

1-A Turkish-African Non-governmental Organizations Forum was held in Istanbul between 14-16 August 2008 and it took place in a very constructive and cordial atmosphere.

This meeting that was arranged and hosted by TASAM (Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies) focused on the main themes of cooperation and development. Ninety Non-governmental

Organizations (CSOs) from African countries, the African Union, the medias as well as resource persons and eighty five NGOs from Turkey participated. The following subjects were discussed:

Gender-neutral economic development, trade, education and health, democracy, human rights and good governance, tourism and the environment, science and technology, energy, youth and the family, as well as the international status of Africa and achieving peace and stability in the Continent. Furthermore ideas were exchanged with regard to how collaboration can be established between Turkish and African NGOs on the foregoing subjects.

2-During this Forum, the Turkish and African NGOs agreed to cooperate in taking action to ensure that development is achieved in these areas in Africa. It was also unanimously agreed to submit this Declaration for consideration to the Heads of State and Government who will be participating in the Turkish-African Cooperation Summit which will be held in Istanbul between 18-21 August 2008, while at the same time emphasizing how important the support of all branches of the state and government in this process will be.

3-At this first Forum, it was also agreed that the Turkish and African NGOs need a 'common action plan' so as to achieve an effective and efficient partnership and cooperation. This action plan primarily calls for the establishment of a effective communication network between Turkish and African NGOs. For this purpose, it was agreed to set up initial working groups operating in the following areas: humanitarian assistance and development processes, poverty alleviation, infrastructure, education and training, cultural and youth, woman and family related matters, health, water, sanitation and the environment, science and technology, human rights and good governance, and peace and security. All working groups will emphasize special sensitivity to gender. They will meet every two years to agree on their action plans and operational modalities, while ensuring continued cooperation is established between the Turkish and African NGOs.

4-It was also agreed that the Turkish and African NGOs Forum will establish a Platform for International Non-governmental Organizations and Networks (USTKIP). As such, African NGOs will be provided opportunities to share knowledge and experiences within the framework of USTKIP. This will allow better mutual communication and cooperation. Materials will be published in Turkish and African Union languages at the address www.ustkip.org.

5-Turkish NGOs are prepared to provide necessary support and relief in emergency situations along with all issues related to the development and industrialization of Africa. Mutual cooperation in raising awareness of risks and threats such as international terrorism and crime was agreed upon. This offer was conveyed by the African NGOs during the Forum and it was received very warmly and positively.

6-The outcomes of the work of the working groups based on an effective strategy and the cooperation established with similar organizations in Africa, will contribute to solving problems

of Africa and to the establishment of peace and stability in the Continent. Furthermore, the engagement of Turkish NGOs in Africa will have a positive impact on the integration processes of African States in all areas.

August 16, 2008, Istanbul