



# THE AFRICA-EUROPE **NEXUS**

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# Mutual Prosperity: The Africa - Europe Nexus

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### I. INTRODUCTION

#### CONTEXT AND IMPORTANCE

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##### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HISTORICAL TIES BETWEEN AFRICA AND EUROPE.

The relationship between Africa and Europe is deeply rooted in history, shaped by centuries of complex interactions that have left a lasting impact on both continents. The ties between the two regions are characterised by a mixture of cooperation and conflict, with significant influence on political, economic, and cultural developments.

##### **Early Interactions and Colonialism**

The early connections between Africa and Europe can be traced back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century when European explorers first ventured into Africa. This period marked the beginning of European exploration and expansion, driven largely by the desire for new trade routes, resources, and territories. The Portuguese were among the first to establish trading posts along the West African coast, followed by other European powers such as Spain, the Netherlands, Britain, and France.

These early interactions laid the groundwork for the transatlantic slave trade, a dark chapter in Africa-Europe relations that saw millions of Africans forcibly transported to the Americas as slaves. The slave trade not only devastated African societies but also fuelled economic growth in Europe, particularly in the colonial powers involved in the trade.

As European powers expanded their influence in Africa, the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the scramble for Africa, a period during which European nations divided the continent among themselves at the Berlin Conference of 1884 -1885. This event marked the formal beginning of European colonization in Africa, leading to the establishment of colonial administrations across the continent. European powers exploited Africa's vast natural resources, imposing their own economic systems, governance structures, and cultural norms on the colonized populations.

##### **Post-Colonial Era and the Evolution of Africa-Europe Relations**

In the mid-20th century, we witnessed the wave of decolonization that swept across Africa, as nations gained independence from European colonial rule. This period marked a significant shift in Africa-Europe relations, transitioning from colonial domination to new forms of cooperation and partnership. However, the legacy of colonization, including economic dependency, political instability, and social fragmentation, continued to shape the interactions between Africa and Europe.

In the post-colonial era, the relationship between Africa and Europe evolved within the framework of formal agreements and cooperation initiatives. The formation of the *European Economic Community (EEC)* in 1957, which later became the *European Union (EU)*, provided a platform for structured engagement with Africa. The *Yaoundé Conventions*, signed in 1963 and 1969, were among the first agreements to formalize trade and aid relationships between

the EEC and former European colonies in Africa. These agreements offered preferential access to European markets for African goods and provided financial assistance for development projects.

The *Lomé Conventions*, which replaced the *Yaoundé Conventions* in 1975, marked a significant deepening of Africa-Europe relations. The Lomé framework extended trade preferences, development aid, and financial support to African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, including the majority of African nations. The conventions aimed to promote economic development and reduce poverty in ACP countries while strengthening political and economic ties with Europe. The *Lomé Conventions* were renewed four times (Lomé I-IV) before being replaced by the *Cotonou Agreement* in 2000.

### **The establishment of the African Union**

The *Organization of African Unity* (OAU) was founded on May 25, 1963, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Its primary goals were to promote unity and solidarity among African states, fight colonialism, and protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its member states. In the late 1990s growing criticism of the OAU's limited effectiveness in resolving conflicts and addressing human rights abuses led to discussions about the need for reform and a more robust continental organization.

The Constitutive Act of the *African Union* was adopted at the *Lomé Summit* in Togo in July 2000. This act outlined the objectives of the AU, focusing on peace, security, economic integration, and the promotion of democratic governance. The *African Union* (AU) was officially launched in Durban, South Africa, on July 9, 2002, replacing the OAU. The AU was designed to be more proactive, with institutions like the *Peace and Security Council* (PSC) and the *Pan-African Parliament* to support its goals of conflict prevention, economic development, and integration.

The *African Continental Free Trade Area* (AfCFTA) agreement was signed by 44 African countries on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda. The AfCFTA creates a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of businesspersons and investments, accelerating economic integration and boosting intra-African trade. The AfCFTA officially commenced trading on January 1, 2021, marking a significant step towards economic integration across Africa. The AfCFTA is one of the AU's flagship initiatives under its *Agenda 2063*, which envisions a prosperous and integrated Africa.

### **The Cotonou Agreement and the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership**

The *Cotonou Agreement*, signed in 2000, represents a comprehensive framework for cooperation between the EU and ACP countries, focusing on Africa. The agreement emphasizes development cooperation, economic integration, and political dialogue as key pillars of the partnership. It seeks to address global challenges such as poverty, inequality, and governance while promoting sustainable development and regional integration in Africa. The *Cotonou Agreement* also introduced new elements of political cooperation, including promoting human rights, democracy, and good governance.

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Building on the *Cotonou Agreement*, the *Africa-EU Strategic Partnership* was launched in 2007 as a more focused effort to strengthen ties between Africa and the EU. The partnership is based on mutual interests and shared values, to address common challenges and opportunities. It encompasses various areas of cooperation, including peace and security, economic growth, sustainable development, and human development. The *Africa-EU Strategic Partnership* is underpinned by regular summits and dialogues between African and European leaders, ensuring that the relationship remains dynamic and responsive to evolving global contexts.

### Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities

Today, Africa and Europe are connected by a relationship that is multifaceted and complex, characterized by both historical legacies and contemporary challenges. The two regions continue to work together to address pressing global issues such as climate change, migration, and economic development. The EU, and other European countries, remain key partners for Africa in terms of trade, investment, and development aid, while Africa's growing economic and demographic significance offers new opportunities for deeper collaboration.

However, the relationship is not without its challenges. Issues such as economic inequality, migration management, and the need for more equitable trade arrangements continue to strain African-Europe relations. Both regions recognize the need to move beyond the traditional donor-recipient dynamic and to foster a partnership based on mutual respect, shared goals, and joint responsibility.

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### SIGNIFICANCE OF AFRICA-EUROPE RELATIONS IN THE CURRENT GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL LANDSCAPE.

Africa-Europe relations hold significant importance in today's global geopolitical landscape, shaped by evolving economic dynamics, shifting power structures, and shared global challenges. The partnership between the AU and the EU is not only rooted in historical ties but is also increasingly defined by mutual interests in economic development, security, and addressing global issues such as climate change and migration.

### Economic Interdependence and Growth

The economic relationship between Africa and Europe is a cornerstone of their partnership, with the EU remaining Africa's largest trading partner, accounting for approximately **28%** of the continent's total trade in 2023. In monetary terms, Africa exported goods worth over **€145 billion** to the EU, primarily consisting of raw materials, energy resources, and agricultural products. These exports are crucial for the EU's industries, particularly in sectors like energy and agriculture.

Conversely, the EU exported over **€185 billion** worth of goods and services to Africa in the same year, including manufactured goods, machinery, pharmaceuticals, and vehicles. The *Economic Partnership Agreements* (EPAs) have facilitated this trade, enabling countries like Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to significantly increase their exports of processed goods, such as cocoa, which have risen by over **30%** in recent years. This has enhanced local value creation, supported job growth, and contributed to economic diversification within these nations.

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The *African Continental Free Trade Area* (AfCFTA), now operational, is expected to increase intra-African trade by more than **50%** by 2030, making the continent an even more attractive destination for investment. This integration aligns with the EU's strategy to forge economic partnerships that can help address its challenges, such as an ageing population and the need for new markets. The *EU's Global Gateway Investment Package*, aiming to mobilize **€150 billion** for Africa by 2030, underscores the critical importance of this interdependence in ensuring mutual growth and stability.

### Political Interdependencies

A balanced AU-EU partnership is essential for ensuring peace and security in both regions. This relationship is built on mutual interests and shared responsibilities. While the EU has allocated over **€8 billion** to peacekeeping, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa since 2004, African nations play a critical role in these efforts, contributing local knowledge, leadership, and personnel to stabilize regions such as the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. These collaborative efforts help mitigate the risks of conflict spilling over into Europe and address the root causes of migration.

Africa's commitment to good governance, democracy, and human rights is equally vital in this partnership. Many African countries have made significant strides in governance reforms, supported by the EU, which facilitates a stable environment conducive to investment and development. This cooperation is not one-sided; African nations, through regional organizations like the *African Union*, actively engage in promoting these values across the continent, thereby contributing to global governance.

Furthermore, the AU and the EU collaborate in multilateral forums such as the *United Nations* and *World Trade Organization* to shape global policies. This coordination amplifies their collective influence, allowing both regions to advocate for common interests, such as sustainable development and fair-trade practices. This balanced partnership highlights the importance of mutual respect and shared goals in enhancing global governance.

### Strategic Security Partnership

Security cooperation remains a critical dimension of AU-EU relations, particularly as both regions face challenges such as terrorism, civil conflict, and organized crime. The EU has supported peacekeeping missions and conflict resolution efforts in regions like the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. The stability of Africa is crucial not only for regional security but also for managing migration flows to Europe. In 2023 alone, irregular migration from Africa to Europe surged, with over **200,000** migrants crossing the Mediterranean. The EU's approach, therefore, focuses on addressing the root causes of instability, such as poverty and political corruption, to reduce these migration pressures.

### Climate Change and Sustainable Development

Africa's vulnerability to climate change poses a significant challenge to its development. Although Africa contributes only about **3%** to global greenhouse gas emissions, it faces disproportionate impacts, such as extreme weather events and food insecurity. The EU has committed to supporting Africa through initiatives like the *European Green Deal* and the



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*Global Gateway*, which aim to increase Africa's renewable energy capacity from **56 GW** in 2023 by a further **300 GW** by 2030 and improve the livelihoods of **65 million people** by enhancing climate resilience. The EU has been actively supporting various projects across Africa aimed at building resilience, including through the *Africa-Europe Green Energy Initiative*, which focuses on sustainable agriculture, water management, and biodiversity. However, challenges remain, particularly in aligning these efforts with local needs and ensuring that the benefits reach the most vulnerable populations.

### Geopolitical Influence and Multilateralism

In a multipolar world with the rising influence of powers like China and India, the Africa-EU partnership is strategically vital. In multilateral forums, the alliance strengthens their collective influence, allowing Africa to leverage EU support to advocate for its interests globally, while the EU could benefit from Africa's significant voting bloc (**54** countries) in international organizations. Progress towards the 2030 goals, including the ambitious renewable energy targets, shows promise but faces challenges that require continued cooperation and investment. Politically, the partnership enhances peace and security, with both regions collaborating on governance reforms and conflict resolution.

### Migration and Human Development

Migration remains a pivotal issue in Africa-EU relations. In 2023, Europe continued to be a major destination for African migrants, with over 1 million new migrants recorded. The EU's strategy increasingly focuses on creating economic opportunities in Africa to address the root causes of migration, such as economic hardship and conflict. Through initiatives like the *Africa-EU Migration Partnership*, the EU has invested in education, healthcare, and job creation to improve living conditions in Africa and reduce the push factors driving migration.

### Social and Cultural Interdependencies

Educational initiatives, such as scholarships, exchange programs, and capacity-building projects, strengthen ties between Africa and the EU. These programs not only enhance the skills of African students and professionals but also foster mutual understanding and long-term partnerships. Cultural exchanges, through arts, music, and literature, further deepen these connections, enhancing the EU's soft power in Africa while promoting African cultures in Europe.

## II. ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE

### TRADE AND INVESTMENT

#### IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA AS A MARKET FOR EU GOODS AND SERVICES.

Africa represents a rapidly growing and crucial market for the EU, offering substantial opportunities across various sectors due to its economic growth, urbanization, and expanding middle class. As Africa's demand for goods and services increases, it becomes an essential destination for European exports. At the same time, the EU plays a vital role in Africa's development through investments, technology transfer, and infrastructure projects, which enhance the continent's economic resilience and growth. This mutually beneficial relationship underscores the strategic importance of strengthening the Africa-Europe partnership to address global challenges and promote shared prosperity.

#### 1. Demographic and Economic Growth

Africa is home to over **1.4 billion people**, with a population that is expected to double by 2050. This demographic boom, coupled with rising incomes and the expansion of the middle class, is driving increased consumption across the continent. The African middle class, which is projected to reach **1.1 billion by 2060**, is increasingly demanding higher-quality goods and services, ranging from consumer products to healthcare, education, and technology. This growing consumer base offers the EU a vast and expanding market for its goods and services, making Africa an essential partner in the EU's economic strategy.

#### 2. Demand for Quality and Innovation

As African economies continue to develop, there is a growing demand for high-quality, innovative products that can meet the needs of an evolving consumer base. European companies are well-positioned to meet this demand, given their expertise in manufacturing, technology, and design. From automobiles and machinery to pharmaceuticals and luxury goods, European products are often seen as synonymous with quality, reliability, and innovation. This perception gives EU companies a competitive edge in African markets, where consumers and businesses alike are seeking products that can deliver value and performance.

#### 3. Infrastructure and Urbanization

Africa's rapid urbanization is another key factor driving demand for EU goods and services. As more people move to cities, there is a growing need for infrastructure development, including transportation, energy, and telecommunications. European companies are major players in these sectors, offering expertise in building and maintaining the infrastructure necessary to support Africa's urban growth. The EU's investment in African infrastructure not only helps to meet the continent's development needs but also creates a market for European goods and services in sectors such as construction, engineering, and energy.

### 4. Market for Services

Beyond physical goods, Africa is also a significant market for European services, particularly in areas such as finance, education, and healthcare. The continent's financial services sector is expanding rapidly, driven by the rise of mobile banking and financial inclusion initiatives. European banks and financial institutions are increasingly looking to Africa as a growth market, offering services that range from commercial banking to insurance and investment products. Similarly, the demand for education and healthcare services is growing, with African students and patients seeking high-quality options, often provided by European institutions.

### 5. Mutual Benefits and Economic Partnership

The EU's engagement with Africa as a market for its goods and services is not just beneficial for Europe; it also plays a crucial role in Africa's development. European investments in African industries, infrastructure, and services contribute to job creation, technology transfer, and capacity building, which are essential for the continent's economic growth. By supplying goods and services that meet the needs of African consumers and businesses, the EU helps to foster sustainable development across the continent, thereby reinforcing the mutual benefits of the Africa-EU partnership.

### 6. Strategic Importance in Global Trade

In the context of global trade, Africa's significance as a market for EU goods and services is set to increase. The *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*, which aims to create a single market across Africa, will further enhance trade opportunities between Africa and the EU. By reducing trade barriers and facilitating the movement of goods and services, AfCFTA will make it easier for European companies to enter and expand within African markets. This strategic integration offers the EU a unique opportunity to strengthen its economic ties with Africa, ensuring that European companies remain competitive in a rapidly changing global landscape.

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EU AS AFRICA'S LARGEST TRADING PARTNER; KEY SECTORS (E.G., ENERGY, AGRICULTURE, RAW MATERIALS).

The EU holds a prominent position as Africa's largest trading partner, reflecting deep-rooted economic ties that span several key sectors. This partnership is central to the economic development of both regions, with trade in energy, agriculture, and raw materials forming the backbone of their economic exchanges. The relationship is not only significant in terms of volume but also in its strategic importance for sustainable development and global economic stability.

#### 1. Trade Dynamics and Economic Significance

As of recent years, the EU accounts for roughly 30% of Africa's total trade, making it the continent's largest trading partner. This trade relationship is characterized by a significant exchange of goods, with Africa exporting a variety of raw materials and agricultural products to Europe while importing machinery, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and other manufactured goods from the EU. The reciprocal nature of this trade supports economic growth on both

continents, with the EU benefiting from access to Africa's rich resources and Africa gaining from Europe's industrial and technological capabilities.

### 2. Key Sector: Energy

The energy sector is a cornerstone of Africa-EU trade relations. Africa is rich in energy resources, including oil, natural gas, and increasingly, renewable energy potential. North African countries like Algeria and Libya are significant suppliers of natural gas to Europe, contributing to around **20%** of the EU's natural gas imports. This supply is vital for diversifying the EU's energy sources and enhancing its energy security. The focus has increasingly shifted towards renewable energy, where Africa's potential is immense. The EU is investing heavily in renewable energy projects across the continent, particularly in harnessing solar power from the Sahara region. For instance, the *Desertec* project aims to generate up to **20 GW** of solar energy by 2030, potentially powering both African and European grids. These investments are crucial as the EU seeks to reduce its carbon footprint and transition to a more sustainable energy model, aligning with its goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

### 3. Key Sector: Agriculture

Agriculture remains a crucial component of Africa-Europe trade, with significant flows of agricultural products between the two regions. In 2023, Africa's agricultural exports to the EU were valued at approximately **€24 billion**, with key products including coffee, cocoa, fruits, and vegetables. These exports are vital for African economies, supporting the livelihoods of over **33 million** smallholder farmers and contributing significantly to rural development. In return, the EU exported around **€12 billion** worth of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and processed foods to Africa, playing a critical role in modernizing the continent's agricultural sector and enhancing productivity. The EU's *Common Agricultural Policy* (CAP) influences this trade by shaping market access and offering trade preferences for African agricultural products, which helps to stabilize prices and secure income for African producers.

Recent initiatives under the *Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs* are also supporting agri-businesses in Africa, aiming to increase value addition and boost local food production, further integrating African agricultural markets with European supply chains.

### 4. Key Sector: Raw Materials

Africa is a vital supplier of raw materials to the EU, particularly minerals and metals critical for European industries. The continent is rich in resources like cobalt, platinum, and rare earth elements, which are essential for the production of high-tech products, including electronics, electric vehicle batteries, and renewable energy technologies. Notably, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) supplies over **70%** of the world's **cobalt**, a mineral crucial for lithium-ion batteries, which are central to the EU's green energy transition and electric vehicle industry. In 2023, the EU imported over **€3 billion** worth of cobalt from the DRC alone, highlighting the significance of this supply chain for maintaining the EU's competitive edge in global markets. Additionally, Africa's exports of **platinum**, mainly from South Africa, accounted for **60%** of the EU's platinum imports, essential for industries like automotive manufacturing and electronics.

Beyond minerals, Africa is also a key supplier of crude oil to the EU, with Nigeria and Angola together providing around **10%** of the EU's crude oil imports in 2023. These raw materials are fundamental not only to the EU's energy security but also to its industrial processes, underscoring the strategic importance of Africa as a reliable supplier.

### 5. Sustainable Development and Future Prospects

The EU's trade relationship with Africa is increasingly focused on sustainability and value addition. There is a growing emphasis on not just extracting raw materials but also supporting the development of local industries in Africa. By investing in value-added processing and manufacturing in Africa, the EU aims to help African countries move up the value chain, creating jobs and fostering economic diversification. This approach is aligned with the *African Union's Agenda 2063*, which seeks to transform Africa's economies through industrialization and sustainable development.

Looking ahead, the *African Continental Free Trade Area* (AfCFTA) presents new opportunities for enhancing AU-EU trade relations. The AfCFTA aims to create a single market across Africa, facilitating intra-African trade and making the continent a more attractive destination for EU investment. The EU is likely to play a significant role in supporting the AfCFTA's implementation, given its interest in a stable and prosperous African market.

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### INVESTMENT FLOWS FROM THE EU INTO AFRICAN INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRIES.

Investment flows from the EU into African infrastructure and industries have been a critical driver of economic development across the continent. The EU, as Africa's largest trading partner and a key source of foreign direct investment (FDI), **€30 billion in 2023**, plays a pivotal role in enhancing Africa's economic prospects. These investments are strategically directed towards sectors that are crucial for sustainable development, including infrastructure, energy, manufacturing, and technology, helping to address the continent's developmental challenges while fostering mutual growth. African FDI in the EU was estimated to be around **€5 billion in 2023**.

#### 1. Infrastructure Development

The EU has made significant investments in African infrastructure, recognizing its foundational role in economic development. Infrastructure is essential for connecting markets, facilitating trade, and improving access to essential services like electricity, water, and transportation. The EU's support for infrastructure projects in Africa is channelled through various initiatives and financial instruments, including the *European Investment Bank (EIB)*, the *European Development Fund (EDF)*, and the *Africa Investment Facility (AIF)*.

- **Transportation Networks:** One of the most critical areas of EU investment in Africa is transportation infrastructure. The EU has funded numerous projects aimed at improving road, rail, and port infrastructure across the continent. For instance, the EU has supported the construction of the *Nairobi-Mombasa Highway* in Kenya, a vital corridor for East African trade. Improved transportation networks facilitate regional integration and boost trade, which is essential for economic growth and development.

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- **Energy Infrastructure:** The EU has also prioritized investments in Africa's energy infrastructure, focusing on both traditional and renewable energy sources. This includes funding for solar and wind energy projects in *North Africa* and the *Sahel region*, where the potential for renewable energy is immense. These projects not only help to meet Africa's growing energy demands but also align with the EU's commitment to supporting the global transition to sustainable energy. The EU's partnership with Africa in the energy sector is crucial for enhancing energy access, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting industrialization.
- **Urban Development:** With Africa's urban population expected to double by 2050, the EU has invested in urban development projects that address the challenges of rapid urbanization. This includes investments in affordable housing, urban transport systems, and water and sanitation facilities. These projects, such as the *Addis Ababa Light Rail Transit (AALRT)* project in Ethiopia are designed to improve the quality of life in Africa's rapidly growing cities while also contributing to sustainable urban development.

### 2. Industrial Investments

The EU's investments in African industries are crucial for driving economic diversification, creating jobs, and fostering innovation. European companies are increasingly investing in African manufacturing, agriculture, and technology sectors, contributing to the continent's industrialization efforts.

- **Manufacturing and Industrial Parks:** The EU has supported the development of industrial parks and special economic zones (*SEZs*) across Africa. These zones provide an attractive environment for manufacturing, offering tax incentives, improved infrastructure, and streamlined regulatory processes. The *Hawassa Industrial Park* in Ethiopia, supported by the EU, has created over 25,000 jobs and attracted significant foreign investment in the textile industry. The EU's involvement in these projects helps to attract European companies to set up manufacturing facilities in Africa, thereby creating jobs and transferring technology and skills.
- **Agribusiness:** Agriculture remains a vital sector for African economies, and the EU has been a significant investor in agribusiness projects. These investments are aimed at improving agricultural productivity, promoting value-added processing, and enhancing food security. For example, the EU-funded *Sustainable Cocoa Initiative* in Côte d'Ivoire has boosted farmers' incomes by improving productivity and facilitating access to European markets.
- **Technology and Digital Economy:** The EU has recognized the potential of Africa's digital economy and has invested in technology and innovation hubs across the continent. These investments are aimed at fostering entrepreneurship, supporting startups, and enhancing digital connectivity. The *EU's Digital4Development (D4D)* initiative is a key component of this strategy, promoting digital innovation as a driver of sustainable development in Africa such as *The Kigali Innovation City* in Rwanda which serves as a hub for technology startups and digital innovation.

### 3. Impact and Future Prospects

The impact of EU investments in African infrastructure and industries is profound, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction across the continent. By addressing critical infrastructure gaps and supporting industrial development, these investments help to build a more resilient and diversified African economy. Moreover, the EU's focus on sustainable development ensures that these investments contribute to long-term prosperity while addressing environmental and social challenges.

Looking ahead, the EU's investment flows into Africa are expected to increase, driven by initiatives like the EU's *External Investment Plan (EIP)* and the *EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund*. These programs are designed to mobilize additional private sector investment, leveraging EU funds to support large-scale infrastructure and industrial projects across Africa. As Africa continues to grow and develop, the EU's investments will remain a key pillar of the continent's economic transformation, fostering a partnership that benefits both regions.

## RESOURCE ACCESS AND SUPPLY CHAINS

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AFRICA'S ROLE IN SUPPLYING CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS (E.G., COBALT, LITHIUM) NECESSARY FOR EU INDUSTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN THE GREEN AND DIGITAL TRANSITIONS.

Africa plays a crucial role in supplying Europe with critical raw materials that are essential for the continent's green and digital transitions. As the EU pursues ambitious goals to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and to strengthen its digital economy, the demand for raw materials such as cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements is soaring. These materials are vital for producing electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy technologies, and high-tech products, all of which are central to the EU's sustainability and technological advancement agendas.

### 1. Cobalt: The Backbone of Electric Vehicle Batteries

Cobalt is one of the most important raw materials required for the production of lithium-ion batteries, which power electric vehicles and various consumer electronics. Africa, particularly the *Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*, is the world's leading supplier of cobalt, accounting for more than **70%** of global production in 2023. The DRC's vast reserves are pivotal for meeting the growing global demand for cobalt, which is expected to triple by 2030 as the adoption of electric vehicles accelerates.

For the EU, securing a stable supply of cobalt is critical to its Green Deal objectives, which include reducing greenhouse gas emissions by promoting the adoption of electric vehicles across the continent.

### 2. Lithium: Powering the Renewable Energy Revolution

Lithium is another critical mineral in the EU's green transition, essential for manufacturing batteries used in electric vehicles and energy storage systems. While Africa currently accounts for only about **1%** of global lithium production, compared to regions like South America and

Australia, the continent has significant untapped lithium resources, particularly in countries like Zimbabwe and Namibia. Zimbabwe alone is estimated to hold around **11%** of the world's lithium reserves, positioning it as a potential future leader in the global lithium market.

As global demand for lithium is projected to increase fourfold by 2030, Africa's potential to become a key supplier is becoming increasingly apparent. The EU's strategy to diversify its sources of lithium is driven by the need to secure supplies for its rapidly growing battery manufacturing industry, which is expected to produce over **40 million** batteries annually by 2030 for electric vehicles and renewable energy systems.

### **3. Rare Earth Elements: Enabling High-Tech and Clean Energy**

Rare earth elements (REEs), such as neodymium, dysprosium, and praseodymium, are essential for producing high-performance magnets used in wind turbines, electric vehicles, and various high-tech applications. Africa possesses significant reserves of REEs, particularly in countries like Burundi, South Africa, and Malawi. Burundi, for instance, holds an estimated **6%** of the world's total REE reserves. Although China currently dominates the global supply, controlling approximately **60%** of rare earth production and over **85%** of processing capacity, Africa's resources present an opportunity for the EU to diversify its supply chains and reduce dependency on a single source.

The EU's reliance on REEs is critical for its digital and green transitions, as demand for these materials is expected to increase by **30%** by 2030, driven by the growth of renewable energy and electric vehicle industries. By partnering with African nations to develop rare earth mining and processing capabilities, the EU can ensure a stable supply of these critical materials while supporting sustainable development and economic growth in Africa.

### **4. Challenges and Opportunities**

While Africa's role in supplying critical raw materials is essential for the EU's green and digital transitions, this relationship is not without its challenges. The extraction and processing of these materials often raise environmental and social concerns, including deforestation, pollution, and labour rights issues. The EU, as part of its broader commitment to sustainability and ethical sourcing, is increasingly focused on promoting responsible mining practices in Africa. This includes supporting initiatives that enhance transparency, improve labour conditions, and reduce the environmental impact of mining activities.

Moreover, there is growing recognition of the need for Africa to capture more value from its natural resources. Rather than merely exporting raw materials, African countries are increasingly looking to develop local processing industries that can produce higher-value products. The EU can play a vital role in this process by investing in technology transfer, infrastructure, and capacity building, helping African countries to move up the value chain.



### THE EU'S RELIANCE ON AFRICAN ENERGY RESOURCES, PARTICULARLY RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL (E.G., SOLAR POWER FROM THE SAHEL REGION).

As the EU advances towards its ambitious climate goals, particularly the aim of carbon neutrality by 2050, it increasingly relies on Africa's vast energy resources. While traditional energy sources like oil and natural gas from North Africa have long been crucial to the EU's energy security, the focus is rapidly shifting toward renewable energy sources. Among these, solar power from the Sahel region stands out as a cornerstone for future EU-Africa energy cooperation.

#### 1. Traditional Energy Resources

Africa has historically been a crucial supplier of oil and natural gas to the EU, with countries like Algeria, Libya, and Nigeria playing pivotal roles. Algeria alone supplied approximately **8%** of the EU's natural gas in 2022, mainly through pipelines such as the *Trans-Mediterranean (TransMed)* and *Medgaz* pipelines, which connect directly to Southern Europe. Libya and Nigeria together provided about **12%** of the EU's crude oil imports in the same year, highlighting the strategic importance of Africa's traditional energy resources for maintaining EU energy security.

However, the global push towards reducing carbon emissions and the *EU's Green Deal*, which aims to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, have led to a decreasing reliance on fossil fuels. This transition marks a significant shift towards sustainable energy sources, with Africa's vast renewable energy potential—particularly in solar and wind—becoming increasingly vital to the EU's energy strategy.

#### 2. Solar Power from the Sahel Region

The Sahel region, spanning countries such as Mali, Niger, and Chad, has some of the highest solar irradiance levels globally, making it an ideal location for large-scale solar energy projects. This geographical advantage positions the Sahel as a key area for renewable energy development. The EU recognizes this potential and is actively investing in initiatives to harness solar power from the region.

One of the most significant projects is the *Desert to Power* initiative, supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and European partners. This ambitious program aims to transform the Sahel into a major producer of solar energy, with a target of generating up to **10 GW** of solar power by 2030. This capacity is projected to provide electricity to over **250 million people** in Africa, significantly improving energy access across the region. Additionally, the project includes the potential to export surplus energy to Europe, aligning with the EU's strategy to secure a diversified, sustainable energy supply while supporting Africa's development goals.

#### 3. Wind and Hydropower

Beyond solar energy, Africa also offers significant potential in wind and hydropower, particularly in regions like North Africa and East Africa. Morocco has emerged as a leader in wind energy development, with projects such as the *Tarfaya Wind Farm*, which, at 300 MW,

is one of the largest in Africa. Supported by European investments, including from companies like Siemens Gamesa, these projects are helping to grow Africa's renewable energy sector, contributing to the EU's broader energy transition goals.

Hydropower is another critical resource, with large-scale projects like the *Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)* exemplifying Africa's capacity to generate renewable energy. GERD, with a planned capacity of 6,450 MW, is set to be the largest hydropower plant in Africa and one of the largest in the world. While the primary focus of GERD is to meet Ethiopia's domestic energy needs, it also holds the potential for future energy exports to neighbouring countries and possibly Europe, especially as intercontinental energy infrastructure, such as the proposed *Mediterranean Power Pool*, develops. These initiatives underscore Africa's role as a growing contributor to global renewable energy supplies, with significant implications for both African development and the EU's energy security.

#### 4. Strategic Importance for the EU

The EU's reliance on African renewable energy resources is strategic, serving multiple objectives. First, it diversifies the EU's energy sources, reducing dependence on fossil fuels and on energy imports from less stable regions. Second, it supports the EU's climate goals by ensuring that a greater share of its energy consumption comes from renewable sources. Third, by investing in African renewable energy projects, the EU helps stimulate economic development in African countries, creating a win-win situation that fosters long-term economic and political stability in the region.

Moreover, this partnership in renewable energy reflects broader geopolitical considerations. As the EU seeks to secure its energy future in a rapidly changing global landscape, Africa's renewable energy potential becomes a critical component of a resilient and sustainable energy strategy. This partnership also positions the EU as a global leader in the green transition, leveraging Africa's natural resources to meet the demands of a low-carbon economy.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

### HOW AFRICA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH CAN BENEFIT EUROPE THROUGH EXPANDED MARKETS AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Africa's economic growth presents significant opportunities for the EU, offering a range of benefits through expanded markets and increased investment opportunities. As Africa experiences rapid economic transformation, driven by factors such as urbanization, a growing middle class, and improved governance, the continent is emerging as a vital economic partner for Europe. The EU can leverage this growth to enhance its economic prospects, secure strategic resources, and foster long-term partnerships.

#### 1. Expanding Markets for European Goods and Services

Africa's economic growth translates into a larger and more affluent consumer base, which is increasingly demanding higher-quality goods and services. With a population of over **1.4 billion** and a rapidly expanding middle class, Africa represents a substantial market for

European companies. As incomes rise and consumer preferences evolve, there is growing demand for a wide range of products, including automobiles, electronics, healthcare services, and luxury goods—sectors in which European companies are global leaders.

For instance, European automotive manufacturers such as *Volkswagen* and *Peugeot* have expanded their operations in Africa, recognizing the continent's potential as a growing market for vehicles. Similarly, European technology firms are increasingly targeting African markets, offering everything from consumer electronics to digital services that cater to the continent's tech-savvy youth population. The expansion of these markets offers European businesses new revenue streams and opportunities for growth, particularly as demand in other global markets matures or slows.

### 2. Opportunities for Investment and Industrial Development

Africa's need for infrastructure development, industrialization, and technological advancement presents a wide array of investment opportunities for European companies. The EU can play a key role in supporting Africa's economic transformation by investing in critical sectors such as manufacturing, energy, and technology.

- **Manufacturing:** Africa's push towards industrialization offers European companies opportunities to invest in manufacturing facilities across the continent. By setting up production plants in Africa, European firms can benefit from lower labour costs, proximity to raw materials, and access to growing local markets. This not only supports Africa's economic diversification but also allows European companies to optimize their global supply chains.
- **Energy:** With Africa's abundant natural resources and renewable energy potential, there are significant opportunities for European investment in the energy sector. European companies can invest in renewable energy projects, such as solar and wind farms, that help meet Africa's growing energy demands while also contributing to the EU's own energy security and sustainability goals.
- **Technology and Innovation:** Africa's burgeoning technology sector, exemplified by the rise of tech hubs in cities like Nairobi, Lagos, and Cape Town, offers fertile ground for European investment. By partnering with African startups and tech companies, European investors can gain early access to innovative solutions tailored to the unique challenges of the African market, such as mobile banking and digital health services. These investments not only drive growth in Africa but also generate returns for European investors and foster innovation that can be scaled globally.

### 3. Strategic Resource Access and Supply Chain Diversification

Africa is rich in natural resources that are critical for the EU's industrial and technological sectors. As the EU seeks to secure strategic resources for its green and digital transitions, Africa's role as a supplier of key raw materials, such as cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements, becomes increasingly important. By investing in and securing long-term partnerships with African resource-rich countries, the EU can diversify its supply chains and reduce dependency on a limited number of global suppliers.

For example, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the world's largest producer of cobalt, a mineral essential for manufacturing batteries used in electric vehicles. As the EU accelerates its transition to electric mobility, securing a stable supply of cobalt from Africa is crucial for European automotive and technology industries. Investing in African mining projects and processing facilities also supports the development of local economies, creating a win-win scenario for both regions.

#### 4. Strengthening Political and Economic Alliances

Investing in Africa's economic growth fosters stronger political and economic alliances between the European and African nations. These partnerships are essential for addressing global challenges such as climate change, migration, and security. By supporting Africa's development, the EU not only enhances its economic prospects but also contributes to global stability and sustainability.

Moreover, as Africa continues to integrate economically through initiatives like the *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*, the continent's collective bargaining power in global trade negotiations will increase. By aligning with Africa's economic growth trajectory, the EU can strengthen its influence in multilateral forums and ensure that its interests are represented in global economic governance.

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### THE ROLE OF THE EU IN SUPPORTING AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS, SUCH AS THROUGH THE EU-AFRICA PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES.

The EU plays a pivotal role in supporting Africa's development goals, particularly through its comprehensive *EU-Africa partnership initiatives*. These partnerships are designed to address a wide range of challenges, including economic development, peace and security, environmental sustainability, and social progress. By leveraging its resources, expertise, and diplomatic influence, the EU has established itself as a key partner in Africa's journey towards achieving its development aspirations.

#### 1. Economic Development and Trade

One of the cornerstone objectives of the *EU-Africa partnership* is to promote economic development across the continent. The EU has been instrumental in fostering trade and investment between Europe and Africa, providing African countries with access to European markets through initiatives like the *Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)*. These agreements are designed to promote trade liberalization, enhance market access for African goods, and support regional integration within Africa.

Moreover, the EU supports Africa's economic diversification efforts through investment in infrastructure, industry, and the digital economy. The *European Investment Bank (EIB)* has been a key player in financing large-scale infrastructure projects, such as roads, ports, and energy systems, which are crucial for facilitating trade and boosting economic growth. The EU's *External Investment Plan (EIP)* also mobilizes private investment in sectors critical to Africa's sustainable development, including agriculture, renewable energy, and digitalization.

### 2. Peace and Security

The EU is deeply committed to enhancing peace and security in Africa, recognizing that stability is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Through the *African Peace Facility (APF)*, the EU provides financial support to African-led peacekeeping missions, conflict prevention initiatives, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. The APF has funded operations in conflict zones such as the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Central African Republic, helping to stabilize these regions and create conditions for development.

In addition to direct financial support, the EU collaborates with the AU to strengthen Africa's peace and security architecture. This includes capacity-building initiatives aimed at improving the effectiveness of African security forces, enhancing governance, and promoting the rule of law. The EU's involvement in these areas underscores its commitment to helping Africa build sustainable peace and security frameworks.

### 3. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

Environmental sustainability is another critical area where the EU supports Africa's development goals. The EU recognizes that Africa is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and has prioritized partnerships that promote environmental protection and climate resilience. Through initiatives like the *EU-Africa Green Energy Initiative* and the *Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA)*, the EU provides funding and technical assistance to help African countries transition to renewable energy, improve water management, and protect biodiversity.

The EU is also involved in supporting Africa's efforts to achieve the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, particularly those related to environmental sustainability. This includes programs aimed at reducing deforestation, promoting sustainable agriculture, and enhancing disaster risk management. By supporting Africa's green transition, the EU not only contributes to global climate goals but also helps ensure that Africa's development is sustainable and resilient to environmental challenges.

### 4. Social Development and Human Capital

The EU's support for Africa's development goals extends to social sectors such as education, health, and social protection. Recognizing the importance of human capital development, the EU has invested in initiatives that improve access to quality education and vocational training in Africa. Programs such as *Erasmus+* offer African students opportunities to study in Europe, while also fostering academic partnerships between African and European institutions.

In the health sector, the EU has been a key partner in efforts to strengthen healthcare systems and improve access to essential services. This includes support for initiatives that combat diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, as well as programs aimed at improving maternal and child health. The EU's investment in social protection systems also helps to reduce poverty and inequality, ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are widely shared.

### 5. Governance and Human Rights

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The EU's partnership with Africa is also focused on promoting good governance, democracy, and human rights. Through various programs and dialogues, the EU supports African countries in building strong, transparent, and accountable institutions. This includes assistance in conducting free and fair elections, strengthening judicial systems, and combating corruption.

The EU-Africa partnership emphasizes the importance of human rights as a foundation for sustainable development. The EU works with African governments, civil society organizations, and international bodies to promote and protect human rights, including the rights of women, children, and marginalized communities. By supporting governance reforms and human rights initiatives, the EU helps create an enabling environment for sustainable development in Africa.

### III. POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION

#### REGIONAL STABILITY AND SECURITY

THE EU'S INTEREST IN AFRICAN STABILITY IS TO PREVENT CONFLICTS, MANAGE MIGRATION, AND COMBAT TERRORISM.

The EU has a profound interest in ensuring stability across Africa, recognizing that the continent's security and stability are closely linked to its own. Africa's geopolitical significance, coupled with its proximity to Europe, means that instability in African nations can have direct and immediate impacts on European security and well-being. The EU's efforts to prevent conflicts, manage migration, and combat terrorism in Africa are key components of its broader strategy to promote peace, stability, and prosperity both in Africa and Europe.

##### 1. Preventing Conflicts

The EU views the prevention of conflicts in Africa as essential to maintaining regional and global stability. Many African regions, including the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes, have been plagued by long-standing conflicts, often exacerbated by ethnic tensions, competition for resources, and weak governance structures. These conflicts can spill over into neighbouring regions, leading to broader instability that affects both Africa and Europe.

To address these issues, the EU has been actively involved in peacekeeping and conflict prevention initiatives across the continent. The EU supports African-led peacekeeping missions through the *African Peace Facility (APF)*, providing financial, logistical, and technical assistance. For example, the EU has funded the *African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)*, which aims to stabilize Somalia and combat the Al-Shabaab insurgency. Additionally, the EU engages in diplomatic efforts to mediate conflicts and support post-conflict reconstruction, helping to build lasting peace and stability in conflict-affected areas.

##### 2. Managing Migration

Migration is a critical issue in Africa-EU relations, with Europe being a major destination for African migrants. The EU's interest in managing migration flows from Africa is driven by several factors, including the need to control irregular migration, prevent human trafficking, and integrate migrants into European societies. Instability and conflict in Africa are among the primary drivers of migration, as people flee violence, persecution, and economic hardship in search of safety and better opportunities.

To manage migration effectively, the EU has implemented a range of policies and initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of migration in Africa. The *EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)* is one such initiative, designed to promote economic development, improve governance, and enhance security in African countries, thereby reducing the incentives for people to migrate. The *EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)*, established in 2015, has mobilized over €5 billion (till 2024), financing more than 250 programs across 26 African countries. This initiative has created over 200,000 jobs, supported 3.5 million people with education and vocational training, and assisted more than 80,000 migrants with voluntary

return and reintegration. Additionally, the EU has established migration partnerships with key African countries, focusing on improving border management, facilitating legal migration, and enhancing the protection of refugees and migrants.

The EU also works closely with African countries to combat human trafficking and smuggling networks that exploit vulnerable migrants. By strengthening law enforcement and judicial systems in African countries, the EU aims to dismantle these criminal networks and protect the rights and dignity of migrants.

### 3. Combating Terrorism

Terrorism poses a significant threat to both African and European security, with terrorist groups operating in regions such as the Sahel, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa. Groups like Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab, and various Al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates have not only destabilized parts of Africa but also have the potential to carry out attacks on European soil or radicalize individuals within Europe.

The EU's counter-terrorism strategy in Africa involves a combination of military, diplomatic, and development efforts. Through the *Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)*, the EU deploys military and civilian missions to support African countries in their fight against terrorism. For example, the *EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM)* provides training and advice to Malian armed forces to enhance their ability to combat terrorist groups in the Sahel.

In addition to military support, the EU invests in development programs aimed at addressing the underlying conditions that fuel terrorism, such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of education. By promoting economic development and good governance, the EU seeks to reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies and prevent the recruitment of vulnerable populations into terrorist organizations.

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## AFRICA'S ROLE IN GLOBAL SECURITY, PARTICULARLY IN REGIONS LIKE THE SAHEL AND THE HORN OF AFRICA.

Africa plays a crucial role in global security, with particular emphasis on the regions of the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. These areas are not only significant due to their geographical and strategic locations but also because the security challenges they face have implications far beyond the continent, affecting international peace and stability. Africa's engagement in addressing these challenges is essential for maintaining global security.

### 1. The Sahel: A Critical Zone for Counterterrorism

The Sahel region, which stretches across North and West Africa, has become a focal point for global security efforts due to the rise of terrorism and extremist groups. This vast area, including countries such as Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Chad, has been plagued by the presence of jihadist groups like *Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM)* and the *Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS)*. These groups exploit the region's weak governance, poverty, and lack of infrastructure to establish bases, recruit fighters, and launch attacks.



The instability in the Sahel poses a direct threat to global security. Terrorist activities in this region have the potential to destabilize neighbouring countries, spread violence, and disrupt international trade routes. Moreover, the Sahel is a significant transit route for migrants heading to Europe, and the instability exacerbates migration pressures on European borders.

In response to these threats, African nations, with support from international partners, have taken the lead in counterterrorism efforts. The *G5 Sahel Joint Force*, comprising military units from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, operates in coordination with international forces such as the *French Operation Barkhane* and the *United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)*. These efforts are crucial in containing the spread of terrorism and maintaining regional stability, which in turn contributes to global security.

### 2. The Horn of Africa: Strategic Maritime and Geopolitical Importance

The Horn of Africa, including countries such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti, is a region of significant global security concern. Its strategic location near the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Arabian Peninsula makes it a critical juncture for international maritime trade, essential for the flow of oil and goods between Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. One of the most pressing security issues in the region has been piracy off the coast of Somalia, which at its peak caused billions of dollars in losses and required a coordinated international naval response.

In recent years, the security of these waterways has also been disrupted by the Houthi movement in Yemen, which has carried out attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, further complicating the security landscape. Alongside these maritime threats, the Horn of Africa faces internal conflicts and political instability, particularly in Somalia and Ethiopia's Tigray region. The *African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)*, supported by the *United Nations* and international partners, plays a key role in stabilizing Somalia and combating the Al-Shabaab insurgency. These efforts are crucial for preventing the spread of extremism and ensuring the security of the broader region, which has direct implications for global stability.

### 3. Africa's Broader Role in Global Security

Beyond the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, Africa's contributions to global security are significant, particularly through its participation in peacekeeping missions and conflict resolution. African nations are among the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations, providing approximately **87,000** personnel, which accounts for nearly **28%** of all UN peacekeepers globally. These troops are deployed not only within Africa but also in other conflict zones worldwide, playing a crucial role in maintaining peace and stability in regions affected by conflict.

The AU has increasingly taken the lead in addressing security challenges on the continent. Through initiatives such as the *African Standby Force (ASF)* and the *Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)*, the AU aims to enhance Africa's capacity to manage its own security challenges and respond rapidly to emerging crises. The ASF, which has a mandate to deploy up to **25,000** personnel within **14 days** of a crisis, represents a cornerstone of Africa's security architecture. This African-led approach to security not only strengthens the continent's stability

but also contributes to the global security framework by reducing the need for external interventions.

### GOVERNANCE AND DIPLOMACY

#### EU'S INFLUENCE IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA.

The European Union (EU) has been a significant player in promoting good governance, democracy, and human rights in Africa, reflecting its commitment to these principles as foundational to sustainable development and stability. Through a combination of diplomatic efforts, financial support, and partnership programs, the EU has sought to foster political reforms, strengthen institutions, and uphold human rights across the African continent.

#### 1. Promoting Good Governance

The EU views good governance as essential for political stability, economic growth, and the effective delivery of public services in Africa. To promote governance reforms, the EU engages with African governments through dialogue, technical assistance, and capacity-building programs. One key initiative is the Governance Facility, which provides funding and expertise to support the implementation of governance reforms in areas such as public financial management, anti-corruption, and the rule of law.

The EU also supports regional and continental efforts to promote governance standards in Africa. For example, the EU collaborates with the AU on the *African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*, a self-monitoring initiative designed to encourage member states to adopt policies and practices that lead to political stability, economic growth, and sustainable development. By backing such mechanisms, the EU helps African countries improve governance practices in a way that is locally owned and driven.

#### 2. Supporting Democracy

The EU is a strong advocate for democracy in Africa, believing that democratic governance is vital for peace, stability, and development. The EU supports democratic processes through various initiatives, including electoral assistance, observation missions, and support for civil society organizations.

- ***Electoral Assistance and Observation:*** The EU has provided technical and financial support to electoral processes in numerous African countries, helping to ensure that elections are free, fair, and transparent. The EU's electoral observation missions have been critical in assessing the credibility of elections and providing recommendations for improving electoral integrity. These missions not only contribute to the legitimacy of electoral outcomes but also help build public confidence in democratic processes.
- ***Empowering Civil Society:*** The EU recognizes the importance of civil society in fostering democratic governance. Through programs such as the *European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)*, the EU funds civil society organizations in Africa that work to promote democracy, protect human rights, and hold governments

accountable. By empowering these organizations, the EU helps to create a vibrant civic space that is essential for the functioning of democracy.

### 3. Upholding Human Rights

The promotion and protection of human rights are central to the EU's engagement with Africa. The EU works to uphold human rights through diplomatic advocacy, funding for human rights initiatives, and support for international and regional human rights institutions.

- **Human Rights Dialogues:** The EU conducts regular human rights dialogues with African countries as part of its broader political engagement. These dialogues provide a platform for discussing human rights concerns, sharing best practices, and identifying areas for cooperation. The EU uses these dialogues to address issues such as freedom of expression, the rights of women and children, and the prevention of torture and other forms of ill-treatment.
- **Support for Human Rights Defenders:** The EU provides support to human rights defenders in Africa who are at risk due to their work. Through the *ProtectDefenders.eu* initiative, the EU offers emergency assistance, legal support, and capacity-building to individuals and organizations working to defend human rights. This support is crucial for ensuring that those who fight for human rights can continue their work in safety.
- **Engagement with the African Human Rights System:** The EU also collaborates with the *African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)* and other regional human rights bodies to strengthen the African human rights system. By supporting these institutions, the EU helps to build a robust framework for the protection of human rights across the continent.

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AFRICA AS A KEY PARTNER IN MULTILATERAL FORUMS (E.G., UN, WTO) WHERE COLLECTIVE AFRICA-EU VOICES CAN INFLUENCE GLOBAL POLICIES.

Africa's growing role in multilateral forums such as the *United Nations (UN)* and the *World Trade Organization (WTO)* underscores its importance as a key partner for the EU in influencing global policies. As the world becomes more interconnected and multilateralism increasingly critical for addressing global challenges, the partnership between Africa and the EU in these international arenas is vital. Together, their collective voices can drive significant change in areas such as peace and security, trade, climate action, and sustainable development.

#### 1. United Nations: Advocating for Peace, Security, and Development

At the *United Nations*, Africa's 54 member states form one of the largest regional blocs, making the continent a crucial partner in advancing global initiatives. The EU, with its strong commitment to multilateralism, often aligns its positions with African nations to promote peace, security, and development.

One key area of collaboration has been in peacekeeping and conflict resolution. African countries contribute a significant number of troops to UN peacekeeping missions, particularly in conflict-prone areas like the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, and Central Africa. The EU supports these efforts through financial contributions, training, and logistical support. By working

## Mutual Prosperity: The Africa - Europe Nexus

together, Africa and the EU enhance the effectiveness of UN missions, promoting stability in regions that are critical to both continents.

Moreover, Africa and the EU have jointly advocated for the implementation of the UN's *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*. These goals align closely with the development agendas of both Africa and the EU, focusing on eradicating poverty, improving health and education, promoting gender equality, and addressing climate change. By uniting their efforts, Africa and the EU can influence the global development agenda to ensure that it reflects the needs and priorities of both regions.

Africa is underrepresented on the *United Nations Security Council (UNSC)*, despite being home to 54 countries and facing a significant share of global security challenges. Currently, Africa has only three non-permanent seats on the UNSC, limiting its influence in critical decisions affecting international peace and security. This underrepresentation is partly due to the Council's outdated structure, which reflects the geopolitical realities of the post-World War II era rather than today's global dynamics. To rectify this imbalance, reforming the UNSC to include permanent seats for Africa, as proposed by the *African Union's Ezulwini Consensus*, is essential. Granting Africa at least two permanent seats (with veto power) would ensure that the continent's voice is adequately represented in global security decisions. Additionally, increasing the number of non-permanent seats allocated to Africa would further enhance its ability to contribute to and shape international peace and security efforts.

### **2. World Trade Organization: Shaping a Fair and Inclusive Global Trade System**

In the *World Trade Organization (WTO)*, Africa's collective voice, when aligned with the EU, can significantly impact global trade policies. The WTO is a critical platform for negotiating trade rules that affect economies worldwide, and Africa's increasing participation in global trade makes its involvement essential.

One area of focus has been advocating for trade policies that are fair and inclusive, particularly for developing countries. Africa and the EU have worked together to push for reforms in global trade rules that ensure better access to markets for African products, protect the interests of small-scale producers, and promote sustainable trade practices. This collaboration is crucial for addressing the imbalances that have historically disadvantaged African countries in global trade.

*The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)* is another significant development that enhances Africa's role in global trade. As Africa integrates its markets through AfCFTA, it presents new opportunities for the EU to engage with a more unified and economically powerful Africa. Together, Africa and the EU can leverage their collective influence in the WTO to advocate for trade policies that support economic growth, job creation, and sustainable development on both continents.

### **3. Climate Action and Environmental Protection**

Africa and the EU also collaborate closely in multilateral forums on issues of climate change and environmental protection. Both regions are deeply affected by climate change, and their

partnership in international negotiations, such as the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, is vital for advancing global climate action.

The EU has supported Africa's climate initiatives through financial assistance, technology transfer, and capacity building, helping African countries adapt to climate impacts and transition to renewable energy sources. By presenting a united front in global climate negotiations, Africa and the EU can push for ambitious climate targets and ensure that the needs of developing countries are addressed, particularly in terms of climate finance and adaptation support.

## MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

### THE IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA IN THE EU'S STRATEGY FOR MANAGING MIGRATION FLOW AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF MIGRATION, INCLUDING POVERTY AND INSTABILITY IN AFRICA.

Africa is central to the European Union's strategy for managing migration, given its proximity and significant role in global migration patterns. Migration from Africa to Europe is driven by factors such as economic hardship, political instability, conflict, and environmental challenges. While migration can bring economic and social benefits, the high levels of forced migration due to adverse conditions in Africa present serious challenges. Addressing the root causes, particularly poverty and instability, requires urgent, coordinated efforts involving governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to ensure orderly, safe, and sustainable migration.

#### 1. Addressing Root Causes of Migration

The EU's migration strategy focuses on tackling the root causes that drive people from Africa to Europe, such as poverty, lack of economic opportunities, conflict, and climate change. By investing in development programs aimed at improving living conditions in African countries, the EU seeks to reduce the incentives for irregular migration. Initiatives like the *EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF)* support projects that create jobs, enhance education, and improve access to healthcare, fostering economic stability and reducing migration pressures.

Poverty and instability are major drivers of migration in Africa. Many African nations struggle with persistent poverty, limited economic opportunities, and high unemployment, leading individuals to seek better prospects abroad, often through perilous routes. Instability, fueled by conflict, political violence, and weak governance, exacerbates the crisis by displacing large populations both within and across borders. The combined lack of security and economic prospects pushes many to migrate in search of safety and a better quality of life.

#### 2. Collaborative Approaches to Addressing Migration

To effectively address the root causes of migration, a multi-faceted and collaborative approach is essential. This includes the following key strategies:

### 2.1 Economic Development and Poverty Reduction

**Investment in Sustainable Development:** International and regional bodies, along with national governments, must prioritize investments in sustainable development projects that create jobs, improve infrastructure, and enhance access to education and healthcare. Programs like the *African Union's Agenda 2063* and the *United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* provide frameworks for such initiatives.

**Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs):** SMEs are vital to economic growth and job creation in Africa. Collaborative efforts should focus on providing financial support, training, and market access to entrepreneurs, particularly in rural areas where poverty is most severe.

**Agricultural Development:** As agriculture remains a primary source of income for many Africans, enhancing agricultural productivity through modern techniques, access to markets, and climate-resilient practices can reduce poverty and, by extension, the pressures to migrate.

### 2.2 Strengthening Governance and Political Stability

**Promoting Good Governance:** Strengthening institutions and promoting transparency, accountability, and the rule of law are crucial for political stability. Collaborative efforts should focus on capacity-building for government institutions and supporting civil society organizations that advocate for democratic governance.

**Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding:** International organizations, regional bodies like the African Union, and local governments must collaborate to resolve ongoing conflicts and prevent future violence. This includes supporting peace negotiations, disarmament, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

**Human Rights Protections:** Ensuring the protection of human rights, particularly in conflict zones, is essential to reduce forced migration. Collaborative efforts should include monitoring human rights abuses, providing support to victims, and holding perpetrators accountable.

### 2.3 Enhancing Regional Cooperation

**Regional Integration:** Strengthening economic and political ties within Africa through regional organizations like the *African Union* and the *Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)* can help address migration pressures by fostering economic development and stability.

**Cross-Border Collaboration:** Addressing migration effectively requires cross-border cooperation in areas such as border management, information sharing, and joint development projects. Collaborative efforts should also focus on providing safe and legal migration pathways to reduce the risks associated with irregular migration.

### ***2.4 International Partnerships and Support***

***Global Partnerships:*** The international community has a critical role in supporting Africa's efforts to address migration's root causes. This includes providing financial assistance, technical expertise, and capacity-building support. Partnerships with international financial institutions, donor countries, and multinational organizations are vital for scaling up development and stability initiatives.

***Migration Management:*** Collaborative efforts should also focus on improving migration management systems in both origin and destination countries. This includes enhancing legal migration pathways, protecting migrants' rights, and integrating migration into broader development policies.

### **3. Strengthening Border Management and Security Cooperation**

Another critical aspect of the EU's strategy is strengthening border management and enhancing security cooperation with African countries. The EU collaborates with African governments to improve their capacity to monitor and control their borders, which helps to prevent irregular migration and combat human trafficking networks that exploit vulnerable migrants.

For instance, the EU supports capacity-building initiatives for African border and coast guards, providing training and equipment to better manage migration flows. Additionally, through the EU's partnership with the AU and other regional organizations, joint efforts are made to enhance regional security, which is crucial for controlling migration routes and preventing the spillover of conflicts that drive mass displacement.

### **4. Promoting Legal Migration Pathways**

The EU recognizes that managing migration effectively also involves promoting legal migration pathways. By providing more opportunities for legal migration, the EU can reduce the demand for dangerous and illegal migration routes, which often lead to human rights abuses and loss of life.

The EU has established various programs that facilitate legal migration from Africa to Europe, particularly for skilled workers and students. For example, the EU's *Blue Card scheme* is designed to attract highly skilled workers from non-EU countries, including African nations, by offering favourable conditions for work and residence in EU member states. Similarly, scholarship programs like Erasmus+ enable African students to pursue higher education in Europe, fostering cross-cultural exchange and development.

### **5. Humanitarian Assistance and Protection**

Africa is home to a significant number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) who flee persecution, conflict, and environmental disasters. The EU's migration strategy includes providing humanitarian assistance and protection to these vulnerable populations, both within Africa and in Europe.

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The EU works with international organizations such as the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)* to support refugee camps and provide essential services, including food, shelter, and medical care. By supporting these efforts, the EU helps to ensure that refugees receive the assistance they need close to their countries of origin, which can reduce the pressure on them to undertake dangerous journeys to Europe.



## IV. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

### HISTORICAL TIES AND DIASPORA

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#### THE IMPACT OF HISTORICAL TIES, INCLUDING COLONIAL LEGACIES, ON CURRENT RELATIONS.

The relationship between former colonial powers and their colonies continues to shape global dynamics in profound ways. Historical ties, particularly those forged during the colonial era, have left enduring legacies that influence contemporary political, economic, and cultural relations. These legacies are complex, marked by both cooperation and tension, and they continue to play a significant role in the interactions between countries that were once linked by colonialism. Understanding the impact of these historical ties is crucial for analysing current international relations and addressing the challenges and opportunities they present.

#### **The Colonial Legacy and Its Dimensions**

Colonialism, characterized by the political and economic domination of one nation over another, has left deep scars on the social, economic, and political fabric of former colonies. The colonial legacy can be broadly understood through several dimensions:

##### ***1. Political Legacies:***

*State Formation and Borders:* Many post-colonial states retain borders drawn by colonial powers, often without regard for the ethnic, cultural, or linguistic realities on the ground. These arbitrary borders have contributed to ongoing conflicts, political instability, and difficulties in nation-building. The imposition of colonial administrative systems also influences current governance structures, sometimes contributing to challenges in establishing democratic institutions.

*Governance and Political Systems:* Colonial powers often imposed their governance models, which were not always compatible with local traditions and practices. This has resulted in hybrid political systems in many post-colonial states, where traditional leadership coexists uneasily with modern state institutions. The legacy of authoritarian governance, used by colonizers to maintain control, can also persist, affecting contemporary political culture and governance.

##### ***2. Economic Legacies:***

*Economic Dependency:* Colonial economies were primarily structured to serve the interests of the colonial powers, focusing on the extraction of raw materials and the production of cash crops. This economic model left many former colonies dependent on a narrow range of exports, making them vulnerable to global market fluctuations and limiting their economic diversification. The continued economic dependency on former colonial powers is a significant

issue, particularly in Africa, where many countries still rely heavily on trade relationships established during the colonial era.

*Infrastructure and Development:* The infrastructure developed during the colonial period was often designed to facilitate resource extraction rather than to promote broad-based development. As a result, many post-colonial countries face challenges in building infrastructure that supports sustainable economic growth and social development. Additionally, the concentration of infrastructure in certain regions, often aligned with colonial interests, has contributed to regional inequalities within these countries.

### 3. *Cultural and Social Legacies:*

*Language and Identity:* Language is one of the most enduring cultural legacies of colonialism. Many former colonies retain the language of their colonizers as an official language, which plays a crucial role in education, governance, and international relations. While this can facilitate communication and integration into global markets, it also raises issues of cultural identity and the marginalization of indigenous languages and cultures.

*Education and Knowledge Systems:* Colonial education systems often prioritized the history, culture, and knowledge systems of the colonizers over those of the colonized. This legacy persists in the form of education systems that may not fully reflect or respect indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. The decolonization of education remains a critical issue in many post-colonial societies.

### 4. *Diplomatic and Strategic Relationships:*

*Foreign Policy Orientation:* Historical ties influence the foreign policy orientations of many former colonies. Former colonial powers often remain key allies or partners, shaping diplomatic strategies, military alliances, and international relations. These ties can lead to both cooperation and dependency, with former colonies sometimes finding it challenging to pursue independent foreign policies that diverge from the interests of their former colonizers.

*Development Assistance and Aid:* Former colonial powers often play a significant role in providing development assistance and aid to their former colonies. While these relationships can foster development and cooperation, they can also perpetuate dependency and inequality, as aid may come with conditions that reflect the interests of the donor country rather than the needs of the recipient.

## **Current Relations and the Influence of Colonial Legacies**

The impact of colonial legacies on current relations is multifaceted. On the one hand, shared history and cultural ties can facilitate cooperation, as seen in the *Commonwealth* and the *Francophonie*, where former colonies and colonial powers engage in ongoing dialogue and collaboration. These organizations provide platforms for addressing common challenges, fostering economic ties, and promoting cultural exchange.

On the other hand, colonial legacies also contribute to tensions and conflicts in international relations. Issues of historical injustice, such as demands for reparations, the restitution of

cultural artefacts, and the lingering effects of economic exploitation, continue to complicate relations between former colonies and colonial powers. The perception of neo-colonialism—whereby former colonial powers are seen as continuing to exert control through economic, political, or cultural means—remains a source of resentment and resistance in many post-colonial states.

### Addressing the Legacy of Colonialism

Addressing the colonial legacy requires a concerted effort to acknowledge and redress historical injustices while fostering equitable and respectful relationships. This includes:

1. **Reparative Justice:** Engaging in dialogues about reparations, the return of cultural artifacts, and the recognition of historical wrongs is essential for healing and building more balanced relationships. Reparative justice can take many forms, including financial compensation, apologies, and initiatives that support the cultural and economic development of former colonies.
2. **Decolonization of Knowledge and Culture:** Efforts to decolonize education, governance, and cultural practices are crucial for empowering former colonies to define their identities and futures on their terms. This involves promoting indigenous knowledge systems, languages, and cultural practices, and ensuring they are valued and integrated into national life.
3. **Economic Diversification and Development:** Supporting former colonies in diversifying their economies and reducing dependency on former colonial powers is essential for achieving sustainable development. This can be facilitated through fair trade practices, investment in infrastructure, and the promotion of regional integration within former colonies.
4. **Equitable Partnerships:** Moving beyond colonial legacies requires building partnerships based on mutual respect and equality. Former colonial powers must approach their relationships with former colonies as equals, supporting their development goals without imposing conditions that undermine sovereignty or perpetuate dependency.

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### THE ROLE OF AFRICAN DIASPORA COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE IN SHAPING BILATERAL RELATIONS.

The African diaspora in Europe, estimated at around **9 million people**, plays a critical role in shaping Africa-Europe bilateral relations through their contributions to trade, investment, and cultural exchanges. The largest diaspora communities are in France (5 million), the UK (2.1 million), Italy (1 million), and the Netherlands (500,000). Their **remittances**, totalling approximately **€8.2 billion in 2023**, significantly bolster African economies, supporting education, healthcare, and small businesses, particularly in countries like Nigeria, Morocco, and Egypt. These financial flows often exceed official development assistance.

Diaspora members also facilitate trade and investment between the two continents, often acting as bridges for business partnerships and innovation. They contribute to entrepreneurship, transferring knowledge and technologies to their countries of origin. In addition, their involvement in development initiatives enhances education and infrastructure in Africa.

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Politically, diaspora communities influence bilateral relations through advocacy, diplomatic engagement, and participation in European political life. They lobby for policies that benefit African interests and help foster peacebuilding efforts. Culturally, they promote African heritage through events and media, contributing to cultural diplomacy and mutual understanding between Africa and Europe.

Despite these contributions, the diaspora faces challenges like discrimination and barriers to political participation, which can limit their influence. Nevertheless, their involvement offers significant opportunities to strengthen African-Europe relations.

### CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND EDUCATION

#### IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS.

Educational partnerships, scholarships, and cultural exchange programs are vital for strengthening Africa-EU cooperation. In 2023, the *Africa-EU Partnership* supported more than **200 educational initiatives**, including joint research and academic exchanges. The *Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme*, funded by the EU, has facilitated the mobility of over **2,000 students and staff** between African universities and EU institutions since its inception.

Scholarships are also crucial, with the *Erasmus+ program* offering over **8,000 scholarships** to African students between 2014 and 2020, allowing them to study in Europe. This program enhances access to quality education and fosters global citizenship by exposing African students to diverse cultures and academic environments. In 2023 alone, **€250 million** was allocated to scholarships for African students through EU initiatives.

Cultural exchange programs, such as the *AU-EU Youth Cooperation Hub*, have engaged thousands of young Africans and Europeans in dialogue, training, and exchange projects. These programs help build mutual understanding, with over **1,500 participants** in 2023, contributing to peacebuilding and stronger diplomatic ties between Africa and the EU.

#### HOW CULTURAL CONNECTIONS ENHANCE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND COOPERATION.

Cultural connections between Africa and Europe play a significant role in enhancing mutual understanding and fostering cooperation across multiple sectors. Programs like the *Erasmus+ Exchange* have expanded to include African universities, facilitating thousands of student and faculty exchanges. These exchanges promote cross-cultural understanding and academic collaboration. One notable partnership is between the *University of Ghana* and several European institutions, which has resulted in joint research projects and cultural exchanges, enriching the educational environments on both continents.

The *EU-Africa Festival of Photography and Arts* is another powerful example of cultural connection. Held alternately in Europe and Africa, the 2023 festival in Bamako, Mali, showcased the theme of "*Heritage and Innovation.*" This event highlighted how traditional

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African art forms are preserved while embracing modern expressions, promoting dialogue between African and European artists through exhibitions and collaborative projects.

Media collaborations, such as the *Africa-Europe Radio and Podcasting Partnership*, also enhance cultural understanding. Broadcasters like Deutsche Welle (Germany), Radio France Internationale (France), and African stations such as Radio Nigeria and South Africa's SABC produce joint programs on topics like migration, identity, and youth. These shows foster awareness of shared challenges and encourage deeper understanding between African and European audiences.

Additionally, the EU actively supports African cultural heritage through projects like the restoration of the *Island of Mozambique*, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This initiative combined efforts from local artisans, European conservation experts, and the Mozambican government, helping preserve cultural heritage while boosting tourism and job creation.

Lastly, *EU-Africa Film Festivals*, such as the European Union Film Festival in Nairobi, showcase films from both continents that explore global issues like climate change and migration. These festivals offer audiences the chance to engage with filmmakers, facilitating ongoing cultural exchange and understanding through cinema.

These initiatives exemplify how cultural connections foster deeper cooperation and mutual respect between Africa and Europe, bridging divides and promoting collaboration across academic, artistic, and media platforms.

## V. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE COOPERATION

### CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

SHARED CHALLENGES IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE; AFRICA'S VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE IMPACTS AND THE EU'S NEED FOR GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS TO MEET CLIMATE GOALS.

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges of our time, with impacts that are global in scope but vary significantly across regions. Africa, despite contributing only about **3.8%** of global greenhouse gas emissions, is particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The continent faces a range of climate-related challenges, including extreme weather events, food insecurity, and water scarcity, which threaten the livelihoods of millions of people. The EU has positioned itself as a global leader in climate action, setting ambitious goals for reducing emissions and transitioning to a green economy. However, achieving these goals requires robust global partnerships, particularly with regions like Africa that are on the frontlines of climate impacts.

#### **Africa's Vulnerability to Climate Change**

Africa is highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change due to a combination of geographical, economic, and social factors. The continent's vulnerability is exacerbated by its limited adaptive capacity, high levels of poverty, and dependence on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and water resources.

1. **Extreme Weather Events:** Africa is increasingly experiencing extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and heatwaves, which are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change. These events have devastating effects on agriculture, infrastructure, and human health. For example, prolonged droughts in the Horn of Africa have led to severe food shortages, displacing millions of people and exacerbating conflicts over scarce resources.
2. **Food Insecurity:** Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies, employing about **60%** of the continent's workforce and accounting for nearly **23%** of its GDP. However, climate change severely threatens agricultural productivity, with erratic rainfall, shifting growing seasons, and increased pest infestations leading to declining crop yields. As a result, food insecurity is escalating, with an estimated **282 million** people in Africa facing hunger in 2023. This vulnerability is especially acute in regions already grappling with poverty and limited access to resources, exacerbating the challenges of malnutrition and hunger across the continent.
3. **Water Scarcity:** Water resources in Africa are extremely vulnerable to climate change, with over **400 million** people currently living in areas facing water scarcity. Changes in precipitation patterns, melting glaciers, and reduced river flows are exacerbating this issue, leading to significant shortages in many parts of the continent. This scarcity affects drinking water supplies, agriculture, energy production, and sanitation. In regions like the Sahel and Southern Africa, where water availability has declined by up to **40%** in some areas over the past decade, water scarcity has become a major driver of migration and conflict, further destabilizing already vulnerable communities.

4. **Public Health Threats:** Climate change poses severe public health challenges in Africa, where rising temperatures and shifting precipitation patterns are contributing to the spread of vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever. Malaria alone, which already affects over **200 million** people annually in Africa, is expected to see increased transmission rates because of changing climate conditions. **47%** of Africa's population lacks access to essential healthcare services, further compounding the continent's vulnerability to climate-induced health crises.
5. **Socio-Economic Impacts:** The socio-economic impacts of climate change in Africa are profound. Disruptions to agriculture and water supplies affect economic stability, leading to loss of income and employment. Moreover, climate-induced migration is increasing, with an estimated **86 million** Africans expected to be displaced within their countries by 2050 due to climate impacts. This migration strains resources in receiving areas, exacerbates social tensions, and further destabilizes already fragile regions.

### The EU's Climate Goals and the Need for Global Partnerships

The European Union has set ambitious climate goals, including becoming climate-neutral by 2050 and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. Achieving these goals is crucial for mitigating global climate change and leading the transition to a sustainable future. However, the EU recognizes that climate change is a global challenge that requires collective action, and its success depends on strong international partnerships.

1. **Global Leadership in Climate Action:** The EU has taken on a leadership role in global climate governance, advocating for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and supporting initiatives that promote sustainable development and resilience. The EU's Green Deal, a comprehensive strategy aimed at making Europe the first climate-neutral continent, emphasizes the importance of global cooperation in achieving climate goals. Through diplomacy, development aid, and climate finance, the EU seeks to support other regions, particularly vulnerable ones like Africa, in their efforts to combat climate change.
2. **Climate Finance and Technology Transfer:** One of the keyways the EU supports global climate action is through climate finance. The EU has committed to providing financial assistance to developing countries to help them adapt to climate change and transition to low-carbon economies. This includes funding for renewable energy projects, climate-resilient infrastructure, and sustainable agriculture. In addition, the EU promotes the transfer of green technologies and expertise to African countries, enabling them to build the capacity needed to address climate challenges.
3. **Supporting Adaptation and Resilience in Africa:** Given Africa's vulnerability to climate change, the EU has prioritized supporting adaptation and resilience-building efforts on the continent. This involves working with African governments, regional organizations, and international partners to develop and implement strategies that enhance climate resilience. Projects focus on areas such as water management, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable land use. By strengthening Africa's ability to cope with climate impacts, the EU also contributes to regional stability and reduces the risk of climate-induced migration.
4. **Sustainable Development and the Green Transition:** The EU's climate goals are closely linked to the broader agenda of sustainable development. In its partnerships with Africa, the EU seeks to align climate action with development goals, ensuring that

efforts to reduce emissions also promote economic growth, job creation, and social equity. For example, investments in renewable energy in Africa not only help reduce emissions but also provide access to electricity for millions of people, supporting education, healthcare, and economic development.

5. **Mitigating Global Climate Risks:** The EU's climate strategy also recognizes the interconnectedness of global climate risks. Climate change impacts in Africa, such as food insecurity and migration, can have spillover effects on Europe, including increased migration pressures and security challenges. By addressing these risks through international cooperation, the EU not only supports global climate stability but also protects its interests. Collaborative efforts to mitigate climate change can help prevent conflicts, reduce migration pressures, and promote global security.

### The Importance of EU-AU Cooperation

EU-AU cooperation is essential for addressing the shared challenge of climate change. Both regions stand to benefit from a partnership that combines Africa's natural resources and potential for green development with the EU's technological expertise and financial resources.

1. **Joint Climate Initiatives:** The EU and AU have launched joint climate initiatives that focus on areas such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and climate resilience. These initiatives are designed to leverage the strengths of both regions, fostering innovation and creating opportunities for sustainable development. By working together, the EU and Africa can develop solutions that address both climate mitigation and adaptation, contributing to global climate goals.
2. **Addressing Migration and Security:** Climate change is increasingly recognized as a driver of migration and conflict, particularly in vulnerable regions like Africa. EU-AU cooperation on climate change includes efforts to address the root causes of climate-induced migration, such as water scarcity, food insecurity, and environmental degradation. By supporting climate resilience and sustainable development in Africa, the EU can help reduce the push factors that drive migration, contributing to regional stability and security.
3. **Promoting Climate Justice:** Climate justice is a key principle guiding EU-Africa cooperation. This concept recognizes that those who are least responsible for climate change, such as African countries, are often the most affected by its impacts. The EU's climate strategy includes a commitment to ensuring that climate action is fair and equitable, providing support to vulnerable communities and countries. This approach is essential for building trust and solidarity between the EU and Africa, fostering a partnership based on mutual respect and shared responsibility.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

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COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS, FOCUSING ON SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, AND GREEN ENERGY.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, represent a global blueprint for addressing the world's most pressing challenges by 2030. These 17 goals



encompass a wide range of social, economic, and environmental objectives, all of which are interconnected and essential for creating a sustainable future. Among these, sustainability, environmental protection, and green energy are critical components that underlie many of the SDGs. Achieving these goals requires collaborative efforts at all levels, from local communities to international organizations, and across sectors, including governments, businesses, civil society, and academia.

### The Role of Collaboration in Achieving the SDGs

Collaboration between the European Union and Africa is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as both regions face interconnected challenges like climate change, food security, and energy access. This joint effort ensures that the SDGs are addressed through multi-stakeholder partnerships, leveraging the strengths of diverse actors.

1. **Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (Goal 17):** The EU and Africa collaborate extensively to meet the SDGs by involving governments, businesses, and civil society. For example, initiatives like the *EU-Africa Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP)* help address shared sustainability goals by pooling resources and expertise to promote clean energy and green technology across the African continent.
2. **Regional Cooperation:** The *European Green Deal* and *Africa's Agenda 2063* are examples of regional frameworks that align to tackle challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable development. The EU supports African countries in reaching SDGs by financing projects in renewable energy, agriculture, and environmental conservation through its external action instruments like the European Development Fund (EDF).
3. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** PPPs are vital in driving progress on green energy and sustainable infrastructure. The *Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs* promotes investments in African renewable energy projects, illustrating how collaboration can expand access to clean energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and foster economic growth.
4. **Civil Society Engagement:** Collaboration between the EU and African grassroots organizations strengthens efforts to meet sustainability goals. Programs like *EU Civil Society Organizations (CSO)* and *Local Authorities Thematic Programme* work with African civil society to implement sustainable practices in areas such as water resource management and community-driven environmental protection.

### Sustainability and Environmental Protection

The EU-Africa partnership focuses heavily on sustainability, which underpins all SDGs. Collaborative efforts, such as sustainable agriculture initiatives, ensure long-term food security and environmental protection.

1. **Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems:** Programs like the *Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)*, supported by the EU, focus on improving agricultural productivity through sustainable farming practices. This collaboration increases food security while reducing the environmental impact of farming in Africa.
2. **Conservation and Restoration:** Efforts such as the *Great Green Wall initiative*, funded in part by the EU, highlight joint efforts to restore degraded land and combat

desertification. These projects not only protect biodiversity but also enhance climate resilience and support rural livelihoods in Africa.

### Green Energy and the Just Transition

A transition to green energy is crucial for sustainable development. The EU-Africa collaboration supports renewable energy projects, ensuring access to clean energy while fostering a just transition away from fossil fuels.

1. **Access to Clean Energy:** The *Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI)*, backed by the EU, aims to increase renewable energy capacity across the continent, providing electricity to millions and reducing Africa's carbon footprint. Such efforts are key to achieving SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).
2. **Research and Innovation:** The EU supports collaborative research between African and European institutions through initiatives like *Horizon Europe*. These partnerships drive innovation in renewable energy technologies, improving solar, wind, and geothermal energy systems to meet global energy needs.
3. **Financing the Transition:** The EU plays a critical role in financing Africa's green energy transition through mechanisms like the *Green Climate Fund (GCF)*. These collaborations help de-risk investments and promote private sector involvement in Africa's energy sector, facilitating progress towards SDG 7 and SDG 13.

In conclusion, the EU and Africa's collaborative efforts in addressing the SDGs underscore the importance of partnerships in achieving global sustainability goals and ensuring shared prosperity through sustainable development.

## BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION

### THE IMPORTANCE OF AFRICAN BIODIVERSITY AND THE ROLE OF THE EU IN SUPPORTING CONSERVATION EFFORTS.

Africa is home to some of the richest and most diverse ecosystems on the planet. From the savannas of the Serengeti to the rainforests of the Congo Basin, the continent's biodiversity is a vital component of its natural heritage and a critical resource for the world. African biodiversity supports millions of livelihoods, sustains ecosystem services essential for human survival, and plays a significant role in global environmental stability. However, this biodiversity is under threat from various pressures, including habitat loss, climate change, poaching, and unsustainable land use. The EU has recognized the global significance of Africa's biodiversity and plays a crucial role in supporting conservation efforts on the continent.

#### The Importance of African Biodiversity

African biodiversity is of immense value, both for the continent itself and for the world. Its importance can be understood in several key dimensions:

1. **Ecological Significance:** Africa's ecosystems are among the most diverse and complex on Earth. They support a vast array of plant and animal species, many of which are

endemic, meaning they are found nowhere else in the world. These ecosystems provide critical services such as water purification, soil fertility, pollination, and carbon sequestration, which are essential for maintaining environmental stability. The loss of biodiversity in Africa would have profound impacts on the health and functioning of global ecosystems.

2. **Economic Value:** Biodiversity is a cornerstone of Africa's economy. Many communities rely directly on biodiversity for their livelihoods through agriculture, fishing, tourism, and traditional medicine. Ecotourism, driven by Africa's iconic wildlife and natural landscapes, is a major source of income for several African countries. Moreover, biodiversity supports industries such as pharmaceuticals and biotechnology, which depend on the discovery of new species and genetic resources. Protecting biodiversity is therefore not only an environmental imperative but also an economic necessity.
3. **Cultural and Social Importance:** For many African communities, biodiversity is deeply intertwined with cultural identities and traditions. Indigenous knowledge systems, spiritual beliefs, and cultural practices often revolve around the natural world, with specific species and ecosystems holding particular significance. The conservation of biodiversity is thus critical for preserving cultural heritage and supporting the social fabric of African societies. Additionally, biodiversity contributes to food security and health by providing diverse diets and traditional medicines.
4. **Global Environmental Stability:** Africa's biodiversity plays a crucial role in global environmental stability. The continent's forests, particularly the Congo Basin, are vital carbon sinks that help mitigate climate change by absorbing large amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Additionally, Africa's biodiversity supports the resilience of global ecosystems, contributing to the stability of climate, water cycles, and food systems. The loss of biodiversity in Africa would have far-reaching consequences for the entire planet, highlighting the global importance of its conservation.

### Threats to African Biodiversity

Despite its significance, African biodiversity is facing severe threats, driven by both natural and human-induced factors:

1. **Habitat Loss and Degradation:** Deforestation, agricultural expansion, urbanization, and infrastructure development are leading causes of habitat loss and degradation in Africa. The conversion of forests, wetlands, and grasslands into farmland or urban areas destroys the habitats of countless species, leading to population declines and extinctions. Habitat fragmentation further exacerbates these impacts by isolating species and reducing their ability to migrate and adapt to environmental changes.
2. **Climate Change:** Climate change is altering the distribution and behaviour of species, disrupting ecosystems, and increasing the vulnerability of biodiversity in Africa. Changes in temperature and precipitation patterns affect species' habitats and food sources, leading to shifts in ecosystems that can result in the loss of biodiversity. Additionally, extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, are becoming more frequent and severe, further threatening species and ecosystems.
3. **Poaching and Illegal Wildlife Trade:** Poaching and the illegal wildlife trade are major threats to many of Africa's iconic species, including elephants, rhinos, and pangolins. Driven by high demand for animal products such as ivory, rhino horn, and bushmeat,

these illegal activities not only deplete wildlife populations but also undermine conservation efforts and contribute to insecurity and corruption in affected regions.

4. **Unsustainable Land Use Practices:** Unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing, and mining are contributing to the degradation of ecosystems and the loss of biodiversity in Africa. These practices often lead to soil erosion, water pollution, and the destruction of habitats, reducing the resilience of ecosystems and their ability to support diverse species. The expansion of monoculture crops and the use of chemical inputs in agriculture also reduce biodiversity by displacing native species and altering ecosystems.
5. **Invasive Species:** The introduction of non-native species, whether intentionally or accidentally, poses a significant threat to African biodiversity. Invasive species can outcompete, prey on, or bring diseases to native species, leading to declines or extinctions. Invasive plants, for example, can alter ecosystems by changing fire regimes, soil chemistry, and hydrology, with negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

### The Role of the EU in Supporting African Biodiversity Conservation

The EU has played a crucial role in supporting African biodiversity conservation through policy advocacy, financial aid, and collaborative efforts. The EU promotes international biodiversity agreements like the *Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)* and *CITES*, aiding African nations in enforcing laws to protect biodiversity. Financially, the EU contributes through programs like the *Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI)* and the *European Development Fund (EDF)*, which fund wildlife conservation, sustainable agriculture, and ecosystem restoration projects.

Partnerships such as the *African-EU Partnership on Environment and Climate Change (AEUPECC)* and initiatives like the *Kavango-Zambezi Trans frontier Conservation Area (KAZA)* protect biodiversity while fostering sustainable tourism. The EU also focuses on building capacity by providing technical assistance, training, and resources to African institutions, helping them manage protected areas and develop sustainable livelihoods.

Looking forward, the EU-Africa cooperation must address key areas, including integrating biodiversity into development planning, enhancing community-based conservation, tackling climate change, leveraging technology, and strengthening global biodiversity alliances. By promoting sustainable development and green economies, the EU aims to help Africa balance economic growth with environmental protection.

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### JOINT INITIATIVES TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

Joint initiatives bring together African and European governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society are essential for developing strategies that ensure the sustainable use of natural resources while promoting agricultural practices that support both current and future generations.

### The Importance of Protecting Natural Resources in Africa

Africa's natural resources, including water, soil, forests, and biodiversity, are the backbone of its agricultural productivity and environmental health. These resources provide essential ecosystem services, such as water purification, soil fertility, and climate regulation, which are crucial for sustaining life and supporting economic activities. However, the degradation of these resources poses significant risks to the continent's sustainability and to the global environment.

1. **Water Resources:** Water is a critical resource for agriculture, industry, and human consumption in Africa. However, many regions face water scarcity due to overuse, pollution, and the impacts of climate change. Africa-EU collaboration is vital in implementing efficient water management practices, preventing water pollution, and restoring degraded watersheds. Ensuring sustainable water use is essential for maintaining agricultural productivity and safeguarding the health of aquatic ecosystems.
2. **Soil Health:** Soil degradation, caused by factors such as erosion, deforestation, overgrazing, and the overuse of chemical inputs, threatens agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability across Africa. Collaborative efforts between Africa and the EU are necessary to promote sustainable land management practices that restore and maintain soil health, ensuring the long-term fertility of agricultural lands and the preservation of natural ecosystems.
3. **Forests and Biodiversity:** Africa's forests and biodiversity are globally significant, playing key roles in climate regulation, water cycling, and providing ecosystem services that support millions of livelihoods. However, deforestation and habitat loss are major challenges. Africa-EU joint initiatives are crucial in conserving these resources, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring that forests continue to provide essential environmental and economic benefits.
4. **Ecosystem Services:** The ecosystem services provided by Africa's natural resources are fundamental to agriculture and human well-being. Protecting these services through collaborative conservation efforts between Africa and the EU is critical for maintaining the health of ecosystems and ensuring the sustainability of agricultural practices that depend on them.

### The Role of Sustainable Agriculture in Africa-EU Collaboration

Sustainable agriculture is key to achieving food security, reducing environmental impact, and fostering economic development in Africa. The EU's collaboration with African nations is central to promoting agricultural practices that enhance productivity and resilience while minimizing environmental degradation. Joint initiatives between Africa and the EU are instrumental in advancing sustainable agriculture through shared knowledge, innovation, and the implementation of best practices.

1. **Integrated Land Management:** Integrated land management practices, which combine conservation with agricultural production, are essential for sustainable agriculture. Africa-EU partnerships support the adoption of integrated land management approaches, such as agroforestry, conservation agriculture, and mixed farming systems, which optimize land use while preserving natural resources. These collaborative efforts help African farmers achieve sustainable productivity while protecting the environment.
2. **Agroecology and Biodiversity:** Agroecology, which applies ecological principles to agriculture, is a key focus of Africa-EU collaboration. By promoting practices such as

crop diversification, organic farming, and natural pest control, agroecology enhances biodiversity within farming systems and reduces dependence on chemical inputs. Joint initiatives between Africa and the EU support the adoption of agroecological practices, contributing to more sustainable and resilient agricultural systems across the continent.

3. ***Climate-Smart Agriculture***: Climate-smart agriculture (CSA) is critical for increasing agricultural productivity, enhancing resilience to climate change, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Africa-EU collaboration is vital in promoting CSA practices, such as the use of drought-resistant crops, improved water management, and agroforestry. These joint efforts help African farmers adapt to changing climate conditions and contribute to global climate mitigation goals.
4. ***Sustainable Livestock Management***: Livestock production is an important component of Africa's agricultural sector but also a significant source of environmental impact. Africa-EU partnerships focus on promoting sustainable livestock management practices, such as rotational grazing, improved feed efficiency, and manure management, to reduce the environmental footprint of livestock farming. These collaborations ensure that livestock production in Africa aligns with environmental protection and sustainability objectives.

### Successful Africa-EU Joint Initiatives in Natural Resource Protection and Sustainable Agriculture

Several joint initiatives between Africa and the EU highlight the effectiveness of collaboration in protecting natural resources and promoting sustainable agriculture:

1. ***The Great Green Wall Initiative***: The Great Green Wall Initiative is a landmark Africa-EU collaboration aimed at combating desertification and restoring degraded land across the Sahel region. The initiative involves multiple African countries, the EU, and international organizations working together to create productive landscapes that improve food security, create jobs, and enhance climate resilience. By promoting sustainable land management practices, such as agroforestry and water conservation, this joint effort helps protect natural resources and supports sustainable agriculture in one of Africa's most vulnerable regions.
2. ***The Sustainable Cocoa Initiative***: The Sustainable Cocoa Initiative is a collaborative effort between the EU and West African countries, focused on promoting sustainable cocoa production. The initiative aims to address issues such as deforestation, child labor, and low farmer incomes by promoting sustainable farming practices, improving supply chain transparency, and supporting local communities. This Africa-EU partnership enhances the sustainability of cocoa production, protects biodiversity, and ensures fair economic returns for African farmers.
3. ***The African-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP)***: The RECP is an Africa-EU partnership aimed at promoting renewable energy solutions across Africa. By supporting the development and deployment of renewable energy technologies, the RECP contributes to sustainable agriculture by providing access to clean energy for irrigation, processing, and other agricultural activities. This collaboration helps reduce the environmental impact of agriculture and supports the transition to a green economy in Africa.
4. ***The Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan***: The FLEGT Action Plan is a joint initiative between the EU and African countries aimed at

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combating illegal logging and promoting sustainable forest management. Through this partnership, the EU and African nations work together to improve forest governance, enhance the legality of timber trade, and protect forest ecosystems. The FLEGT initiative plays a crucial role in conserving Africa's forests and biodiversity while promoting sustainable economic development.

### **Strategies for Enhancing Africa-EU Collaboration**

To enhance Africa-EU collaboration in natural resource protection and sustainable agriculture, several strategies are vital. Strengthening institutional partnerships between governments, regional organizations, and civil society is crucial for ensuring that joint initiatives are well-coordinated and sustainable. These partnerships must be based on mutual trust and shared goals. Empowering local communities is equally important, as their involvement in decision-making and access to resources are key to the success of conservation and agriculture projects. Integrating traditional knowledge and building local capacities will ensure long-term success.

Additionally, promoting innovation and technology transfer is essential for advancing sustainable agriculture. Africa-EU collaborations should focus on developing and sharing technologies like climate-resilient crops and sustainable water management systems. Scaling up successful models across regions and ensuring sustainable financing through innovative mechanisms such as blended finance and green bonds will help achieve a greater impact. Mobilizing private sector investments and ensuring these projects deliver measurable environmental and social benefits is critical for lasting success.

## VI. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES

#### ECONOMIC DISPARITIES AND THE NEED FOR EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS.

Africa and Europe have long-standing ties that span centuries, marked by periods of colonialism, trade, and cultural exchange. However, these ties have also been marred by significant economic disparities. While Europe has benefited from sustained economic growth, technological advancement, and high standards of living, many African nations continue to grapple with poverty, underdevelopment, and limited access to global markets.

The economic divide between the two continents is not merely a product of geographical and resource-based differences but is deeply entrenched in historical and structural inequalities. Addressing these disparities is not only a moral imperative but also a pragmatic necessity for fostering global stability, peace, and prosperity.

#### **Economic Disparities: A Comparative Analysis**

1. ***Income and Wealth Inequality:*** The income and wealth gap between Europe and Africa remains substantial. According to the World Bank, the average per capita income in Sub-Saharan Africa is approximately **\$1,600** compared to around **\$35,000** in Europe, highlighting a stark disparity. This gap is further exacerbated by significant wealth inequality within African countries, where over **40%** of the population lives below the poverty line, surviving on less than **\$1.90** per day. Meanwhile, a small elite controls a disproportionate share of national wealth, with the richest **10%** of the population owning more than **50%** of total income in several African nations.
2. ***Access to Markets and Trade:*** African countries often face significant barriers to accessing global markets, including trade restrictions, tariff and non-tariff barriers, and inadequate infrastructure. In contrast, European nations enjoy preferential access to global markets, bolstered by strong trade agreements and advanced logistical networks. This unequal access limits Africa's ability to export its goods and services competitively, stifling economic growth and perpetuating dependency.
3. ***Technological and Industrial Development:*** Europe's industrialized economies are characterized by advanced technology, innovation, and high productivity. Conversely, many African economies remain reliant on agriculture and extractive industries, with limited progress in industrialization. The lack of technological infrastructure and investment in research and development further widens the economic gap between the two continents.
4. ***Human Development and Education:*** Education and human capital development are crucial drivers of economic growth. European countries typically boast high literacy rates, advanced education systems, and strong social safety nets. In contrast, many African nations struggle with inadequate educational infrastructure, low literacy rates, and limited access to quality education, particularly in rural areas. This disparity in human capital development undermines Africa's potential for economic growth and innovation.



### The Need for Equitable Partnerships

To address economic disparities between Africa and Europe, a shift from traditional aid models to equitable partnerships is essential. These partnerships should emphasize *shared prosperity* by fostering inclusive economic growth that benefits marginalized populations. Investments in education, healthcare, and social infrastructure are critical for ensuring broad-based development.

The partnership must also prioritize *fair trade and market access*, working to dismantle trade barriers and support Africa's efforts to diversify its economy. *Technology transfer* and *capacity building* are crucial for empowering African nations to advance their industrial and technological sectors. These efforts include promoting local innovation, research, and skills development.

Furthermore, both continents should commit to *sustainable development*, with Europe playing a pivotal role in supporting Africa's transition to a green economy. Lastly, the partnership must uphold *good governance and accountability*, ensuring transparency, democratic governance, and fairness on both sides, aligning investments with equity and respect for sovereignty.

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### HOW THE EU AND AFRICA CAN ADDRESS HISTORICAL IMBALANCES IN TRADE AND INVESTMENT.

Historical imbalances in trade and investment between the EU and Africa have contributed to economic disparities. These imbalances stem from colonial legacies and unequal trade systems, with Africa primarily exporting raw materials and importing European manufactured goods. This trade pattern has limited Africa's industrialization and made its economies vulnerable to price fluctuations. European investments, concentrated in extractive industries, have often led to environmental degradation and failed to stimulate diversified economic growth in Africa. Trade agreements like the *Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)* have also reinforced unequal trade terms, restricted African market access and limited local industry protection.

To address these imbalances, both regions must reform trade agreements, focusing on industrialization and regional integration. The EU can support Africa's diversification by promoting green industries, enhancing local content in investments, and fostering SME growth. Strengthening governance and transparency is crucial for maximizing benefits, with both regions working to enhance accountability and build Africa's negotiation capacity. These strategies aim to create a more equitable and sustainable partnership between Africa and the EU, advancing long-term economic development.

### FUTURE PROSPECTS

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#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEEPER INTEGRATION THROUGH INITIATIVES LIKE THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA).

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), launched in 2021, represents a pivotal opportunity for deeper economic integration between Africa and the European Union (EU). By

establishing the world's largest free trade area, AfCFTA seeks to enhance intra-African trade, promote industrialization, and spur economic growth. For the EU, engaging with AfCFTA offers a strategic avenue to build stronger economic ties with Africa, support sustainable development, and create new market opportunities.

### Key Opportunities for Deeper EU-Africa Integration

#### 1. Expanding EU-Africa Trade Relations

AfCFTA offers a framework for the EU to expand and diversify its trade relations with Africa by engaging with a more integrated and cohesive African market. Historically, EU-Africa trade has been characterized by the export of raw materials from Africa and the import of manufactured goods from Europe. AfCFTA provides an opportunity to shift this dynamic towards a more balanced and diversified trade relationship.

- **Leveraging Regional Value Chains:** The EU can support the development of regional value chains within Africa, enabling African countries to move up the value chain and export more value-added products. By investing in these value chains, European companies can benefit from cost-effective production and access to a broader range of products, while also contributing to Africa's industrialization efforts.
- **Enhancing Market Access:** The EU should work to improve market access for African goods, particularly value-added products, by reducing tariffs and non-tariff barriers. Supporting AfCFTA's objectives will enable European businesses to tap into a growing African consumer market, while also helping African economies diversify their exports.

#### 2. Attracting and Channeling Investment for Sustainable Growth

The AfCFTA framework makes Africa a more attractive destination for foreign direct investment (FDI), presenting the EU with opportunities to channel investment into sectors that promote sustainable growth and development.

- **Investing in Sustainable Infrastructure:** European investments can play a critical role in addressing Africa's infrastructure deficits, particularly in transportation, energy, and digital connectivity. By supporting infrastructure projects that align with AfCFTA's goals, the EU can facilitate smoother trade flows, enhance regional integration, and create new opportunities for European businesses.
- **Supporting Green and Inclusive Growth:** The EU can lead in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth in Africa by investing in green industries, renewable energy, and sustainable agriculture. Such investments align with both AfCFTA's objectives and the EU's Green Deal, fostering economic growth while addressing environmental challenges.

#### 3. Promoting Economic Diversification and Industrialization

AfCFTA's focus on reducing trade barriers within Africa creates a favorable environment for economic diversification and industrialization, which the EU can actively support.

- **Supporting Industrialization Efforts:** The EU can provide technical assistance, technology transfer, and investment to help African countries build their industrial capacity. By partnering with African governments and businesses, the EU can contribute to the development of manufacturing and other value-added sectors, reducing Africa's reliance on raw material exports.
- **Enhancing the Services Sector:** The services sector, including finance, telecommunications, and logistics, is set to benefit from AfCFTA. The EU can support the expansion and modernization of these sectors through investment, knowledge sharing, and regulatory cooperation, helping to drive innovation and economic growth in Africa.

#### 4. Strengthening EU-Africa Competitiveness and Innovation

AfCFTA provides a platform for enhancing the competitiveness of African economies, which the EU can support through strategic partnerships focused on innovation and capacity building.

- **Boosting SME Competitiveness:** Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are crucial for economic growth and job creation in Africa. The EU can help African SMEs integrate into regional and global value chains by providing access to finance, technology, and markets. Supporting SME growth will also create new opportunities for European companies to partner with dynamic African businesses.
- **Promoting Technological Advancement:** Collaboration on technological innovation is key to maximizing the benefits of AfCFTA. The EU can support African efforts to adopt digital technologies and improve trade efficiency through investments in digital infrastructure and partnerships in innovation ecosystems.

#### Challenges to Address

To fully realize the potential of deeper EU-Africa integration through AfCFTA, several challenges must be addressed:

- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Africa's infrastructure deficits, particularly in transportation, energy, and digital networks, remain significant obstacles to effective trade and investment. The EU should prioritize investments in cross-border infrastructure projects that support AfCFTA's goals.
- **Regulatory Alignment:** Harmonizing regulations and standards across Africa is critical for reducing trade barriers and ensuring a level playing field. The EU can assist African countries in aligning their regulations with international best practices, facilitating smoother trade and investment flows.
- **Capacity Building:** Many African countries need support in building the capacity to implement AfCFTA and benefit from its opportunities. The EU can provide technical assistance and capacity-building programs to help African governments and businesses navigate the new trade landscape.

### THE POTENTIAL FOR AFRICA-EU COOPERATION TO SERVE AS A MODEL FOR NORTH-SOUTH PARTNERSHIPS.

The Africa-EU partnership can serve as a model for North-South collaboration, focusing on sustainable development, equitable trade, and shared prosperity. This relationship emphasizes ***fair trade and investment*** through initiatives like the *Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)* and support for the *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*, promoting diversification and economic growth in Africa. The EU has prioritized ***sustainable investment*** in sectors like infrastructure, renewable energy, and digital technology, aligning economic development with global sustainability goals.

Key areas of cooperation include a ***joint commitment to sustainable development***, with a focus on climate action and inclusive growth. The partnership also strengthens ***governance and institutional capacity*** in African nations through capacity-building initiatives, fostering democratic governance, and improving transparency. Furthermore, the collaboration addresses global challenges through ***multilateralism***, advocating for fairer trade rules, stronger climate action, and migration management. Opportunities for further development include expanding digital cooperation, engaging the private sector, and deepening regional integration across Africa.

## VII. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EU INFLUENCE IN AFRICA VERSUS OTHER GLOBAL ACTORS

While the EU is a dominant player in Africa, its influence is increasingly being challenged by other global actors, particularly China and the United States. The EU's approach, which emphasizes trade, development, governance, and cultural ties, offers a comprehensive engagement model but faces competition from China's economic and infrastructure investments, which are often accompanied by fewer political conditions. The United States, while still influential, has a more focused engagement, particularly in security and counterterrorism. As Africa's strategic importance continues to grow, the interplay between these global actors will shape the continent's development trajectory and its role in the global order.

### ECONOMIC INFLUENCE

The *EU* has historically been one of the most significant external actors in Africa, primarily through trade, investment, and development aid. The EU is Africa's largest trading partner, accounting for about **28%** of Africa's total trade in 2023, and it remains a major source of foreign direct investment (FDI), with approximately **€30 billion** invested in Africa in 2023 alone. The EU's *Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)* with various African regions have facilitated this economic engagement, although they have also faced criticism for perpetuating unequal trade dynamics.

In contrast, *China's* influence in Africa has surged over the past two decades, making it the continent's largest bilateral trading partner. As of 2023, China accounted for approximately **22%** of Africa's total trade, with the trade volume reaching over **\$282 billion**, reflecting a significant rise from **\$254 billion** in 2021. This deepening economic engagement highlights China's role in Africa's development, primarily through infrastructure projects under the *Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)*. Since the early 2000s, China has provided over **\$155 billion** in loans and development finance to African nations. While these investments offer substantial development opportunities, they have been critiqued for fostering debt dependency and lacking stringent environmental and labour standards. Countries such as Zambia and Ghana have experienced economic strain due to high levels of debt owed to China, highlighting the challenges Africa faces in managing these investments. Nevertheless, China remains a critical player in shaping the continent's development trajectory, particularly in infrastructure, trade, and technology.

The *China-Africa Summit* held in September 2024 in Beijing reinforced this relationship by announcing **\$50 billion** in financial support over the next three years. This funding will focus on infrastructure, renewable energy, and industrial diversification. China committed to investing in solar and wind energy projects to help Africa transition towards a greener economy. The summit also tackled issues around trade barriers, debt sustainability, and long-term trade relations, focusing on promoting Africa's role in global supply chains and addressing concerns about over-reliance on primary product exports.

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The *United States*, while historically influential through aid and military assistance, has seen its relative economic influence in Africa wane compared to the EU and China. As of 2023, the U.S. accounted for approximately **5.6%** of Africa's total trade, a modest share compared to the EU's **28%** and China's **22%**. In terms of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), U.S. investments in Africa totalled around **\$45 billion** in 2023, which, while significant, is smaller compared to the EU's **€30 billion** (approximately **\$32 billion**) and China's cumulative investments, which have exceeded **\$150 billion** over the past two decades. However, recent initiatives like the *Prosper Africa* campaign and the *African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)* continue to facilitate trade and investment between the U.S. and Africa. Under AGOA, African exports to the U.S. reached approximately **\$8.4 billion** in 2022, highlighting ongoing, albeit smaller-scale, economic engagement compared to other global actors.

### POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE

The *EU* exerts considerable political influence in Africa through its diplomatic efforts, peacekeeping missions, and support for governance reforms. The EU-AU partnership has been pivotal in fostering dialogue on issues such as democracy, human rights, and regional security. The EU also contributes to various peacekeeping missions across the continent, with significant financial support and personnel.

*China's* political influence in Africa is primarily exercised through bilateral relations rather than multilateral engagements. China's policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of African states has been attractive to many African leaders, offering an alternative to the EU's conditions-based approach to governance and human rights. This approach has enabled China to forge strong ties with a wide range of African governments, regardless of their governance records.

The *United States* maintains significant political influence in Africa through its military presence, particularly through *AFRICOM*, and its role in counterterrorism efforts. However, U.S. influence has sometimes been viewed as more security-oriented, in contrast to the EU's broader focus on governance and development.

### CULTURAL AND SOFT POWER INFLUENCE

The *EU's* cultural influence in Africa is deeply rooted in the historical ties between Africa and European countries, particularly former colonial powers like France, the UK, and Portugal. The EU has promoted cultural exchanges, education, and the arts through programs such as *Erasmus+* and various cultural cooperation agreements. The African diaspora in Europe also plays a significant role in maintaining cultural and social ties between the continents.

*China's* cultural influence in Africa, while growing, is relatively new. Through initiatives such as *Confucius Institutes* and media outlets like *CGTN Africa*, China is working to expand its cultural footprint on the continent. However, the depth of China's cultural influence does not yet match that of the EU, partly due to the long-standing historical and linguistic connections between Africa and Europe.

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The *United States* exerts considerable soft power in Africa through popular culture, education, and media. American music, films, and technology are widely consumed across the continent, contributing to the U.S.'s cultural influence. Additionally, U.S. universities and exchange programs, such as the Fulbright Program, attract many African students and professionals.

### STRATEGIC AND SECURITY INFLUENCE

The *EU* has been a major contributor to peace and security in Africa, particularly through its support of African-led peacekeeping missions and its involvement in conflict prevention and resolution efforts. The EU's *Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)* missions in Africa, such as in Mali and Somalia, underscore its commitment to regional stability.

*China's* involvement in African security has traditionally been minimal, but it has increased in recent years. China has contributed troops to UN peacekeeping missions in Africa and has established its first overseas military base in Djibouti. However, China's security involvement is still primarily focused on protecting its economic interests rather than engaging in broader regional security initiatives.

The *United States* remains deeply involved in African security, particularly through its counterterrorism efforts and military partnerships. *AFRICOM*, the U.S. Africa Command, plays a central role in coordinating U.S. military activities across the continent, focusing on combating terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram. The U.S. also provides significant military aid to African nations, reinforcing its strategic influence in the region.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

### POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF AFRICA – EUROPE RELATIONS

The future of Europe-Africa relations can take several potential directions depending on geopolitical, economic, and environmental trends.

The four possible scenarios outlined below also reflect the complexity of the Africa-EU relationship, influenced by evolving global dynamics, regional challenges, and strategic interests.

#### 1. Deepening Strategic Partnership

**Scenario:** Europe and Africa strengthen their relationship, emphasizing equitable trade, sustainable investment, and technology transfer.

**Key Drivers:** Increased commitment to the *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)*, further collaboration in *renewable energy* through the EU's Green Deal, and *digital transformation* through initiatives like the *EU-Africa Digital Economy Task Force*.

**Outcome:** Both continents benefit from economic diversification, with Africa reducing its dependence on raw material exports, and the EU fostering green and inclusive development across Africa. This scenario would see greater political alignment on global issues such as climate change and migration management.

#### 2. Fragmented Engagement

**Scenario:** Africa and the EU maintain their trade relationship, but cooperation becomes fragmented due to internal EU challenges and rising competition from other global powers such as China, the U.S., and Russia.

**Key Drivers:** The *growing influence of China* in African infrastructure projects through the *Belt and Road Initiative* and potential European focus on internal challenges (e.g., migration, economic stagnation) might reduce cohesive engagement with Africa.

**Outcome:** The EU may lose ground in strategic sectors such as infrastructure development, leaving space for other powers. Africa could benefit from more diversified partnerships but face coordination challenges between different foreign investors with competing interests.

#### 3. Focus on Security and Migration

**Scenario:** Europe focuses its engagement with Africa primarily on *security* and *migration control*, driven by concerns about instability in the Sahel and the Mediterranean.



**Key Drivers:** The *Sahel conflict*, terrorism, and the need to manage migration flows to Europe could push the EU to prioritize *border security*, *counter-terrorism* initiatives, and migration-related agreements, overshadowing broader development goals.

**Outcome:** While short-term security and migration concerns are addressed, there is a risk of neglecting long-term sustainable development. This could lead to further economic disparities and instability, as local development and economic growth in Africa become secondary to European security priorities.

#### 4. Rise of African Economic Autonomy

**Scenario:** Africa increasingly positions itself as an independent player in global markets, reducing reliance on the EU for trade and investment.

**Key Drivers:** Successful implementation of the *AfCFTA*, increasing intra-African trade, and investments from emerging markets like China and India. African countries could prioritize partnerships that emphasize *South-South cooperation*.

**Outcome:** Europe remains a significant partner, but Africa diversifies its economic relationships. Europe may have to compete for influence, leading to more balanced partnerships, with Africa dictating terms in sectors such as technology and energy.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF A DEEPENING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA AND EUROPE

The Europe-Africa partnership is vital for both regions, offering a platform to address shared challenges and capitalize on mutual strengths. This relationship is anchored in historical ties but has evolved into a forward-looking collaboration that promises substantial benefits for both Europe and Africa in the future.

**Economic Growth and Development:** For Africa, the partnership facilitates access to European markets, technology, and investment, which are crucial for the continent's economic diversification and sustainable development. The *African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)* and *EU's Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)* are expected to boost trade, attract investments, and enhance local value creation, which in turn supports job creation and economic stability. For the EU, Africa presents a growing market with a rapidly expanding middle class and significant demand for European goods, services, and technology, thus offering new opportunities for European businesses.

**Political and Security Cooperation:** On the political front, the EU's support in areas such as governance, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution helps to stabilize regions in Africa that are critical for global security, such as the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. This stability not only benefits Africa but also mitigates security risks for Europe, including terrorism and irregular migration. Additionally, Africa's role in global forums like the UN and WTO, supported by the EU, amplifies their collective influence in shaping global policies, ensuring that both regions' interests are represented on the world stage.

**Migration and Human Development:** Migration is another key area where the partnership yields mutual benefits. By addressing the root causes of migration, such as poverty and instability, through development cooperation and investment in human capital, both regions can manage migration flows more effectively. This collaboration reduces the pressures on Europe from irregular migration while supporting economic development and stability in Africa.

**Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change:** The partnership also emphasizes environmental sustainability, with the EU supporting Africa in its green transition through initiatives like the *Africa-Europe Green Energy Initiative*. This cooperation is crucial as both regions work towards achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, their climate goals, with Africa providing the EU with critical resources for renewable energy while benefiting from technology transfer and financial support. By aligning their efforts, Africa and Europe can meet their development objectives but also set an example of effective North-South cooperation that addresses global challenges while promoting mutual prosperity.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential for both the AU and the EU to strengthen their collaboration, acknowledging that their futures are deeply interconnected. This partnership holds the potential to become a model for regional cooperation, demonstrating how areas with shared interests and mutual respect can effectively address global challenges.

By fostering a mutually beneficial relationship, the AU and the EU can meet their immediate needs while establishing a solid foundation for long-term prosperity, stability, and sustainability. As this cooperation evolves, it will enable both regions to achieve their shared objectives of economic growth, political stability, and environmental sustainability, ensuring that their alliance remains pivotal to global development in the years ahead.

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### PAPER TITLE

*"Mutual Prosperity: The Africa-Europe Nexus"* encapsulates the interdependent relationship between the European and Africa. The phrase "Mutual Prosperity" emphasizes the idea that both regions stand to gain significantly from a strong, cooperative partnership. It reflects that the economic, social, and political well-being of one is closely tied to the success of the other.

The term "Nexus" highlights the critical connection and interlinkages between the European Union and the African Union, pointing to the multifaceted nature of their relationship. This includes trade, investment, development aid, security cooperation, and cultural exchanges. The title implies that this connection is not just beneficial but essential for the long-term stability and growth of both continents.

"Mutual Prosperity: The Africa-Europe Nexus" explores how the EU and AU are strategically linked, and how their collaboration can lead to shared growth and development, addressing common challenges and seizing joint opportunities.