



## **JOINT AUC/LAS STATEMENT**

At the invitation of H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of the League of Arab States (LAS), the Seventh General Cooperation Meeting between the League of Arab States and the African Union Commission (AUC) was held on 10 December 2017 at the headquarters of LAS in Cairo, Egypt, under the co-chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of LAS and H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of AUC, with the participation of senior officials from both organizations.

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit and H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat jointly inaugurated the meeting which coincides with the commemoration of 40 years since the establishment of the Africa-Arab partnership. They expressed their determination to promote the Arab-Africa partnership in all areas of interest for the mutual benefit of both sides, taking into consideration the shared priorities, geographical, historical and cultural bonds that exist between the Arab and African peoples.

The two leaders exchanged views on recent developments in the region and discussed ways and means of accelerating the joint action and cooperation between LAS and AUC on issues of key concern such as counter-terrorism, the promotion of regional peace and security especially in common member states, as well as cooperation in economic, investment and cultural areas of mutual importance.

They exchanged views on issues of mutual political interest, including the latest developments in the Horn of Africa, the situation in Libya and in the Sahel region, and agreed to enhance their coordination in addressing these issues and the challenges facing the region. They also stressed the importance of addressing the challenges of migration and the provision of

adequate conditions to safeguard the rights of migrants, and condemned the abuses perpetrated against them by criminal networks in Libya and called for those responsible to be brought to justice.

The two sides agreed to further their cooperation in support of the Palestinian people and their legitimate right to establish their own independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. They rejected any attempt to alter the legal status of Jerusalem and in this regard strongly deplored the decision of the United States administration to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the U.S. Embassy to the city. They stressed that this decision, which violates international law and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council, aggravates the situation and destabilizes the region and further undermines the prospects for a just and lasting negotiated settlement based on the two-state solution.

The two sides further agreed to enhance the institutional cooperation that exists between the League of Arab States and the African Union, including within the framework of the General Agreement on Cooperation between the two organizations signed in March 2007, and agreed to discuss the possibility of elaborating an additional Protocol to the Agreement in order to advance their coordination and mechanisms of cooperation with regard to all issues of mutual importance.

The two sides reviewed the progress attained thus far towards the implementation of the declarations and resolutions adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> Arab-Africa Summit which was held in Malabo in November 2016. They welcomed the efforts of the League of Arab States and the African Union to further elaborate the Joint Arab-Africa Action Plan as soon as possible for the endorsement by an Extraordinary session of Ministers in accordance with the conclusions of the Malabo Summit.

They agreed to advance their consultations and preparations towards the convening of the 5<sup>th</sup> Arab Africa Summit scheduled to be held in Riyadh in 2019.

The two sides agreed to convene the Eighth General Cooperation Meeting between LAS and AUC in Addis Ababa in 2018.