About the EU Delegation to the African Union

A summary of the EU Delegation’s relations with the African Union, plus an outline of the strategic partnership.

About

The role of the EU Delegation

The Delegation of the European Union (EU) to the African Union (AU) was created in 2008. Its overall purpose is to contribute to enhancing the unique Partnership that exists between the two Unions. The EU Delegation operates in an environment which includes 55 AU Member States, regional and pan-African organizations and institutions, such as the AU Commission, and international partners. The Delegation deals with a wide range of topics. This includes both dialogue on political issues of mutual concern as they arise, as well as longer-term cooperation and institution building.

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2007, constitutes the overarching long-term framework for Africa-EU relations. EU-Africa Summits in Tripoli (2010) and Brussels (2014) refined the Partnership's Strategy, taking into consideration changes and emerging priorities on both continents. The 5th and most recent AU-EU Summit took place in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, in November 2017.

The 5th AU-EU Summit

The 5th African Union - European Union Summit brought together EU and AU leaders to define the future direction for cooperation between the two continents. The theme of the Summit was "Investing in Youth for a Sustainable Future".

African and European Heads of State and Government adopted a Joint Declaration setting out their commitment to invest in youth for accelerated inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The Summit agreed on four common strategic priorities for the period leading up to the next Summit:

- Investing in people - education, science, technology and skills development
- Strengthening Resilience, Peace, Security and Governance
Migration and mobility
Mobilising Investments for African structural and sustainable transformation

Young leaders contributed to the Summit both through the 4th Africa-Europe Youth Summit and the Youth Plug-In Initiative, which allowed 36 youth fellows to elaborate concrete and innovative proposals in six thematic areas. The resulting Youth Agenda was embraced by Heads of State and Government at the Summit.

For more information on the main areas of cooperation between the EU and AU, see the page "Relations with the EU".

Ambassador

Dear Readers,
In her speech at a meeting of the African Union Commission and European Commission (C2C) in Addis Ababa, the High Representative and Vice President Federica Mogherini said, "Africa and Europe have a shared history.....in many ways a difficult and a heavy one, but most of all we have a common present and a shared future that we have the responsibility to build together".

Some years ago I had the pleasure to be the first coordinator for relations with the African Union and Chair of the Task Force for the African Peace Facility in the European Commission. Since then, the AU has become a key player in the promotion of peace and prosperity in our neighbour continent. The AU's achievements - quoting from an evaluation of the African Peace Facility, have "had a direct and positive impact on the lives of millions of Africans, affected by wars, violence and political crisis".

Today, the African Union - by any kind of measurement - is undertaking one of the most ambitious regional integration processes in the world. It is and will continue to be our main partner for our engagement with Africa as a whole.

In my career I have had the opportunity to work with several regional integration processes and on each occasion it became evident that the EU has a unique and proven comparative advantage in engaging with and providing support for regional integration processes. This is an area of external relations where the EU demonstrates its strength based on its own singular and unique experience.

When Africa and Europe work together and express similar views, our collective voice is stronger in the international arena and our combined 83 votes can make a critical difference. In times when multilateralism has come under increasing pressure, our cooperation can be decisive for the maintenance of a rules-based international order.

We are firmly committed to continue our support to the AU institutions so that they can fulfil their just aspirations through effective implementation of their policies and plans. Furthermore, we will be calling on them to strengthen our alliance so that, going forward we can jointly address the critical challenges ahead in both the continental and global contexts.

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Head of Delegation

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