**European elections 2014: Why Africans should be involved.**

**Appeal to the African Community in Europe**

Today, certain forms of violations of human rights such as barriers to family reunification that some countries tended to implement as well as other discriminations against immigrants are often fought by European institutions, when they seize the matter. Europe is the largest aid donor in Africa and a strong supporter of development projects as well as electoral processes on the African continent. The 503.7 million people of Europe will be voting from the 22nd to 25th of May 2014 to elect 751 legislators.

Two candidates are vying for the Presidency of the European Commission. The German Socialist **Martin Schulz**, current President of the European Parliament and the Conservative **Jean- Claude Juncker**, former prime minister of Luxembourg.

The European Commission is one of the main, if not the most important, institutions of the European Union. The European Commission is independent from the member states. It yields substantial legislative and executive powers. It represents and defends the interests of the EU as a whole and, as such, has a strong diplomatic impact around the world.

Therefore, Africans with European citizenship should be well aware of the importance of the upcoming elections. They could weigh in this electoral process in order to profit their families in Africa. With growing numbers in all countries, the Afro-Europeans can be an effective political pool to advocate for positive changes on the African Continent by pressuring European institutions on appropriately acting on a host of issues: promoting the rule of law and democracy, fighting corruption and the illicit trading of assets by African leaders and their families to European banks. Afro-Europeans are not organized as a single advocacy group. They can still be very effective, through national organizations of country of origin. Through these associations they can maintain essential communication channels to make a strong statement and advance their concerns during the elections.

Progressive European parties (left, center and right) have in their ranks numerous political figures with genuine concerns on the plight of the African peoples. Many progressive parties have maintained strong positions against violations of civil and human rights in Africa, such as the use of government hired thugs along with security forces to wage real wars against the civilian populations. It is established that this pervasive climate of repression is the root cause of entrenched conflicts that maintains most African countries under economic poverty and underdevelopment.

The more Afro-Europeans mobilize to vote, the more European institutions and politicians will show a stronger will to favor human rights and democracy. The end result of their participation in the electoral process will be an effective contribution in the implementation of the rule of law and democracy in their African countries, as aspired by their peoples.

In regard to these considerations, we are calling on to Afro-Europeans to mobilize massively in favor of the candidate that has shown to be the most effective for the post of President of the European Commission: German Martin Schulz! Martin Schulz, a native of Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), is a credible leader with high human values ​​and a keen awareness of the suffering of the peoples of the South. Besides of his comprehensive project of reforming the European Union for the benefit of the people, Mr. Martin Schulz is a breed of politicians that is becoming rare in today's world. He is a strong advocate of justice and the promotion of genuine democracy as true guarantor of peace and stability which African countries need for sustainable economic growth. Martin Schulz is among the European political figures who believe that European aid and funding should be tied to rigorous requirements of human rights protection, credible and transparent elections, and – of course – a zero tolerance for dictators who resort to violence against their people etc.

Martin Schulz is committed to a more humanist Europe and as such, he is a genuine guarantor of human rights and democracy in Africa. For the sake of their own interest and that of African populations as a whole, we are calling on Africans of the European Union to help elect Martin Schulz as President of the European Commission.

  It is to be noted that the vote is indirect. This means that we should identify and vote for European parties that support the candidacy of Martin Schulz. The majority for those parties will translate into the election of Mr. Martin Schulz as President of the European Commission in succeeding the Portuguese José Manuel Barroso. Below is the list of the political parties for each European country:

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| **Pays** | **Parti soutenant Martin Schulz** |
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| Germany | SPD |
| Belgium | PS, SPA |
| Bulgaria | BSP |
| Cyprus | EDEK |
| Denmark | S |
| Estonia | SDE |
| Spain | PSOE |
| Finland | SDP |
| France | PS |
| United Kingdom | Labour |
| Greece | PASOK |
| Hungary | MSZP, MSZDP |
| Ireland | LP |
| Italy | PS, PD |
| Croatia | SDP |
| Lithuania | LSDP |
| Luxembourg | LSAP |
| Malt | PL |
| Northern Ireland | SDLP |
| Austria | SPÖ |
| Poland | SLD, UP |
| Portugal | PS |
| Romania | PSD |
| Czech Republic | ČSSD |
| Sweden | SAP |
| Slovakia | SMER |
| Slovenia | SD |
| The Netherlands | PvdA |

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