, took the opportunity to showcase their wares alongside their counterparts from across Africa.



Climate Change in Africa

The Heads of States acknowledged the vulnerability of Africa's socio economic and productive systems to climate change and to the continent's low mitigation and response capacity.



Commissioner Rosebud Kurwijila of Rural Economy and Agriculture introduced Climate Change to the Summit

The Summit called upon Africa's cooperation partners to support the members states and RECs to effectively integrate adaptation and mitigation measures into their development plans and to implement them.

The leaders urged member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECS) in collaboration with the private sector, civil society and development partners, to integrate climate change considerations into development strategies and programmes at national and regional levels. They endorsed a plan entitled "Climate Information for Development Needs; An Action Plan for Africa".

Launch of 2007 as the International Year of African Football

2007 was officially declared as the International Year of African Football at the AU Assembly on 29 January. The Assembly also mandated the Commission, in collaboration with member states, to develop a programme of activities to mark the IYoAF, and to elaborate concrete activities in connection with the 2010 World Cup to be held in South Africa. It also congratulated the Confederation of African Football on its 50th anniversary.

As part of the IYoAF activities, a football match was played between the South African and Ethiopian under 15 teams at Addis Ababa stadium on January 28. After a stalemate at the end of regular time, Ethiopia prevailed 3-2 on penalty kicks. The other activity to mark IYoAF was a gala dinner hosted by the AU and co-sponsored by the AU, South Africa and Ethiopia. Heads of State and Government, AU and AUC Chairpersons, Commissioners and prominent football personalities were among the guests.



Social Affairs Commissioner Advocate Bience Gawanas presenting the trophy to the Ethiopian team captain



AU SIGNS A CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

On 12th January 2007, the African Union Commission, represented by Deputy Chairperson Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka, signed a multi donor contribution agreement with the European Community, represented by the EU Head of Delegation in Addis Ababa, Mr. Timothy Clarke. The signing took place at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. The EC undertook to finance EUR 55 million.

The purpose of the agreement is a contribution by the EC for the implementation of the African Union Support Programme. It has two general objectives:

- To enable the AU Commission to effectively play its role as the “motor” of the integration process
- To facilitate the deepening of the partnership between the AU and EU

Specific objectives are:

- To strengthen the overall institutional capacity of the AU (Commission and organs)
- To support synergies and organic links between the AU, NEPAD and the RECS
- To foster effective dialogue and cooperation between the AU and EU in areas of mutual interest
- To prepare the ground for effective implementation of the future Pan Africa multi annual support programme (under the 10th EDF)

Annual work plans will constitute the framework for all activities financed under the contribution agreement and the work plans will be in line with the internal work plan of the AU Commission. Implementation of the agreement is for a period of six months and will not go beyond 31 December 2011.

The AU Support Programme underlines a long term, strong relationship between the EU and AU. The AU is recognized as the central interlocutor for the EU’s relations with Africa. The relationship between the two concentrates on areas that are in line with the AU’s strategic objectives and priorities.

Since 2003 the European Commission has supported the AUC in a number of key areas, notably the African Peace Facility, institutional capacity building, governance, peace building and conflict prevention.

Picture:
Deputy Chairperson of the AUC H.E Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka (center right) signing the agreement with Mr. Tim Clarke (left) of the EU

EU-AFRICA JOINT STRATEGY EUROPEAN UNION - AFRICAN UNION MEET FROM 19 - 23 FEBRUARY



AU and EU experts meeting in Brussels

The African Union and the European Union met from 19 - 23 February in Brussels to start discussions on a new joint EU-Africa Strategy to be adopted at the second EU-Africa Summit, which is foreseen to be held at the end of the second semester in Lisbon.

The aim of the meeting was to identify the challenges the new joint EU-Africa Strategy needs to address as well as to establish a shared vision between both parties that should guide these negotiations. The discussions were organised on a thematic basis (Shared Vision; Peace and Security; Governance and Human Rights; Regional Integration and Trade; Key Development issues) and allowed for a frank and constructive exchange of ideas between both sides.

At the meeting, both sides reit-

erated their will to develop a new Strategic Partnership between their two continents in the framework of the positive developments on the African continent since the holding of the first EU-Africa summit in Cairo in 2000 and in particular following the establishment of the African Union in 2002.

The results of the meeting have enabled the AU and the EU to examine the objectives and principles for their future strategic partnership.

The experts agreed that the Partnership should establish a long-term alliance with a view to promoting peace, security, development and integration of Africa; strengthening the political Partnership as a means of finding solutions to concerns of each party and common issues such as poverty alleviation, Millennium Development Goals, democratic governance, gender

mainstreaming, energy, infrastructure, migration, among others.

They also agreed to combine efforts to establish an Alliance for global governance in the international fora based on their commitment to an effective multilateralism to address globalization, climate change, Weapons of Mass Destruction non-proliferation and terrorism; involving all stakeholders of the two continents in a people-centred partnership.

The meeting made clear that there is a strong will to work on a new strategic partnership based on common interest, mutual respect, solidarity, mutual obligations, accountability and transparency. This set of principles should guide the elaboration of the future joint Africa-EU joint Strategy, which should be operationalised throughout the different areas of the partnership.

It was also recognised that for such a political partnership to sustain long-term benefits for the people of the two continents, the support, participation and ongoing consultation of the African and European public will be essential and the EU and AU experts will take stock of the contributions made by African and European Non State Actors around mid-April.

AFRICAN UNION MINISTERS OF TRADE MEET TO DISCUSS THE STATE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE WTO AND THE EPAS.



Commissioner Tankeu addressing the Ministerial Conference

Ministers of Trade of the AU member States met on January 16, 2007, within the framework of their Third Extraordinary Session, at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss the state of the WTO negotiations (Doha cycle), on the one hand, and the economic partnership agreement (EPA) between African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) and the European Union (EU) on the other.

The Commissioner of Trade and Industry at the AU, Mrs. Elizabeth Tankeu, highlighted the importance of implementing the WTO Aid for Trade Initiative. In that light, she called on AU member States and their respective regions to set up at the national and regional levels, respectively, « Aid for Trade Committees » as requested by the common African position on the said initiative.

Mrs. Tankeu regretted the current interruption of ongoing negotiations between the EU and the EPA regions, due to the great differences notably on the opportunity to direct the EPA on the axis that can insure a du-

orable EPAs development.

At the end of the discussions, the conference adopted two declarations: The Declaration on trade negotiations with the WTO, and the Declaration on the EPA negotiations.

The Declaration on the WTO trade negotiations

The Declaration is based on the Doha cycle. It clearly defines the « pressing need » for action in re-launching negotiations and arrives at results that reflect the objectives of development as stated in the Doha ministerial declaration. This is to ensure that negotiations on agriculture guarantee the following modalities:

The substantial and effective reduction of internal support by developed countries on certain products; access to markets; the immediate elimination of all forms of challenges on exportation; the evaluation of food aid; as well as the issue of long term preference and erosion preference including that on bananas and other raw materials counting

as development factor for Africa

Stating cotton as an example, the Declaration highlights the devastating consequences of internal support given to producers by developed countries, on the profitability of the African producers.

The Declaration further calls for an increase of resources to improve the infrastructure linked to trade, strengthen human and intellectual capacity etc.

The Declaration on the EPA agreement

The Declaration on the EPA agreement is a request for economic EPAs – EU partnership in line with the problems affecting development. The text highlights the preoccupations of AU ministers of Trade on the differences that occurred during the negotiation process with Europe. The Ministers realised that the level of preparedness of the African countries was insufficient to conclude an EPA agreement. « This is due to the fact that some States do not facilitate concrete research

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AU LAUNCHES NEW PUBLICATION

The library of the AU Commission has recently been enriched with a new scientific publication on continental integration. The publication, titled « African Integration Review » is a multidisciplinary journal that focuses on integration related issues in Africa. It is published by the Department of Economic Affairs, in collaboration with the Division of Communication and Information.

Published twice yearly, the publication is targeted at teachers, highly intellectual voluntary writers in the domain of scientific research, and university graduates of the continent and the Diaspora.

The « African Integration Review » comprises of theoretical and applied research topics. It creates a forum to exchange views on the continental integration process as well as giving wide coverage to research issues on the regions and countries of Africa.

The publication also analyses and critiques other books that deal with economic integration, as well as challenges faced by Africa, such as peace and security, governance, economic and social issues. It also seeks to provide solutions to these challenges while defining the role the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States should play in addressing those challenges.



(Continued from page 5)

projects that have great impact » on the economy. They therefore asked the EU to « prolong the negotiation period » and look for efficient EPA alternatives that guarantee the interest of the African countries.

In the meanwhile, « given the ostentatious hike in adjustment » required in the implementation of the EPAs project, the declaration highlighted the need to put in place an « instrument different from the FED to go alongside the social development, economic reforms, and development of the private sector as well as capacity building of the institutions »

The AU ministers of Trade however expressed their intention to bring together the four African regions engaged in the EPA negotiations so as to better coordinate their actions under the auspices of the African Union.

The General Manager of the WTO, Mr. Pascal Lamy, and representatives of key development partners such as the United States, Japan, India and Brazil took part in the meeting.



WTO Chief, Mr. Pascal Lamy (center) making a point during the conference

The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Mr. Abdoulaye Janneh, H.E. Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Minister of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Kenya, and Chairman of the Conference also attended .

38 member States of the African Union took part in the 3rd Extraordinary Session of the AU Ministers of Trade. Also present, were some representatives of international organisations, United Nations system, NGOs and the Civil Society.

Somali President
H.E Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf Abdullahi
(right front)
pictured while in Addis Ababa
to attend the
8th Ordinary Session of the Assembly
of the African Union



PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL DISCUSSES SITUATION IN SOMALIA

The Peace and Security Council, at its meeting held on 8 January 2007, received a briefing on the situation in Somalia from the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security Ambassador Said Djinnit, as well as from IGAD (Kenya – Chair of IGAD – and the IGAD Secretariat), the Permanent Representative of Somalia to the African Union, the League of Arab States and the United Nations.

The Peace and Security Council noted that the recent developments in Somalia represent a new and historic opportunity that should be seized upon by the Somali parties and the international community alike, with a view to fostering peace and reconciliation in Somalia.

The Peace and Security Council stressed the need for an all-inclusive political process, as

provided for in the Transitional Federal Charter of Somalia, in order to consolidate stability, peace and reconciliation in the country. In this respect, the Peace and Security Council welcomed the commitment of President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed to reach out to all groups in Somalia and promote an inclusive dialogue and reconciliation.

The Peace and Security Council recalled its earlier decisions on the deployment of a Peace Support Mission in Somalia to undertake tasks aimed at providing security support for the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) and institutional capacity building, as well as supporting dialogue and reconciliation in Somalia. In this regard, the Peace and Security Council underlined the urgency of the deployment of a Peace Support Mission in order to build on the current momentum to stabilize the situation and the need for continued support by the United Nations and its Security

Council, as well as by the other AU partners.

The Council appealed to all AU Member States and the international community at large to provide the much needed assistance to alleviate the plight of the civilian population and extend all necessary support to the TFIs, including financial and technical assistance, to facilitate their effective functioning and to enable the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) deliver the services expected of it as a Government.

The Council agreed to reconvene to finalize the plans for the deployment of an African Peace Support Mission in Somalia, based on proposals to be submitted by the African Union Commission, working closely with IGAD, the TFG and other stakeholders.

PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL CONDEMNS DISPROPORTINATE USE OF FORCE IN GUINEA

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 71st meeting held on 16 February 2007, considered the situation in the Republic of Guinea. The Council received briefings from the Commission and the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Guinea to the African Union.

The Council expressed its grave concern over the situation prevailing in the Republic of Guinea and its implications for peace, security and stability in the sub-region. It strongly condemned the disproportionate use of force and the repression of the civilian population during the recent demonstrations and, in this regard, requested the opening of an independent inquiry, with the participation of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, in order to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of the atrocities and other acts of violence committed during these events.

Council underscored the fact that the crisis facing Guinea is deep seated, and that it can only be resolved within the framework of open dialogue and consultations among the concerned parties. In this regard, the Council requested the Guinean authorities to take immediate and appropriate measures in order to bring to an end all acts of violence being committed by the security forces and facilitate a genuine dialogue among all the stakeholders.

It urged the President of the Republic and the Government of Guinea to scrupulously respect the spirit and letter of the *Procès Verbal de Négociation* signed on 27 January 2007, including the appointment of a new consensual Prime Minister.

It also expressed its support for the initiatives taken by ECOWAS and its current Chairperson with a view to assisting in the resolution of the crisis. The Council commended the efforts of the Chairperson of the African Union, as well as the initiatives already taken by the Chairperson of the Commission and requested the latter to continue working closely with ECOWAS and to intensify his consultations with all relevant institutions, including the United Nations, with a view to establishing the modalities for a sustained and concerted action aimed at the rapid resolution of the crisis facing Guinea, including through the establishment of an appropriate coordination mechanism.

PEACE AND SECURITY RECEIVES COMPUTERS

In February the Department of Peace and Security received computers and accessories from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to be used to support the Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development Unit.

Handing over the computers on behalf of the UNHCR was Mr. Ilunga Ngandu.

The ceremony took place in the office of the Peace and Security Director Mr. Geoffrey Mugumya.



Mr. Mugumya (second from right) receives the computers and accessories from Mr. Ngandu, in the presence of other AU and UNHCR officials

The Significance of the First AFRICA- SOUTH AMERICA SUMMIT

“We, the Heads of State and Government of Africa and South America, meeting in Abuja, on Thursday, 30 November 2006 ”

It was with this magic preamble that the leaders of the two regions opened their solemn declaration and gave voice to their determination to turn their first ever Summit into an epoch – making rendezvous with history in Abuja, Nigeria.

The difference this time perhaps lay in the fact that these were not causal expressions of intent that should be shrugged off as *déjà-vu*, but rather a rare collective manifestation of the sterling political will on the part of these well-meaning leaders to enter into an unprecedented dividend – yielding pact, covering a wide range of areas of cooperation and solidarity between willing nations that have been natural allies, thanks to their historical bonds of fraternity and cordiality

The outcome of the Africa- South America Summit also gave cause for genuine optimism that, by putting their acts together in this collaborative fashion, the two regions were sure to make a huge difference in the lives of their peoples through effective implementation and follow-up of their twin South – South solidarity tools as embodied in the Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action. In fact, these two flagship strategic texts contain a comprehensive roadmap for the implementation of the proposed projects adequately covered by the agreed areas of cooperation that transcend the conventional spheres, encompassing as they do, such hitherto unexplored terrains as agribusiness, energy, solid minerals, etc.

Through their five days of intense and frank deliberations, the leaders of the two sides also came to appreciate the fact that, to actualise the good intentions expressed at the podium of their trail-

Muhammad I.S Gassama of Conference Services Division at the AUC attended the 1st Africa South America Summit in November 2006. Here he gives his views on the Summit and how it can assist in the development of the two regions

blazing Summit with the rhetoric that accompanied them, a substantial degree of political will and resources as they pledged, will need to be invested by their respective governments, if the high expectations of the peoples of the two regions are to be realised through their concerted efforts.

The stakes are indeed high, and the challenges are even more daunting; but no one must doubt that together, the two regions are not only capable of being each other's keeper in the most positive sense of the word, but can also prove to the rest of the world that they constitute a formidable development bloc that is committed to ensuring the socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental well-being of their peoples.

This however also requires that, to buttress the ideals and objectives of this nascent South-South partnership, every effort must be exerted to bring its first outcome to the door steps of the beneficiaries and major stakeholders who are the peoples of the two regions. Such a grassroots approach to sensitise the populace on both sides of the advantages and stakes involved will not only ensure their ownership of the relevant projects and programmes but to also enable them to effectively participate in their execution through their duly designated civil society organisations and the private sector as well.

In a nutshell, this is what the Abuja Africa-South Africa Forum of Heads of State and Government was all about.

The other nations of the world are now waiting to see what tangible results will come out of that extraordinary historic gathering for the mutual benefit of the optimistic citizenry of the two regions.

Summit round up

Appointment of the Panel of the Wise

The following people were appointed as members of the Panel of the Wise for a three year period: Miguel Trovoada- former President of Sao Tome and Principe; Salim Ahmed Salim- former Secretary General of the Organisation of African Unity; Ahmed Ben Bella- former President of Algeria; Brigalia Bam- President of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa; and Elizabeth K Pogonon- President of the Constitutional Court of Benin. The Panel of the Wise was established in order to support the efforts of the Peace and Security Council and those of the Chairperson of the Commission, particularly in the area of conflict prevention.

Consideration of Proposals for a Union Government

On the issue of the Union government, the Heads of State devoted the next Summit of the AU to be held in Accra, Ghana from 1-3 July 2007, to the theme: "Grand Debate on the Union Government". In preparation for this, all member countries were requested to carry out the necessary consultations within their countries. The Union government discussion is important because the ultimate objective of the AU is the political and economic integration of the continent, leading to the creation of the United States of Africa.



First Ladies meeting

Adoption of the budget for 2007

A budget of US\$133 million was adopted for the AU for 2007. \$97 million is to be assessed to member states and \$36 million is earmarked for specific programmes secured from partners.

Peace and Security

Issues of Peace and Security received much attention from the Heads of State. In general, they were satisfied at the progress made in the search for peace in stability in Africa; for example the successful conclusion of the transition process in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which ushered in a new political order; The signing of the cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army; The signing, on 14 October 2006, of a Peace Agreement between the Government of The Sudan and the *Eastern Front*; The signing on 7 Septem-

ber 2006, of a Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Burundi and Pali- pehutu/FNL; and the pursuit of the transition process in Mauritania.

They also expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the post-conflict reconstruction process in Liberia, Burundi and Sierra Leone. Conflict areas which seized the leaders' attention were Somalia, Sudan, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea and Comores.

Gabon, Ethiopia, Algeria, Angola and Nigeria were elected as members of the Peace and Security Council for a three year term.

First Ladies Meeting

African first ladies, under the auspices of the Organisation of African First Ladies Against HIV/Aids, met on the sidelines of the summit to brainstorm on measures to mitigate the AIDS pandemic on the continent.

Summit round up



UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon at the Summit



President Obasanjo of Nigeria leading the NEPAD meeting in his capacity as Chairman of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee of NEPAD while Economic Affairs Commissioner at AU Dr Maxwell Mkwezalamba and NEPAD Secretariat CEO Dr Firmino Mucavele look on

Other considerations and events

Among the other considerations made by the Heads of State were: the report of the Executive Council on the Proposals for the Union Government; modalities for the integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes; and modalities for the election of members of the Commission.

The leaders also considered various reports such as that of the Peace and Security Council; NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee; Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the Reform of the United Nations and the UN Security Council; as well as reports of the Summits that took place during the year. These include the First Africa- South America Summit (ASA); Food Security Summit; and the Africa- China Forum. The President of the Pan African Parliament and the Presiding Officer of the Interim General Assembly of ECOSOCC made presentations to the Assembly.

While the Summit was underway, a number of events and activities took place on the sidelines:-

- A coordination meeting between the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities took place from 22-24 January.
- The Inter Governmental Authority on Development met from 26 to 27 January, while the African Peer Review Mechanism had its meetings from 26- 28 January.

- On the 27th two meetings took place i.e. that of NEPAD, as well the AU Committee on Post Conflict Reconstruction in the Sudan.

Media Coverage of Summit

The proceedings of the opening session of the Summit were broadcast live to millions of people on the continent and the world by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) through its SABC Africa and SABC 2 channels. Ethiopian TV and Al Jazeera International also carried live interviews from the venue. The football match on 28 January and the Gala Dinner were also carried live. In all, more than 400 African and international journalists were accredited to cover the Summit.

Attendance

Apart from the African Heads of State, invited Heads of State were Turkish Prime Minister Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Italian Prime Minister Mr. Romano Prodi Mr. Patrick Manning, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President of Palestine. In addition, the FIFA President Mr. Joseph Blatter and the CAF President Mr. Issa Hayatou attended. The newly elected UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon was also present.

Further references

For more details on the decisions and declarations of the 8th assembly of the AU, go to www.africa-union.org.

Visitors to the Commission

1. On 24 January 2007, Ambassador H.E Mr.. Rudolf Agstner of Austria was accredited to the African Union as Permanent Representative.
2. Mayor of Addis : H.E. Berhane Deressa visited the AUC on 24 January 2007, and met Chairperson Konare
3. Tunisian ambassador H.E. Mr. Mohamed Adel Smaoui signed the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU On 8 January before Deputy Chairperson Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka
4. Ambassador of Antigua H.E Mr. Bruce Goodwin presented his credentials to the Chairperson of the Commission on 3rd February
5. Swiss Ambassador H.E Mr. Peter Reinhardt was accredited as Permanent Representative to the AU on 3rd February



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