

African leaders press for equality

by UPI

LISBON, Portugal -- African leaders are urging their EU counterparts not to give them charity but allow them to become players in the international marketplace. The chairman of the African Union Commission said at the opening session of the Africa-EU Leaders Summit in Lisbon, Portugal, that "Africa doesn't want charity or paternalism. We don't want anyone doing things for us. We want to play in the global economy, but with new rules." Alpha Oumar Konare also criticized the EU for pressing individual African regions to sign new trade pacts, saying the trade accords were divisive and would hurt Africa's industry and rural poor, the Lagos, Nigeria, newspaper This Day reported. EU leaders have called for a new partnership between the two continents instead of the traditional relationship between donors and aid recipients. Speaking to the group, the EU president, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, challenged European and African leaders to confront human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. Merkel said the international community could not stand by while human rights there were "trampled underfoot."

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