

Relations between Africa and Europe

Mapping Africa's priorities

Tsion Tadesse Abebe and Hafsa Maalim



Negotiations around a new Africa-European Union (EU) strategy are expected to culminate in its adoption at a summit in October 2020. African negotiators should ensure that the continent's priorities are integrated into the strategy. These include poverty reduction, health, digital access, small and medium enterprises, remittances, transport infrastructure, and the blue economy. More emphasis could also be given to illicit financial flows, the brain drain and debt cancellation.

Key points

- ▶ In February 2019, the African Union (AU) Commission and the AU's office of the High Representative to support member states in negotiating a new agreement post-2020 presented a draft strategy to the AU's Permanent Representatives' Committee for consideration. This was ahead of the October 2020 EU-AU Summit, where the new Africa-EU strategy is set to be adopted.
- ▶ To move the negotiations forward, the European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a joint communication in March 2020, proposing five key areas for consideration: green transition and energy access; digital transformation; sustainable growth and jobs; peace and governance; and migration and mobility. In June 2020, the Council of the European Union formally adopted the proposed priority areas of the communication.
- ▶ Issues covered in the EU's communication can be categorised into two broad areas: inclusive growth and sustainable development; and peace, security, governance and resilience. These cover trade, access to finance, education, jobs, gender equality, youth inclusion, access to sustainable energy, digitalisation, migration, peace and security, governance and the rule of law.
- ▶ African negotiators need to ensure the integration of Africa's priorities into the strategy. The following issues are worth considering: poverty, health, digital access, small and medium-sized enterprises, remittances, transport infrastructure, and the blue economy. Illicit financial flows, the brain drain and debt should also be considered.

Recommendations

- ▶ The AU should publicise the strategy it presented to the AU Permanent Representative Council (PRC) to ensure the inclusion of Africa's priorities in the Africa-EU strategy.
- ▶ The Africa-EU partnership should be revamped with a mutually beneficial accountability framework in mind. Some existing partnership frameworks have lapsed. These include the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its Abidjan Action Plan (2018-2020), the second Multiannual Indicative Programme of the EU's Pan-African Programme (2018-2020) and the Cotonou Agreement (2000-2020). These lapses create room for innovation in renegotiating the new strategy.
- ▶ Existing AU institutional architectures – the Constitutive Act, including the Assembly of the Union, the Executive Council, the Permanent Representatives' Committee and the Peace and Security Council – should inform the framework.
- ▶ The Africa-EU strategy should be accompanied by an implementation framework with a set timeline and targets, and a corresponding financial mechanism.
- ▶ A holistic approach should be applied that allows the different segments of the strategy to work together to achieve a common goal. Existing frameworks such as the Abidjan Declaration are good examples. Education, skills and jobs for example, are framed as enhancing the livelihoods of people in the Abidjan Declaration, but not in the EU communication.
- ▶ The Africa-EU strategy should apply a people-centred approach. This will enable the integration of Africa's priorities into the strategy, including tackling poverty, health, digital literacy, internet access, illicit financial flows, gender mainstreaming, and debt management and cancellation.

Introduction

This report aims to contribute to the Africa-European Union (EU) negotiations towards a new strategy, which is expected to be adopted at the EU-African Union (AU) Summit scheduled for October 2020.

The AU started preparations for the Africa-EU strategy negotiations in 2018. In its 11th extraordinary session in November 2018, the body took the lead in continent-to-continent negotiations including on the Africa-EU strategy. That same year Carlos Lopes was appointed as the AU High Representative on negotiations of a new agreement with the EU post-2020. In February 2019, his office together with the AU Commission, presented a proposed AU strategy to the Permanent Representatives' Committee for consideration ahead of the EU-AU Summit. However, the AU strategy is yet to be publicised.

In March 2020, the European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy issued a joint communication¹ proposing five key areas for consideration. These included green transition and energy access, digital transformation, sustainable growth and jobs, peace and governance, and migration and mobility. In June, the Council of the EU issued conclusions on the Africa-EU Strategy,² which officially adopts the Commission's proposal. This means the proposals in the communication can be tabled for negotiations.

Agenda 2063 provides the basis for analysing the EU communication, together with relevant AU legal, policy and strategic frameworks

The AU's Agenda 2063 provides the basis for analysis of the EU communication, together with relevant AU legal, policy and strategic frameworks. Applicable AU-EU frameworks such as the Abidjan Declaration are also used.

Agenda 2063 is a comprehensive 50-year blueprint that aims to transform Africa into an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent, 'driven by its citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena.'³ It consists of 20 goals encapsulated in the broader seven aspirations and 15 flagship projects.⁴ Agenda 2063 was signed in 2013 during the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration. Its 10-year implementation plan (2013-2023) aimed at capturing incremental progress on the delivery of the agenda.

The Abidjan Declaration is also one of the relevant AU-EU frameworks to consider in light of discussions on the Africa-EU strategy. The Abidjan Declaration is the outcome of the 5th AU-EU Summit which took place in 2017. The declaration refocused the AU-EU areas of engagement along four key strategic areas. These are: investing in people – education science, technology, and skills transfer; strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance; migration and mobility; and mobilising investments for African structural sustainable transformation.⁵

AU PREPARATIONS FOR THE
AFRICA-EU STRATEGY STARTED IN

2018

Although the declaration was to serve as the pre-2020 vehicle for engagement, little has been done to holistically implement the outcome of the declaration, making the four areas crucial for consideration ahead of a post-2020 negotiation. The inadequate implementation of the Abidjan declaration is largely attributed to the absence of an action and implementation plan.

The EU communication indicates that the Abidjan Declaration, together with the outcomes of the 10th EU-AU Commission-to-Commission meeting held in February 2020⁶ provided the basis for the priority areas.⁷ Nevertheless, some crucial recommendations provided by the above-mentioned documents have not been sufficiently reflected in the EU communication.

This report is informed by interviews with policymakers and researchers from the AU, EU, think tanks and civil society organisations. Document analysis and literature reviews were also conducted.

The report is structured into four main parts. The first outlines the roadmap towards the EU-AU Summit and offers a brief overview of the 20-year history of the Africa-EU strategic partnership. The second part compares African priorities to the EU communication, with a focus on two key aspects: sustainable development and inclusive growth; and peace, security, governance and resilience. The third discusses the need for integrating Africa's priorities in the upcoming strategy. The last section provides policy recommendations to be considered in the upcoming Africa-EU negotiations and strategy development.

Road to 2020 EU-AU Summit

2020 is a crucial year for Africa and the EU as the two embark on negotiating two key partnerships. These are the post-Cotonou partnership in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, and the Africa-EU strategic partnership which has been primarily implemented through the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy. While both processes are equally important, this report focuses on the latter that covers the continent-to-continent partnership, spearheaded by the African Union.

The Africa-EU strategic partnership was conceived at the first Africa-EU Summit in Cairo in April 2000.⁸ The Cairo Declaration became the formal political channel through which the EU and the Organisation of African Unity, the

AU's predecessor, engaged. The declaration emphasised areas of mutual cooperation such as regional integration, peace, security, human rights and governance. At the time, the partnership between the two continents largely depended on bilateral engagement between the EU and African member states.

In 2007, through the Lisbon Declaration,⁹ the EU-Africa strategy, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), came to being. The JAES is a pioneer strategy that covers all of Africa.¹⁰ Though largely criticised as a unilateral effort rather than a collaborative Africa-EU strategy, the JAES became the partnership framework for the two continents. The partnership still faced a number of challenges including the developmental gap between the two continents.

The 2017 Abidjan Declaration reiterated the need for this partnership framework. The declaration underscored the leadership's call for a 'paradigm shift to an even stronger, mutually beneficial partnership in the spirit of shared ownership, responsibility, reciprocity, respect and mutual accountability and transparency.'¹¹

The Africa-EU partnership was conceived at the first Africa-EU summit in Cairo in April 2000

This call was timely given the AU's growing institutional clout. Agenda 2063 was adopted, and the African Peace and Security Architecture, African Governance Architecture, Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, and Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa were being implemented. The AU Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development had also enjoyed years of restructuring and institutional growth.

In 2020, as the two bodies revisit their partnership, the AU's institutional maturity may provide for a better negotiating partner. The AU is undergoing various reforms to improve its institutional responses. The most notable step is Africa's move to take responsibility for financing its own development. As of February 2020, the AU's self-financing scheme had already raised US\$164 million, which will be used for mediation and preventive diplomacy, institutional capacity and peace support operations.¹²

These reforms will further enhance the partnership with the EU as Africa streamlines its programming and implementation mechanisms. Additionally, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement went operational in May 2019, although its anticipated launch has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. AfCFTA cements the expansion of intra-African trade, contrary to the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), which promote European duty-free and quota-free imports as part of the ACP.¹³

On the European side, leaders have increased talks on promoting an equally mutually beneficial partnership with Africa.¹⁴ During the launch of the communication, EU Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen emphasised that, 'Africa is the European Union's natural partner and neighbour.'¹⁵ She stressed that 'today's strategy with Africa is the roadmap to move forward and bring our partnership to the next level.'¹⁶ This rhetoric by EU counterparts of promoting equal partnership is a major departure from 'the donor-recipient relationship that has long characterised EU-Africa relations.'¹⁷

To stress Africa's importance, Von der Leyen, three days after taking the European Commission's presidency, made her first overseas visit to Addis Ababa, the seat of the AU, on 9 December 2019. She followed this with another visit to Addis Ababa, accompanied by 22 EU commissioners – the largest delegation of its kind – in February 2020 for the 10th EU-AU Commission-to-Commission meeting.¹⁸ Then the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa was issued in March 2020.¹⁹ This was followed by the council conclusions issued in June 2020.

Collectively, these steps laid the foundation for the 6th EU-AU Summit scheduled for October 2020. For the EU, the communication is the first step towards a comprehensive, inclusive partnership of equals. In this respect, the title of the communication in itself is worth noting as it underpins 'a strategy with Africa' as opposed to 'a strategy for/on Africa'. The strategic choice of title, though targeted at furthering the rhetoric of a partnership of 'equals', has raised questions on the level and scope of engagement.

On the African side, the AU has taken a more dominant role in leading the negotiations. In its 11th extraordinary session in November 2018,²⁰ it decided to uphold the

sovereignty of African states while playing a key role in the negotiations.

The decision of the AU Assembly therefore provided for a two-track negotiation approach. The AU would negotiate the continent-to-continent partnership track with the representation of all its 55 member states, and the African Group of Ambassadors would negotiate under the umbrella of the ACP.

To assert the AU's role as the custodian of Africa's strategy, in 2018²¹ the AU Commission chairperson appointed Carlos Lopes as the AU High Representative on negotiations of a new agreement with the EU post 2020. This office supports member states' discussions, along with the AU Commission, on the continent-to-continent track. It also coordinates the technical support that the AU Commission provides to the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels negotiating the African pillar within the broader partnership under the ACP.

Carlos Lopes was appointed AU High Representative on negotiations of a new agreement with the EU

To enable this dual approach, the High Representative's office has a team of advisers tasked with advising the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels on the ACP talks with the aim of streamlining the two-track negotiations.

Ahead of the 32nd Ordinary Summit in February 2019, the office of the High Representative and the AU Commission jointly presented a proposed AU strategy to the Permanent Representatives' Committee's relevant sub-committee for consideration ahead of the EU-AU Summit. This might be the document referred to by AU officials, where they said Africa had its own strategy guided by its priorities, during the 10th commission-to-commission meeting.²²

The drafting of the Africa strategy is a step in the right direction taken by the AU to drive the continent-to-continent negotiations. The fact that it was discussed at the 2019 February summit confirms that the continental body is committed to driving the process. However, it should be made public and tabled for discussion with relevant stakeholders including regional economic

communities (RECs) and regional mechanisms (RMs) to ensure that the strategy is consensus-based and reflects the needs of the people.

The adoption of the communication was expected to be followed by a series of meetings, including the EU-AU ministerial meeting in May that was to contribute to the 6th EU-AU Summit scheduled for October 2020. The summit timeline, however, has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shifted the global focus.

Accordingly, the scheduled EU-AU ministerial meeting has been postponed, which might lead to the postponement of the summit. This provides a good opportunity for African negotiators to reflect on the proposed EU communication as well as the council conclusions and finalise the AU strategy in consultation with relevant stakeholders including RECs and RMs.

The far-reaching socio-economic impact of COVID-19 will certainly reorient the EU-AU engagements as managing the impact of the pandemic on the respective continents is the current primary focus. While the AU is playing a lead role in the fight against COVID-19, including in political mobilisation and policy guidance as well as obtaining resources, the EU is also coordinating a collective European response to the pandemic.²³

COVID-19 has highlighted global structural fissures and, as such, provides opportunities for a renewed impetus to address the gaps and strengthen the existing mechanisms. A post-COVID-19 era will undoubtedly disrupt the structured institutional norms, while creating opportunities for both Africa and Europe to revisit their partnerships and realign their priorities within the new global order.

Are Africa's priorities reflected in the EU-Africa strategy?

This section analyses the priority areas proposed by the communication from the African perspective, guided mainly by Agenda 2063. It is presented in two sub-sections: (i) inclusive growth and sustainable development; and (ii) peace, security, governance and resilience. These two sub-sections encapsulate key priorities for Africa covered in the communication.

Inclusive growth and sustainable development are primary agendas for Africa. Accordingly, building a

'prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development' is the first aspiration of Agenda 2063, which consists of seven goals and 18 priority areas. These goals cover key issues such as poverty, jobs, unemployment, decent work, access to energy, health, digitalisation, science, technology, agriculture, climate change, migration and the blue economy.

These issues are captured under priorities 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the communication that cover issues of green transition and energy access, digital transformation, sustainable growth and jobs, and migration and mobility respectively.

According to the AU, Africa has met 56% of its 2019 target for attaining high standards of living

Peace, security, governance and resilience is another major priority for Africa since these areas comprise fundamental pillars that ensure socio-economic development of the continent. In this regard, aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063 focuses on 'good governance, democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law,' while aspiration 4 aims to create 'a peaceful and secure Africa.'

These aspirations cover aspects such as improving the quality of governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, building strong institutions, operation of the African Peace and Security Architecture and African Governance Architecture, and strengthening mechanisms for securing peace and reconciliation at all levels. These issues correspond with priority 4 of the communication, which covers peace, security, governance and resilience.

Inclusive growth and sustainable development

Africa has made progress regarding its aspiration to build a 'prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.' The continent has met 56% of its 2019 target intending to attain the goal of high standards of living.²⁴ This is partly achieved due to 'the increase in the proportion of the population with access to the internet, growing from 21.8% in 2013 to 41.9% in 2019, respectively.'²⁵

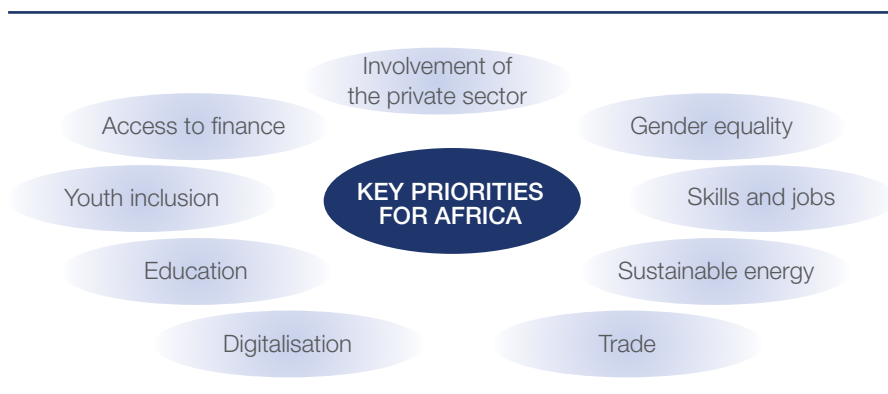
The continent has also made good progress in basic education, 'with enrolment rates increasing from 76.8% in

2013 to 80.8% in 2019.²⁶ Here the provision of free basic education has made a substantial contribution. Sustainable development and jobs are the third priority area of the communication, where four action areas are discussed that cover trade; investment; regional economic integration; and education, skills and jobs.

Africa's free trade area could become one of the largest global single markets in the world, with a market of 1.3 billion people

Agenda 2063 indicates that key priorities for Africa in relation to inclusive growth and sustainable development include trade; access to finance; involvement of the private sector; education, skills and jobs; sustainable energy; digitalisation; gender equality; and youth inclusion. Migration is also covered in the context of regional integration. Below these issues are discussed in relation to the communication.

Key priorities for Africa



Trade

Trade, and more specifically intra-African trade, is a primary driver of growth on the continent. Accordingly, boosting trade and sustainable investment and advancing regional and continental economic integration are interlinked, with AfCFTA being a leading priority for Africa. On advancing the free trade area, the continent has made outstanding progress, meeting 92% of its target set for 2019. The fact that AfCFTA's agreement was signed by 54 member states, with 30 ratifications, contributes to this achievement.²⁷

In the communication, the EU's continuous technical and financial support to AfCFTA is emphasised, highlighting that the EU's support grew from €12.5 million in 2014-2017 to €60 million in 2018-2020. The increase in support should be welcomed as it will contribute to realising the free trade area.

Africa's free trade area could become one of the largest global single markets in the world, with a market of 1.3 billion people.²⁸ In 2018, Africa had a

AFCF TA'S AGREEMENT
WAS SIGNED BY

54

MEMBER STATES WITH
30 RATIFICATIONS

collective GDP of US\$2.5 trillion and combined consumer and business spending of more than US\$4 trillion.²⁹

The EU's support to AfCFTA however shouldn't be in relation to the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), referring to 'trade and development agreements negotiated between the EU and ... ACP partners engaged in regional economic integration processes.'³⁰

Although the EPAs are not mentioned in the EU communication, they are highlighted in the council conclusions. The EPAs are signed by 24 African countries. Regional EPAs were also signed with 13 West African states, along with RECs such as the Southern Africa Development Community and the East African Community.³¹

As previously mentioned, EPAs are viewed as mechanisms aimed at promoting market opportunities for European companies facilitating duty-free and quota-free imports,³² which adversely affect intra-African trade.³³ To address such issues, the AU has pushed for continent-to-continent agreement including the ACP negotiations, though some of its member states preferred the continuation of the ACP framework.³⁴

Expanding energy access is crucial in sub-Saharan Africa, where half the population lacks electricity

AfCFTA, however, is more beneficial to the continent. Therefore, the EU support to intra-African trade should be closely coordinated with the AU, RECs and member states in delivering on the AfCFTA. It is further argued that Africa's free trade area can also be mutually beneficial to European countries as it 'can provide investment opportunities for European business.'³⁵

Access to finance and supporting the private sector

The communication posits that fostering access to finance, enhancing regulatory frameworks and developing a value-added private sector would bolster Africa's development agenda.

Specifically, the communication emphasises the EU's plan to support Africa's effort to attract more foreign direct investment and roll out stimulus-sustainable funding. Stating

that the EU is the largest investor in Africa with €222 billion, the communication highlights ongoing EU investments in Africa.³⁶ The EU's External Investment Plan is one of the mechanisms highlighted, where the EU pledged to raise at least €44 billion in private investment by 2020.³⁷

The communication also states that the EU plans to roll out €60bn to stimulate sustainable investment in Africa from 2021-2027, under the proposed Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.³⁸ The EU Commission proposed to establish this in 2018 as 'a single EU foreign policy instrument,' which enables the EU to follow a coordinated approach to Africa.³⁹ This aligns with the AU's 2018 decision delegating the continental body to negotiate on a continent-to-continent partnership.

These focus points address the financial bottlenecks that Africa faces, including implementing Agenda 2063's flagship infrastructure projects such as the Grand Inga Hydropower Project, Single African Air Transport Market and Continental High-Speed Train Network.⁴⁰

Enhancing regulatory frameworks to foster an enabling business environment and investment climate is also discussed in the communication. Developing the private sector aligns with Agenda 2063, which explains the importance of engaging the private sector, including enhancing agricultural productivity. The private sector can catalyse inclusive growth across all economic sectors on the continent, 'generating growth, jobs, and economic opportunity for the majority, including the poor.'⁴¹

Sustainable energy

Expanding access to sustainable energy is crucial in sub-Saharan Africa, where half of the population lacks access to electricity.⁴² In this respect, the African Development Bank's New Deal on Energy for Africa aims to achieve universal access to electricity across Africa by 2025. To achieve this, the bank estimates that annual investment worth between US\$60 billion and US\$90 billion is required.⁴³

Agenda 2063's first 10-year implementation plan also aimed to increase access to electricity by at least 50% of the 2013 levels. However, the continent showed weak performance, meeting only 26% of its 2019 target.⁴⁴

There are many benefits to developing Africa's energy access – including enhancing the small and medium-

sized enterprises (SMEs) that employ most people and contribute heavily to the GDP. Further, it can contribute to expanding access to education and healthcare.

The communication recognises that Africa should work towards doubling its energy access by 2040 in light of its already low connectivity rate and growing population. However, it doesn't articulate how Africa and the EU collaborate to materialise it.

The EU-AU partnership on access to energy should build on existing partnerships in this area. This includes the 2007 Africa-EU Energy Partnership, which is one of the partnerships under JAES. The 2007 Africa-EU Energy Partnership aims to 'improve access to secure, affordable and sustainable energy for both continents, with a special focus on increasing investment in energy infrastructure in Africa.'⁴⁵

Digitalisation

The AU's digital transformation strategy shows the potential for digital transformation as an enabler for inclusive and sustainable growth through 'stimulating job creation and contributing to addressing poverty, reducing inequality, facilitating the delivery of goods and services.'⁴⁶

The strategy emphasises digitalisation of the agriculture, health and education sectors, and increasing the number of Africans with digital identity documents. Digitalisation is also integrated into other AU frameworks. The AfCFTA operational phase launched in July 2019, for example, includes a pan-African digital payment and settlement system as one of its instruments.⁴⁷ These can help Africa close the digital divide it currently faces.

The increase in the number of people in Africa with internet access from 2013 to 2019 has already helped Africa meet 56% of its 2019 target of its high standard of living goal.⁴⁸

In the communication, the role of digital transformation in creating jobs, stimulating trade, backed by robust regulatory frameworks, is discussed. The potential for e-finance platforms to promote digital entrepreneurship and job creation speaks directly to the AU's digital transformation strategy, which aspires to 'build inclusive digital skills and human capacity across' different sectors.⁴⁹ The digital sector can stimulate entrepreneurship, trade and investment by reducing the cost of doing business.

It is worth noting that the EU Council conclusions reflected aspects that matter to the African continent such as developing 'new Africa-made solution to boost the digital economy ... closing the digital divide, fighting data poverty ... and promoting digital for development.'⁵⁰

Further, the EU communication indicates that 'e-governance will protect consumers and privacy and will intensify the fight against corruption.' For African governments, the primary use of digital services and platforms is to enhance efficiency in the delivery of essential services, from business registration and application of birth certificates, passports and identity cards to filing tax returns. This aligns with the AU's aim to expand the provision of digital identity documents across the continent.⁵¹ Close to 542 million people in Africa – more than 40% of the continent's population – lack an official identity document.⁵²

The AU aspires to build inclusive digital skills and human capacity across different sectors

The communication also discusses the importance of establishing a robust regulatory framework to enhance capacities to deal with cybercrime and the misuse of the internet for terrorism and violent extremism. This is relevant for African countries and sub-regions, which are already grappling with numerous security challenges, including the use of the internet by extremist groups such as al-Shabaab and Boko Haram.⁵³

AU-EU cooperation should build on existing frameworks. This includes the Africa-Europe Innovation Partnership launched in September 2019 with the aim to 'support and connect innovation and technology incubators and accelerators in tapping into new markets, find their trusted partner across the Mediterranean as well as build new perspectives, knowledge and networks.'⁵⁴

Education, skills and jobs

Education is one of the leading priorities for Africa, as well-trained human power is the backbone of sustainable and inclusive economic growth. In this respect, goal 2 of the first aspiration of Agenda 2063 also focuses on 'well-educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation.'

Although overall performance of the continent stands at 24% in relation to this goal, good progress was made in basic education, with enrolment rates reaching 80.8%.⁵⁵ The communication stresses post-secondary education with a focus on increasing the employability of young graduates by aligning education and skills to labour market demands.

In support of this priority area, the communication proposes scaling up 'EU-Africa academic and scientific cooperation, including on technical and vocational education and training and enhancing skills development.'⁵⁶ It also proposes capacity-building initiatives to enhance quality training for teachers, development of research and innovation capacities. Facilitation of mobility of students, teachers, trainers and researchers is also highlighted.

Such support is critical to Africa since it will increase the number of well-trained people. The communication's emphasis on post-secondary education, however, leaves out primary and secondary education, which is fundamental to enhancing the education system.

Africa is unlikely to attain its unemployment rate reduction targets by 2023 unless radical changes are made

Enhancing education and skills can support the job sector. It can also help the continent meet goal 4 of Agenda 2063 – transforming economies and job creation – where it has shown low progress, meeting only 16% of its 2019 target.⁵⁷ Part of the reason for this low progress is that 'the proportion of manufacturing value added as a percentage of GDP fell in many countries during the reporting period.'⁵⁸

Decent work is another important element highlighted in the communication, which is relevant to the African context. On improving 'incomes, jobs and decent work' the continent met 51% of its 2019 target.⁵⁹ Further collaborations between Africa and Europe in the area can take the current progress to the next level.

Gender equality

Given the centrality of gender equality to achieving Africa's sustainable development and inclusive growth agenda, the 17th goal of Agenda 2063 aspires to 'achieving full gender equality in all spheres of life.'⁶⁰

The continent has made some progress in meeting its goals. On ensuring women's political participation, for example, the continent met 71% of its 2019 target, specifically in relation to 'the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments, regional and local bodies.'⁶¹ However, low progress persists on equal economic opportunities among men and women – including ownership to land, meeting only 20% of its target.⁶²

The EU communication discusses the importance of women's participation in the economic sector, education, politics, peace and security. But beyond

AFRICA HAS MET

71%

OF ITS 2019 TARGET FOR WOMEN'S
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

highlighting the inclusion of women more broadly, gender is not mainstreamed in the communication. In relation to climate change, for example, women are disproportionately affected as their 'roles as primary caregivers and providers of food and fuel make them more vulnerable when flooding and drought occur.'⁶³ Women can also play a leadership role in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation.⁶⁴

Further, women's participation in education, training and jobs is not aligned. Discussions on women, peace and security don't cover aspects of prevention and resolution of conflict, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Gender-responsive budgeting, which can advance gender equality, is also not included.⁶⁵ In addition, existing AU structures that work on advancing gender equality are not included such as the AU's Special Envoy's Office on Women, Peace and Security, and the Network of African Women in Conflict Prevention and Mediation (FemWise-Africa).

Youth inclusion

Africa is the world's youngest continent, with 60% of its population under the age of 25.⁶⁶ Goal 18 of Agenda 2063 is also dedicated to the 'engagement and empowerment of youth and children.'⁶⁷ Agenda 2063's implementation plan indicates that the continent has performed relatively well, attaining 77% against the 2019 targets on the implementation of the provisions of the African Youth Charter.⁶⁸

However, the continent's performance in reducing unemployment rates among youth stands at -128%, signalling a 'likelihood of not attaining the overall target by 2023 if radical changes are not made.'⁶⁹

The EU emphasises post-secondary education but primary and secondary schooling is key to enhancing Africa's education system

Acknowledging that in the next 15 years some 375 million young people are expected to reach working age in Africa, the communication emphasises aspects of education, skilled labour and jobs. But discussions should apply a broader perspective beyond jobs. For example, social protection mechanisms need to be addressed adequately.

The communication refers to this through the lens of 'health and safety at work, fighting against inequality and discrimination, and forced labour.' While this is commendable, young Africans are faced with more social protection challenges such as exposure to unsafe environments, whether in conflict, post-conflict or violent electoral settings. This needs to be adequately reflected in the joint strategy.

The strategy must also integrate structures of the AU that work on youth empowerment. These include the AU's Youth for Peace Africa (Y4P) Programme, and the newly created office of the Youth Special Envoy, which

60%

OF AFRICA'S POPULATION IS
< 25 YEARS OLD

are crucial in promoting youth protection in the realm of peace, security and governance. These structures provide a good opportunity to deepen youth engagement, including through inter-continental platforms such as the Africa-Europe Youth Meet-Up.⁷⁰ The platform aims to provide a way to exchange ideas between European, African and diaspora youth.

Migration and mobility

Migration is a development issue in the African context. In this respect, the African Common Position on Migration and Development states that ‘well-managed migration may have a substantial positive impact for the development of countries of origin and yield significant benefits to [destination states].’⁷¹

This is manifested by migrants’ contribution to economies of their countries of origin through remittances, investment, transfer of skills and knowledge. In 2019, for example, the continent received US\$48 billion in remittances.⁷² Migrants’ contributions to their countries of destination also include spending 85% of their income there, paying taxes and responding to labour market needs.⁷³

The EU discusses migration from the security perspective, focusing on fighting irregular migration and improving return and readmission

Migration is also central to Africa’s integration agenda as articulated by aspiration 2 of Agenda 2063 that envisions creating ‘an integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Africa’s renaissance.’⁷⁴ Here the implementation of the 2018 AU *Protocol* to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment is critical. The protocol’s implementation goes hand in hand with achieving AfCFTA.

The free movement protocol, however, has seen low implementation, being ratified by only four countries⁷⁵ as of June 2020, out of the required 15.⁷⁶ The increasing tendency by African states to view people’s movement as a security concern contributes to this.⁷⁷ The implementation of EU policies in Africa⁷⁸ that aim to stem Africa’s migration to Europe have played a significant role in this too.⁷⁹

In the communication, migration is discussed from the security perspective as manifested by two of its four critical areas of focus, which cover fighting irregular migration and improving return and readmission. Enhancing border management from the perspective of building effective migration management is also emphasised.

To ensure a balanced discussion that represents both continents’ priorities, the communication needs to be informed by other frameworks beyond those spearheaded by the EU.⁸⁰ These include the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees and the AU’s free movement protocol and Joint Labour Migration Programme.

MIGRANTS SPEND

85%

OF THEIR INCOME IN
DESTINATION COUNTRIES

Peace, security, governance and resilience

Peace, security, governance and resilience are among the leading priorities for Africa. Agenda 2063, most notably aspiration 3 and 4 respectively, call for ‘an Africa of Good Governance, Democracy, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law,’⁸¹ and ‘a Peaceful and Secure Africa, Democracy and Good Governance.’⁸²

These aspirations, in combination, outline five main goals that, if achieved, enable the ‘Africa we want’. Encapsulated in this are seven goals: human rights, justice and the rule of law; institutions and leadership; participatory development and local governance; maintenance and preservation of peace and security; institutional structure for the AU; instruments on peace and security; and to ensure the African Peace and Security Architecture pillars are fully operational and functional.

These issues are also of mutual interest to the EU. According to the Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy, peace and security are of vital interest to the EU as security in Europe is strongly linked to peace in neighbouring and surrounding regions.⁸³

The EU’s position on peace and security should be welcomed as it aligns with the AU’s priorities

The impetus for collective security reflected in the outcomes of the Abidjan Declaration has therefore been anchored in shared threats. This is especially in preventing and countering violent extremism and other transboundary threats such as piracy, human trafficking, and smuggling, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The need for collective security through shared responsibility is further echoed in the 2018 memorandum of understanding between the AU and the EU on peace, security and governance. The memorandum stresses the need to ‘promote an integrated approach to conflicts and crises through the better use of joint strategies and of early warning systems, focusing on fragility, human security, human rights and recognising the need for increased coherence and greater synergies between development, humanitarian, governance and peace-building activities.’⁸⁴

The communication proposes three action points under this priority area: (i) peace and security, (ii) governance, democracy, human rights, and (iii) the rule of law and building resilience. These action points are discussed below.

Peace and security

The first proposed action point, peace and security, seeks to enhance the EU-Africa partnership to adapt and deepen the ‘EU’s support to African peace efforts through a more structured and strategic cooperation, with a particular focus on regions where tensions and vulnerabilities are the highest priority areas.’⁸⁵ This action point is in line with the AU’s flagship project Silencing the Guns in Africa, and the continental body’s 2020 theme of the year – Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development. The communication reiterates that:

... instability in Africa is no longer defined by inter-state conflict but by restricted state control over territories and maritime domains, social cohesion, home-grown extremism, inter-community conflicts, the proliferation of armed groups, terrorism and transnational crime, including cybercrime. Climate change, increased competition for natural resources, environmental challenges, lack of basic social services, pandemics, and other health threats are additional sources of instability.⁸⁶

This pronouncement should be welcomed as it underpins the AU’s call for an all-encompassing response to the issue of peace and security. It also underscores the need for full implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture, which provides the foundational framework to peace and security as it is ‘built around structures, objectives, principles, and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts, post-conflict reconstruction and development [on] the continent.’⁸⁷

While the EU has been a critical player in the implementation of the African Peace and Security Architecture, the structural difference in coordination such as those seen in the deployment of peace operations continue to hamper effective partnership.

In light of this, negotiations on the future of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM),⁸⁸ deployment of

peacekeeping forces to the Sahel, and prevailing crises such as that in Libya will need special attention. The continued tension in these areas is of mutual concern for both Africa and Europe and emphasises the need to supplement the support to these areas.

This includes crafting holistic responses within the current African Peace and Security Architecture support structure, and supplementing peacekeeping support with high-level mediation as provided for by the Panel of the Wise.

So far the EU's primary support to peace and security is through the African Peace Facility, which focuses on three main areas of intervention: peace support, capacity building and early response.⁸⁹ Much of this goes to peace support, especially in Somalia, Guinea-Bissau, South Sudan, Gambia, the Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel, and Central Africa. The most significant contribution goes to AMISOM – the AU's largest mission.

While the communication indicates continued support to these areas, it should focus less on continuing support and repurpose the support provided by the African Peace Facility towards conflict prevention and resolution.

To be effective, EU support should go beyond the traditional electoral observation missions

The pronouncement in the communication to support dialogue-centred conflict prevention and resolution provides a good opportunity to repurpose the funds and focus on early warning and response mechanisms. The cyclical nature of conflict in Africa demands a multi-pronged response, and adequate support at all stages of conflict is key to Africa's aspiration to silencing of its guns.

The support to the capacity-building component, mostly in early warning and early response, is crucial. While the EU has contributed €2.7bn since 2004 to the African Peace Facility, around €740 million⁹⁰ has been earmarked for early response mechanisms such as mediation and fact-finding missions.

Using these funds in the area of early response needs to be in line with the AU's new way of working, as outlined in the African Peace and Security Architecture,

which puts prevention at the heart of conflict mitigation. operationalisation of the Mediation Support Unit and the creation of multi-tiered preventive diplomacy response mechanisms under the Panel of the Wise must be prioritised.

Good governance, democracy and human rights

The second proposed action plan of the communication focuses on partnering 'with Africa on integrating good governance, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and gender equality in action and cooperation.'

This proposed priority is buttressed in the core mandate of the African Governance Architecture,⁹¹ inspired by the Constitutive Act⁹² of the AU that seeks to 'promote and protect human and people's rights, consolidate democratic institutions and culture and ensure good governance and the rule of law.' Within this, two main areas come into focus: support to electoral processes and upholding human rights, priority areas in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.⁹³

Elections affect the democracy, human rights, security and development spheres; upholding electoral integrity is critical to preserving good governance principles. The AU explains that:

... while there is no universally agreed definition of electoral integrity, it is generally understood as referring to the conduct of elections based on established democratic principles of universal suffrage and political equality as reflected in international, continental and regional standards and norms; and the professionalism, impartiality, and transparency underpinning the process of electoral preparation and administration across the electoral cycle.⁹⁴

Therefore, to effectively support Africa's need to attain 'credible, inclusive, and transparent electoral and democratic processes,' EU support needs to go beyond the traditional electoral observation missions. As it stands, the AU's election observer missions have been fraught with challenges regarding the timing of deployment, scope of coverage, and lack of follow-up mechanisms to encourage the implementation of critical recommendations emerging from such observer missions.

These observer missions should be supplemented by capacity building measures such as those provided

to electoral management bodies. While this support already exists within the EU-AU support framework, there is a need to upscale it to achieve the AU's goal to 'strengthen political institutions to entrench a culture of democracy and peace.' This will also act as a catalyst for the implementation of Agenda 2063 which aims to accomplish transformational outcomes where:

... at least seven out of ten persons in every member state of the union will perceive elections to be free, fair and credible; democratic institutions, processes and leaders accountable; the judiciary impartial and independent, and the legislature independent and key component of the national governance process.⁹⁵

Second to this is the promotion and protection of human rights, be they political, civil, economic, social or cultural. The communication expressly underscores support to this area through reinforcing the implementation of the African Governance Architecture by support initiatives such as annual dialogues. But it's also imperative to support the AU in popularising its normative frameworks to encourage their adoption and ratification by member states.

Statistics drawn from the Agenda 2063 implementation report indicate that Africa's overall performance was better in areas where accountability frameworks were adopted, signed, ratified and implemented.⁹⁶ Good performance of 48% against the 2019 indicators on aspiration 4,⁹⁷ a peaceful and secure Africa, for example, was attributed to the existence of an African framework – the African Peace and Security Architecture. This operates at continental and regional levels and is domesticated at a national level with the development of national peace councils.

Inversely, the low performance of 16% on the aspiration for good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and justice was attributed to the low ratification and domestication rate of critical governance accountability frameworks.⁹⁸

In this respect, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance is the most notable governance framework that aims at 'improving the African governance landscape and addressing the daunting challenges posed by civil wars, coups d'état, gross human rights violations and election-related violence.'⁹⁹

Since its adoption in 2007, however, it has been signed by only 46 member states, out of which only 34 have ratified and deposited their instruments of ratification.¹⁰⁰

The protection of human rights can only be accomplished if there are effective accountability mechanisms tied to the adoption of critical frameworks. Support to the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights will be critical to the protection of human rights in Africa.

This is especially regarding advocacy around the implementation of the verdicts and recommendations of these organs respectively. Member states' adherence to their biennial reporting obligations as enshrined in article 62 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights is also vital.

Resilience

The third and last proposed action point aims to 'secure resilience by linking humanitarian, development, peace and security interventions at all stages of the cycle of conflicts and crises.' The idea of bridging humanitarian, development, peace and security interventions is crucial to is crucial to the AU working methods.

To manage conflict, a focus is needed on governance-induced problems such as corruption

A resilient Africa is an Africa that takes responsibility for its own financing, and can pre-empt and adequately respond to development and humanitarian challenges in line with the pan-African vision of an 'integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa'. Within this, the communication calls for an 'integrated approach acting at all stages of the conflict cycle.'

To prevent and manage conflict and build state resilience, there must be a focus on governance-induced problems such as political corruption, poor public service delivery and humanitarian aid, weak human rights, justice, constitutionalism and enforcement of the rule of law, and deficits in state accountability and responsiveness. These priority areas are inextricably interlinked and must be implemented simultaneously.

This approach reflects the AU's structural prevention efforts employed through the Continental Early Warning System, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Africa Risk Capacity. Structural conflict prevention is premised on addressing the root causes of conflict.¹⁰¹

Integrating Africa's priorities into the Africa-EU strategy

Over the years, Africa has made strides in socio-economic areas including poverty, health, digital access, small and medium-sized enterprises and remittances. These strides matter for Africa's medium- and long-term development as explained in Agenda 2063, and other relevant AU policy documents.

In related priority sectors such as transport infrastructure and the blue economy, the continent didn't make much progress, while illicit financial flows, the brain drain and debt continue to pose serious obstacles to Africa's development. This section discusses these key issues and how they are considered by African negotiators in Africa-EU strategy discussions.

The EU communication mentions poverty only once, recognising the challenges it poses to Africa

Eradicating poverty is one of Africa's leading priorities. Over 70% of the world's poorest live in Africa and 38% of the continent's population, accounting for over 511 million people, live in poverty.¹⁰² Accordingly, addressing poverty, inequality and hunger is one of the critical areas under aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063. With respect to this critical area, the continent has made modest progress, meeting 36% of its 2019 target.¹⁰³

The communication mentions poverty only once, recognising the challenges it poses to Africa, while the Sustainable Development Goals' key principle of 'leaving no one behind' is not mentioned.¹⁰⁴ The council conclusions, however, reference 'leaving no one behind' in light of creating inclusive and participatory societies including in terms of sustainable development.¹⁰⁵

The current COVID-19 pandemic makes tackling poverty even more pertinent. A new forecasting study published by the Institute for Security Studies shows that the most

severe effects of the pandemic on Africa will be seen in rising levels of extreme poverty.¹⁰⁶

Health is another critical priority area for Africa, as indicated by goal 3 of Agenda 2063 – that of 'healthy and well-nourished citizens.' In the communication, health is discussed marginally in relation to workers' rights, improving access to digital technology, and the promotion of investments. Pandemics are mentioned only once despite Africa's previous history with HIV/AIDS and Ebola.¹⁰⁷

Health is covered more holistically in the council conclusions, which state that the EU will work with 'African partners to strengthen African public health systems.'¹⁰⁸ Further, the conclusions recognise Africa's broad experience 'in containing pandemics' and highlight the importance of 'knowledge sharing and cooperation.'¹⁰⁹ On COVID-19, the EU's support to the continent is referred to in terms of ensuring the 'an equitable allocation of tests, treatments, and vaccines at affordable prices as they become available.'¹¹⁰

Related to goal 3, the continent met 62% of its 2019 target.¹¹¹ However it still has a long way to go to reduce the incidence of malaria, with only 27% of its 2019 goal met.¹¹² Despite such efforts, Africa carries 23% of the global disease burden, yet it spends only 1% of the total global health expenditure.¹¹³ Analysts argue that African states spend five times their healthcare budget to service their debts.¹¹⁴

COVID-19 has stressed not only the need to enhance Africa's healthcare systems, but also the burdens of debt on African economies. Africa's total foreign debt stands at US\$417 billion, while the pandemic is already causing the first recession in over 25 years in sub-Saharan Africa.¹¹⁵

According to 2018 figures, 36% of African government external debt was owed to multilateral organisations – mainly the World Bank and International Monetary Fund; 32% to bilateral creditors (including 20% to China); and another 32% to private lenders.¹¹⁶ The continent has already paid US\$35.8 billion in total debt service in 2018, 2.1% of the regional gross domestic product, of which US\$9.4 billion was paid to official bilateral creditors which translates to about 0.7% of Africa's GDP.¹¹⁷

The communication mentions 'debt management' from the perspective of reforming policies to enhance

the business environment and investment climate without any indication of proposed actions to address it. The impact of debt ties the hands of African states in terms of being able to invest in transport infrastructure, including roads and rail, which is crucial to Africa's sustainable and inclusive growth. This is crucial to the operationalisation of AfCFTA.

This is primarily because Africa depends heavily on its roads both for cargo and passengers, accounting for 80-90% of its transport coverage.¹¹⁸ However 53% of Africa's roads remain unpaved, with less than 50% of Africans in rural areas having access to all-season roads.

Transport infrastructure is not explicitly discussed in the communication, despite roads and rail networks being one of the issues raised by AU officials during the 10th commission-to-commission meeting in February 2020.¹¹⁹ Inclusion of transport infrastructure in the Africa-EU strategy could address Africa's \$100bn gap in infrastructure financing, which could be covered by European direct investment. This could also support AfCFTA.¹²⁰

Transport infrastructure isn't explicitly covered in the EU communication although AU officials raised it in the February 2020 meeting

Since 90% of Africa's imports and exports are transported by sea,¹²¹ developing Africa's blue economy is another priority for the continent.¹²² While 38 of the 55 African countries are also coastal and island states with a coastline of over 47 000 km, the sector employs more than 12 million people in fisheries alone, providing food security and nutrition for over 200 million Africans.¹²³ Accordingly, goal 6 of Agenda 2063 is dedicated to 'blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth.'¹²⁴

Africa didn't make good progress with this goal. It met only 21% of its 2019 target, 'partly owing to the very low proportion of marine biotechnology value added to the GDP.'¹²⁵ The communication, however, refers to the blue economy only once – regarding the enhancement of ocean governance. Its developmental benefits are not mentioned.

In terms of driving Africa's sustainable development and inclusive growth agenda, SMEs are an essential part of Africa's economic fabric. Some African countries' experiences also confirm the significance of SMEs towards advancing Agenda 2063's goal on transformed economies and job creation.

Senegal's industrial sector, comprising over 1 600 companies, for example is dominated by SMEs that 'boosted the industrial value added from 17.9% in 2015 to 21.5% in 2018,' and saw the 'share of real value added of manufactured goods in GDP increase from 16.6% in 2014 to 17.4% in 2018.'¹²⁶ This shows the immense potential of SMEs in creating more employment opportunities than other sectors.¹²⁷

US\$417
billion

AFRICA'S TOTAL FOREIGN DEBT

They can also increase Africa's middle class with disposable income, in tandem with market opportunities for new investors.¹²⁸ However the communication discusses SMEs in relation to regulatory frameworks and doesn't delve into how the two continents will partner on this front.

Digital transformation is another priority area for Africa, being an enabler to drive the continent's inclusive and sustainable growth agenda. In this respect, increasing access to the internet is one critical aspect of the 'high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all' goal of Agenda 2063.

Although the proportion of Africa's population with access to the internet grew from 21.8% in 2013 to 41.9% in 2019, less than a third of Africa's people have access to broadband connectivity.¹²⁹ To achieve affordable and good-quality internet access by 2030, the continent needs to invest US\$100 billion.¹³⁰ However, enhancing access to the internet is not adequately addressed in the communication.

For affordable and good-quality internet access by 2030, Africa must invest US\$100 billion

Related to this, digital literacy is also critical. The AU's Pan African Virtual and E-University is one mechanism the AU plans to use to address the issue. Practices on the ground show that a lot needs to be done by African governments. 'Only 50% of countries in Africa have computer skills as part of their school curriculum, compared to 85% globally.'¹³¹ And 230 million jobs in sub-Saharan Africa are projected to require digital skills by 2030.¹³²

Although the communication says 'access to safe and affordable digital services needs to be ensured for all through investment in infrastructure and reliable sources of electricity,' it doesn't explain how to address the issue.

Remittances are also high on Africa's agenda since they provide a stable source of foreign currency to African countries. In 2019, as mentioned previously, the continent received US\$48 billion in remittances.¹³³ To enable African countries to harness the benefits of

remittances, the AU established the African Institute for Remittances in 2015.

Enhancing the flow of remittances through reducing the cost of this money to and in Africa is part of the institute's objectives.¹³⁴ In 2018/19, the cost of sending money to sub-Saharan Africa was 9.3%, much higher than the global average of 7%.¹³⁵ Remittances are highlighted only twice in the communication in relation to cooperation on legal migration and the role of digitalisation in improving the flow of remittances. The council conclusions call for a reduction in the cost of remittances.¹³⁶ The African Institute for Remittances is not mentioned at all.

Africa's diaspora is the major source of remittances. The diaspora's contributions to the development of African countries of origin through skills transfer is also important. Therefore, engaging the diaspora is one of the leading priorities for African countries. In this respect, the AU declared the diaspora as the sixth region in the continent's structure in 2006.¹³⁷ It also established the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate.

However, the communication mentions the diaspora issue only vaguely – stating once that 'the EU should also continue to work with the diaspora to enhance the different ways in which they can contribute.'¹³⁸ This is despite Europe being home to the biggest portion of the African diaspora, and the top destination for African outbound migration. In 2019, more than 26%, which is 10.6 million of the total 39.4 million African migrants worldwide, lived in Europe.¹³⁹

Although the African diaspora in Europe benefits its African countries of origin through remittances and skills transfer, brain drain remains a significant problem for Africa, as it takes away its trained workforce. Annually close to 70 000 skilled professionals emigrate from Africa.¹⁴⁰ In the health sector alone, since 2010, nine African countries including Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi have lost over US\$2 billion from training doctors who have migrated.¹⁴¹ Despite its strong socio-economic impact, brain drain is not discussed in the communication.

To ensure Africa's sustainable development and inclusive growth, addressing illicit financial flows is critical. These illicit flows were one of the factors that led to the continent meeting only 18% of its 2019 targets against

Agenda 2063's goal 20 – 'Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development.'¹⁴²

The continent is losing US\$50 billion annually through illicit financial flows, further to the US\$1 trillion that has been lost in the past 50 years [1965 - 2015].¹⁴³ Despite this, illicit financial flows are not adequately discussed in the communication. They're mentioned only once regarding the need for policy reform that governs Africa's economic sector. Discussions on illicit financial flows should involve how the EU and its member states can support Africa in tackling the problem.

Lack of attention to the above issues is partly related to the fragmented nature of EU-Africa relations. The fact that the AU is leading the continent-to-continent negotiations provides an opportunity to address this better. Here the AU could play a central role in the integration of Africa's priorities in the Africa-EU strategy.

Conclusions and recommendations

African and European leaders have been talking about enhancing the partnership between the two continents to a 'new strategic' level since 2000.¹⁴⁴ In 2007 it was stressed that a common future for both continents required an audacious approach, informed past lessons and experiences of their engagement.¹⁴⁵

This good intention didn't materialise partly due to the 2008 financial crisis, the EU's fragmented approach towards Africa, and the reluctance of some European stakeholders in recognising the AU's leadership role.¹⁴⁶ A lack of proper implementation, monitoring and evaluation frameworks have also contributed to this.

To ensure that ongoing negotiations on the Africa-EU strategy enhance the partnership, efforts should be made to reflect the priorities and interests of both continents. In this respect, the most current issue – the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its far-reaching implications – comes first. While its impact cannot yet be quantified, the ripple effect of COVID-19 is already being felt in various sectors, and will continue in the medium to longer term.

In addressing the impact of the pandemic, the EU's call for African debt cancellation should be commended. The call for 'coordinated international debt relief efforts' is also reiterated in the council conclusions.¹⁴⁷

Debt relief will be the first litmus test for the EU's rhetoric of a 'partnership of equals.' Regarding the impact the pandemic is predicted to have in Africa, the EU will need to strongly support debt relief for African countries. The major impact of COVID-19 on the continent will be economical, as 'many African economies face a fragile macroeconomic picture globally and enjoy only limited ability to cope with increased fiscal pressure.'¹⁴⁸

EU High Representative Joseph Borrell Fontelles has stressed the EU's support of African countries' efforts in response to COVID-19, saying the EU 'will not forget about our sister continent when addressing this global pandemic.'¹⁴⁹ This pledge was followed by the 'Team Europe' package. Within this, '€3.25 billion of existing foreign external action resources to Africa was allocated – the most significant geographical allocation under the €20bn package.'¹⁵⁰

In 2019, over 30 African countries spent more on debt payment than on public healthcare

While the support package furthers this partnership, debt relief wasn't adequately addressed as part of the EU's support, which instead offered debt moratoriums for the poorest countries.¹⁵¹ The International Monetary Fund also announced a debt relief of six months for its debt obligations to 25 of the most vulnerable countries worldwide, 14 of which are in Africa.¹⁵²

But this is too little considering the magnitude of the problem. In 2019, 'more than 30 African countries spent more on debt payment ... than they did on public healthcare.'¹⁵³ Africa's development partners' considerations around debt relief should also take into account the fact that 'global economic recovery is only expected to occur within two to three years.'¹⁵⁴

While it is too early to predict a post-COVID-19 global order, history has shown that 'multilateral innovation' follows significant crises.¹⁵⁵ For example:

The First World War led to the creation of the League of Nations, and the Second to the establishment of the UN, the Bretton Woods

institutions and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which paved the way for the creation of the EU. The 1973 oil shock ushered in the G7. More recently, the G20 was established after the 2008 financial crisis.¹⁵⁶

In the African context, colonial wars led to the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity. In 1986, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development was established in response to the rampant drought- and disaster-related problems in the Horn of Africa.

While the path to a renewed EU-Africa partnership has just begun, its timeliness cannot be ignored. The partnership renewal occurs against the backdrop of AfCFTA being operational, the restoration of the Silencing the Guns agenda, and institution-wide reforms at the AU that seek to make RECs the first responders.

The impetus to capitalise on this environment is ever more pressing, providing Africa with an opportunity to not only redefine the partnership, but to do so on an equal footing. The African negotiators should therefore work through the AU and in tandem with the RECs to attain a more holistic inter-institutional partnership.

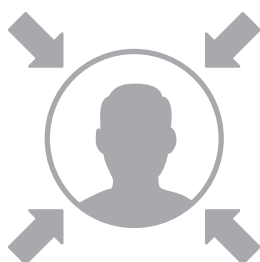
The October EU-AU Summit is an opportunity to revamp the partnership and create a mutually beneficial accountability framework

While the EU has reiterated that the communication of a strategy with Africa is an outline of crucial areas for consideration, and not the strategy in its entirety, support to primary priorities for Africa needs to be reinforced. This consideration is very important for Africa since the EU communication's proposals are now adopted through the council conclusions. Coupled with this are emerging priority areas due to COVID-19. The following section presents key considerations in light of the upcoming negotiations leading to the EU-Africa strategy.

Unveiling the AU's strategy

The AU and its relevant organs and member states should publicise its strategy on the EU-Africa negotiations with strong involvement of RECs, African-based civil society, research, women and youth organisations. This strategy, in turn should serve as a vehicle to ensure the inclusion of Africa's priorities. The strategy should also emphasise the central role of local administration to ensure the strategy's delivery.

Ensuring the centrality of local administration enhances domestic resource mobilisation capacity through tax collection, which could ultimately increase public service delivery including education and health services. This contributes to achieving Agenda 2063's self-financing goal.



THE AFRICA-EU STRATEGY
SHOULD APPLY A
PEOPLE-CENTRED APPROACH

Creating a political framework for partnership

The EU-AU Summit scheduled for October presents an opportunity to holistically revamp the partnership and work towards creating a mutually beneficial accountability framework. Some existing partnership frameworks, including the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its Abidjan Action Plan (2018-2020), the second Multiannual Indicative Programme of the EU's Pan-African Programme (2018-2020) and Cotonou Agreement (2000-2020), have lapsed.

Working towards enhancing the partnership would require innovation. This includes ensuring implementation of existing AU institutional architectures as outlined in the Constitutive Act, including the Assembly of the Union, the AU's Executive, the Permanent Representatives' Committee and the Peace and Security Council, is central to promoting a continent-to-continent partnership.

Linked to this is the need to take into account the evolution of the continental frameworks and their role in the delivery of the continental agenda. All relevant stakeholders including the AU, EU and their respective member states should work towards this.

Holistic approach

To ensure the strategy improves Africans' socio-economic and political situations, a holistic approach must be applied. This approach will allow the different parts of the strategy to work together to achieve a common goal.

Existing frameworks such as the Abidjan Declaration provide good examples. Aspects of education, skills and jobs, for instance, are discussed to enhance the livelihoods of people in the Abidjan Declaration, but not in the communication.

Similarly, the Women, Peace and Security and the Youth, Peace and Security agendas are also discussed holistically and in a way that supports existing mechanisms of the AU and EU in the Abidjan Declaration – which is not the case in the communication.

A holistic approach enhances policy coherence of the partnership, allowing the strategy to align its priorities with existing EU-AU frameworks, which makes implementation and tracking easier. The AU, EU and their respective member states should ensure that a holistic approach is applied in the strategy.

People-centred approach

The Africa-EU strategy should apply a people-centred approach, where the interests of the people of Africa are central to the different dimensions of the new strategy. Such an approach also aligns with aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 that aims to create 'an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of the African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.'

The importance of a people-centered approach is highlighted in the council conclusions, which include two new themes – 'investing in people' and 'human dimension' – that were not included in the EU communication. This is very encouraging since a people-centred approach enables the strategy to address most of the gaps observed in the communication, such as health, digital literacy, and internet access. It also allows application of human rights perspectives in relation to migrants and refugees.

The AU and its member states should publicise its strategy on the EU-Africa negotiations

This should be led by the AU, EU and their respective member states, with strong participation of RECs, civil society, women's and youth organisations.

Developing an implementation framework

The upcoming strategy should be accompanied by an implementation framework with set targets, clearly identified responsible stakeholders and an agreed timeline. The framework should include a financial mechanism that corresponds with targets that have been agreed upon.

A monitoring and evaluation mechanism should also be developed along the implementation framework. Such a comprehensive framework will make tracking its implementation and progress easier, and hold relevant stakeholders accountable.

The AU, EU and their respective member states should lead in developing the framework, in close coordination with RECs, civil society, research, women's and youth organisations.

Notes

- 1 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.
- 2 Council of the European Union, outcomes of proceedings, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvP0A>.
- 3 African Union, Agenda 2063, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 African Union and European Union, African Union – European Union Summit 2017: Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development, www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31991/33454-pr-final_declaration_au_eu_summit.pdf, 29-30 November 2017.
- 6 European Commission, 10th African Union Commission – European Union Commission – Joint Communique, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_20_365, 29 February 2020.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 European Commission, Africa-Europe Summit under the Aegis of the OAU and the EU Cairo, The Cairo Declaration 2000, 3-4 April 2000, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/PRES_00_901, 2000.
- 9 European Commission, Council of the European Union, Lisbon Declaration, EU-Africa Summit, Lisbon, www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/97494.pdf, 8-9 December 2007.
- 10 European Commission International Cooperation and Development cited in E De Groof and J Bossuyt, Mixed messages from Europe and Africa stand in the way of an intercontinental deal, ecdpm, Discussion Paper No. 239, February 2019.
- 11 African Union and European Union, African Union – European Union Summit 2017: Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development, www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31991/33454-pr-final_declaration_au_eu_summit.pdf, 29-30 November 2017.
- 12 G Paravicini, African Union delays plan to start using fund for security operations, *Reuters*, www.reuters.com/article/us-africanunion-summit/african-union-delays-plan-to-start-using-fund-for-security-operations-idUSKBN2050D9, 11 February 2020.
- 13 CONCORD, CONCORD analysis of the Joint EEAS EC Communication "Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa", https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CONCORD-analysis-of-Joint-Comm.-_Towards-a-comprehensive-strategy-with-Africa_FINAL_May2020.pdf.
- 14 European Commission, State of the Union 2018: Towards a new 'Africa-Europe Alliance' to deepen economic relations and boost investment and jobs, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_18_5702, 12 September 2018. President Jean-Claude Juncker, speaking during the State of the Union in 2018, said, '*Africa does not need charity, it needs true and fair partnership. And we, Europeans need this partnership just as much.*'
- 15 European Commission, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/3hZ103L>.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Centre for European Policy Studies, Why the EU should take the global lead in cancelling Africa's debt, www.ceps.eu/why-the-eu-should-take-the-global-lead-in-cancelling-africas-debt/, 16 April 2020.
- 18 Europe and African relations post COVID-19: time to add size, scale and speed, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/europe-and-african-relations-post-covid-19-time-to-add-size-scale-and-speed-135017>, 31 March 2020.
- 19 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.
- 20 African Union, Assembly of the African Union, Eleventh Extraordinary Session, (Decision Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.4(XI)), https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/36425-ext_assembly_dec._1-4xi_e.pdf, 17-18 November 2018.
- 21 African Union Peace and Security Department, Appointment of the AU High Representative on negotiations of European Union post 2020 agreement, www.peaceau.org/en/article/comm-1, 13 July 2018.
- 22 S Marks, African Union to EU: We've got our own strategy, thanks, *Politico*, www.politico.eu/article/commission-in-africa-ursula-von-der-leyen-frans-timmermans-moussa-faki/, 27 February 2020.
- 23 European Commission, Coronavirus response, https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en, 2020.
- 24 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Legal Texts and Policy Documents, <https://bit.ly/3axYXB7>.
- 28 Worldometer, Africa population (Live), <https://bit.ly/33iVdSy>, August 2020.
- 29 H Fofack, A Competitive Africa: Economic integration could make the continent a global player, International Monetary Fund, Finance and Development, Volume 55, No. 4, www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2018/12/afcta-economic-integration-in-africa-fofack.htm, December 2018.
- 30 European Commission, Economic partnerships, EU trade policy and ACP countries, <https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/economic-partnerships/>.
- 31 European Commission, Overview of Economic Partnership Agreements, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2009/september/tradoc_144912.pdf.
- 32 CONCORD, CONCORD analysis of the Joint EEAS EC Communication "Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa", https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CONCORD-analysis-of-Joint-Comm.-_Towards-a-comprehensive-strategy-with-Africa_FINAL_May2020.pdf.
- 33 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Policy brief. Economic partnership agreements and the African Continental Free Trade Area, www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/policy-brief_epas-and-cfta_final.pdf, July 2016.
- 34 B Stout, It's Africa's Turn to Leave the European Union, *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/02/10/african-union-european-union-trade/>, 10 February 2020.
- 35 Europe and African relations post COVID-19: time to add size, scale and speed, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/europe-and-african-relations-post-covid-19-time-to-add-size-scale-and-speed-135017>, 31 March 2020.
- 36 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.
- 37 European Union, EU External Investment Plan, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/external-investment-plan-factsheet_en.pdf.
- 38 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.

- 39 European Commission International Cooperation and Development cited in E de Groof and J Bossuyt, Mixed messages from Europe and Africa stand in the way of an intercontinental deal, ecdpm, Discussion Paper No. 239, February 2019.
- 40 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 41 African Development Bank Group, Briefing Notes for AfDB's Long-Term Strategy, Briefing Note 6: Inclusive Growth Agenda, www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/FINAL%20Briefing%20Note%206%20Inclusive%20Growth.pdf, 10 April 2012.
- 42 More than half of sub-Saharan Africans lack access to electricity, *The Economist*, www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2019/11/13/more-than-half-of-sub-saharan-africans-lack-access-to-electricity, 13 November 2019.
- 43 African Development Bank Group, Light up and Power Africa – A New Deal on Energy for Africa, www.afdb.org/en/the-high-5/light-up-and-power-africa-%E2%80%93-a-new-deal-on-energy-for-africa.
- 44 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 45 The Africa-EU partnership, Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP), <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en/projects/africa-eu-energy-partnership-aEEP>.
- 46 African Union, The digital transformation strategy for Africa 2020-2030, <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38507-doc-dts-english.pdf>.
- 47 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 African Union, The digital transformation strategy for Africa 2020-2030, <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38507-doc-dts-english.pdf>.
- 50 Council of the European Union, outcomes of proceedings, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvPOA>.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram have been using social media to disseminate propaganda and recruit followers. K Cox et al, Social media in Africa: A double-edged sword for security and development, United Nations Development Programme, www.undp.org/content/dam/rba/docs/Reports/UNDP-RAND-Social-Media-Africa-Research-Report_final_3%20Oct.pdf.
- 54 European Commission, Africa-EU Innovation Partnership, <https://africaeurope-innovationpartnership.net/about>.
- 55 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 56 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.
- 57 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 African Union, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want., <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.
- 61 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Mary Halton, climate change 'impacts women more than men', British Broadcasting Corporation, <https://bbc.in/33t3ovV>, 8 March 2018.
- 64 CONCORD, CONCORD analysis of the Joint EEAS EC Communication "Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa", https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CONCORD-analysis-of-Joint-Comm.-_Towards-a-comprehensive-strategy-with-Africa_FINAL_May2020.pdf.
- 65 CONCORD, Towards a new EU-Africa strategy, CONCORD 10 points for building a real partnership, <https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/10-points-Concord-Recs-New-Africa-Strategy-disclaimer.pdf>.
- 66 Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Africa's first challenge: the youth bulge stuck in 'waithood', <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2019/africas-first-challenge-youth-bulge-stuck-waithood>, 10 July 2019.
- 67 African Union Commission, Agenda 2063, Goal 18, <https://au.int/agenda2063/goals>.
- 68 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 69 Ibid.
- 70 AU-EU Youth Cooperation Hub, <https://bit.ly/30jv0Bm>.
- 71 African Union, African Common Position on Migration and Development, Executive Council Ninth Ordinary Session, Banjul, The Gambia, www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/cap_migrationanddev_2006.pdf, 25-29 June 2006.
- 72 World Bank Group, KNOMAD, Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook, Migration and Development Brief 31, www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/Migrationanddevelopmentbrief31.pdf, April 2019.
- 73 M Clemens, H Dempster and K Gough, Promoting New Kinds of Legal Labour Migration Pathways between Europe and Africa, Center for Global Development, www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/EU-Roadmap-Migration.pdf, 24 October 2019; quoting M Foresti, J Hagen-Zanker and H Dempster, Migration and development: how human mobility can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Overseas Development Institute, www.odl.org/publications/10913-migration-and-2030-agenda-sustainable-development, 2018.
- 74 African Union Commission, Agenda 2063, <https://au.int/agenda2063/goals>.
- 75 These countries are Mali, Niger, Rwanda and São Tomé and Príncipe.
- 76 African Union, Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment, <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36403-sl-PROTOCOL%20TO%20THE%20TREATY%20ESTABLISHING%20THE%20AFRICAN%20ECONOMIC%20COMMUNITY%20RELAT...pdf>, 2019.
- 77 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 78 These policies include the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (2015), the Joint Valletta Summit Action Plan (2015), the EU Partnership Framework on Migration (2015) and the European Agenda on Migration (2015).
- 79 T Tadesse Abebe, Securitisation of migration in Africa: The case of Agedez in Niger, *Africa Report*, Institute for Security Studies, 2019.

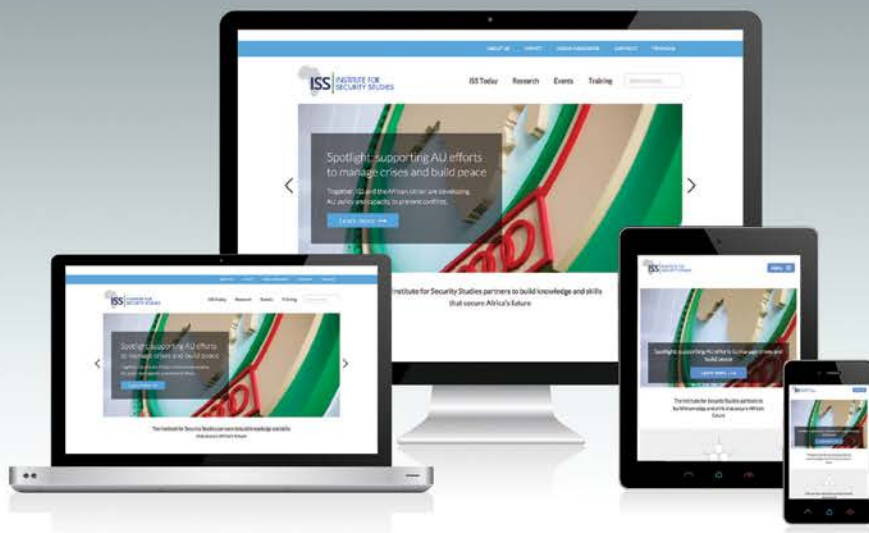
- 80 The communication calls for the implementation of the Joint Valletta Action Plan and the Khartoum and Rabat processes.
- 81 Agenda 2063, Agenda 2063, aspiration 3, <https://au.int/agenda2063/goals>.
- 82 Agenda 2063, Agenda 2063, aspiration 4, <https://au.int/agenda2063/goals>.
- 83 European Commission, Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe, A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy, http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/top_stories/pdf/eugs_review_web.pdf, June 2016.
- 84 AU-EU, Memorandum of understanding between the African Union and the European Union on Peace, Security, and Governance, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_18_3887, 2018.
- 85 European Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa, <https://bit.ly/34SQVQu>, 9 March 2020.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 African Peace and Security Architecture, <https://bit.ly/317Bdja>.
- 88 African Union Commission, Peace and Security Council, Communique of the 911th meeting of the PSC, held on 24 February, 2020, on the upcoming elections in Somalia and the future of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), www.peaceau.org/en/article/communique-of-the-911th-meeting-of-the-psc-held-on-24-february-2020-on-the-upcoming-elections-in-somalia-and-the-future-of-the-african-union-mission-in-somalia-amisom.
- 89 EU-AU, The African Peace Facility, www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/success-stories/african-peace-facility.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 African Union Commission, African Governance Architecture, <http://aga-platform.org/>.
- 92 African Union Commission, Constitutive Act of the African Union, https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf.
- 93 African Union Commission, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, http://archive.ipu.org/idd-E/afr_charter.pdf.
- 94 African Union Commission, Department of Political Affairs, Statement of the Commissioner for Political Affairs at the opening of the 4th Continental of the Elections Management Bodies, <https://au.int/en/speeches/20171109/statement-commissioner-political-affairs-opening-4th-continental-forum-elections>.
- 95 African Union, Agenda 2063, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.
- 96 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 97 Ibid.
- 98 Ibid.
- 99 African Union, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, <https://au.int/en/treaties/african-charter-democracy-elections-and-governance>.
- 100 African Union Commission, Status of implementation of African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36384-sl-AFRICAN%20CHARTER%20ON%20DEMOCRACY%2C%20ELECTIONS%20AND%20GOVERNANCE.PDF>.
- 101 According to the Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework, these are classified into seven categories: (i) socio-economic development; (ii) good governance, the rule of law, democracy and human rights; (iii) security sector; (iv) environment and climate change; (v) gender and youth; (vi) post-conflict peacebuilding; and (vii) transitional justice and reconciliation. In tandem, the seven pillars respond to humanitarian, development and security challenges.
- 102 World Data Lab, World Poverty Clock, <https://worldpoverty.io/headline>.
- 103 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 104 CONCORD, Towards a new EU-Africa strategy, CONCORD 10 points for building a real partnership, <https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/10-points-Concord-Recs-New-Africa-Strategy-disclaimer.pdf>.
- 105 Council of the European Union, outcomes of proceedings, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvPOA>
- 106 J Cilliers et al, The poor lose again: impact of COVID-19 on Africa, *ISS Today*, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/the-poor-lose-again-impact-of-covid-19-on-africa>, 30 June 2020.
- 107 This despite the fact that the Abidjan Declaration extensively discussed the importance of prevention and response to disease outbreaks and the need to support and strengthen the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 108 Council of the European Union, outcomes of proceedings, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvPOA>
- 109 Ibid.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 112 Ibid.
- 113 World Health Organization, SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages, www.who.int/sdg/targets/en/.
- 114 Yinka Adegoke, African economies are spending up to five times their health budgets on debt repayment, *Quartz Africa*, <https://qz.com/africa/1848047/nigeria-kenya-ghana-spend-twice-more-debt-payment-than-health/>, April 2020.
- 115 Centre for European Policy Studies, Why the EU should take the global lead in cancelling Africa's debt, www.ceps.eu/why-the-eu-should-take-the-global-lead-in-cancelling-africas-debt/, April 2020.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 Ibid.
- 118 Export-Import Bank of India, Connecting Africa: Role of Transport Infrastructure, www.tralac.org/images/docs/12896/connecting-africa-role-of-transport-infrastructure-exim-bank-working-paper-march-2018.pdf, 2018.
- 119 S Marks, African Union to EU: We've got our own strategy, thanks, *Politico*, www.politico.eu/article/commission-in-africa-ursula-von-der-leyen-frans-timmermans-moussa-faki/, 27 February 2020.
- 120 A Lebovich, After covid: Resetting Europe-Africa relations for mutual benefit, European Council on Foreign Relations, www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_after_covid_resetting_europe_africa_relations_for_mutual_benefit, 8 June 2020.
- 121 African Union, Africa's Blue Economy is a vehicle for sustainable development, <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20190607/au-commissioner-drea-participates-conference-blue-economy>, 7 June 2019.
- 122 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, The policy framework for greening industrialization in Africa, www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/era2016_chap4_en_rev6may.pdf.
- 123 Investing in Africa's blue economy can also address illegal and unregulated fishing, illegal dumping of waste, and hard security issues such as piracy and the use of the African maritime domain for human trafficking and smuggling, and arms smuggling.
- 124 African Union, Agenda 2063, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>.
- 125 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.

- 126 Ibid.
- 127 J Filomeno de Sousa dos Santos, *Why SMEs are key to growth in Africa*, World Economic Forum, www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/08/why-smes-are-key-to-growth-in-africa/, 4 August 2015.
- 128 Ibid.
- 129 World Bank Group, *Achieving Broadband Access for All in Africa Comes With a \$100 Billion Price Tag*, www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2019/10/17/achieving-broadband-access-for-all-in-africa-comes-with-a-100-billion-price-tag, 17 October 2019.
- 130 Ibid.
- 131 Salah-Eddine Kandri, *Africa's future is bright – and digital*, World Bank Blogs, <https://bit.ly/39Oe3ll>, October 23, 2019.
- 132 Ibid.
- 133 Centre for European Policy Studies, *Why the EU should take the global lead in cancelling Africa's debt*, www.ceps.eu/why-the-eu-should-take-the-global-lead-in-cancelling-africas-debt/, April 2020.
- 134 African Union, *Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018 – 2030)*, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-2018_mdfa_summary_english_version.pdf, 2018.
- 135 World Bank Group, *KNOMAD, Migration and Remittances: Recent Developments and Outlook*, Migration and Development Brief 31, www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/Migrationanddevelopmentbrief31.pdf, April 2019.
- 136 Council of the European Union, *outcomes of proceedings*, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvPOA>.
- 137 African Union, *Assembly of the Union Eighteenth Ordinary Session*, 29-30 January 2012, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, <https://bit.ly/2EAUNN1>.
- 138 European Commission, *State of the Union 2018: Towards a new 'Africa-Europe Alliance' to deepen economic relations and boost investment and jobs*, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_18_5702, 12 September 2018.
- 139 *World Migration Report 2020*, International Organization for Migration, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf, 2020.
- 140 African Union, *Migration Policy Framework for Africa and Plan of Action (2018 – 2030)*, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/35956-doc-2018_mdfa_summary_english_version.pdf, 2018.
- 141 Mo Ibrahim Foundation, *Brain drain: a bane to Africa's potential*, <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2018/brain-drain-bane-africas-potential>, 9 August 2018.
- 142 African Union and AUDA-NEPAD, *First continental report on the implementation of Agenda 2063*, https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38060-doc-agenda_2063_implementation_report_en_web_version.pdf, February 2020.
- 143 United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa, *Illicit financial flows: report of the High Level Panel on illicit financial flows from Africa*. Addis Ababa, <http://hdl.handle.net/10855/22695>, 2015.
- 144 Europe and African relations post COVID-19: time to add size, scale and speed, *The Conversation*, <https://theconversation.com/europe-and-african-relations-post-covid-19-time-to-add-size-scale-and-speed-135017>, 31 March 2020.
- 145 Ibid.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 Council of the European Union, *outcomes of proceedings*, 30 June 2020, <https://bit.ly/33dvPOA>.
- 148 A Lebovich, *After covid: Resetting Europe-Africa relations for mutual benefit*, European Council on Foreign Relations, www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_after_covid_resetting_europe_africa_relations_for_mutual_benefit, 8 June 2020.
- 149 Centre for European Policy Studies, *Why the EU should take the global lead in cancelling Africa's debt*, www.ceps.eu/why-the-eu-should-take-the-global-lead-in-cancelling-africas-debt/, April 2020.
- 150 European Union Commission, *Team Europe*, <https://bit.ly/3gprWcz>
- 151 Ibid.
- 152 International Monetary Fund, *IMF Executive Board Approves Immediate Debt Relief for 25 Countries*, www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/13/pr20151-imf-executive-board-approves-immediate-debt-relief-for-25-countries?cid=em-COM-123-41400, April 2020.
- 153 Centre for European Policy Studies, *Why the EU should take the global lead in cancelling Africa's debt*, www.ceps.eu/why-the-eu-should-take-the-global-lead-in-cancelling-africas-debt/, April 2020.
- 154 United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, *Communiqué – African Ministers of Finance – Immediate call for \$100 Billion support and agreement the crisis is deep and recovery will take much longer.*, www.uneca.org/stories/communiqu%C3%A9-african-ministers-finance-immediate-call-100-billion-support-and-agreement-crisis, 31 March 2020.
- 155 Sara Pantuliano, *Covid-19: 'we would not get back to normal because normal was the problem'*, Overseas Development Institute, <https://bit.ly/2DtdKRu>, 1 April 2020.
- 156 Ibid.

The Institute for Security Studies partners to build knowledge
and skills that secure Africa's future

Visit our website for the latest analysis, insight and news

www.issafrica.org



Step 1 Go to www.issafrica.org

Step 2 Go to bottom right of the ISS home page
and provide your subscription details

About the authors

Tsion Tadesse Abebe is a Senior Researcher in the Migration Programme at the Institute for Security Studies. Her research focuses on migration, forced displacement, peace and security.

Hafsa Maalim is a Policy Analyst at the African Union Peace and Security Department.

About ISS Africa Reports

The Africa Report series analyses human security problems and solutions at the regional and continental level. It also considers the implications and lessons from Africa for global policy. Reports provide insights into African and global policy on conflict trends, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, terrorism, organised crime, peace operations, maritime security, migration, development and governance.

About the ISS

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) partners to build knowledge and skills that secure Africa's future. The ISS is an African non-profit with offices in South Africa, Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal. Using its networks and influence, the ISS provides timely and credible policy research, practical training and technical assistance to governments and civil society.

Acknowledgements



This report is funded by the Hanns Seidel Foundation. The ISS is also grateful for support from the members of the ISS Partnership Forum: the Hanns Seidel Foundation, the European Union, the Open Society Foundations and the governments of Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the USA.

© 2020, Institute for Security Studies

Copyright in the volume as a whole is vested in the Institute for Security Studies and the author, and no part may be reproduced in whole or in part without the express permission, in writing, of both the author and the publishers.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the ISS, its trustees, members of the Advisory Council or donors. Authors contribute to ISS publications in their personal capacity.

Photo credit: Amelia Broodryk/ISS

ISSN 2617-7749 Print
ISSN 2617-7757 Digital



9 772617 775008