

AU and EU engage in geoscientific information-sharing talks

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The African Union and the European Union have strengthened their cooperation in the field of geology at the 5th EU-Africa Business Forum on “Engaging the private sector in sustainable and inclusive growth” between 31 March to 01 April at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Brussels at a crucial time in the relations between Europe and Africa. In a media release by the round table it was said that “the event has been a great success for the geological surveys of Africa and Europe. They engaged at the round table on raw materials and governance, thanks also to a previous debate with geological surveys worldwide at the EuroGeoSurveys’ general meeting last week.”

The Organisation of African Geological Surveys (OAGS), EuroGeoSurveys (EGS), Euromines, Business Europe and other industrial players and institutions discussed how to enhance a sustainable exploitation of the mineral wealth of the continent leading to a sustainable economic growth along four axes: governance, infrastructure, knowledge base and waste management. It has emerged that geological knowledge and information should be increased by strengthening Geological Surveys’ capacity and geological cooperation.

The round table stressed the importance of developing a good policy framework to attract investments, promote skills development and business education in the sector. This process should ensure environmental protection and the participation of the local population in all sectors of the processes, also in the form of consultation.

Fatima Haram Acyl, African Commissioner for Trade and Industry, and Karel De Gucht, European Commissioner for Trade, were present at the debate.

Acyl expressed full support to the geological cooperation, considered one of the most important and urgent needs to understand mineral-resources potential in Africa and its sustainable development.

“Geological Surveys’ data production and access has a remarkable impact, especially for business and development opportunities and to enable African countries to make informed decisions,” she said.

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