



The Fifth AU-EU Summit: An Overview

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The fifth Africa-Europe Summit took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 29-30 November 2017. The theme of the Summit was “Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development”. It aimed to “define the future direction of cooperation between the two continents” in four identified strategic areas – economic opportunities for youth, peace and security, mobility and migration, and cooperation on governance. Although the Europe-Africa summit meetings have been institutionalised since the year 2000, the fifth summit meeting brought a fundamental change in this intercontinental engagement. The summit titled *5th African Union-European Union (AU-EU) Summit* indicated a move towards African Union (AU) as the preferred institution for further Africa-Europe relations. The partnership moved to a greater institutional and structured engagement.

The fifth summit reaffirmed the Joint Strategy adopted by the two regions at Lisbon in 2007 as the valid framework of their partnership, and recalled the commitments made in the 2014-2017 Roadmap adopted at the fourth summit in Brussels based on the principles of “mutual trust, sovereign equality, integrity and interdependence”.¹ The Joint-Strategy frames the current phase of Africa-EU long-term partnership, which was followed by the fifth summit as well. Further, the declaration stated, “As two Unions, we support regional unity, integration and speaking with One Voice in the management and implementation of this partnership...” It emphasised on a deeper, mutually beneficial, stronger, targeted and more operational engagement. The two sides aspired

for a stronger “mutual engagement and a more coordinated approach to ensure effective multilateralism” and strengthen “AU-EU-UN trilateral cooperation”.

The summit marked a decade since the adoption of the joint strategy; and further, in the declaration, listed four priorities of the joint strategy for the period leading up to the next summit (2020). The priorities, although correspond to the long-term joint strategic framework, take into account the issues requiring immediate action. These priorities are:

- Investing in People (Education, Science, Technology, and Skill Development).
- Strengthening Resilience, Peace, Security and Governance.
- Migration and Mobility.
- Mobilising Investments for African Structural Transformation.

Of the four strategic priority areas determined by the Summit, three are measures to be taken reflecting the action oriented approach of the two sides. One area – migration and mobility – is in fact an issue that has been singled out for special focus. The focus on an issue among several underscores its importance for the Summit. It was in fact the most discussed issue that, despite being old and regularly mentioned in declarations and statements, has found a place as an immediate strategic priority for the first time.

For a comprehensive understanding of the Africa-Europe engagement, the following table covers the highlights of the declarations of all the Africa-Europe summits hitherto.

	Africa-Europe Summit, Cairo, 2000	EU-Africa Summit, Lisbon, 2007	Africa-EU Summit, Tripoli, 2010	EU-Africa Summit, Brussels, 2014	AU-EU Summit, Abidjan, 2017
Trade, development and regional economic cooperation	<p>Efforts to create Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area on the basis of ACP-EU Partnership Agreement to promote economic growth in Africa.</p> <p>Promotion of closer relation between African regional integration and EU.</p> <p>Recalling traditional partnership between EU and Africa, the need to remove non-tariff barriers to enhance trade cooperation between both sides was recognised.</p>	<p>The cooperation between Africa and EU on trade and regional integration should pursue private sector involvement, boost infrastructural development and extend integration of trade for smooth flow of South-South and North South trade flows.</p> <p>Boost stronger trade relation with the implementation of Economic Partnership Agreements, the implementation of the EU-Mediterranean Free Trade Agreement with north African</p>	<p>With the central theme on “Investment, economic growth and job creation”, the Summit strengthened internal markets and financial services on EU-Africa Trade.</p> <p>Collaboration on building of knowledge and skills in mining and other raw material sectors.</p> <p>Commitment to develop infrastructures in areas such as energy, agriculture, transport, ICT,</p>	<p>Promotion of inclusive economic growth and development.</p> <p>Both continents agreed to form High Level Policy Dialogue in areas of science, technology and innovation.</p> <p>Fostering agricultural transformation to meet food security within the framework of NEPAD and the comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme</p> <p>Addressed issues of</p>	<p>Creation of adequate job opportunities to provide employment to youth.</p> <p>Both EU and AU continue joint efforts to generate favourable place for investment and business and welcomed the establishment of European External Investment Plan and G20 Africa Partnership.</p> <p>Both parties agreed to promote African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), Programme for Infrastructure Development in</p>

	<p>Acknowledged constraints with regard to “application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, anti-dumping and countervailing duties” on products produced by African countries.</p> <p>Both EU and Africa agreed for collaboration on processed agricultural products within framework of multilateral trade negotiations.</p> <p>Both the continents agreed to intensify Foreign Direct Investment and mobilise resources in the line of globally</p>	<p>countries</p>	<p>attracting African and European private direct investment and creating private-public-partnership.</p> <p>Support of EU to build renewable energy and energy competence technologies in Africa.</p> <p>Full execution of Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme and efforts to bring modern and cheapest energy services to common Africans</p>	<p>land degradation, desertification and drought.</p> <p>The summit recognised manufacturing as top priority; both continents began dialogue on responsible mineral sourcing.</p> <p>Focussed on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to create better job prospects.</p> <p>Joint collaboration of government and private sector to stimulate greater economic integration with particular focus</p>	<p>Africa(PIDA) to increase intra-African trade.</p> <p>Expanding partnership and exchange of knowledge, skills, research and development to create entrepreneurship among youth.</p> <p>Welcomed the inauguration of European External Investment Plan for human investment and investment in skill sector with creation of jobs in agriculture, agro-business, manufacturing, and blue economy for</p>
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	<p>agreed rules for transfer of resources.</p> <p>Recognising Africa's lack of adequate infrastructure in transport, communication, water and energy, the need to increase the flow of domestic and foreign resources to build proper infrastructure in that regard was underscored. The necessary involvement of private sector for industrial development in the continent was highlighted.</p> <p>A requirement of special attention in research and technology arena was</p>			<p>on transport, energy between both continents. Full commitment to Doha Development Agenda of WTO.</p> <p>Boost 'inclusive, open and secure information society that contributes to growth and development'³</p> <p>Support of EU for Africa's commitment to inaugurate Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) in Africa, commitment to Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) ensuring profits to both continents.</p> <p>Africa appreciated</p>	<p>African countries.</p> <p>Attention to women entrepreneurs in small and medium sized industries and start-ups.</p> <p>Recognising the opportunities provided by ICT, both continents would exchange digital policies with each other.</p> <p>Support to AU Business Plan for Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) – Malabo Declaration 2017-2021 in</p>
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	<p>identified; and acknowledged the efforts to boost capacity, especially in centres of information technology, education, and enhancing scientific and technological cooperation between both sides.</p> <p>The summit welcomed the idea of EU member states in creating 'Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Initiative of 1996 aiming to reduce debt burden of poor countries by following economic reform programmes. EU allocated 1 billion Euros from the European</p>			<p>EU's development assistance for trade.</p>	<p>promoting Africa's agriculture and productivity, strengthening African farmers to have better livelihood, enhancement of vocational training and education with regard to entrepreneurial activities of African farmers.</p>
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	Development Fund for debt relief under HIPC initiative ² for debt-ridden African countries on the condition of committing on good governance, economic reform measures improving social sectors and infrastructure.				
Human Rights, Democratic Principles and Institutions, Good Governance and Rule of Law	Expressing deep concern over massive human rights violence in atrocious events of mass murder in the name of racism, holocaust and ethnic cleansing, the summit asked both EU and Africa to cooperate to protect and promote human rights under the Charter of the United Nations and	Endorsing democratic governance and human rights, the Summit recognised the need for Africa-EU strategic partnership jointly undertaking issues of governance including “human rights, children rights, gender equality, democratic	Both EU and AU should initiate coordinated actions to address political crises in African countries. Understanding the importance of multilateral system, both sides agreed to form cooperation for implementation	Both EU and AU continued their efforts to make 2016 as the African Human Rights year. Focus was on dignity of work, promotion of entrepreneurial skills of women and youth through vocational training and education. ⁵	Providing full support to the African Governance Architecture (AGA), emphasising on the need of transparent and accountable government, more engagement of people in governance, it recognised the crucial role played by local administration.

	<p>the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.</p> <p>The summit appreciated efforts such as UN Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in South Africa in 2001, Grand Bay Declaration and Plan of Action on Human Rights in Africa, and establishment of African Court for Human and People's Rights.</p> <p>The Summit honoured the Beijing Platform of Action and the UN Convention on the</p>	<p>principles, rule of law, local governance, management of natural resources, transparent and accountable management of public funds, security sector reform, the fight against corruption, corporate social responsibility, institution building and development.”⁴</p> <p>Joint engagement of Africa and EU to promote and protect human rights and international humanitarian law within the framework of UN Human Rights Council.</p>	<p>of UN bodies</p> <p>Both continents showed a determination for cultural cooperation.</p>	<p>Special attention on higher education, promotion of student exchange programmes.</p>	<p>Both AU and EU would work together for implementation of the Ten Year Action Plan of the African Human and people's Rights Decade, Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).</p>
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	<p>Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, UN Convention on the Rights of Child, and African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.</p> <p>Condemning anti-democratic activities to attain power, the Summit acknowledged the decisions took at OAU Summit in Algiers in 1999 regarding unconstitutional changes of government in the continent, reaffirming values of good governance and rule of law.</p>	<p>Commitment of EU in developing institutional structure, capacity building, sharing of knowledge for AU's vision of pan-African governance structural designs like <i>African peer Review Mechanism</i> and <i>African Charter on Democracy</i></p>			
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	Emphasising greater citizen participation in decision making, the summit called for more inclusion of civil society, local governing authorities and other actors in governance.				
Strengthening Resilience, Peace and Security	Recognising complementary role between peace and security and socio-economic development, the summit provided full support to OAU's effort to boost mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution, respect to international humanitarian law.	Cooperation to build an integrated approach comprising of civil society and non state actors for security. Addressed common issues like proliferation of trafficking of small and light weapons, landmines, environmental threats, water	The Summit identified the achievement with regard to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). By stressing the role of report of the Prodi-Panel for funding African peace-support operations, the Summit prioritised	Commitment to peace and security in accordance with Charter of UN. Acknowledgement of African aspiration within the framework of African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), multidimensional African Standby Force, African Capacity for Immediate	With the aim to strengthen human security, EU would support Africa's project on "silence the guns by 2020". ⁸ The Summit viewed that Africans problems could be solved in African ways and endorsed successful deployment of peace operations by AU and EU authorised by UN

	<p>Acknowledged the need for addressing post-conflict issues, especially “disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration”⁶ of child soldiers, and environmental impacts.</p> <p>Expressing determination for cooperation in thwarting and combating terrorism, on the issue of spread of small arms, the summit supported international and regional initiative such as the 2001 UN Conference on the illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects, and ECOWAS</p>	<p>degradation, deposits of toxic waste through strengthening institutional cooperation.</p> <p>EU as crucial partner and provider of finance and human resources to AU’s peace building architecture such as AU Peace and Security Council, Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction, and the Declaration of Border Program.</p> <p>Backing of EU in mobilising international community to</p>	<p>future capacity building measures to prevent conflicts.</p> <p>More attention should be given to protect civilians especially children and women during conflicts and also to initiate local resilience capacities to stop transnational threats such as climate change, terrorism.</p>	<p>Responses to Crises (ACIRC).</p> <p>Recognised efforts of AU in countries like Somalia, Mali, Sudan, CAR and so forth.</p> <p>Collective efforts to fight terrorism and transnational organised crimes along with prevention of spread of weapons.</p> <p>Protection of women and children in conflict areas</p> <p>Addressed rising threats to maritime security especially in the coast of Horn of</p>	<p>Security Council.</p> <p>To provide special attention to women and youth in security and peace agendas.</p>
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	<p>moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons in its sub-region.</p> <p>Identifying presence of numerous conflicts in Africa threatening its peace, stability and security, the summit vowed to take necessary steps for rapid settlement plans adopted by UN and OAU.</p>	<p>enlarge Africa's peace efforts. funding</p>		<p>Africa where EU naval operation Atlanta has significant presence.⁷</p> <p>Special attention given to non-traditional security issues like climate change, water management, cyber security.</p>	
Development Issues	<p>A multi-sectoral solution-based approach consisting of education, health, food security, water and development is needed to alleviate poverty for increased</p>	<p>African countries with the help of EU investment should achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the field of poverty, primary education, creating</p>	<p>Commitment to MDGs to include certain actions like focus on primary and secondary education, protection of maternal and new</p>	<p>Cooperation in maritime policy and conservation of maritime environment.</p> <p>Adoption of the UN</p>	<p>Taking into account to the full commitment to the Paris Agreement and Marrakech Action Plan adopted in COP22, the Summit addressed that it</p>

<p>economic growth and sustainable development.</p> <p>Investment in education in particular science and technology.</p> <p>Called for commitments to eradicate HIV/ AIDS and other diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, polio and river blindness for development of human resources.</p> <p>Aimed for improvement in accessing food, leading to permanent improvement in food</p>	<p>gender equality, reduction of child mortality, HIV/AIDS and other diseases.</p> <p>Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness should be executed in a manner that EU would promote certain conditionalities like performance of African nations in the fulfilment of MDGs.</p> <p>Creation of dignified work in Africa was the agenda of the summit with more attention to private sector development.</p>	<p>born child health, implementation of land reforms and sustainable development, special care for people with disabilities, access to water and maintenance of sanitation.</p> <p>For climate change and environment, the Summit prioritised that second phase of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) and the ClimDev initiative should be fully implemented.</p>	<p>Framework Convention on Climate Change, support of EU to build “national and regional climate-resilient and low-emission development strategies” in Africa.</p> <p>Both EU and Africa jointly put their efforts to reach MDGs by 2015, stressing on eradication of poverty and protection of environment.</p>	<p>would try to reach target of US\$100 billion per year by 2022 on climate finance.</p> <p>Both AU and EU would initiate joint efforts to assist African Initiative on Renewable Energy (AREI), deepening AU-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP).</p> <p>Both continents would increase their activities to ensure quality education at all levels especially for girls, Interlinking education and health, the summit stressed that there should be regular and proper delivery of services</p>
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	<p>security.</p> <p>Strategic and participatory approach to combat environment threats like soil erosion and water degradation.</p> <p>The Summit observed the negative impact on youth due to drug abuse and trafficking, and agreed to implement “the pertinent recommendations of the 20th Special Session of the UN General Assembly aimed at reducing substantially the illicit drug phenomena.”⁹</p>				<p>for better care of sexual and reproductive health of girl children.</p> <p>Enhancement of skills and knowledge of youth especially girls to find better opportunities in job markets.</p> <p>Partnership should be strengthened between Europe and Africa for mobility of young students and researchers.</p> <p>Both continents should increase their efforts to collaborate in field of Scientific, Technical and Vocational Education</p>
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					<p>and training for better research and innovation.</p> <p>Promotion of inter-cultural dialogues between AU and EU with regard to preserving culture of respective societies.</p>
Migration and Mobility	<p>On migration, the summit recognised the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to deal with the issue of migration of skilled labourers from Africa to Europe.</p> <p>EU promised to provide considerable support to six million refugees and about 20</p>	<p>Mentioned migration as one of the key challenges of our times.</p>	<p>Measures adopted to reduce illegal and irregular migratory flows and provisions to protect migrants and refugees.</p> <p>Focus was given on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Action Plan on Employment and</p>	<p>The Summit raised great concern on lives and living conditions of migrants, and asked both AU and EU to tackle migration in a comprehensive way.</p>	<p>Migration and mobility listed as a strategic priority till the next summit.</p> <p>Recognising the UN Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (2016) as political framework, the Summit expressed its commitment to work towards developing</p>

	<p>million internally displaced persons in the Africa.</p> <p>Enhancement of security personnel to safeguard refugee camps.</p>		<p>poverty alleviation, strengthening of mobility of students and academia along with development of diasporas in the development process of Africa.</p>		<p>robust and inclusive Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees, boosting cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination.</p> <p>Addressing causes of irregular and forced migration, the summit focussed on young migrants.</p> <p>The Summit reiterated its commitment towards Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the African Institute for Remittances (AIR)</p>
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Table: Highlights of Africa-Europe summit declarations hitherto.

Although the Abidjan summit had a comprehensive agenda, the speeches and discussions mainly highlighted the issues of (i) migration and mobility and (ii) peace and security. Reports of migrants and refugees being sold in slave markets, their poor conditions and inhuman treatment by Mafia en route to Europe, especially Libya, put the issues on top in deliberations. It reflected the outrage of the African Countries as well as concerns of the EU. Emphasising these issues, Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council, in his inaugural address, said that although since 2004 the European Union had contributed €2.5 billion to the African Peace Facility alone, the two sides need a “more strategic” cooperation for peace and security. Noting the horrifying experience of the African migrants en route, he acknowledged migration as a “long-term issue” for both sides. He called for identification of a common ground between the two parties on this issue to enable them to cooperate more “concretely” and “effectively”.¹⁰

Currently, from the European perspective, security diplomacy has a priority over development diplomacy.¹¹ Creating a sustainable business environment in Africa remains an integral part of its partnership and the strategy for peace and security. Although migration has been a serious problem for both EU and Africa, the past summits did not accord it an immediate strategic priority. The EU generally focused on the issues of development, humanitarian aid and trade relations. However, in this summit, due to a surge in anti-migrant sentiments in Europe as well as massive media coverage of barbaric treatment of African migrants and refugees, the attention of the leaders of both AU and EU was drawn towards the issue, and it was agreed as one of the strategic priorities. The summit addressed the issue acknowledging the fact that 80 per cent of African immigrants and refugees move within Africa.¹² They felt the need to plan and devise ways to benefit from this mobility as well. However, there should be improvement of security in border areas of EU and Africa along with creation of legitimate passages between both the continents. The main agenda is to reduce migratory burden on European countries by creating sustainable business environment for African populations in Africa.

Given the security challenges within Africa, leading to huge displacement of African migrants towards Europe for better life prospects, the EU in the past have come up with various initiatives to address insecurity and bringing stability in the continent. For the purpose, it has created funds, provided defence equipments, organised training missions, capacity building initiatives to AU’s peace keeping operations and counter terrorism missions. Building on the past initiatives at this summit, both EU and Africa also discussed the rise of trans-boundary terrorist activities as a common security threat, and decided to build a structured framework document to address their origin. The summit recognised intricacy involved in these security threats and reaffirmed obligation towards African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and subsequent positioning of African peace support operations and EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions.¹³

Taking a note of the importance and immediate focus of the deliberations on the two issues, the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, the President of the European Commission, Jean-

Claude Juncker, and the High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini met at the margins of the summit to discuss the required concrete steps to be taken to jointly address the situation of migrants and refugee victims of criminal networks. They agreed to set up a joint task force to save and protect the life of the migrants and refugees on the routes and in Libya in particular. The task force, with EU funding, would help the countries of origin and the International Migration Organization (IMO) in the ongoing process of voluntary repatriation of the refugees. The process would be coordinated with the Libyan authorities; and the trilateral cooperation would work to dismantle the trafficking and criminal networks.¹⁴

The Summit and the Africa-Europe Partnership

Africa-Europe engagement has seen transformation from a state of total dependence of Africa on Europe to the state of drift towards Africa's aspirations for the ownership of its future on respectable terms with Europe. The changes in geopolitical and geo-economic scenario due to the rising/ emerging powers in different parts of the world, primarily Asia, have provided Africa avenues for diversification and getting rid of its total dependence it used to have on Europe. However, the relationship still has substantial and remarkable element of dependence on European finances. The EU, still, is the biggest trade and development partner of Africa. The European Commission (EC) has a plan to invest €31 billion in Africa in the period 2014-20. For the period 2014-16, it allocated €680 million for enhancing Africa-Europe trade, and 18.2 million people were given access to energy through EU support. €21 billion as development aid was also provided to Africa in 2016 by the EU and its member states, making them the largest aid donors on the continent.¹⁵

With a contribution of €4.1 billion by the EC, the External Investment Plan introduced in 2015 promises to generate an investment of €44 billion for Africa by 2020. With a contribution of €31 billion in 2015 the total stock of European Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Africa stood as €294 billion. The region remains as one of the top FDI sources in Africa.¹⁶ However, this position of Europe is being threatened by new players in Africa. For example, in 2016, Asia-Pacific with a 55 per cent share in terms of capital investments was the highest source of FDI in Africa. Total investment from the Asia-Pacific amounted to US\$50.8 billion while Western Europe invested a total of US\$12 billion, i.e. 13 per cent of the total FDI in Africa. China was the highest investor in the region with US\$36.1 billion of FDI, a sum higher than the total contribution by EU. The United Kingdom (UK), already under Brexit pressures, was the top FDI contributor to Africa with a total of US\$2.3 billion, i.e. 3 per cent of the total in Africa.¹⁷ These figures give the current picture of the changing dynamics and the pressures faced by the Africa-EU engagement.

The speech by the President of EC noted the changing scenario. He said, "Both of our continents are undergoing great change. The global order is contested and the fundamental principles are being challenged". In this light, he called for concrete and effective Africa-Europe talks on "the post-Cotonou Framework". Since the year 2000, the Africa-Europe partnership is

being largely guided by the Cotonou framework that remains valid till 2020.* Although Africa is still negotiating its common position on different issues through the AU platform, contemplations on a post-Cotonou scenario have already started. The change in the title of the Summit meeting from Africa to AU is not just incidental. This manoeuvre may appear like mere semantics but reveals the kind of institutional interest and posture Africa and Europe are adopting towards engaging each other.

In this summit, the emphasis was also on the two continents to see each other cooperating on a more equal footing, addressing each other's deficiencies and restrictions and restructuring the future partnership. Federica Mogherini, EU high Representative noted:

It is not a donor-recipient Summit. It is a Summit between political partners that share the same approach to global issues and multilateralism, and that have a common agenda to develop together. It is a Summit on the partnership between the European Union and the African Union on many different fields, from peace and security, where we need to increase even more our cooperation; on global issues like climate change and environmental issues; to economy, investment, creation of jobs, education.¹⁸

In the global governance aspect, the summit declaration promised enhanced cooperation in international bodies including the United Nations, the G20, and all multilateral institutions to strengthen high level policy dialogue for a coordinated approach. The AU-EU-UN trilateral cooperation is to be promoted due to its role in peace and security, human rights, democracy, global governance and development. The leaders also looked forward to constructive cooperation and dialogue in the comprehensive institutional reforms of multilateral institutions, revitalisation of the General Assembly and the reform of the United Nations Security Council.

As for the approach of the Summit regarding addressing issues and problems of Africa, it was summed up in the statements of Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson, African Union Commission and UN Secretary General António Guterres. Their speeches articulated an integrated approach consisting of both immediate and long-term priorities within the framework of Africa-Europe Joint Strategy. Mr. Faki, corresponding to the immediate theme, emphasised that the African youth creating 60 per cent of the continent's population are looking forward to investments in "education, training, employment, intellectual, cultural, sporting and artistic development."¹⁹ Africa and Europe do not have a future without it, and the two sides need to engage more in these areas. Mr. Guterres highlighted the importance of "multilateral cooperation and capacity building", and the requirement of implementing 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063. These, according to him, are "ambitious and

* The Cotonou Partnership Agreement replacing the arrangement provided by four Lomé Conventions (1975-1995) was signed in Cotonou, Benin in June 2002. The partnership agreement entered into force in April 2003 and introduced some fundamental changes in Africa-Europe engagement. It intended to end several economic privileges given to the African countries in a phased manner, and bring the Africa-Europe economic partnership in consonance with the WTO standards. It also introduced changes in some fundamental rules of trade and developmental aid to Africa. To achieve its goals, the agreement remains valid till 2020. Therefore, an assessment of the performance and relevance of the agreement would be pertinent after 2020, leading to a new agreement.

mutually reinforcing blueprints” for world peace, prosperity and dignity for all.²⁰ The declaration of the Summit corresponded with the approach and included both the aspects.

The Abidjan Summit declaration expresses the intention give a new impetus to the partnership through effective joint mechanisms and structures, which include annual Joint ministerial meetings. As the previous summits, since 2007, have been formulating joint action plans and roadmaps, both the AU and EU Commissions were requested to develop an action plan for identifying projects and programmes within the AU-EU joint priority areas and establishing a joint follow-up mechanism.

Conclusion

The 5th AU-EU Summit is indicative of a departure from the usual Africa-Europe engagement due to the current global geo-economic scenario as well as immediate imperatives of peace and security. The intercontinental partnership moved towards a more institutionalised format. It also highlighted the African desire for equality and real solutions to its problems. It was also noticeable that although African irregular migration to Europe is a socio-economic and security problem for the continent, the EU, in principle, gave positive signals for advancement of legal migration. However, contention remains in the detail. The Africa-Europe summits had been mentioning migration and mobility in their declarations earlier as well, but this summit focused on the “root” for a solution, i.e. the youth. It construed that solving the problems of youth would also address the interlinked problems of migration and mobility as well as peace and security. Therefore, while the 4th Summit had a general focus on “Investing in People Prosperity and Peace” the 5th Summit was more particular and action oriented in term of its focus on the factors driving Africa’s growth as well as the problems. It was also clear during the summit that the African-European partnership is moving further towards transformation. The nature of engagement has changed from Lomé to Cotonou, and Africa has gradually taken more responsibilities under the changing world scenario. The EU has also recently attempted to transform its relationship with Africa due to its internal economic pressures and the emergence of new players and competitors in the African continent. Although the Abidjan Summit was mainly focused on Africa-Europe bilateral issues, it also had overtones of the changing global context. The African leaders in their statements emphasised the principle of joint responsibility and joint strategy on bilateral, regional and global issues.

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Disclaimer: The views expressed are that of the Researcher and not of the Council.*

Endnotes

¹ Clause 1, 5th AU-EU Summit Declaration.

² Africa-Europe Summit under the aegis of the OAU and the EU, Cairo, 3-4 April, 2000 [Cairo Declaration].

³ Fourth EU-Africa Summit, 2-3 April, 2014, Brussels.

⁴ The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership- A joint Africa-EU Strategy”, Lisbon Declaration.

⁵ Fourth EU-Africa Summit, 2-3 April, 2014, Brussels.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Fourth EU-Africa Summit, 2-3 April, 2014, Brussels.

⁸ African Union-European Union Summit 2017.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Speech by Mr. Donald Tusk, President of the European Council at the 5th AU-EU Summit, November 29-30, 2017.

¹¹ “European Intervention in Africa: Past and Future”, in Catherine Gegout (2017): *Why Europe Intervenes in Africa: Security, Prestige and the Legacy of Colonialism*, C. Hurst Publishers Ltd., London, 2017, p.291.

¹²“Six things to watch at the 2017 AU-EU Summit”, November 27, 2017, <https://www.devex.com/news/6-things-to-watch-at-the-2017-au-eu-summit-91517>

¹³ AU-EU Summit Declaration 2017

¹⁴ “Joint Press Release of the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union”, November 29, 2017, at <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20171129/joint-press-release-united-nations-african-union-and-european-union>

¹⁵ “5th African Union-EU Summit”, European Council, at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2017/11/29-30/>

¹⁶ European Commission factsheet on the EU’s key partnership with Africa, at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31793/au-eu-summit_factsheet-v27nov.pdf

¹⁷ Africa Investment Report 2017

¹⁸“Africa: EU and African leaders to meet for summit focused on youth”, at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/36287/africa-eu-and-african-leaders-meet-summit-focused-youth_es, 27 November 2017.

¹⁹ Speech of Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson, African Union Commission at the 5th AU-EU Summit, November 28-30, 2017.

²⁰ Speech by UN Secretary General António Guterres at the closing of the 5th AU-EU Summit, November 28-30, 2017.