Africa-Europe: Intercontinental relations in a multipolar world and the way ahead

Marco Massoni (2019)
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Executive Summary

Intercontinental relations between Africa and Europe are based on the overall frameworks of the Cotonou Agreement (ACP Countries) and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), plus three regional strategies (Sahel, Horn of Africa and Gulf of Guinea) and three formal dialogues (the EU-Africa Summits, the troika meetings and the commission-to-commission meetings).

In particular, the areas of cooperation between Africa and Europe are trade (Economic Partnership Agreements – EPAs), development, migration (Valletta action plan as well as the Rabat and the Khartoum Processes), counter-terrorism (G5 Sahel Joint Force) and security with military and civilian missions and operations (Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Niger and Somalia) as part of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) together with the role played by the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs) within the configuration of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The closest African region to Europe under global terror attack is the Sahel, due to the interconnection of the Al Qaeda Associated Movements (AQAMs) and the Daesh Associated Movements (DAMs) across an arc of instability throughout the Saharan-Sahelian band, ranging from the Mediterranean to the Gulf of Guinea and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, indirectly involving the disputed Western Sahara territories too. Therefore, for the security and the development of the Sahel in particular and of Africa in general, the EU has most recently introduced some specific initiatives: The Sahel Alliance, the European
External Investment Plan (EIP) and the Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs and the Pan-African Programme (PanAf).

In parallel, in light of its Agenda 2063, the African Union (AU) is going through considerable changes by way of its ambitious internal institutional reform process, so as to soon become independent from external funding, and by way of continental economic integration, by reason of the Import Levy and the entry into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the implementation of which is in due course.

Brexit is a critical factor for the effectiveness of the European diplomatic and business projection in Africa. In fact, the EU and the UK are likely to experience an external action marginal attenuation capacity and consequently undergo a decline in political leadership as global players. So, London will be tempted to revitalise the Commonwealth and liberalise even more trade with Africa, even if forced to renegotiate several bilateral agreements in parallel, thus entering into open competition with the rest of Europe.

At the same time, an ever less Western-managed multipolar world is looming and resolutely taking the leadership on Africa’s development, principally made of key non-European international players, such as China, India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey and so forth, in many cases examples of South-South Cooperation. In terms of policy recommendations, the paper suggests seriously detecting European intercontinental interest, mapping the Africa-EU Partnership’s criticalities, overlaps, and redundancies, in order to:

- Address an innovative European policy towards Africa in terms of Co-localization.
- Put forward the creation of a Euro-African Foundation for Mutual Growth (EAFMG), developing a Strategic Co-Development Vision (SCV).
- Launch Euro-African alliances in key industrial sectors for internationalization and delocalization of European SMEs, accelerating the transit from the mere import-export-trade-approach to the investments-transfer-approach.
• Renegotiate the Post-Cotonou 2020 EU-African trade agreements, in terms of an Au-Eu Continent-to-Continent Free Trade Agreement (AuEu-CtC-FTA).

• Enhance the use of multilateralism and promote quadrangular cooperation between Africa, Europe, China and the United States, in order to avoid any future conflict between Newly Emerged and Old Powers in Africa.
1. Africa and Europe

Notwithstanding the persistence of negative narratives about it, Africa however remains the second fastest growing macro-region in the world after Asia and in the twenty-first century, it shall be the fastest. In truth, although it started from backward conditions in the early millennium, Africa is recovering very quickly, gaining positions in all economic sectors – trade, investments and global financial flows – which increasingly converge on what until a few years ago had been labelled the Lost Continent. Essentially, leading the continental growth are four mega trends: the African population will consist increasingly of young people; the sudden urbanization will be the driving force of epochal socio-cultural transformations; the widespread diffusion of information and communication technologies (ICT) is revolutionising African customs and habits; the management of climate change will determine future geopolitical structures that are still unthinkable today.

Africa and Europe are bordering neighbours, wishing to strengthen the continent-to-continent partnership and address common challenges in the spirit of shared ownership, responsibility, reciprocity and mutual accountability and transparency. If the European Union is Africa’s biggest trading partner, accounting for 36% of Africa’s trade in goods, worth 243.5 billion euros in 2017, consequently the most open market to African exports in the world, at the same time African countries are the third largest trading partner of the EU, after the United States and China, meaning nearly 7% of total extra-EU merchandise trade. Additionally, although African exports have generally grown faster than imports, generating an exceptional trade surplus for the continent, African economies have disclosed a persistent trade deficit with the EU since 2013, culminating in 2016 at 43 billion euros.

In spite of that, we are witnessing a true *African Renaissance* and an “ever less Western” *Scramble for Africa*, in which a lot of emerging powers are without scruples positioning themselves for the first time ever, while the former colonialists are relocating, in order to develop their economies in the long term, taking advantage of the enormous Africa’s
wealth and new investment opportunities. In a few years, a market of Asian dimensions will flourish in Africa. Rather than a *trickle-down* system, in which the poorest gradually benefit as a result of the increasing wealth of the richest, in the next decades, Africa is destined to become the land of the *Reverse Innovation*, otherwise known as *Trickle-up Innovation*, a process according to which multinationals offshore to emerging countries not only manufacturing, but even the process whereby such products, models and strategies, are conceived, so that they can distribute it globally. India and China are vying to gain a competitive edge in logistics distribution and marketing of such products that are perfectly suited to African markets. The enthusiasm of Asian and Latin American emerging economies for African natural resources has triggered a boom in international commodity prices of African origin, although conditioned by the continuous international prices' fluctuations, which aggravates the continent’s susceptibility to external shocks and strengthens the need for export diversification.

African macroeconomic data are remarkable: a population already of over one billion people, which will double by 2050 (being the average annual growth of the population of 2.7%); the current middle class is of almost four hundred million consumers, but it will be over one billion people in 2060; general inflation has fallen from 22% in the 1990s to 8% in the last decade; Sub-Saharan Africa’s GDP in 2018 was around 3%, forecasting a GDP growth rate of 3.5% for 2019. In 2018, there were particularly high peaks (by 6%) in West Africa (Ghana, Senegal and Côte d’Ivoire), Eastern Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania) and Central Africa (Rwanda and Uganda); besides, since 2000, trade has increased by two hundred per cent. In fact, between 2000 and 2010, Africa achieved a real annual GDP growth of 5.4%; this rate held steady at 3.3% from 2010 to 2015. Lately, six of the most rapidly growing nations in the world were African: Angola, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Chad, Mozambique and Rwanda. Moreover, some expect that the African GDP will increase from two thousand billion dollars today to thirty thousand in 2050, so it will then be greater than
that of the eurozone and the United States together. Amazingly, the contribution for creative industry to African GDP is expected to surpass that of agriculture. Yet, in recent times, in Africa the big countries are not doing so well, while the little ones are getting better. When, at global level, we look at the list of the ten countries that had the greatest economic performance in 2018, there are five African countries: Ethiopia, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal, Tanzania and Rwanda. Also, it is worth noting that they are relatively rich in soft commodities, rather than in minerals.

It is not easy to classify from an economic perspective a complex continent, such as Africa. the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), for instance, divide Africa into the following five clusters: the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Angola, South Sudan, Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria); Middle Income Countries (South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Senegal, Ghana, Mauritius, Cabo Verde and Botswana); Low Income Countries (Madagascar, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali and Sierra Leone); Fragile Countries (Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Togo, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eritrea and Zimbabwe). Furthermore, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) makes a distinction between Resource-Rich Countries (Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan and Zambia) and Non-Resource-Rich Countries. Other criteria could be performance and reliability ranks: more reliable countries would then be Botswana, Cape Verde, Mauritius and Seychelles, while those under-performing would be Chad, Eritrea, the Central African Republic and Somalia. The under-performing category matches with that grouped as Failed States and/or Failing States, countries that are described by the United Nations system as affected by the breakdown of the rule of law and institutional fragility, also known as the fragility & failure paradigm,
Regarding real social and economic transformation factors in Africa, some scholars have observed two kinds of governments economic attitudes: reformers and rent seekers. Reformers relates to countries that, depending in large amounts on a single commodity, tend not to reform enough nor to diversify their revenues, while reform-minded countries are not normally natural resources rich; reformers are likely to be more ambitious and more coherent, turning prescriptive policies into goals. These African leaderships try to have visions for the future, capable of inspiring the youth, creating comparative advantage out of very few priorities in terms of national undertakings.

Even though, in the last twenty years, Africa has doubled its GDP – which is in reality underestimated by at least twenty per cent – having created the world second most attractive region for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI), nonetheless it still lacks of appropriate industrialization, to help making significant progress in education and health, improving governance systems and reducing poverty despite demography and urbanization. Although industrialization is a late comer in Africa, producing about five hundred billion dollars of goods, yet it can take advantage of the leapfrogging mechanism. Surprisingly, Africa has peculiar advantage compared to industrialised countries, constituted precisely by the absence of previous structures to be modernised. The leapfrogging suggests a technological revolution with unexpected results, in terms of potential of sustainable energy development, increasing connectivity and access to clean energy, thanks to its structural versatility and adaptability. In other words, Africa is more prone to that technological leap capable of directly overtaking obsolete, less efficient, more expensive or more polluting techniques, still in use in developed countries, replacing them with more advanced and more sustainable ones, without however, having to bear the costs of any already existing physical disposal.
Because of it, albeit having missed previous ways of industrializations, Africans are predisposed to become the first with a green decarbonised industry.¹

¹ Because of technological innovations, it will be inevitable to move towards a low-carbon economy in Africa, so as to hold the increase in global average temperature to below two degrees Celsius. It is indispensable on the one hand that Europe and other industrialised countries do not desist from investments in alternative energy and on the other that the Emerging Economies, especially those in Sub-Saharan Africa itself, willingly accept to reduce dependence on most polluting fuels, coal in the first place. Yet, the significant lowering of prices of oil and gas will not help in this regard in the medium-term, while it will unfortunately strengthen the opposite trend.
2. The Cotonou Agreement and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP)

Not counting the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES),\(^2\) the general political framework outlining the between the European and the African continents, the European Union has anyway distinctive relations with the African countries, which are defined by many juridical frameworks of bilateral and regional type. If on the one hand all Northern African countries (i.e. Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) fall within the *European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)*, at the same time the regional approach with North Africa is well defined by the *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED)*. Instead, EU relations with Sub-Saharan African countries are part of the broader legal framework of the *Cotonou Agreement*,\(^3\) expressly reserved to the *African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP)*.\(^4\)

The *Cotonou Agreement*, having replaced the *Lomé Convention (1975-2000)* that in turn had taken the place of the *Yaoundé Convention (1964-1975)*, is the European Union’s cooperation framework with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP), based on political, development and trade pillars.

The Cotonou Agreement, signed in 2000, and renewed in 2010, between 79 ACP countries, out of which 48 are African, and 28 EU Member States, will expire in 2020. Being renewal negotiations in progress, the forthcoming agreement shall be focused on the following priority areas: democracy and human rights; economic growth and investment; climate change; poverty eradication; peace and security; migration and mobility. The Cotonou Agreement refers to both political dialogue and financial cooperation at national and sub-regional level through the *European Development Fund (EDF)*, with the exception of South Africa that is part of the *Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)*. Moreover, the EU has recently decided to develop ad hoc political dialogues, which take place at ministerial

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\(^2\) See infra.

\(^4\) ACP. See: [www.acp.int](http://www.acp.int)
level, on the one side with a number of key African nations, such as Cape Verde, Nigeria and South Africa, and on the other side with equally noteworthy regions, namely: West Africa with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); Central Africa with the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC); East Africa with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC); Southern Africa with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are the reciprocal trade agreements between ACP countries and Europe introduced by the Cotonou Agreement. EPAs are negotiated with different ACP countries regional blocs: West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA), East African Community (EAC) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) EPA Group, Caribbean and Pacific. Up until today, as far as African blocs are concerned, the most advanced EPA’s state of play is that with SADC, while the others keep stagnating. Till the Lomé Convention, trade agreements were kept non-reciprocal, so that the EU guaranteed duty-free access to the ACP Countries’ products into the European market, but the World Trade Organization (WTO) disrupted its structure, decreeing its illegality. EPAs look like an attempt to liberalise the, however still weak, African economies in the global market without effective safeguard clauses and in a non-gradual manner. In theory, EPA’s aim would be to boost the creation of intra-African free trade zones, but in practice the whole process seems to be spoiled at the origin, since it has very long times and does not take off.

On this issue, the former President of the African Union Commission (AUC), Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, recalled the need for Europe to understand that, if Africa had a single and dynamic market rather than several inefficient regional ones, there would instead
be mutual benefits. As a matter of fact, with the Cotonou Agreement, EPAs, requires ACPs to eliminate their own protectionist barriers in the light of market liberalisation rules, required by the WTO, otherwise the favourable conditions set for their exports shall be invalid. Being required to remove duties and tariffs, the ACP countries must therefore open their markets to more competitive – because of European origin – products, goods and services. In truth, the profound asymmetry between ACP and EU countries is evident, since European agriculture, supported by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) subsidies, is incomparably more powerful than those of the ACP, whose agricultural products are unable to compete with the prices of those ‘Made in Europe’. This gives explanation why it took nearly twenty years, to conclude these difficult negotiations to some extent only, due to the enormous resistance manifested by the ACPs.

Africans have serious concerns about how EPAs may affect their industrial development and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)\textsuperscript{5}. To them trade gains from EPAs, as negotiated today, are likely to be concentrated on a few agricultural products, including the risk to exclude the least developed countries. In most regions, EPAs will in fact shall not bolster intra-African trade, weakening trade revenues and undermining trade-led industrialization in Africa. Therefore, it is no surprise that Africans believe that the best way for Africa to avoid losses is to focus on strengthening AfCFTA and dropping EPAs, so as to go beyond the traditional model of dependency.

With regard to the Post-Cotonou 2020 agreements, the African Union (AU) has decreed the constitution of a collective of African countries coordinated by the African Union Commission (AUC), to negotiate directly with the Europeans. We are moving towards maintaining an ACP-EU political hat under which relations are regionalised. In the new partnership, it will be essential to introduce some flexibility, by considering the weight of the

\footnote{See infra.}
different entities of the group, particularly Africa. From a critical point of view, the contribution of development aid and traditional trade preferences out of the Lomé and Cotonou agreements has not reduced poverty. On the contrary, it provoked a gradual marginalization of Africa and the ACP in general in world trade. Therefore, the spirit through which to properly revise the negotiations should take into consideration that a large part of development aid must be put at the service of integration into the world trade, so as to try to eradicate poverty for millions of people. In reality, it is no longer a question of mere economic agreements, rather it is a political and strategic subject, mainly because the EPAs, not fully responding to the needs of African industrialization, are more and more being perceived by Africans as a political barrier to their progress. They are seen as a set of tools limiting the continental economic growth, *de facto* still promoting an asymmetric European geo-economic supremacy. It sounds as if, Africa’s exports to Europe remain mired in the perpetuation of colonial models which are, in part, the cause of the delay in the process of industrialization of the continent.

Consequently, the EU should try to take advantage of the Post-Cotonou 2020 for completely rethinking these agreements, because, as long as Africa looks at them with scepticism, sooner or later it will disregard them.
3. The Africa-EU Partnership

The *Africa-EU Partnership*, launched in 2000 in Cairo, is thoroughly defined by the *Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)*. The JAES, adopted in 2007 in Lisbon, is implemented by the Multiannual Roadmaps and Action Plans that are updated after each Africa-EU Summit. The currently overall goals are to reinforce the political dialogue between the two Continents, expanding the mutual cooperation areas, so as to promote a people-centred partnership. According to the *2017 Abidjan Declaration*, on the occasion of the *Fifth Africa-EU Summit*, the new focuses are: investing in people, education, science, technology and skills development; strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance; mobilising investments for African structural and sustainable transformation; migrations and mobility.

Let us now present a quick overview of the summits accomplished so far.

3.1. The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and the EU-Africa Summits

The JAES is often presented with a certain emphatic rhetoric not at all corresponding to any far-reaching European political vision. Against the mainstream narrative, notwithstanding the increasing strategic importance of Africa for Europe – demographic forecasts estimate that in 2050 Africa will have two billion inhabitants, while Europe only half a billion – regrettably in the “Old Continent”, because of deeply rooted prejudices, still very few stakeholders, though in a roundabout way admitting it, are ultimately convinced of it. The institutionalization of the *EU-Africa Dialogue* began with the *First Africa-EU Summit* in Cairo (3-4 April 2000) with the aim of giving an innovative and strategic dimension to the relations between Europe and Africa. It subsequently developed through two Ministerial Meetings, the first in Brussels (October 2001) and the second in Ouagadougou (November 2002), plus six Bi-regional Group meetings at senior official level. In its first phase (between 2000 and 2003), the EU-Africa Dialogue fixed the following priority themes: foreign debt; restitution of
illegally stolen African cultural assets; regional integration; conflict prevention; human rights, good governance, democracy and the rule of law; AIDS and other endemic diseases; food safety; environment and the fight against drought and desertification. During the Second Ministerial Meeting in Ouagadougou, a global agreement was reached on all the issues bar Africa’s foreign debt: the EU insisted on the need to address the problem at the Paris Club with a case-by-case approach, while the AU demanded the convening of an international conference, aimed at reaching a total cancellation of the debt.

Soon after, it was decided to make the dialogue agenda more flexible, in any case with a specific focus on four clusters: Peace & Security; Governance; Regional Integration and Trade; main Development issues. It was then agreed that the meetings would be held in the Troika format, rather than in the plenary form, so as to centralise the role of the African Union Commission (AUC). In fact, the AUC has the task of coordinating African positions on the various issues on the agenda, being the privileged interlocutor of the European Commission. Despite the problems until that time encountered, EU-UA cooperation intensified especially in the Peace and Security sector through the launch of the African Peace Facility (APF), a European fund of 250 million euros, established in November 2003 and made operational in June 2004, so as to finance the peace initiatives taken by the AU and conceptualise the African Standby Force (ASF) project, as an essential component of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), in order to allow for

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6 EU-Africa Ministerial Troikas meet every six months.

7 Thanks to the two Dublin meetings in February and April 2004, a joint assessment document on Africa’s external debt was adopted, thus closing the dispute between the two parties on the issue. The EU and UA Ministerial Troikas then returned to meet in Addis Ababa on 4 December 2004 and in Luxembourg in the spring of 2005. However, from then on, greater difficulties emerged in terms of the balance between the two counterparts, Africa and Europe, as the dialogue in the Troika format was spontaneously identified with that of the EU-AU, even if the level of integration within the African Union could not and still cannot be comparable to that of the European Union yet. In particular, the AU Troika was not in a position, except rarely, to undertake commitments on behalf of all its members.

8 The two main sources of EU funding for the African Union are the African Peace Facility (APF) and the Pan-African Programme (PanAf).
planning and conducting peace operations on a more predictable and solid basis. The philosophy behind the EU-Africa Partnership is, in fact, summarised in the concept *No Development without Security*, meaning that it is not possible to favour any development in the relations between Africa and Europe in the absence of the fundamental prerequisite of security. The theme of Peace and Security is important everywhere, but perhaps nowhere in the world is this as true as it is in Africa. In fact, this is a continent whose development prospects, although supported by a good rate of economic growth and by the progressive, albeit unequal, spread of respect for the rule of law and democratisation, remain too often hostage to local conflicts and crises, which continue to mobilise the attention and resources of the international community. This is the reason why is Europe’s interest to assist the African Union in a context of increasing African empowerment (ownership), which, in the meantime, cannot be separated from an effective partnership relationship with the entire international community. This is to be seriously taken into consideration, regardless of any given emphasis on both the guiding principles of *Ownership*\(^9\) (i.e. each single African state identifies its intervention priorities and procedures underpinning actions) and *Partnership* (i.e. donor countries provide Africa with the resources entailed to promote development).

The AU, within the framework of its *African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA)* – the Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the African Stand-by Forces (ASF)\(^{10}\) – while waiting the long times for the ASF operationalization, has fielded their temporary

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\(^9\) *Ownership* means the need for individual African countries to identify the priorities for intervention for their own development; in fact, any development project should be conceived from the very beginning in such a way as to allow the peoples directly concerned to appropriate them, by actively participating and taking responsibility for their own interests.

\(^{10}\) The ASF is meant to set up five civil and military multi-operational Contingents, made available by individual Member States. The ASF is the operational tool of the African Union Peace and Security Council with the tasks of monitoring missions, armed interventions, preventive deployments, peacebuilding missions and humanitarian assistance to the victims of both natural disasters and man-made conflicts. ASF are made of five operative and multidimensional (i.e. military, police, and civilian elements) brigades under the command of the following five Regional Economic Communities (REC): AMU for North Africa, ECCAS for Central Africa, ECOWAS for the Western Africa, IGAD for Eastern Africa and SADC for Southern Africa.
replacement with the *African Capacity for the Immediate Response to Crisis (ACIRC)*, which is a transitory resource each time set up, on a case-by-case basis, by specific coalitions of the willing sponsored by a number of African contributors when needed. As mentioned before, the EU projects on Peace & Security in Africa are part of the *African Peace Facility (APF)*, a tool of the European Development Fund (EDF), designed to facilitate the coordination and decision-making processes in the prevention of conflicts and in the post-conflict stabilisation period within the framework of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). More in detail, the African Peace Facility initiatives are distributed and financed as follows: *Capacity Building* so as to improve cooperation for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa; *Peace Support Operations (PSOs)* – mainly African-led ones – in favour of both the AU and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs); *Early Response Mechanism (ERM)*, in order to finance the initial phases of any given PSO; *Contingencies* in terms of funds available for any unforeseen eventuality.

Getting back to the history of the Africa-EU Partnership, the *Second Africa-EU Summit*, held in December 2007, in Lisbon, was a milestone. Then, the aspiration was of launching a renewed policy that would have put an end to obstacles and asymmetries between the European and the African blocs in the light of the new international context. On that occasion, the intentions were to create the conditions for a qualitative leap in the relations between the parties, paying back greater political importance to the African partners, eager to be treated in conditions of equality and no longer of subjection. Thanks to the substantial progress made by Africa in earlier years and acknowledged its geostrategic importance on the international scene, the Lisbon political agenda aimed to define a clearer political structure, to better integrate the reciprocal political-economic relations, raising them to the highest level possible. Appreciably, the intercontinental meeting in the Portuguese capital ended with the adoption of two essential documents, aimed at jointly address common challenges: The *Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES)* and its
Yet, it is worth noting that the first two Action Plans (2008-2010 and 2011-2013) were replaced by two Roadmaps (2014-2017 and 2018-2020) with a reduction of the number of priority areas from eight to five, specifically: peace and security; democracy, good governance and human rights; human development; sustainable and inclusive development together with growth and continental integration; global and emerging issues.

In point of fact, defined on the basis of shared interests, the JAES provides a long-term framework as far as the relations between the EU and the AU are concerned, being an umbrella for all current and future cooperation between the two continental institutions. After an initial phase, in which the institutional architecture of the strategic partnership was developed, based on the work of informal groups of experts (Implementation Teams) at European and African level as well as of joint organizations (Joint Africa-EU Expert Groups - JEG) and on times of confrontation at the political level, the succeeding implementation period was concerned about the priority actions that had been envisaged by each of the eight partnerships. The joint strategy is something qualitatively different from what it had ever been done before, since it is jointly elaborated, with the intent of going well beyond the issues of mere cooperation for development, since even Africa no longer looks at Europe from the perspective of the traditional beneficiary-donor relationship, but as a partner, whom to effectively face global challenges with, negotiating at the same time Africa’s role and Africa’s expectations in the global arena. So, the political dialogue intensified considerably: regular consultations on crises and conflicts and operational and strategic discussions on different country situations used to come about, including through meetings between the

11 The Action Plan is divided into the following eight thematic partnerships: Peace and Security; Democratic Governance and Human Rights; Commerce, Regional Integration and Infrastructures; Millennium Development Goals; Energy; Climate Change; Migration, Mobility and Employment; Science, Information Society and Space.

African Union Peace and Security Council and the European Union Political and Security Committee, subsequently encouraging, thanks to the implementation of joint initiatives, a slow but steady growth of the aforementioned APSA.

The Third EU-Africa Summit, convoked in November 2010, in Tripoli (Libya), whose main theme was combating financial speculation and raw materials in Africa, gave rise to the implementation of the Second Action Plan (2011-2013), which in fact is the continuation of the Lisbon concept. The Fourth EU-Africa Summit – entitled People, Prosperity and Peace – took place, in April 2014, in Brussels. On that specific occasion, it, again, emerged that Africa ought to be considered as the place par excellence for global investments (Business-First Strategy) and not just the continent of aid and international solidarity’s final destination. “Trade, not Aid” is therefore the passage from dependence on development aid to economic growth based on trade and rooted in the economic globalization: let us consider, for instance, that today some European countries enjoy a lower GDP than that of some African states. In the margin of the Brussels Summit, a number of important socio-economics events came about, such as: The Fifth EU-Africa Business Forum, with particular attention paid to the Information Technology (IT), know-how transfer and the agriculture sector; the Third Pan-African-European Parliamentary Summit; the Third Africa-Europe Youth Summit; the EU-Africa Economic and Social Stakeholders Networking Meeting. Among the topics addressed, some issues remained open, if not unanswered, due to the delicate European institutional moment, including migration policies and the vexatious issue of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). So, a principle agreement was established during the Summit, bringing about the following lines of actions: a joint struggle against trafficking in human beings; the contrast to irregular immigration and a better management of regular

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13 See infra.
immigration; strengthening of the migration-development nexus; and to increase the international protection for asylum seekers.

Finally, January the 22nd 2019, the Joint Communique of the EU-AU Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting declared that the Sixth EU-AU Summit shall be organised in 2020 by Europe. On that circumstance, in regards of the Peace Fund, it has been reaffirmed the commitment to mobilise resources from AU Member States to the target of 400 million dollars by 2021, to finance AU operational peace and security activities, having recognised the importance of sustainable and predictable financing for African-led Peace Support Operations. What is more, as far as it concerns the cooperation on the global scene, Ministers shared the conviction that multilateralism is the most effective mode of international cooperation to address global issues, by levelling the international playing field and contributing to common, sustainable and ambitious solutions to today’s challenges.

3.2. The European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Special Representatives (EUSRs)

The strategic need for Europe to conceive and carry out continental politics with Africa clashes with a proliferation of initiatives and agendas of the individual EU Member States that are increasingly divergent, pointing out to what extent foreign policy towards Africa is being spoiled, with the consequence that both Multilateralism and Europeanism are put in danger. Hence, these days European identity crisis unsurprisingly reverberates even in its outward projection and perception by other stakeholders. The creation, in 2010, of the European External Action Service (EEAS) still fails to fully respond to the need to counteract the abovementioned phenomenon of the fragmentation of European diplomatic action, due to the preference still substantially accorded to bilateral relations rather than to the multilateral ones mainly represented by the JAES. The most important EEAS task is to support the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-
President of the Commission (HRVP) in fulfilling her mandate, for a greater consistency in the diplomatic action of the Union, giving substance to the objectives of the European foreign policy agenda, through an incisive and growing use of political instruments and available specific and innovative capacities, primarily carried out by the network of 140 EU delegations in the world, of which 45 in Africa.

With the purpose to make EU external action more dynamic and effective in some very sensitive areas of the world, the role of the *EU Special Representatives (EUSR)* has been adopted too. At the moment, there are eight *EU Special Representatives*¹⁴ in as many areas of the world: *Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central Asia, Horn of Africa, Human Rights, Kosovo, Middle East Peace Process, Sahel and South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia*. While most EUSRs have a regional focus, some have thematic responsibilities. The EUSRs, appointed by the HRVP, are an integral part of the EEAS. In particular, the EUSRs are also expected to promote the EU policies and interests in these regions and to actively work, in order to stabilise the political situation and to support peace-making and legality. EUSRs’ areas of African competence are the *Sahel* – Angel Losada Fernandez (2015) – and the *Horn of Africa* – Alexander Rondos (2012).

### 3.3. Brexit, Europe and Africa

Surprisingly, British trade relations with Africa are incredibly weak, corresponding to only 3.5% of the total trade of Africa. Therefore, the overall impact of Brexit on African development would be negligible, as exports to the United Kingdom account for less than 1% of Sub-Saharan African countries’ GDP. African Union’s Member States with the major trade and financial exposure to the United Kingdom (i.e. *Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria,*

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¹⁴ EUSRs. See: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/3606/eu-special-representatives_en#EUSR+for+the+Horn+of+Africa](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/3606/eu-special-representatives_en#EUSR+for+the+Horn+of+Africa)
South Africa and Zambia) are about to undergo the worst Brexit effect. Actually, after South Africa, Nigeria is the second largest African market in the UK, while Kenya is the third. For those African States overly dependent on London, there shall be two scenarios: the first provides for a replacement of the role played by the UK in the European markets by one or more other Member States; the second concerns the renegotiation, with raising pretensions, hence more favourable to African counterparts, of safeguard clauses in future bilateral preferential agreements with the United Kingdom. If in the short-term the main consequences of Brexit will regard the increased markets volatility with repercussions on currency exchange rates, in the long-run there could be a decline of both European and British growth, caused by the possible downsizing of African goods and services demand with subsequent effects of a decrease in tourism, remittances, trade and development cooperation. Not only the London financial centre could be affected in terms of instability, but also the aversion to high-risk investments could grow significantly, including those related to African finance, with the danger of reduced capital inflows into Sub-Saharan Africa. In such conditions, it is plausible for international capitals to begin to discard Africa for safer shores, by considerably spoiling the stock exchanges and stock markets linked to Johannesburg (South Africa) and Lagos (Nigeria), inasmuch intrinsically associated with London.

Vis-à-vis a Post-Brexit Exit Strategy, the UK could in the first-place liberalise trade with Africa, or more realistically, with an elected group of African countries, by way of agreements, far beyond EPAs requisites, through different provisions concerning investment and competition rules. Clearly, if London took the decision to unilaterally offer to African countries’ duty & quota free access to its market, that would not only raise the approval of many African governments that do not see favourably the EU’s position in this regard, but it would also cause several troubles on the current WTO regulations. Last but
not least, London could aspire to strengthen its relations within the *Commonwealth*\(^{15}\), of which Africa has the largest number of Member States, eighteen out of fifty-four, namely: *Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Tanzania* and *Zambia*. Following Brexit, in terms of Euro-African relations on the one hand and those between London and Africa on the other hand, three main risks have to be highlighted. Firstly, loss of European and British political leaderships as global players with third parties: in terms of influence, in today multipolar world and in Africa, despite the special relations with Washington, London might be seen isolated from the rest of Europe. Subsequently, the European Union as well, as a key international actor, would suffer some consequences, being perceived weakened for the very first time in history and, for this reason, considered just as one among many other stakeholders, and not, as it used to be, the main interlocutor any longer. Secondly, Euroscepticism’s may determine a domino effect over Afroscepticism. Thirdly, to the African Union’s eyes, Brexit hampers the EU’s authority and credibility as a promoter of both regional and continental integration processes, encouraging isolationism and slowdown in both continental and regional integration policies in Africa and elsewhere in the world. Most of all, Brexit is destined to represent a benchmark for centrifugal tendencies supporters within international or intergovernmental organisations, especially in Africa.

\(^{15}\) Commonwealth. See: http://thecommonwealth.org/
4. Migration

The general framework through which the European Union looks at migration, mobility and asylum policy is described in the 2005 *EU Global Approach to Migration and Mobility (GAMM)*, structured according to an in-depth dialogue with Africa, more precisely at continental, national and regional levels. EU actions will increasingly concern the three geographical areas that are experiencing the crossing of migrant flows: *countries of origin*, *transit countries* (both in Africa and in Europe) and *final destination countries*. As a matter of fact, over the last few years, there have been several bilateral and multilateral initiatives concerning not only the Sahel, but also the *Greater Horn of Africa* (i.e. Sudan\(^{16}\), South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya and Uganda). In Africa in general and in the Sahel in particular, the main causes of migration are political instability, conflicts, violations of human rights, poverty and the absence of credible prospects for the future. Since international protection and humanitarian assistance must be guaranteed to all those who are entitled to it, in full compliance with the principle of non-refoulement, as enshrined in the *1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees*, the EU has decided to intervene on the migration issue, sharing among the Member States not only the tracking of population movements, but above all an objective assessment of the root causes of migration also through direct dialogues with the countries, where more migratory flows are generated.

Though overestimated, the migration issue is at the heart of today’s European Union agenda, but it is still much less the case of the African Union’s that takes it lightly for a good reason. In fact, unexpectedly, Africa contributes to the 14% of global immigration, Europe

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\(^{16}\) For the peace and stability of the region of the Greater Horn of Africa, the political evolution in Sudan is a priority for the European Union. Particularly, the EU calls for the immediate resumption of negotiations between the *Transitional Military Council (TMC)* and the *Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC)*, through the necessary mutual confidence-building measures. Moreover, the EU not only supports the call of the AU in cooperation with Ethiopia, IGAD Chair, for the establishment of a civilian-led transitional authority, but also commends the AU for having suspended Sudan from the African Union, until the return to constitutional order through free, fair, transparent and credible elections, to be possibly monitored through a fully-fledged Eu Election Observation Mission (EuEOM).
25% and Asia 31%; the net number of African migrants to the world is relatively modest, 2.1 million, while China’s is 10 million. Anyhow, EU responses to the migration problem are declined according to three levels: the first relates to technical-bureaucratic solutions; the second is just tactical and programmatic; the third, yet under negotiation, will have to be a political and strategical driver, conveying a long-term vision along with pragmatism, both features still for the most part uncaught in Europe. On the contrary, it is of paramount importance to consider human mobility not as a problem, rather as an opportunity and a pushing-factor of economic growth. In truth, recent studies show that migrants from low-income countries are significantly increasing their revenues, subsequently gaining a double positive effect or a win-win situation: enriching host societies and devolving a substantial portion of their profits into remittances to their families in Africa, thus contributing to the development of their countries of origin. What is more, remittances tend to be superior to the ever-decreasing Official Development Assistance (ODA) in many cases. The eagerness of African expatriates to invest and to embark on commercial relations with their countries of origin must be taken more seriously into consideration: assuming that one third of the African diaspora in Europe belongs to the middle class, as a consequence it is a formidable lever for new development partnerships. That explains also why, in January 2008, the African Union Executive Council suggested that the African diaspora be treated as Africa’s sixth region and its participation in the AU’s organs and activities be strengthened. The Assembly has recognised the diaspora as a substantive entity contributing to the economic and social development of the continent and has invited its representatives as observers to Assembly sessions.
4.1. The Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development, the EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (HoAMRI) and the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)

The EU has started two relevant political dialogues with Africa in regards of migration: The Western Migration Route and the Eastern Migration Route that are respectively regulated on the one hand, since 2006, by the Rabat Process or Euro-African Dialogue on Migration and Development, concerning the relationship between the EU and Enlarged West African States and on the other hand, since 2015, by the Khartoum Process or EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative (HoAMRI) concerning East Africa.

The Rabat Process, launched during the First Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development in Rabat (Morocco), applies to three specific regions: Northern Africa, West Africa and Central Africa. Over the years, it has been able to initiate a fruitful dialogue by implementing some significant initiatives, such as for example the Seahorse Atlantic Network, operating since 2006 between Spain, Portugal, Senegal, Mauritania, Cape Verde, Morocco, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, which allowed for information exchange, in order to prevent irregular immigration throughout the area.

The Khartoum Process was established with a ministerial conference, held in Rome in November 2014, under the impetus of the Italian Presidency of the European Union. It is governed by a standing committee, which operates according to the consensus rule, consisting of five European nations (France, Germany, Italy, Malta and United Kingdom), five Africans (Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan), the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the African Union Commission (AUC). The revived commitment of Italy and Germany towards a joint multidimensional action in the Horn of Africa (HoA) is resulted in the Rome Declaration, according to a strategy based on the following four pillars: legal migration and mobility; irregular migration and combating organised crime; link between migration and development; international protection. On that
occasion, the then Italian and German Foreign Ministers (Paolo Gentiloni and Frank-Walter Steinmeier) described the Khartoum Process as a long-term strategic commitment to tackle the problem of immigration, which involves various political actions, including the fight against migrant smuggling and against trafficking of human beings. With the Khartoum Process-Sharm El Sheikh Action Plan (April 2015), some practical indications were approved on the type of projects to be prepared: strengthening of institutional capacities and human resources of those countries in the frontline against the trafficking of human beings also through the creation of regional ad hoc training centres; capacity building in the legal sphere; awareness development about the implicit risks in embarking in such journeys also through migrants information points; strengthening border control capacities; information campaigns with traditional and innovative means; development of a national strategy model aimed at implementing the Palermo Convention (i.e. the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime – UNTOC).

The Valletta Summit on Migration, held in November 2015, in Malta, was the occasion for the EU to get focused on five specific areas along these lines: addressing the reasons behind migration; promoting legal migration channels; enhancing the protection of migrants and asylum seekers, particularly vulnerable groups; tackling more effectively the exploitation and trafficking of migrants; working more closely to improve cooperation on returns and readmissions. Bearing in mind that migration is a global phenomenon that requires a global approach and that, if well managed, regular migration represents an opportunity for countries of origin and destination as well as for migrants themselves, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)\textsuperscript{17}, addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa, was formally launched at the occasion of the Valletta summit.

\textsuperscript{17} EUTF. See: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/content/homepage_en
5. The Sahel

About 5,400 kilometres long and 1,000 kilometres wide, the Sahel is a semi-arid zone of biogeographic and ecoclimatic transition, bounded in the north by the Sahara Desert and in the south by the savannah. The Arabic word Sahil literally means “coast”, as it by analogy describes the savannah’s vegetation’s shoreline slightly merging with the Saharan sands’ limits. In the Sahel – one of the poorest regions in the world closest to Europe – people have to face conditions of extreme poverty, internal tensions, institutional weaknesses, high rates of population growth and considerable exposure to climate change as well as to frequent food crises. The Sahel shows an anthropological and environmental discontinuity that corresponds to the African Belt, creating par excellence a deep cultural rift between the Arab and Berber populations and the black African ones. The African Belt is an invisible dividing line not only between White Africa and Black Africa, but also – within Islam – between Sunnism and Sufism. In short, such fracture points out the historical contradictions involving the Northerner-Arab-Berber-Nomadic-Pastoral peoples on the one side and the Southerner-Negro-African-Sedentary-Farmer on the other.

The spillover of the fall of Gaddafi’s Libyan regime in 2011 has accelerated the break-up of the until then only latent crisis in the Sahel-Saharan countries, producing a new epicentre of conflicts characterised by too-long underestimated localist claims intrinsic to internal political dynamics, rather than portraying global aspirations, despite the tactical alliance tightened just for visibility purposes with international terrorism such as in the case of Al Qaeda and Daesh, so as to be universally acknowledged. Fundamentalism and terrorism are concentrating their capacity for tactical projection in the most difficult manageable territories of the planet: the Sahara and the Sahel. The centres of gravity shift from the Middle East to Africa along a south-north direction is generating a new front of conflict of Islamist matrix across the Sahel, or between North Africa and West Africa, with repercussions up to the Horn of Africa, depicted as the “great arc of instability”, potentially
ranging from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. For the above, the Sahel region has become a priority for the European Union in terms of peace and sustainable development. Because of this new polarisation along the $16^{th}$ Parallel North, a number of EU-led actions against the consolidation of any terrorist free zones between Mediterranean Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa are currently under way. The arduous management of state sovereignty over important domains pertaining to the so-called Failed States and Failing States, due to profound institutional deficiencies, encourages illicit trafficking, violent radicalization and Islamist extremism. In fact, the most recent conflicts in Africa insist on the fragility of borders and on the difficulty for some central governments to exercise their own sovereignty over considerable portions of their national territories, which, left at the mercy of the events, are apt to be more and more seized by armed Non-State Actors (NSAs).

5.1. Al Qaeda Associated Movements (AQAMs) and Daesh Associated Movements (DAMs)

The persistence of the low-intensity state of conflict across West Africa, the Sahara and Sahel regions, is due to both Al Qaeda Associated Movements (AQAMS)\(^{18}\) and Daesh Associated Movements (DAMs)\(^{19}\). The AQAMs, whose presence is older in the area, are

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\(^{18}\) Al-Qaeda Associated Movements (AQAMs) are:
- Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM) or Nusrat.
- Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) aka Al Qaeda in West Africa (AQWA).
- Emirate of the Sahara.
- Al-Mourabitoun.
- Ansar Dine.
- Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA).
- Macina Liberation Front (FLM).
- Vanguard for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa (ANSARU).
- Massina Brigades.

\(^{19}\) Daesh Associated Movements (DAMs) are:
- Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS).
- Boko Haram or the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).
more concentrated in the Western Sahel (Burkina Faso and Mali), whereas the DAMs are stronger in Niger, Chad, Nigeria and around the Lake Chad\(^{20}\).

Between the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019, particularly in Mali and in Burkina Faso, intra-community conflicts have resurfaced and terrorist violence has increased, with five thousand people killed by jihadist groups. Actually, terrorism kills more in Africa than in the Middle East. Over fifty per cent of Africans are Muslims and traditionally very tolerant, so customarily not permeable by any fundamentalism. Nonetheless, both Qaedaists and Pro-Daesh affiliates are using new tactics to achieve their strategic goal: to win support of local populations, radicalising the most marginalised by speculating on their claims, thus ultimately weakening the region. In order to overcome not only the battles of military operations conducted in Africa in terms of counter-terrorism, but also and above all to win the war against radicalization and spread of conflict on the African Continent, it is necessary to persuade local peoples that the international community has the intention to lay the foundations for a comprehensive and definitive development of their countries. In order to restore effective and efficient statehood in all Sahelian countries’ territories, even in the most disregarded ones, it is urgent to prevent terrorist organizations to be seen as credible alternatives in terms of sovereignty to the nation-state authorities, especially where for decades central government’s lack of interest have either on purpose or unintentionally left behind some very specific social or ethnic groups.

About the *Daesh Associated Movements (DAMs)*, the *Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)* – recognised by the Daesh in 2016 – is an independent Al-Mourabitoun’s dissident breakaway wing, based in Menaka in the Gao region (Mali), and led by *Adnane Abou Walid al-Sahraoui*. The ISGS, created in 2015, was soon after repudiated by Al-

\(^{20}\) Al Qaeda is recruiting more and more southwards among non-Arab rather African ethnic groups: these are the populations of Central and Southern Mali, Niger, Northern Nigeria and Burkina Faso. The spreading of the AQAMs’ branches south of the Sahel, right in the tropical savannah, is a new and alarming fact that would match with the globalization of the African jihadism, still maintaining its local purposes though.
Mourabitun’s leader Mokhtar Belmokhtar, condemning al-Sahraoui’s pro-ISIS stance as unofficial and personal only. Boko Haram, or the Islamic State of West Africa Province (ISWAP), in 2015, swear allegiance to the Daesh; based in Maiduguri, capital of the Federal State of Borno (Nigeria), it has so far caused nearly three million internally displaced persons and killed more than twenty thousand people. In 2016, its previous leader, Abubakar Sheaku, was replaced with his former spokesman, Habib Yusuf, also known as Abou Mosab al-Barnaoui, in that allegedly considered too inclined to indiscriminately kill Muslims, while the new goal would be to fight apostates and crusaders. If Abuja wants to “win the peace”, it is necessary to improve the communication and foster the mutual confidence between local communities and national security forces deployed over there, with the shared goal to stem the action of Boko Haram, putting into practice a real trust-building process.

Regarding the Al-Qaeda Associated Movements (AQAMs), in 2017, some of the main non-state armed actors active in the Sahel – the Sahara Emirate, Al-Mourabitoun, Ansar Dine, the Macina Liberation Front, and the Massina Brigades\(^\text{21}\) – merged into a single terrorist organization: the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (Jama’at Nusrat ul-Islam wal-Muslimin – JNIM)\(^\text{22}\) or Nusrat, guided by the Tuareg leader Iyad Ag-Ghaly, who swore oath of allegiance to Al Qaeda, demonstrating the strategic strengthening of Qaedism throughout the Sahel in a clear opposition to the Daesh supporters, there de facto represented by two organizations only: the ISGS and, further south, by Boko Haram. In reality, JNIM’s patent aim is to counteract the UN, the EU and particularly Mali’s attempt to stabilise the Sahel, trying to achieve the support of local populations, by specifically

\(^{21}\) The Massina Brigades is a central Malian group mostly staffed by Fulani herders. Another group under the sphere of influence of Nusrat is Ansaru, led by a radical Fulani Burkinabe, Ibrahim Maalam Dicko, who is not in favour of Al Qaeda though.

\(^{22}\) The JNIM alliance was officially announced March the 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) 2017, being present at the meeting respectively Djamel Okacha – also known as Yahia Abou al-Hammam – chief of the Emirate of the Sahara (a branch of AQMI), Hamadou Kouffa, the Fulani leader of the Macina Liberation Front, Iyad Ag Ghali, the Ansar Dine’s leader, Hassan al Ansari, Al-Mourabitun’s vice-president, and Abou Abderrahmane El Sanhadji on behalf of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)’s
integrating marginalised minorities’ grievances and underrepresented claims, as in the case of Tamashek (Tuareg) and Fulani (Fula People or Fulbe). Terrorist groups deceptively support underrepresented Sahelian-Saharan groups’ claims for independency or autonomy, leveraging with unrealistic rewarding prospects of redemption. In reality, the Fulani and the Tuareg have always felt discriminated by their respective central governments, often ruled by different ethnic groups. Even before European colonialism, the Sahel has constantly been the place of ancestral contrasts and latent tensions between Negro-African rural peoples (such as the Bambara, the Malinke and the Dogon) on the one hand, and nomadic (Tuareg) or semi-nomadic (Fulani) pastoral populations on the other, whose potential exacerbation is being tactically played by Al Qaeda, which is looking to widen its social and ethnic support outcomes so far considered insufficient, right because grounded more on opportunism rather than on any ideological affiliation. In truth, to bestow the JNIM leadership on the prominent Tamashek exponent, Ag-Ghaly, reveals a scaling up of Qaedists’ operational capacities, in this way turning to be less Sahara-oriented and much more Sahel-oriented for the long-term dominance of the region, ready to move the frontline even further south, where to perpetrate attacks, as in the central Malian regions of Mopti and Segou.
5.2. The EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Missions and the G5 Sahel

According to the 13th May 2019 Foreign Affairs Council of the EU’s Conclusions on the Sahel, the main challenges faced by this region literally are: “those of a political nature, in particular serious shortcomings in governance, the rule of law and the protection of human rights; challenges relating to security, with the expansion of the terrorist threat, of extremist violence and of organised crime, including human trafficking, with climate change adversely affecting natural resources and fuelling local conflicts; challenges in terms of development, with endemic poverty, strong demographic growth and weak socio-economic cohesion; these factors aggravate food insecurity, increase migratory pressures and worsen the humanitarian situation”. The security conditions in the Sahel region are still extremely uncertain, with a particularly precarious situation in northern Mali and around Lake Chad with relapses in southern Libya and northern Nigeria, while Niger is an important transit hub and countries for migratory movements across the Sahel. To the crises in the Sahel an effective and multi-sectorial response should be provided, able to integrate all the following levels: national, regional, continental, international and transnational.

In 2014, with a strong European commitment, in order to better commonly tackle the security in the area, a group of five Sahelian States has given birth to the G5 Sahel (G5-S), namely: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Mali and Niger. The G5-S has rapidly become the core regional actor for the realization of the European strategic objectives in the area. The EU-G5-Sahel strengthened partnership is meant to be for the next coming years the place of excellence for the implementation of the Euro-African guidelines about the crisis management in the Sahel. Total EU development cooperation to the G5 Sahel countries amounts to €8 billion for the period 2014-2020. The EU provides long-term assistance to the Sahel mainly through the EU Trust Fund for Africa (€930 million), and the European

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Development Fund (EDF). The distribution of European funding for each of these countries according to the National Indicative Program (NIP) is as follows: €628 million to Burkina Faso, €542 million to Chad, €664 million to Mali, €160 million to Mauritania, and €686 million to Niger. The EU is also a major humanitarian donor, with more than €250 million distributed to G5 Sahel populations over the past two years.

With the objective to contribute to an effective state control in areas affected by criminal and armed terrorist groups, in 2017, the G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) was formed, whose operationalisation has been funded by Brussels with €147 million so far. In addition, the non-participation in the FC-G5S of the two regional powers – Algeria for North Africa and Nigeria for West Africa – suggests that, it will take time to assess the effectiveness of the G5-Sahel’s force, despite the somewhat dominant position of Chad as a regional security provider, increasingly turned to by the international community in regards of the many crises occurred between the Sahel and Central Africa. The FC-G5S’s mandate is to: combat terrorism and drug trafficking; contribute to the restoration of state authority and the return of displaced persons and refugees; facilitate humanitarian operations and the delivery of aid to affected populations; contribute to the implementation of development strategies in the G5 Sahel region. The Force Member States personnel (both military and police components) is deployed along the Mali–Mauritania frontier and across the Liptako-Gourma, also known with the expression of the “Three Borders Area”, a homogeneous cross-border region of some 370,000 square kilometres that is becoming a new sanctuary for terrorist groups. It is situated between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, and the Niger–Chad border. As a matter of fact, along the Niger–Mali frontier line the threat consists mainly of Ansar Dine and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, while the Macina Liberation Front and Ansaru are active along the Mali–Burkina Faso boundary. The FC-G5S headquarters

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is strategically located in Sévaré, near Mopti (central Mali). The area of operations of the Joint Force deals with three zones of the G5 Sahel or three borders sectors (also called “fuseaux”): *Sector West*, protecting the border between Mauritania and Mali; *Sector Centre*, in the “Three Borders Area”, in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso; *Sector East*, covering the state line between Niger and Chad. The G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) is divided into seven battalions of 650 servicemen each: Two battalions (one Malian, one Mauritanian) are positioned in the Sector West; Three (one Malian, one Burkinabe, one Nigerien) are deployed in the Sector Centre; Two (one Nigerien, one Chadian) in the Sector East.

Stability in the Sahel region is key for European security. At present, there are three European Union Missions under the *Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)* throughout the Sahel: the EUCAP Sahel Niger (2012), the EUCAP Sahel Mali (2014) and the EUTM Mali (2013). The *European Union Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Sahel Niger* is a civilian mission supporting Niger’s security institutions and forces (police, gendarmerie, national guard and armed forces) to strengthen the rule of law and enhance the country’s ability to fight terrorism and organised crime. Since May 2015, its mandate has been extended to a fifth objective related to migration. Another Brussels’ objective is the prevention of irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings; a specific emphasis is given to Niger, as in the case of the northern cities of *Agadez* and *Arlit*, in that they are the main transit hubs for migratory routes to Libya and the Mediterranean and of the southern Nigerien locality of *Diffa*, subject to repeated assaults by Boko Haram, along the porous border with Nigeria near Lake Chad. The *European Union Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP) Sahel Mali* is a civilian mission, providing expertise in the field of strategic advice and training to the Malian police, gendarmerie and national guard, to support reform in the security sector, by ensuring the constitutional and democratic order and putting in

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25 At this time, CSDP military and civilian missions and operations in Africa are deployed in Central African Republic (CAR), Libya, Mali, Niger and Somalia.
place the conditions for a lasting peace and the maintenance of territorial control by the State. The European Union Training Mission (EUTM) Mali is a military training mission that advises the Malian authorities on the restructuring of the Malian armed forces, through the training of battalions and support for defence reform; it also provides technical support to the G5 Sahel Joint Force. In fact, the EU acts as a guarantor of the Malian process in cooperation with the French led Operation Barkhane and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

5.3. The European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel

Since March 2011, the EU has adopted a comprehensive approach to the region through the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel (2011a)\textsuperscript{26} and its Regional Action Plan – RAP (2015-2020)\textsuperscript{27} for five specific Sahelian states: Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, Mauritania.

The European Union Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel, a specific all-embracing strategy for regional security and development of the area, is grounded on the principle that development and security mutually reinforce each other and on the pressing need for regional responses to regional challenges. The Strategy includes four guiding lines: development, good governance and internal conflicts resolution; political and diplomatic actions; security and the rule of law; contrast to violent extremism and radicalization phenomena. This strategy remains the backbone for EU action to support countries in the wider Sahelo-Saharan region. The Regional Action Plan – RAP (2015-2020) was adopted by the Foreign Ministers on April 20, 2015 and updated in June 2016. With the slogan ‘Think

\textsuperscript{26} EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. See: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/strategy_for_security_and_development_in_the_sahel_en_0.pdf

and Act Regionally’, the RAP focuses on four key priorities for the following five years: preventing and combating radicalization; creating appropriate conditions for young people; migration and mobility; border management and the fight against illicit trafficking and transnational organised crime. Actually, the framework sketched by the EU Sahel RAP is to no longer consider any discontinuity of vision nor measures along the north-south axis, rather it is a question on how developing a common euro-African strategic approach, summarised as follows: *Europe-Mediterranean-Maghreb-Sahel* nexus. The RAP is complementary to all other relevant EU strategies and Action Plans, such as the *EU Strategy for the Gulf of Guinea*\(^{28}\), through a closer cooperation with the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries, with a particular attention given to the dialogue with Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. Actually, specific Action Areas have been identified, in order to boost the EU Strategy for the Sahel and the RAP regarding the impact of Islamism radicalism (in the form of Salafism and Wahhabism), with the aim to provide job opportunities and concrete alternatives for Sahelian young people, compared to the attraction offered by fundamentalist world-views, so as to rapidly improve youth integration, rather than allowing its dispersion.

Another particularly relevant aspect of the synergetic actions carried out by Brussels in the Sahel concerns the response to recurrent food crises and more generally to long-term food insecurity. According to the data of the *EU Conflict Early Warning System*, the general situation in the Sahel is in clear deterioration or, at best, stagnant: well over five million children suffer from easily eradicable diseases such as rickets (about forty per cent of children under five years of age). Beyond the dramatic human and social aspects of the issue, the economic cost of malnutrition is estimated at between two and eight per cent of the GDP of the most affected Sahelian nations. Needless to say, the weakness of public finances and national institutions in many of these countries makes it particularly difficult to

\(^{28}\) See infra.
adequately respond to the frequent crises affecting the region, thus having to resort to external aid. Brussels’ long-term response to the food crisis in the Sahel can be recapitulated with the concept of *Building Resilience*. In this sense, the EU is implementing development programmes aimed at strengthening resilience, addressing the root causes of malnutrition, improving the functioning of regional markets, with the goal to increase their capacity at regional and national level and consequently to try to reduce the risks of related disasters. The EU works in this way in close cooperation with the UN, the AU, the ECOWAS, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), the G5S and the World Bank.

The Strategy and its Action Plan do not have a single source of funding, inasmuch the allocations used to contribute to their objectives are heterogeneous, such as: (a) Development aid for the period 2014-2020: 5 billion euros coming partly from the 11th EDF (2.5 billion for the five target countries); (b) Humanitarian aid: €358 million for the 2014-2015 period; (c) Response to the food crisis and strengthening of resilience: allocation for the period 2014-2020 of 1.5 billion for the *Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR)*; (d) The funds for annual operating costs of CSDP missions in the Sahel; (e) The possibility of using the funds both of the *Regional Indicative Programme (RIP)* for West Africa as well as of the development cooperation instrument (PanAf); (f) The grants of the *European Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)*; (g) The use of the financial instrument of the EU neighbourhood policy proposed by the 2015-2020 Regional Plan for the realization of joint projects in the Maghreb and in the Sahel. Also, the *Instrument Contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)* is to be considered, regarding funds for crisis management and long-term stabilization measures. In fact, in recent years the IcSP has been widely used throughout the Sahel region both to deal with short-term and long-term crises. The Stability Instrument

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has also been used in the framework of initiatives to combat terrorism and counter-radicalization thanks to the creation of the Sahel Security College, which aims to promote the tolerance, the dialogue between different faiths (inter-religious) and between different beliefs (intra-religious), as well as to provide educational support for the Malian, Nigerian and Nigerien Koranic schools. Other actions concern on the one hand the contrast of violent extremism through the creation of socio-economic opportunities especially for young people in Chad, Niger, and Nigeria and, on the other hand, specific disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes, as to promote the social recovery of former combatants in Nigeria and Chad.

A few other initiatives have been established from the very beginning or just revitalised: this is the case of the Nouakchott Process, established in 2013, to promote collective security in the region under the auspices of the AU; the Lake Chad Basin Commission, reactivated to address common border issues, in view of the greater threat to the Sahel region because of Boko Haram, which from Nigeria’s domestic problem has become a regional menace, involving its neighbouring countries: Niger, Chad and Cameroon. As well, the EU Special Representative for the Sahel, the Special Representative for Mali and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali – Mahamat Saleh Annadif – and the High Representative of the African Union for Mali and Sahel – Pierre Buyoya – act in parallel, in an attempt to create synergies in the implementation of their respective strategies. In conclusion, throughout the Sahelian-Saharan band it is advisable to pay closer attention to the existing latent tensions, as the fertile grounds for new nationalistic claims bond to local rebel movements and

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31 Lake Chad Basin Commission. See: [http://www.cblt.org/](http://www.cblt.org/)
international armed fundamentalists, due to the institutional *Fragility & Failure* of the Sahelian countries, unable to exercise full sovereignty over the entirety of their own national territories. Therefore, the international community should help the African Union and the G5-Sahel to stem any potential regional threats of this kind, such as, for instance, the exacerbation of social fragmentation along the axis of tribalism and of the opposition between laicism/secularism – religion/fanaticism on the one side and the collapse of the idea of the nation-state on the other.

5.4. The Western Sahara Conflict

It lies between the Sahara and the Sahel the almost forgotten crisis of *Western Sahara*, jeopardising a wider area as never before. The protagonists of the Western Sahara conflict are *Morocco* on the one side and on the other the *Popular Liberation Front of the Saguía el Hamra and the Río de Oro (Polisario Front)* and the *Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)*.

*Western Sahara* is a former Spanish colony, since 1975 under the control of Morocco, which considers it its southern provinces. The Polisario, on the other hand, claiming its sovereignty, in 1976 proclaimed the *SADR*. In 1991, after fifteen years of guerrilla warfare, the parties have accepted the truce and stopped hostilities. Thereafter, a United Nations local mission – *Mission des Nations Unies pour le Referendum au Sahara Occidental (MINURSO)* – has been operationalised as far as the peace process across the region is concerned. Its mandate is to verify the reduction of Moroccan troops present in the disputed territory; to control both Moroccan and Polisario troops’ placing across the territories in the assigned locations; in agreement with the parties to ensure the release of all detainees and political prisoners; to supervise the release of all war prisoners through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); to implement the repatriation programme via the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); to identify and register those entitled
to vote; to organise and ensure the conduct of a free and fair referendum for the self-determination of the population residing in the region of Western Sahara.

In terms of resettlement, at present, the Sahrawi people is divided into three groups: those living in the occupied territories under Morocco’s administration, those displaced in the so-called liberated territories, while many other are refugees in the camps around Tindouf (South-Western Algeria), where also the SADR has its government in exile, making it one of the most protracted emergency situations today. In reality, the issue of Western Sahara sovereignty is a problem of unaccomplished decolonization, increasingly undermining the stability not only of North Africa and the Maghreb, but of the whole of West Africa along the Sahelian-Saharan strip, which is why the EU cannot postpone any longer to proclaim its position towards the Western Sahara and Morocco dispute in a well-defined manner, in order to assure a full regional stability, in line with the protection of European interests in the area. If, until now, the forgotten desert conflict has not been strategically important for those regional (Algeria, Mauritania and Libya), continental (African Union) and external (France, Spain, US, EU) actors, implicated in the geopolitical setting of the Sahel and the Sahara, now the context is diametrically opposed, so that it is time for an urgent change to such a too long neglected dispute, so as to guarantee the stability and security of the whole wider region.

Concerning Morocco, for now, the return in 2017 of Rabat into the AU can be seen as strategic reorientation and a change of political-diplomatic step, due to a new pan-African vision of the King Mohamed VI. Morocco plays its geopolitical cards and bilateral diplomacy through the expedient of the securitization aspect as well as the impoundment of radical Islam through the pursuit for a new role as a crisis management mediator and a stabilising actor throughout the Sahara-Sahel. In fact, for some years, the Kingdom of Morocco has been presenting its image as a moderate Islamic middle-income country, taking advantage of the great economic development prospects as far as Sub-Saharan Africa is concerned.
Specifically, the Moroccan Back to Africa strategy is divided into three main themes: *geodiplomacy*, *economic expansion* and *Islamic symbology*. Evidently, Morocco can capitalise on some of its features, such as that of the common languages (Arabic and French); it can also enhance the religious symbolism, since the monarch, as a direct descendant of Mohammed, is a transnational reference for all African Muslims.

It is in the cards that, in the nearest future, the UN Security Council will be strengthening the MINURSO, making it more effective and efficient, as shown by the appointment of the Canadian *Colin Stewart* (December, 2017) as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Western Sahara and Head of MINURSO, having previously served as Deputy Head and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) in Addis Ababa, as well as the nomination made in August 2017 of the former President of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Hoerst Köhler*, as Personal Envoy for Western Sahara of the UN Secretary General (PESG). The ultimate goal of the international community is to guarantee a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict, either it be a full integration in the Morocco, or an autonomy within Morocco, or a full independence for the Sahrawis, both through a referendum or through a political solution between the parties.
6. Other EU Initiatives towards Africa: The Sahel Alliance, the European External Investment Plan (EIP), the Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, the Pan-African Programme (PanAf), the EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) and Maritime Security

In the last times, the whole EU and some more limited group of European countries have launched a series of initiatives, aimed at relaunching their relations with Africa.

The *Sahel Alliance*\(^{32}\) is a donor coordination group, strictly working with the EU, in order to ensure effective and sustainable development and regional security. Inaugurated in July 2017, it currently comprises twelve members: Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank. The Sahel Alliance\(^{33}\) has identified the following six priority areas for action: Youth employment; Rural development, agriculture and food security; Climate, including access to energy, green energy and water; Governance; Support for the return of basic services throughout the territory, including through decentralisation; Security.

The *European External Investment Plan (EIP)*\(^{34}\), launched in 2017, is designed to attract and facilitate FDI, in particular from businesses and private investors, into fragile African and EU Neighbourhood countries that otherwise would not be reached. According to the EIP, development cooperation and assistance need to evolve, by combining grants with other tools and sources of finance, in order not only to reach the Sustainable

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\(^{32}\) The Sahel Alliance. See: [https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/](https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/)

\(^{33}\) The Sahel Alliance is in fact based on four pillars: (1) Enhanced coordination across a range of key sectors, increased resources dedicated to security, short-term stabilization and development, as well as additional investments in the region to produce visible and measurable changes in the short term at local level. These changes should occur in: the employability of young people, particularly through education, training and the creation of economic activities; Rural development, agriculture and food security; Climate, including access to energy, green energy and water; Governance, including the strengthening of judicial systems, the fight against corruption and governance in the extractive sector, as well as the participation of civil society in strengthening the state; Support for the return of basic services throughout the country, including through decentralization. (2) Reciprocal accountability of development partners and Sahel countries. (3) The search for innovative implementation methods, to increase private-sector investment. (4) Amplified support for the security forces (G5-Sahel in particular).

Development Goals targets, but also to deal with the root causes of irregular migration. With a contribution of €4,1 billion from the European Commission, the EIP is expected to bring in more than €44 billions of investments and leverage as much as €88 billions by 2020, thanks to contributions of EU Member States, EFTA countries and other partners. The EIP is divided into three branches: firstly, the *European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD)*[^35] to help to leverage additional financing for development, especially from the private sector; secondly, the technical assistance to help define better viable projects; thirdly, a structured political and private sector dialogue to help improve the investment climate. The EIP transcends classical development assistance, to support sustainable investments in an integrated way, bringing together blending, technical assistance and strategic policy and political dialogue, in order to improve investment climate and business environment. The first five targeted areas for investments or “investment windows” are: Sustainable Energy and Connectivity; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Financing; Sustainable Agriculture, Rural entrepreneurs and Agribusiness; Sustainable Cities; and Digital for Development.

The *Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs* is part of the Africa-EU Partnership. On 12 September, 2018, on the occasion of his *State of the Union Address (SOTEU)*, the President of the European Commission, *Jean-Claude Juncker*, stated that: “Africa does not need charity, it needs true and fair partnership. And we, Europeans need this partnership just as much. Today, we are proposing a new Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs between Europe and Africa. This Alliance, as we envision it, would help create up to 10 million jobs in Africa in the next 5 years alone. I believe we should develop the numerous EU-African trade agreements into a continent-to-continent free trade agreement, as an

[^35]: The funding instrument for the EIP is the *European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD)*, which consists of the EFSD Guarantee with a value of €1,5 billion and €2,6 billion from the Blending facilities under the *African Investment Facility (AfIF)* and the *Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF)*.
economic partnership between equals”. Therefore, regarding the aforementioned potential ten million jobs in the next five years, the EU Commission expected results, by means of a financial support to be mobilised by 2020, are as follows: 35,000 students and academics from Africa will benefit from Erasmus+ by 2020; a further 70,000 will benefit by 2027, reaching a total of 105,000 in ten years; 750,000 people will receive vocational training for skills development; 30 million people and companies will profit from access to electricity thanks to the EU’s leveraged investment in renewable energy and a boosted generation capacity by 5 GW; 24 million people will have access to all season roads through the leveraged investment in transport infrastructure; 3,2 million jobs in Africa are expected to be created under the EIP, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprises. At least in theory, with a guarantee of €75 million, a single investment programme from the External Investment Plan will generate 800,000 jobs. With the idea of identifying the most promising value chains at national and regional level, support to Africa will be enhanced through blending and guarantees for more investments, so as to leverage resources from capital markets with international, European and national financial institutions, with the purpose to de-risk investments and facilitate access to finance. To this end, the proposed course of action encompasses the following ten lines: Boosting strategic investments via blending and guarantees; Supporting the opportunities for manufacturing and processing at national and regional level via the Jobs and Growth Compacts; Establishing sectoral groups of African and European public, private and financial operators and academia, under the lead of a Commissioner, to provide expertise, advice and recommendations; Supporting education and development of skills at continental level; Supporting skills development at national level to match skills to strategic development choices for each country; Strengthening the dialogue, cooperation and support on the investment and business climate; Supporting the Africa Continental Free Trade Area; Strengthening intra-African and EU-African trade in the long-term perspective of a continent-to-continent free trade agreement; Supporting
connectivity both intra-African and between the EU and Africa; Mobilising a substantial package of financial resources.

Additionally, on February 9, 2019, in Addis Ababa, the European Commission signed agreements worth 225 million euros, to support regional programmes involving 25 African countries, within the framework of the new alliance between Africa and Europe. The European funds will concretely finance three new types of actions: 125 million euros will be used to create work and development in East and South Africa, 80 million euros to support coastal development and 20 million euros to ensure maritime safety in the area of the Red Sea. Furthermore, December the 18th, 2018, at the invitation of the ex-Chancellor of Austria, Sebastian Kurz, and the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, the High-Level Forum Africa-Europe was held in Vienna, to discuss “Taking cooperation to the digital age”. The Forum underlined the critical need to step up European private-sector investments in Africa, while highlighting the changes to the policy and legal framework. The main topics, focused on the promotion of both innovation and digitalisation, were: Agriculture 4.0; FinTech (financial technology) in Africa; Jobs for the 21st century; Investing in Start-ups; Sustainable Energy Access; eGovernment; eCommerce. The Co-Chairs welcomed the signing of contracts by the European Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) on “Deepening Africa’s trade integration through effective implementation of the AfCFTA, to support economic integration” (3 million euros). Besides, the European Investment Bank finalised the signing of three major financing operations worth about 500 million euros, which will provide investments in ICT, energy and public transport infrastructures in a number of selected African countries.

Previous to all that, in 2014, the European Commission has embarked on the Pan-African Programme (PanAf), which is a special development plan for cooperation with Africa, financed with 845 million euros until 2020 through the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). According to the European Commission (EC), its added value consists of the
magnitude of the cross-regional, inter-regional, continental and global dimensions of the projects to be developed in sectors ranging from sustainable agriculture and the environment up to higher education, Information Technology and Communication (ICT) and scientific research. Not only is the Pan-African Programme one of the main EU financial instruments for the JAES implementation, but it has also a strong complementarity with other European financial instruments such as the European Development Fund (EDF) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). At its inception, the PanAf focused on five key areas of cooperation between the two continents, namely: Peace and security; Democracy, good governance and human rights; Human development; Sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration Global and cross-cutting issues. Yet, since 2017, its areas were reduced to three: Political dialogue and pan-African governance, Investing in people – education, science, technology and skills; Continental economic integration. It is worth mentioning that under the first area particular importance has been given to the African Governance Architecture (AGA), in order to provide institutional support to the AU institutions.

In regards of maritime security in general and the Gulf of Guinea in particular, African countries heavily depend on the sea, as it is their main means of logistical access to the international market. Water covers more than two thirds of the earth’s surface and affects life all over the world. As the second largest Continent on the planet and major island, Africa, with its 43 million square kilometres, covers a fifth of the total surface area of the globe. The entire African coast’s length, including the islands, is over twenty-six thousand nautical miles; thirty-nine of fifty-five African states are either coastal or insular. This is why, in 2012, the African Union adopted the 2050 Africa’s Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS), to be

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seen as the background of all the other existing African maritime strategies, having the ambition to integrate the socio-economic, the environmental and the security dimensions, with the aim to fully exploit the potential of the Blue Economy for the Blue Growth of the African continent. Geographically, the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) extends from Cape Palmas (Liberia) to well beyond Cape Lopez (Gabon), and is considered the geographic centre of the Earth, since the equator there meets the zero-longitude meridian. Geopolitically, the whole of the African Atlantic coast, roughly six thousand kilometres from Mauritania to Angola, can be defined as the Greater Gulf of Guinea, including the archipelagos of Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe. It is a maritime area straddling two geographical, political and economic regions, ECOWAS and ECCAS. In perspective, the Greater Gulf of Guinea will play an increasingly important strategic role, since international relations, between the African continent and the American one, find their natural routes of communication in the South Atlantic and the Middle Atlantic, where two Portuguese-speaking economic and political giants look at each other: Brazil and Angola. Maritime security is a key component of collective security, particularly in East and West Africa, with the goal to stem both Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships (ARAS). Yet, in recent years, piracy off the African coasts has shifted to less sensitive targets, concentrated above all in the maritime region of the Gulf of Guinea. In 2014, right after the publication of the European Union Maritime Security Strategy (EUMSS), though limited to the Atlantic side, the EU Strategy on the Gulf of Guinea and, the following year, the Gulf of Guinea Action Plan (2015-2020) were released together with the appointment of an EU Senior Coordinator for the Gulf of Guinea,

38 The Gulf of Guinea (GoG) is also known as the Bay of Benin (or Bight of Benin) or the Gulf of Benin, which is actually inside the wider Gulf of Guinea. The Bay of Benin is overlooked by Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria.


who looks after the implementation of the EU’s strategy and action plan in close coordination with the Council’s Political and Security Committee. These initiatives represent an integrated approach, linking the challenges of security, governance and development both onshore and offshore.

The African Union (AU), based in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), was established July the 9th 2002 at the Durban Summit of Heads of State and Government, replacing the former Organization of African Unity (OAU), with the aim of strengthening political unity and co-operation among member countries and free the Continent from colonial domination. The AU is the main and most comprehensive platform for inter-African political dialogue and also the privileged interlocutor to analogous institutions and third countries, thus capable of dialogue with emerged and emerging global powers. Regarding the African Union’s leadership, the current African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson is Moussa Faki Mahamat, who will remain in office until 2021, when the on-going institutional reform will allow the formation of a new commission with the adopted amendments\(^\text{41}\). In addition, after the Rwandan President Paul Kagame’s term (2018-2019), the new AU Chairperson for the current year (2019-2020) is the Egyptian President, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, who has declared to have the intention to establish, during his mandate, a centre for the fight against terrorism and to convene a great conference on Peace & Security.

The primary issue of the latest African Union Summits has been the continental institution’s reform process at the behest of the latest AU Chairperson, the Rwandan President, Paul Kagame. Another ambitious goal is the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Besides, the current reform also concerns the African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa’s Development (AUDA-
and the African Peer-Review Mechanism (APRM) as well. An additional crucial point is Financing of the Union ‘by Africa and for Africa’, particularly through of the so-called ‘Kaberuka Tax’ or the 0.2 per cent Import Levy. In order to reduce dependency on partner funds for the implementation of continental development and the integration programmes as well as to relieve the pressure on national treasuries with respect to meeting national obligations for payment of assessed contributions of the Union, a 0.2 per cent levy on all eligible imported goods into the African Continent has been instituted, so that the African Union be financed in a predictable, sustainable, equitable and accountable manner with the full rights of its Member States.

The major countries contributing to the African Union are the continent’s biggest emerged-emerging powers, such as Angola, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa. However, under existing arrangements, the Union’s budget continues to be underfunded by both Member States and development partners. The 72% of the AU budget is funded by external contributors, which not only creates risks associated with fiscal constraints experienced by the donors’ economies, but also overdependence on external actors, thereby undermining African ownership. On average, 67% of assessed contribution is collected annually from Member States, while, annually, about thirty of them default either partially or completely. This creates a significant funding gap between the planned budget and the real funding available, hindering the effective delivery of the African Union’s agenda. Actually, to contain the problem of Member States contributions, an option could be that at least the five main...
African donors do not exceed forty per cent of the budget and that the minor ones do not pay less than two hundred thousand dollars a year.

Aware that the African Union’s continental priorities are political affairs, peace and security, economic regional and continental integration, in 2016, a Pan-African Advisory Team44 was formed to assist President Kagame to draw down the Institutional Reforms of the African Union. The committee of experts reviewed and submitted some proposals for a better AU’s governance, having identified the following five areas of actions to be adopted without delay: the AU needs to focus on fewer priority areas with continental scope; it has to review its structure and operations, ensuring institutional realignment45 for better service delivery; the AU is to connect with African citizenry; and to become operationally effective and efficient in the performance of its mandate; sustainable financing is to be identified, in order to reduce over reliance on development partners. In 2017, the AU Institutional Reform Unit has been established within the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission with the task of implementing the daily activities to be delivered on the reform process.

In 2015, the former President of the African Development Bank (2005-2015), Donald Kaberuka, was appointed AU High Representative on the Peace Fund. The Peace Fund is the tool to cover any operational activities within the AU Peace & Security Council, such as mediation and preventive diplomacy, institutional capacities and peace support operations.

44 The team consisted of: Ms Cristina Duarte (Former Minister of Finance, Cabo Verde); Dr Donald Kaberuka (Former President, African Development Bank); Dr Acha Leke (Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company); Dr Carlos Lopes (Former Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa); Mr Strive Masiyiwa (Founder, ECONET Wireless); Mr Tito Mboweni (Former Governor, South African Reserve Bank); Ms Amina Mohammed (Minister of Environment, Nigeria); Ms Mariam Mahamat Nour (Minister of Economy and International Cooperation, Chad); Dr Vera Songwe (Regional Director for West and Central Africa, International Finance Corporation).

45 According to the African Union, its institutional realignment shall be focused on the following four key areas: the establishment of a lean and performance-oriented senior leadership team at the African Union Commission (AUC); re-evaluation of the AUC’s structures to ensure that they have the right size and capabilities to deliver on the agreed priorities; review and update the mandate and structure of AU organs and institutions in alignment with agreed priority areas; conducting a professional audit of bureaucratic bottlenecks and inefficiencies that impede service delivery.
The Peace Fund, endowed with 325 million dollars in 2017, is supposed to be rising to a total of 400 million dollars by 2020 from the Kaberuka Tax. Financing of the Union is a decision adopted in July 2016 at the 27th AU Summit in Rwanda, committing its Member States to implement a 0.2% levy on eligible imports to finance the African Union, primarily in seek of alternative sources of funding the Union. For this purpose, a Committee of Ten Ministers of Finance has been set up. Also known as the F10, comprising ten Member States, representing the five regions – two per region: East, Southern, West, North and Central – by taking part to the preparation of the AU’s annual budget, it is in charge of proposing implementation tools on alternative sources of financing of the African Union. The Levy is to be derived from 0.2 per cent of the value of the eligible goods imported into an African Union’s Member State from a non-Member State from outside the continent; products imported from Africa to promote intra-African trade are excluded. The Levy is applicable to finance the Operational Budget (100%), the Programme Budget (75%) and the AU PSOs’ Budget (25%), as well as any other expenditure of the Union that may be determined by the Assembly. Actually, the AU Import Levy will apply to the Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF) value at the port of disembarkation for imports arriving by sea and road and to the Customs value at the airport of disembarkation for goods arriving by air. The eligible goods at this point shall be determined by Member States in line with national priorities. Exceptions are goods received as Aid, gifts and non-repayable grants by a State, and goods originating from non-Member States, imported as part of financing agreements with foreign partners, subject to a specific exempting clause. Once the Revenue is collected as AU import levy, it is then deposited into an account opened in name of the ‘African Union’ with the Central, National or Reserve Bank of each Member State. Since levies on imports, within the framework of customs unions and free trade areas, are already being used by ECOWAS, ECCAS and CEMAC, they would do not collide with international norms.
Thanks to a Cross-border and Pan-African economic approach, the *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*[^46] was signed in Kigali on 21 March 2018 by 52 countries out of 55 African Union’s Member States[^47]. So far, three countries only have not signed it yet: *Nigeria, Eritrea* and *Benin*. While Abuja, fearful of the rule of consensus and the consequent possible dependence on the decisions of smaller states within the free trade area, for the moment does not intend to be part of it, Porto-Novo’s and Asmara’s reasons remain unclear. The AfCFTA has entered into force May the 30th 2019, having reached the threshold of the twenty-two necessary ratifications. During the next AU’s Extraordinary Heads of State and Government Summit, to be held July the 7th 2019 in Niamey, Niger, the AfCFTA will move into the second phase and become fully operational within the next three years. In Niamey, protocols in co-operation in competition, intellectual property rights and investment will also be negotiated by Member States. Being the largest free trade area in the world, since the creation of the World Trade Organization in 1995, the AfCFTA will completely transform the economic-commercial relations between Africa and Europe. The goal is to promote internal trade, which today represents only 17% of African countries’ exports, too little compared to 59% in Asia and 69% in Europe. The agreement will undoubtedly increase the industrialization of the continent, with annexed growth in employment. Looking at the external trade, a harmonised trade bloc will provide investors with economies of scale and greater added values of *Made in Africa* products to be exported. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), once implemented, intra-African trade will improve by 52% by 2022, compared to 2010 levels. At the moment, the majority of businesses on the continent pay an average of 6.9% tax on

[^46]: AfCFTA. See: [https://au.int/en/cfta](https://au.int/en/cfta)

[^47]: In 1984, Morocco had left the AU’s predecessor, the OAU, due to its recognition of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Yet, in September 2016, Rabat officially submitted a request to accede to the AU Constitutive Act and become a member of the Union. The AU Assembly decided at its 28th Ordinary Session in January 2017 to admit Morocco as a new Member State. Morocco deposited its instrument of accession to the Constitutive Act on 31 January 2017.
cross-border transactions. By removing tariffs on 90% of goods, the AfCFTA agreement is expected to create a single market with free movement of goods and services for over one billion people with a combined gross domestic product of over two trillion dollars. This would entail more economic growth, greater foreign investments, with significant positive effects on unemployment of what is the continent with the greatest number of young people on earth. Furthermore, the large beneficiaries of the treaty will be SMEs, representing eighty per cent of turnover on the continent, and women, who manage seventy per cent of the so-called cross-border informal trade. Former UNECA Executive Director (2012-2016), Professor Carlos Lopes, who in 2018 was appointed *African Union High Representative to support Member States in the negotiation of a new agreement with the European Union post-2020*, is one of the leading architects of the continent-to-continent negotiations on several thorny issues, with the aim of transforming the framework of relations for the next fifteen years to the advantage of Africa. Firmly convinced that the continental struggle has to go from ideological to practical, pragmatic and technical, Lopes believes that “the entry into force of the AfCFTA has got enormous potential to strengthen the African market. Beyond that, it will also allow companies to cut costs and promote development through regional value chains. This could have an impact on investments and on the cost of products and services. Entrepreneurs could reinvest their gains by creating new jobs, thereby also increasing revenue for states. Companies can increase their competitiveness by selling their goods at a cheaper price”.

The main obstacles are given by the fragmentation of the single African economies and the lack of both infrastructures and logistics, having so far seriously affected any intra-African trade. Precisely because of such infrastructures deficiency across the Continent, the AfDB has launched the *Regional Integration and Policy Strategy 2014-2023 (RIS)*\(^4^8\), with

the aim to integrate Africa in the global market. It is worth stating that the process of political and economic African integration is being pursued on two parallel paths: the *political integration*, takes place at continental level, being represented by the African Union, whereas the *economic integration* at regional or sub-regional level and is embodied by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)\(^49\).

Parallel to the reform process, the AU has been developing a number of flagship projects – triggering development factors – under the Agenda 2063 umbrella, such as: Integrated High Speed Train Network; Formulation of an African Commodities Strategy; Establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area; The African Passport and Free Movement of People; Silencing the Guns by 2020; Implementation of the Grand Inga Dam Project; Establishment of a Single African Air-Transport Market (SAATM); Establishment of an Annual African Economic Forum; Establishment of the African Financial Institutions; The Pan-African E-Network; Africa Outer Space Strategy; An African Virtual and E-University; Cyber Security; and the Great African Museum.

\(^{49}\) The Regional Economic Communities (RECs) collect individual Member States in sub-regions, with the aim of favouring greater and better economic integration specifically at the regional level. RECs represent the so-called African Union building blocks and are the core of the AU’s development programme strategy, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NePAD). Indeed, the process of African integration is taking place through a political level, interpreted by the UA and an operational level expressed by the RECs, which are the true engine of African integration with regard to both the economy and peace and security. Although there are several sub-regional African bodies, however, the RECs, with which the UA has integrated and structured relationships, are eight:

1. AMU: Arab Maghreb Union.
2. CEN-SAD: Community of Sahel and Sahara States.
4. EAC: East African Community.
5. ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States.
6. ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States.
7. IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority for Development.
8. SADC: Southern Africa Development Community.
7.1. Climate Change and the AU Agenda 2063

The *Agenda 2030* with its *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*\(^{50}\) and the *Paris Agreement (COP 21)*\(^{51}\), within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, are the two global initiatives of the utmost importance for Africa’s sustainable development. In point of fact, *Sustainable Development* must be able to meet the present needs, without however compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy their own; according to the United Nations, to this end it is important to harmonise three fundamental elements: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. Climate change represents a significant threat to Africa’s development, since it can undermine the encouraging economic achievements recently gained. Climate change today costs Africa as a whole about four percentage points of its GDP each year, multiplying threats in areas at risk of persistent conflict. It is interesting that the direct impact of climate change is less relevant in itself than its role as a triggering-effect, amplifying the consequences of other trends already underway in Africa, such as: a high rate of population growth over the next decades; a high rate of urbanization; the stagnation of agricultural productivity, and, finally, the anthropic environmental damage in terms of uncontrolled deforestation, soil erosion and soil fertility decline especially in semi-arid regions such as the Sahel.

In the wider JAES agenda, Brussels and Addis Ababa express a shared vision regarding environmental sustainability and climate change, specifically thanks to the implementation of two specific partnerships, namely the *Africa-EU Partnership on Climate Change* and the *Africa-EU Energy Partnership*. Euro-African cooperation takes due account of crucial sectors related to climate change: food security, sustainable agriculture and land


\(^{51}\) COP21, held in Paris in 2015, was the 21st meeting of the *Conference of the Parties within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*. The Paris Agreement entered into force in 2016. COP25 will take place in Santiago de Chile, Chile, December 2019. See: [https://unfccc.int/](https://unfccc.int/)
management, soil degradation, desertification, biodiversity conservation, biosecurity issues, including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), toxic waste prevention, environmentally sound waste management, sustainable use and management of natural resources, including forests, fish resources and integrated water management as well as early-warning systems to improve disaster risk management. As a matter of fact, global energy challenges have determined the need for Africa and the European Union to strengthen cooperation and solidarity in the sustainable management of their energy resources and to continue to promote access to energy, energy security and regional cooperation also through the EU Energy Facility and other financial instruments. Therefore, to cope with climate change’s challenge, African governments will be compelled to devise better performing feasibility plans for large-scale regional electrification and invest not only in eco-friendly agricultural techniques, developing new generations of seeds, but also and above all in public education programmes that widely explain the impact of climate change on life and on the habits of the communities, recommending simple practices, in order to well preserve their environment. It is true that despite numerous difficulties, African states are all the time more eager to speak with one voice in international climate fora, showing a continental governance responsibility, indispensable to ensure climate change mitigation\textsuperscript{52} and adaptation\textsuperscript{53}.

In fact, in 2014, the African Union adopted the Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda\textsuperscript{54}, the background for a new AU long-term strategy, the

\textsuperscript{52}Mitigation concerns the range of actions necessary to limit both long-term climate change extent and rate.

\textsuperscript{53}Adaptation refers to those changes in ecological, social or economic systems as a response to current or expected climate stimuli and their effects or impacts. It concerns either changes in processes, practices and structures to moderate potential damage or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change. The African Development Bank (AfDB) estimates Africa’s adaptation costs between twenty and thirty million dollars a year for the next 10-20 years. Critical areas for adaptation include irrigation and drought management, diversification of agricultural practices and the livestock sector.

\textsuperscript{54}CAP. See: https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/32848-doc-common_african_position.pdf
*Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*55, launched in 2015. In its concept there is an integrated, people-centred and prosperous Africa divided into seven ‘aspirations’: Inclusive growth and sustainable development; An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa’s Renaissance; Good governance, democracy, human rights, justice and the rule of law; A peaceful and secure Africa; a strong African cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics; People-driven development; Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.

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55 It is interesting observing that 2063 was symbolically chosen, because it is a date ideally linked to 1963, the year in which the *Organization for African Unity (OAU)* was founded, of which the African Union is a direct emanation. See: [http://agenda2063.au.int/en/home](http://agenda2063.au.int/en/home)
8. Other-than-Europe International Key Players in Africa: China, India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey and USA

An increasing diversification of strategic agreements and partnerships between Africa and the rest of the world is taking place, by means of bilateral meetings between Africa and other groups of countries or individual states, the majority of which is Asian. Regarding other Asian actors involved, it is worth mentioning the Vietnam–Africa International Forum, held in 2003 and in 2010, the Africa Singapore Business Forum (ASBF), the latest meeting of which was organised in 2018, and the First Indonesia-Africa Forum (IAF), convened in Bali always in 2018.

8.1. China

China and Africa relationships are more and more significant: China not only is the world’s largest developing country, but also the one and only global power, capable of simultaneously exporting capital, technology, human resources and workforce, whereas Africa, the world’s least-economically-developed macro-region with the biggest number of developing and underdeveloped countries, is a continent abundant of untapped natural and human resources. Precisely because of that, the Sino-African pattern can be regarded as an example of South-South Cooperation. The most direct historical link to Africa relates to China’s 15th century maritime fleets\(^\text{56}\), which reached Africa’s east coast, specifically an area that is part of modern Kenya. In modern times, the establishment of Sino-African relations dates back to the late 1950s, when China signed the first official bilateral trade agreements with Algeria, Egypt, Guinea, Somalia, Morocco and Sudan. In addition, between December 1963 and January 1964, the Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai made a trip to

\(^{56}\text{Zheng He, a Muslim admiral of the Ming Dynasty, who, between 1405 and 1433, along with an awesome naval fleet commanded seven Chinese expeditions to Southeast Asia, South Asia, Western Asia, and East Africa, where he reached the shores of Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania.}\)
ten African countries. Yet, the *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)*\(^57\) is the key venue of the Sino-African partnership. It is organised every three years, alternating between China and an always different African country: it was held in Beijing (2000, 2006, 2012, 2018), in 2003 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), in 2009 in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt), and in 2015 in Johannesburg (South Africa). The FOCAC is based on both *China’s Non-Interference Policy in Internal Affairs* and on the *Beijing Consensus* (i.e. One-China Policy), meaning the exclusive recognition of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and not of the Republic Of China (ROC). All African countries, but form Eswatini (former Swaziland), have diplomatic relations with Beijing only rather than with Taipei. China is seeking to play a constructive role in the reform the international system especially by means of the *Belt & Road Initiative (BRI)* that is a strategic global concept, launched in 2013, aiming to promote development and connectivity of Asian, European, African and Southern American continents and their adjacent seas. Until 2016, it was named *One Belt, One Road (OBOR - Yi Day Yi Lu) Initiative* with the aliases of *B&R* and *One Belt, One Road*. The BRI is made of two settings: the land-based *Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB)* and the sea-lanes of the *21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR)*. Actually, the New Silk Road of China, whose rapid implementation has become the priority of Beijing foreign policy, deals with the improvement of infrastructures links and economic cooperation among countries in all of Eurasia and Africa\(^58\), consisting of the interconnection of land-based and maritime pathways, to promote the role of China in global relations, sponsoring the international investment flows and trade opportunities for Chinese productions.

\(^57\) FOCAC. See: [www.focac.org](http://www.focac.org)

\(^58\) For the OBOR, in order not to disregard the economic globalization and the cultural diversity within the multipolar world it is willing to embrace, shall be crucial to recall the China’s Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (1954): mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty; mutual non-aggression; mutual non-interference in each other’s internal affairs; equality and cooperation for mutual benefit; peaceful co-existence.
Connecting major seaports across “a string-of-pearls” maritime path, the MSR focuses on two routes, both starting from Chinese coastal cities and crossing the South China Sea: the first, through the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, goes to Europe, while the second reaches the South Pacific. Regarding the BRI linking of the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans through Central and Southern Africa, African ports, railways, waterways and transportation networks need to be suitably modernised, so that the BRI may evolve into the “One Belt, One Road, and One Continent”. In the next decade, East African countries are going to be the very first to benefit from the BRI’s outcomes, with Kenya as the major African hub. To do so, Beijing is planning to reinforce and expand the East African Railways Network, connecting the ports of Kirbi (Cameroon), Bagamoyo (Tanzania) and Lobito (Angola) crossing Zambia through the Benguela railway along with an extended link of the Tanzania-Zambia (Tazara) railway. In regards of the Atlantic side, Walvis Bay in Namibia is set to become the second China’s African Naval-Military Base after Djibouti, with capabilities projection over the Atlantic and the Gulf of Guinea. South America will be then at reach through Maritime Sea-lanes, spanning both the Middle and the Southern Atlantic Oceans, to be further consolidated by way of the China-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) Forum in the nearest future. Evidently, financial integration is mandatory for the internationalisation of Chinese currency – the Renminbi (RMB). So, China is signing currency agreements with an ever-greater number of African countries and organisations. Most recently, one of the eight African Regional Economic Communities – the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) – agreed to include the RMB among its official settlement currencies. It is therefore plausible that in the long run the Chinese currency will dominate the market along the Silk Road to the detriment of local currencies, as it appears from the involvement of wealth funds, equity investment funds and private funds to participate in the construction of key BRI projects. Three interlinked and innovative financial institutions are to support the realization of the Belt and Road Initiative objectives:
the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)\textsuperscript{59}, the Silk Road Fund (SRF)\textsuperscript{60} and the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB)\textsuperscript{61}. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a new multilateral development bank, founded in 2014. It aspires to be a global development bank alternative to the World Bank (WB). It is worth noting that, in spite of some objections from the United States, several European and NATO countries are AIIB’s founding Non-Regional Member States, including Italy, the U.K., France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Iceland, Spain, Portugal, Poland and Norway. Besides, so far, some African countries too are already members of the AIIB: Egypt, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Sudan and South Africa. The Silk Road (Infrastructure) Fund (SRF) was launched in 2014. The fund, endowed with 40 million dollars, is capitalised mainly by China’s Foreign Exchange Market (Forex) reserves to be managed as a China’s sovereign wealth fund. It aspires to become alternative to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The New Development Bank (NDB) is a BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) multilateral development bank established in 2014. The bank was provided with 50 USD billion’s initial capital, with the intention to increase it up to 100 billion. Each country will have one vote, but no one will have veto power. The NDB’s Headquarters is in Shanghai, while its African Regional Centre is based in South Africa. It supports Africa’s growth, in particular on infrastructure and sustainable development projects, so that it could be considered as a potential alternative to the African Development Bank (ADB). Ultimately, to cope with the rapid aging of the population, rising wages and production costs, not to mention the domestic industrial overproduction\textsuperscript{62}, Chinese policymakers are increasingly looking for outbound

\textsuperscript{59} AIIB. See: \url{http://www.aiib.org/}

\textsuperscript{60} SRF. See: \url{http://www.silkroadfund.com.cn}

\textsuperscript{61} NDB. See: \url{http://ndb.int/}

\textsuperscript{62} Africa is closely associated with China’s need to boost exports, utilising its excess capacity in construction industries and stimulating China’s slowing economic growth.
investment opportunities[^63], trying to give new economic life to the Chinese low added-value and labour-intensive manufacturing export-oriented model. Indeed, the Chinese economy strives for passing from the state of *World Manufacturing Factory* to that of *World Manufacturing Power*. Accordingly, Beijing’s strategy is structured along the lines of two major mega-trends: the first is the *Made in China 2025*, whilst the second is the *Made in Africa 2050*, with a number of *African-Chinese-led Global Manufacturing Centres*, where to offshore Chinese production. Thanks to the BRI’s transport and infrastructures expansion, Beijing’s goal is to lay the foundations of Chinese production networks with several hotspots particularly in Africa. In the long-term, China seems to have planned a gradual shift of the world industrial production from Asia to Africa through the establishment of the *Special Economic Zones (SEZ)*, acting as logistics aggregators for Chinese products distribution all over Africa. These peculiar economic districts, already operational in Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Nigeria and Zambia, are the forerunners of such a global trend. In the nowadays Africa rush, the smartest external players are post-western: the Asian alternatives to the Western development model do present objectively valid approaches for Africa’s growth, simply because they jump over the out-of-date Donor-Recipient Mindset. On the contrary, Chinese partnership in Africa is grounded not on the Western development aid model, rather on cooperation based, at the same time, on investments, infrastructures and trade. Global in scope, structural and transformative Chinese presence across the African continent, metamorphosing from a sole economic component into an all-dimensional way, has de facto become a Strategic Comprehensive Partnership. The BRI – the most ambitious infrastructure-based project in the world today and, together with FOCAC, a game changer for Africa’s development – essential goal is to outline a global infrastructure dynamic

[^63]: In the late 1990s, China launched the *Go Out Policy*, also known as *Go Global Policy*, which selectively incentivised outbound investment, in order to procure natural resources, capture foreign market share, build a number of global Chinese brand names and acquire foreign technologies.
network, diversifying Chinese economy, deepening political stability and establishing a multipolar global order, under Chinese leadership. China wishes to ultimately lead the Globalization and Africa is going to be the keystone of this operation, so far underestimated, if not ignored, by the West: both the EU and the US. While the probable isolationism of the new American administration, entailing a possible downsizing of its involvement in Africa, except for security issues, would allow China to extend its hegemony over the whole Sub-Saharan Africa, at the same time it is a European miscalculation to keep believing in the complementarity of the roles played in Africa by Europe and China. In fact, Europeans seem to be unable to realise that the Chinese model for the complete control of Africa envisages persuading its major competitors of its own good faith through a simulated multilateralism, a system according to which China deems its relationship with Europe neither competitive nor co-operative, rather co-petitive, meaning ‘cooperative meanwhile competitive’. Actually, Chinese sham multilateralism hides the purpose to restore confidence in the West of its final intentions, so as to assure its long-term monopoly and supremacy across Africa.

8.2. India

New Delhi is trying to catch up with Africa, after having been ousted in recent years by other Asian competitors, striving to re-establish its historical ties and cultural influence, dating back to before the arrival of the Europeans in Africa. For thousands of years there have been links between India and Africa’s Eastern and Southern coasts. In order to relaunch its projection, New Delhi can also count on the Indian diaspora living in East Africa. The third edition of the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)\textsuperscript{64} was celebrated in 2015, in New Delhi; the first had taken place, in 2008, in the Indian capital and the second, in 2011, in Addis Ababa. The Indian approach is characterised by the technical cooperation model through the private

\textsuperscript{64} IAFS. See: http://mea.gov.in/india-africa-forum-summit-2015/index.html
sector. Indian technology has the advantage of offering adaptable, appropriate and accessible products, in direct competition with those of China. This could give India the opportunity to present itself as a viable alternative. India’s engagement with Africa is guided by ten principles, with a specific focus not only on digital revolution, agriculture and climate change, but also to ensure that Africa does not once again turn into a theatre of rival ambitions. In particular, principle number ten states that “Just as India and Africa fought colonial rule together, we will work together for a just, representative and democratic global order that has a voice and a role for one-third of humanity that lives in Africa and India. India’s own quest for reforms in the global institutions is incomplete without an equal place for Africa. That will be a key purpose of our foreign policy”. In this way, New Delhi winks at Africa’s support, to get a permanent seat in United Nations Security Council. From a geopolitical point of view, a further concern for New Delhi is with no doubt maritime security across the Indian Ocean. In fact, India’s energy demands are largely sourced from oil imports arriving by sea and this dependency is destined to increase in the next coming years. In fact, according to principle number eight: “India will work with African nations to keep the oceans open and free for the benefit of all nations. The world needs cooperation and not competition in the eastern shores of Africa and the eastern Indian Ocean. That is why India’s vision of Indian Ocean Security is cooperative and inclusive, rooted in security and growth for all in the region”. In fact, it is vital for India to secure its national naval presence from the Strait of Hormuz to the Strait of Malacca, because India’s maritime doctrine calculates that all the new powers are going to seek a foothold in the Indian Ocean.

8.3. Japan

Since 1993, every five years, Japan has been convening the Tokyo Conference on African Development (TICAD); starting from 2019, TICAD has become a triennial event. For the first time in Africa and not in Japan, in 2016, the sixth edition of the TICAD took place in Nairobi,
with the subtitle “Advancing Africa’s Sustainable Development Agenda TICAD Partnership for Prosperity”, during which the Japanese promised investments in Africa in close collaboration with the African Development Bank. With the slogan ‘from Aid to Trade and from Debt to Investment’, for Japan too, the African continent it is the main economic frontier of the 21st century. Much earlier than others, already in Nineties, Tokyo understood the need to provide Africa with adequate infrastructure as first brick in view of whatever logistical and commercial future development. Although the Japanese African strategy had anticipated of almost a decade the on-going Africa rush, however it soon left empty spaces promptly filled by other international competitors, mainly Asian. Like India, Japanese-African partnership aims at the United Nations Security Council reform, with the goal to grant a permanent seat to both Japan and Africa, precisely thanks to the support of the large African bloc in the UN. Out of the TICAD VI Nairobi Declaration, the following initiatives have been prioritised: structural economic transformation through economic diversification and industrialization; resilient health system for quality of life; social stability for shared prosperity; the United Nations in the new millennium. TICAD is aware that the decline in global prices of primary raw materials has aggravated the tax burden and the debt sustainability of many African countries and, therefore, the most African economies have yet to diversify, in order to reduce dependence on extractive industries. As a result, the Nairobi Declaration underlined the necessity to promote a structural economic transformation through diversification, including the development of the blue/ocean economy and the promotion of green economy. The Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VII) is scheduled to take place in August 2019 in Yokohama.

8.4. South Korea

From the 22nd to the 24th May 2018, in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB), Busan – the second most important south Korean city – hosted the sixth edition of
The Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation Conference (KOAFEC). The theme of the important meeting was “Africa and the 4th Industrial Revolution: Opportunities for leapfrogging?”. The history of the KOAFEC dates back to 2006, when the Korea’s Initiatives for Africa’s Development were announced, with the sharp idea to actively promote economic cooperation with Africa, which has the potential to become the next engine of growth for the worlds’ economy, already showing the far-seeing attitude commitment of South Korea towards Africa. The two main wings of the KOAFEC are the Ministerial Round Table and the Public-Private Partnership Forum. In Busan, the parties have adopted the 2018 KOAFEC Joint Statement as well as the KOAFEC Action Plan (2019-2020) for investments in the following six main cooperation areas: energy and infrastructure, ICT, human resources, agriculture, climate change, and sharing of Korea’s development experiences. Seoul intends to undertake a strategic path and a business alliance with Africa, turning it into a real partnership, remembering that Korea still in the Fifties was a developing country, while today it is the eleventh world economy.

8.5. Turkey

Turkey-Africa relations are on the rise, as Ankara intends to expand a systematic, in-depth penetration of the African continent, leveraging its unique key resources. In fact, Turkey, by the way a promising emerging market itself, not only is simultaneously a Balkan, a European, a Middle Eastern, a Caucasian and an Asian country, but also a member of the Council of Europe, OSCE, NATO and OECD. Since 2008, Turkey is a non-regional member of the African Development Bank and, since 2005, it has an observer status at the African Union, which in turn declared Turkey as one of its strategic partners. In 2008, the first Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit was convened in Istanbul. Two years later, the Turkey-

65 KOAFEC. See: http://www.koafec-conference.org
Africa Joint Action Plan (2010-2040) was approved, with the purpose of creating a free trade area, in this manner outflanking the competition European goods. In 2014, the second Turkey–Africa Cooperation Summit was held in Malabo (Equatorial Guinea), while the third summit is scheduled for 2019 in Turkey. Turkish diplomatic network together with the Turkish International Cooperation Development Agency (TIKA) is one of the widest across Africa. In 2016, the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, visited Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Ghana and Nigeria; in 2017, Sudan, Chad and Tunisia; in 2018, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Zambia and South Africa; in 2019, Tanzania. On the whole, he has paid more than thirty official visits to Africa.

8.6. USA

The United States of America recognise that Africa is home to some of the fastest-growing economies, and so a huge market generating new demand for American goods and services is getting ready. In this sense, the creation in 2007 of the Africa Command (AFRICOM) shows the new strategic importance given by Washington to the Continent. Before Trump, regardless of their political orientation, the previous three U.S. Administrations – Clinton, Bush and Obama – were able to maintain a consistent American policy towards Africa, always focusing on peace and security, good governance and democratization, trade and investment, and business promotion as well as through targeted actions ultimately supporting development for the African continent. The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is an initiative commissioned by George W. Bush in 2004, and still very popular among Republicans in the Congress, increasing through a rewarding mechanism American aid to the best performing African countries with over thirty billion

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66 The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), based in Stuttgart, covers the entire African Continent, except for Egypt. See: www.africom.mil
67 Millennium Challenge Corporation. See: https://www.mcc.gov/
annually. The MCC is a bilateral aid agency independent from both the Department of State and the Agency for International Development (USAID). Another important initiative, taken in 2004, is the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), focused on helping those affected by the HIV/AIDS syndrome around the world and particularly in Africa. In 2012, the White House published the new U.S. Strategy towards Sub-Saharan Africa, based on the following four pillars: strengthening democratic institutions; spurring economic growth, trade, and investment; advancing peace and security; promoting opportunity and development. In accordance with it, US-Africa partnership should be based on responsibility, mutual respect and preventive diplomacy, so as to eventually anticipate serious escalations of violence and conflicts. In 2013, Barack Obama, launched the initiative Power Africa, to double access to electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Power Africa is a development plot designed to help those African countries (so far Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Tanzania), which, albeit characterised by high economic growth, are not in a position to sustain their actual energy needs, because of their poor, costly, obsolete and polluting infrastructures. The actions promoted by Washington to access the African markets are multiple, among which, it is worth mentioning the US-Africa Leaders’ Summit, organised in 2014 in Washington as well as the US-Africa Business Forum (USABF), whose latest edition took place in 2019 in Maputo, Mozambique. As a matter of fact, reciprocal tariff benefits in trade agreements between the EU and Africa harms American companies in terms of competition. Yet, the only African country to have a free trade agreement with the United

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68 USAID. See: https://www.usaid.gov/
69 PEPFAR. See: https://www.pepfar.gov/
71 Barack Obama, visited Sub-Saharan Africa three times: in July 2009, Ghana and Egypt; in July 2013, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania; in July 2015, Kenya and Ethiopia, where he also delivered a historic speech at the African Union, never visited by an American President before.
72 Power Africa. See: http://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica
States is Morocco. It is therefore predictable that Washington will soon consider necessary to undertake appropriate negotiations for an improvement of the commercial relations with Africa. As long as President Trump prefers bilateral agreements to multilateral ones, it will be plausible that he calls into question the cornerstone of trade relations with Africa, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)\textsuperscript{73}. This is a multilateral treaty, opened in 2000 by Clinton, granting duty free access to a large number of African products in the United States, whose commodities instead keep on being taxed when entering the African markets. The AGOA, renewed in 2015 for another ten years, includes almost five thousand products from thirty-eight African countries involved in the programme. In December 2018, the Trump Administration released the New Africa Strategy\textsuperscript{74}, based on the optimisation of the American assistance to Africa and to the enhancing of trade and commercial ties. The main idea is to foster African independence, self-reliance, and growth rather than dependency, domination, and debt, particularly by means of a new initiative labelled Prosper Africa, so as to support American investment, grow Africa’s middle class, and improve the overall business climate.

\textsuperscript{73} AGOA. See: \url{http://trade.gov/agoa/}
9. Policy recommendations: Leadership, EU-Africa Intercontinental Interest and Strategic Co-Development Vision guidelines

In recent years, Africa not only has strengthened its economic weight, but has also given importance to its political dimension, showing a legitimate aspiration to count more and make its own contribution in terms of both continental and global governance. As a matter of fact, Africa is negotiating its conditions of participation in the globalization process, having long set the question of its more incisive representativeness at international level, so to ultimately find the space it deserves.

If truth be told, among the points of friction still not resolved at the base of the relationship between Brussels and Addis Ababa, there is the difficulty of the practical implementation of the agreed-upon political guidelines, inasmuch differently looked at by the parties: on the one hand, Europeans have tendency to complain about the slowness of regional and continental integration as well as the limited African human resources available to execute the projects, on the other hand, Africans have a propensity to blame Europeans of conditioning their support and the funds put at their disposal to the still very few effective African existing capabilities only. Objectively, the reciprocal frustrations are more than legitimate, since the absence of a profound political leadership and vision of the Europe-Africa continental partnership is perceptible on both sides.

Strong exclusive national interests are currently undermining any pan-European unity of intent, making the effectiveness of European foreign policy in Africa intermittent, confirming the urgent need to shape a more political and less technical-bureaucratic EU-Africa Dialogue. Actually, there is a common European security policy, but not a common European economic policy, meaning that Europeans are at the same time partners and competitors in Africa. The realpolitik of some individual EU member states is the other side of the same coin of so long accused biased paternalism, ambiguity, double standards,
incoherence and schizophrenia through which Europe keeps on looking at Africa, ergo the
prejudices with which the European external action is so suspiciously perceived by Africans.

The Post-Brexit EU loss of image and influence among African partners is tangible to
the point of making foreseeable that Europe will be considered just as one among many others. In doing so, African governments will be looking somewhere else, beginning to prefer in a more and more confident way alternative partnerships – more than ever with China – to those offered by former colonial powers. The Euro-African relations are likely to undergo a slowdown, because of Brexit and the European policy makers’ geopolitical narrow view.

The risk of the return of any European unilateralism towards Africa could also encourage a strengthening of African nationalism, making it irreconcilable with the cession of sovereignty that every nation-state should slowly grant to the Pan-African institution in the long-term. A closer political dialogue between the United Nations, the European Union and the African Union should rebalance the risks of the aforementioned nationalistic tendencies both on the European and on the African side. In reality, the UN, the EU and the AU are still very heterogeneous organizations in terms of objectives, effectiveness and functioning. Since the UN and the EU support the AU politically, institutionally, financially and technically with regard to building up stronger capacities aimed at stabilising the Continent, the establishment of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU)75, officially inaugurated in February 2011, is indicative of an acceleration of the AU-EU-UN Tripartite Institutional Dialogue, so that from the still unbalanced triangulation of forces that constitute it, its nature be swiftly converted into an effectively equal relationship. The UNOAU, led by Mrs Hanna Tetteh, wishes to intensify the level of cooperation and political dialogue with the AU and the RECs. More precisely, it plans to strengthen the strategic partnership between the UN and the AU on peace and security regarding the AU direct management of the

75 UNOAU. See: https://unoau.unmissions.org/
resources provided by the UN peacekeeping fund in Africa and to facilitate the development of coordinated and coherent short and long-term capacity building for PSOs in Africa. According to the April the 30th 2019 Joint Staff Working Document Joint Action Plan Implementing the Civilian CSDP Compact, the European External Action Service will continue to include civilian CSDP in the different formats for dialogue and cooperation with partner countries and organisations, EU/UN in particular, also in close cooperation with the African Union in light of civilian missions in Africa.

In light of all this, with the aim of creating a Transversal Identification of the European Continental Interest, mapping the Africa-EU Partnership’s criticalities, overlaps and redundancies.

An appropriate achievement would be to promote the African Diaspora in Europe, in particular the Second Generations (G2), and attract foreign talent – Qualified Immigration – by means of scholarships framed in a far-sighted Euro-African Intercontinental Exchange Programme. In this way, working on long-term training, European soft-power would be spread at reasonable costs with a high added value and broad temporal spectrum outcomes along with considerable intercultural depth.

In line with the EU Global Strategy, it would be also advantageous for Europe to plan a strategy of greater political, economic and security incisiveness in Africa, upholding international norms and agreements, extending multilateralism to new global realities, and making multilateral organisations fit for purpose. Only a veritable and deep-rooted presence in Africa – in the field – will significantly assist the EU Member States to come out of any present or future domestic economic crisis, while at the same time contributing to support

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77 Soft-power here means a nation-state’s or an international player’s more elusive influence than those provided by hard-power, yet capable of achieving significant strategic outcomes. A peculiar kind of soft-power is that of cultural cooperation.
the financing capacities of African economies in accordance with the following recommendations:

- To address an innovative European policy towards Africa in terms of Co-localization. This means fostering the development of advanced Euro-African industrial partnerships, able to allow the integration of local making capacities by means of production and distribution chains initially regional and then global. The aim is to concentrate the production transformative processes by means of special supply chains, thus determining a proper final product added value, right because made on site.

- To put forward the creation of a Euro-African Foundation for Mutual Growth (EAFMG), in order to gather European and African Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), through which to develop a Strategic Co-Development Vision (SCV), aimed at both the internationalization and delocalization of European Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the relaunching of the intercontinental economic relations,

- To give rise to pioneering Euro-African alliances in key industrial sectors for European and African economies: agriculture\(^{78}\), energy, transport, urban development, consumer goods, digitalization, cultural industries, health, tourism and security.

As part of a wide-ranging policy, aimed at the internationalization and delocalization of European SMEs, so as to link the European economic recovery to the impressive long-standing African growth, the European Union cannot miss the opportunity to seriously take root in the last world economic frontier. In the long term, what is still lacking for Europeans SMEs in Africa is the transit from the mere import-export-trade-approach to the crucial investments-transfer-approach of European resources to Africa, like all other international competitors, such as China for instance, are doing.

\(^{78}\) Africa's agriculture potential is enormous, having the 60% of unused arable land of the world and poor use of what is already cultivated.
In order to defend their continental interests, Africans are expected to soon devise more assertive strategies, negotiating with different partners alternative to the Europeans’. In particular, EPAs, inasmuch not fully representing African industrialization requirements, are seen by the ACPs as restraining economic and political growth tools, disproportionately benefiting the geo-economic European supremacy at the detriment of Africa. Therefore, a European more flexible tactic about the Post-Cotonou 2020 negotiations away from the traditional model of dependency, as perceived by the African counterpart, is to be prioritised, with the well-defined goal of consolidating the AfCFTA. Consequently, before it is too late, it is advisable that the existing EU-African trade agreements may evolve into an *Au-Eu Continent-to-Continent Free Trade Agreement (AuEu-CtC-FTA)*.

It is in the interest of the international community as a whole that Africa rapidly transforms itself from a place of international competition between old and new players, or between former colonial powers and emerging economies, into a field of cooperation. Geopolitically speaking, it would be desirable for Europe to enhance the use of multilateral diplomacy and promote quadrangular cooperation between *Africa, Europe, China* and the *United States*, in order to avert the threat of any head-on collision between the Great Powers in Africa, otherwise conceivable in the decades to come, similarly to what had happened in terms of proxy wars during the Cold War era.

Europe and Africa urge a global alliance and a genuine strategic partnership. Geographic proximity, history, economic, social and human interdependencies, intense cultural ties should drive them towards a common future and destiny. In terms of international security, the determination to fight against the common threat of terrorism can be taken as an opportunity to push the countries of the Sahelo-Saharan region to overcome the impasse determined by long-standing disputes or political conflicts, finding on this specific topic a starting point for a different regional balance. For the purpose of a progressive continental stabilisation, it is opportune to keep supporting, on the *political level*,...
the growth of the African Union role, on the military one, the development of the peace and security initiatives and, finally, on the economic one, the intensification of the regional integration processes.

The dramatic nature of the migrations and the difficult stabilisation of the Sahara and the Sahel make it more and more manifest the continuity of the linear extension uninterruptedly linking Europe to Africa and vice versa. For economic and security reasons, the southern borders of Europe are moving ever farther south, towards Sub-Saharan Africa. In the last ten years, the Middle East state of conflict has opened another front, polarised along the 16th Parallel North, in order to consolidate a terrorist enclave between Mediterranean Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The albeit late reaction to the Sahelian-Saharan crises by the international community is carried out through a number of initiatives at national (States), regional (regional organizations and ad hoc initiatives), continental and global (international and intergovernmental organizations) levels. Hence, the EU is reinforcing its regional approach to the Sahel, with the aim of supporting cross-border and regional cooperation, by enhancing G5 countries national capacities.

The era of the New Scramble for Africa stands out for the proliferation of partnerships with alternative and competitive blocks to the historical consolidated European monopoly. The ghost of the return of European nationalisms, masked by a Controlled Multilateralism by some of the EU Member States as well as by the Chinese Simulated Multilateralism, risk undermining the establishment of a continental political integration process, compromising both state sovereignty and the overall African negotiating capacity in the international arena.

For the EU, planning a strategy of greater political and economic incisiveness in Africa will be helpful in relieving the recession that Europe is facing. Brussels has to enhance the opportunities coming from Africa, by taking the initiative, to actively contribute to the design of an effective New Euro-African Geopolitics with a longer-term politically oriented strategy, through a win-win co-development methodology, for which the migrations flows will
be reciprocal and managed and the Mediterranean will recover its hitherto exhausted centrality.

In conclusion, Africa represents a significant development potential with an added value in terms of political weight and geographic proximity to Europe, without equal to any other interlocutor with comparable characteristics. In this sense, the gradual politically, militarily and economically stabilization of Africa should be priority number one, at bilateral and multilateral levels for the European Union and its Member States.

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References


