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Africa-EU Strategy put to the test Shortcomings in the Action Plan

Bonn, 29th April 2010 – The Joint Africa-EU Strategy will have few prospects of success if no improvements are made to the second Action Plan. Gender justice and rural development need to come more to the fore. This was demanded by the Association of German Development Non-Governmental Organisations (VENRO) on the occasion of the meeting of the Ministerial Troika of the EU and Africa in Luxembourg on the 26th April.

“We regret that no progress has been made in the Partnership on Trade, Regional Integration and Infrastructure. The 2008 food crisis has clearly shown that rural development needs to be a focal issue in particular. Most people in Africa live in rural regions,” says VENRO Chairman Ulrich Post.

What VENRO also criticises is that there is no special partnership on gender issues. “The entire Africa-EU Strategy has no prospects of success without the equal participation of women,” says Post.

An outlook towards the second Action Plan 2011–2013 was presented in Luxembourg. “The proposals are by no means satisfactory. Hardly any changes are to be made, while important topics for the African population are being omitted,” Post stresses. He maintains that the past two years have already clearly shown that the strategy bears considerable shortcomings and notes that this also needs to be addressed by the Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli.

Post maintains that while a greater integration of civil society in the process represents a positive aspect in principle, this also needs to be put into practise.

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy was adopted at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007. The aim is a partnership among equals covering all areas of co-operation between the European and the African states. Not only politicians but representatives of civil society, too, are to be involved in its implementation.

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[VENRO](http://www.venro.org), reg. Ass., is the Association of Development German Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). Its membership comprises around 120 German NGOs operating in the areas of private or Church development co-operation, humanitarian aid and development education, public relations and lobbying activities.

www.venro.org

With the project “Prospects for Africa – Europe’s Policies”, VENRO seeks an active civil society contribution to the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. The project builds on co-operation with African partners that began during VENRO’s successful EU Presidency Project in 2007. VENRO member organisations then worked together with their African partners to develop statements for policy-makers, the media and the interested public on the main topics of the project: energy and climate policies, regional integration and trade; and gender.

www.prospects-for-africa.de

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