



# **The EU & Africa: Towards a Strategic Partnership**

## **UK House of Lords Inquiry Sub-Committee C (Foreign Affairs, Defence and Development Policy)**

**Evidence submitted by ECDPM, Maastricht NL  
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### **Introduction**

ECDPM, the European Centre for Development Policy Management, is an independent and non-partisan Dutch foundation established in 1986 specialising in ACP-EU relations. The Centre works on a continuing basis with all the principal actors of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement on both the state and non-state sides. Over the past four years we have also developed expertise on AU-EU relations through working on a number of studies for both the European and African Union Commissions. Our work focuses on policy oriented research, capacity building, communication and the promotion of dialogue and debate aimed at promoting development and strengthening cooperation between the EU and its partners in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The responses below are based on ECDPM's research and experience in the different areas addressed by the questions in the Call for Evidence. Where possible, additional material and specific studies have been referenced in the footnotes. The bulk of ECDPM's publications, research and communication work can be accessed for free on our website [www.ecdpm.org](http://www.ecdpm.org). For further information on this paper please contact James Mackie, [jm@ecdpm.org](mailto:jm@ecdpm.org).

### **Responses to Questions in the Call for Evidence**

#### **1. The EU's Role in Africa**

- **What value does the Strategy add to previous initiatives on Africa such as the G8 Action Plan for Africa?**

The value of the Strategy has to be seen both in a European political context and in a development context. So far neither the EU nor the EC has ever had a single policy document providing an overall reference point for all their cooperation with Africa. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which is the framework for the relationship between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, concerns Sub-

Saharan countries only. South Africa is a signatory to Cotonou but also has a separate agreement with the EU. The cooperation between the EU and Northern African countries takes place in the framework of the Barcelona process (Euro-Mediterranean partnership) and since 2004 the European Neighbourhood Policy. The EU Strategy thus provides a single policy framework for EU dealings with Africa.

The primary value of the Strategy lies in its scope and the strong political status acquired as a result of being approved at the highest level by the European Council. It is a framework for all EU relations with Africa including those of the EU Member States as well as of the European Commission and it is not purely restricted to development assistance, but covers other areas of external action as well.

In terms of content, the Strategy largely summarizes the commitments previously made by the EU and does not include any major new commitments. For the EU as a whole, it provides a single framework for EU Member States to improve the complementarity of their policies and actions – complementarity being one of the guiding principles of EU development policy according to the Maastricht Treaty - which should henceforth take place within the framework defined in the EU Strategy towards Africa. The Strategy should serve as the main guidance to implement EC development cooperation towards Africa as well as EU Member States bilateral policies. It has been conceived as an answer to the new African institutional context with the political rise of the African Union and NEPAD.

One of the main challenges for the Strategy lies in whether it can be implemented in a coherent fashion. The institutional context is not promising in this respect as the current organization of EU institutions does not correspond to this policy framework (In the Commission the split between DGs: DEV and RELEX; in the Council the distribution of working groups) and neither do the Community instruments. The EDF, and the three new instruments<sup>1</sup>, ENP, DCEC and Stability, will all cover different areas or aspects of work with Africa and it will be crucial to see how and to what extent they are used in accordance with the Strategy.

- **How can the EU supplement the work of the United Nations and its associated organisations in working towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa?**

The EU is committed to working closely with the UN and other international partners as per its policy of what is known as *effective multilateralism*. This involves coordination at many different levels and in different fora. EU member states and the Commission recognize the importance of MDG8 on establishing a sustainable partnership and their responsibility in the achievement of this Goal. In the donor community the EU is the biggest single block of donors responsible for more than 50% of global ODA. The EU is also the main source of funds for many UN organizations. The EU can therefore, if it is willing, swing the direction of international cooperation in a particular direction and it is clear that the MDG would not be achievable without its support. Having such a prominent position also carries responsibilities. In the past few years the EU has shown itself willing to rise to the occasion and has been a major force in pushing the donor community to commit themselves to a renewed effort to increase ODA levels to the agreed UN goal of 0.7% of GNI. In this

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<sup>1</sup> EDF: European Development Fund will continue to be outside the EU budget. The ENP, European Neighborhood Policy, DCEC, Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation and Stability Instruments will be introduced in the new EU budget framework as from 2007.

context the key issue is therefore less about the EU ‘supplementing’ the work of the UN and far more about ensuring that it delivers the increased levels of ODA that it has promised.

For Africa the relationship with the EU also offers other aspects of interest over and above what the UN can offer. In particular the EU is an important market for African goods and the Union has direct experience of regional integration processes. In these areas the EU has clear added value as a cooperation partner.

- **How will the EU coordinate its efforts in Africa with other international and bilateral partners?**

The EU, both EC and Member States, is committed to the Paris Declaration on Harmonisation and Alignment (March 2005). Within the context that these commitments provide the EU’s emphasis is first on in-country coordination but efforts are also made to coordinate at regional level. To give some examples: at the country level EC Delegations are instructed to follow closely the World Bank’s PRSP processes and wherever possible use it as a basis for their own programming. EU missions will also seek to do the same. The same happens at the regional level. For example with the SADC in Southern Africa or with the AU Commission in Addis Abeba donor coordination mechanisms have been established that involve EU member States, the EC and the appropriate UN agencies.

- **What should be the role of civil society in designing and implementing EU policy in Africa?**

Civil society should be fully included in the design and implementation of EU policy in Africa by making constructive inputs in the implementation plan that will be adopted in the first semester of 2006. It should monitor the implementation of the strategy and in particular EU’s financial commitments. The Strategy cannot be implemented without fully integrating the role of civil society in its components. For instance improving a country’s governance cannot take place without national and regional civil society playing its role as a watchdog and questioning the different institutions/powers on governance issues. This should be fully taken into account in the implementation of the Strategy.

Most EU Member States and the Commission have long standing records of working with civil society organizations. The EU’s attachment to this principal is also well established with the EU’s partners in Africa and written in to major agreements such as the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. The AU equally provides for the involvement of civil society in different ways. The main formal forum for this is the AU’s ECOSOCC that is currently being established, but civil society is also involved in many other aspects of the AU’s work, one can imagine therefore that the importance of involving them in the implementation of the EU-Africa Strategy will be readily recognized.

## **2. Policy Coherence**

- **How can the EU best ensure that its policies in the fields of development, trade, governance, peace-keeping and weapons control complement one another?**

- **How should prioritisation be balanced against a comprehensive approach to ensure that development, peace and security, good governance and human rights are pursued along parallel tracks?**
- **What more should the Commission Directorates-General be doing to work towards the goal of policy coherence?**

Some institutional mechanisms to promote coherence have been put in place by the European Commission mainly in the context of the reform of external assistance management initiated in 2000: (i) a Country Strategy Paper format which provides a single framework to look at the different components of the EU's relation with developing countries; (ii) an inter-service Quality Support Group – grouping officials from all the external relations DGs - has been created to check the quality of these documents as well as the reports of the different implementation reviews; (iii) country teams meant to coordinate the Commission's various interests and to ensure policy coherence look at all programming and review documents; (iv) policy coherence working groups have been created on different matters and (v) impact assessments function as a tool for improving the coherence of measures under preparation<sup>2</sup>. However this setting could be improved within the Commission by associating more closely DG Development to issues that have a major impact on developing countries, for instance on EPA negotiations, agriculture or on matters dealt with by Justice and Home affairs. Looking at different EU Member States' practices in this respect, further steps could also be taken in the Commission such as establishing a global commitment of all EC administration to policy coherence for development, each DG being responsible to take this aspect into account while making its own decisions.

- **Is the Strategy well-aligned with other EU initiatives including the new Development Policy Statement, the Barcelona Process, the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Cotonou Agreement**

In stated policy terms alignment between these different frameworks is generally good though each one does have its peculiarities. The Africa Strategy and the new DPS, *The European Consensus*, in particular are very consistent as they were drafted in parallel and by and large the same groups of officials were involved in their preparation and negotiation. More effort will have to be made with respect to the other two policy frameworks so as to ensure that their implementation is consistent with and supportive of the Strategy.

- **Can issues relating to trade and agriculture be isolated from the rest of the Strategy and left solely to the outcome of the Doha round of WTO talks?**

In the case of developing economies, certain basic conditions must be in place for free trade agreements to lead to economic development and export growth, so that countries are able to both face possible *costs* and grasp potential *benefits* of liberalization. On the one hand *import liberalization* affects government revenues due to reduced collection of tariff duties and may cause disruption in domestic economic sectors due to increased competition from foreign producers. On the other poor economic infrastructure, unfavourable investment climate, weak institutions and lack of trained work force (generally referred to as 'supply-side constraints') prevent several developing countries from taking advantage of new *export opportunities* created by trade liberalization in developed economies. Without adequate

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<sup>2</sup> For further details on these mechanisms, see ECDPM and ICEI, *Scoping study – EU mechanisms that promote policy coherence for development*. Maastricht, July 2005, pp. 31-33

*policies and resources to adjust to economic transformation and to produce and market their goods competitively*, ACP countries are unlikely to fully benefit from any new free trade arrangements, being with the EU or as part of WTO talks.

Therefore issues relating to trade and agriculture cannot be isolated from the rest of the Africa Strategy, as strengthening infrastructure, governance, etc. is a prerequisite for an outcome to WTO (and EPA) negotiations that can be beneficial for Africa.

The EPA negotiations are also intimately linked to the WTO and therefore trade and agriculture cannot be left solely to the outcome of the Doha round of WTO talks, as they are integral part of the ongoing reform of ACP –EU trade and economic cooperation.

### **3. Priorities**

- **What should the EU's priorities be in setting out its action plan for the Strategy?**

In preparing an action plan for the implementation of the Strategy the EU should attach a high priority to ensuring it itself has the appropriate mechanisms and the continued political will to deliver on the Strategy. As has already been indicated above, some of the main challenges to achieving the Strategy lie in inappropriate institutional structures of the Union: the workings of Council groups, internal structures inside the Commission and the confused division of responsibilities between the two institutions. Equally fundamental is the real willingness of EU Member States to work together and with the Commission in a coordinated and complementary fashion. In practical terms for instance, many diplomats and aid officials in EU Member States missions in Africa are poorly informed about the way the Union is expected to operate and their governments' commitment to work under the framework of a single EU Strategy for Africa. Action therefore needs to be taken to ensure these institutional constraints are removed at an early date if the Strategy is going to work.

### **4. Financing**

- **The Strategy purports to treat Africa as a whole. How can this be reconciled with the different EU funding regimes for the ACP countries and those of northern Africa?**

It will be very difficult, if not impossible, to 'treat Africa as a whole' with the existing EU budgetary and EDF structure. The recent legal objection by the EU Council Secretariat to a Euro 7.7 million transfer from the EU budget to the African Peace Facility is just one example of the constraints to be overcome. Another challenge is the EC's organisational split between one service which deals with Sub-Saharan Africa (DG Dev) and another which deals with Northern Africa (DG Relex for the ENP). From 2007/8 onwards the prospects will be better, though not perfect, as the new EU budgetary instruments as well as the revised Cotonou Agreement allow for cross-funding. The legal problems will thus be reduced but politically, organisationally and procedurally many challenges will still need to be resolved. On top of these internal EC challenges come a series of EU wide challenges, mainly related to coordination, complementarity and coherence of the EC's and EU Member States' interventions in Africa.

- **How can the Commission best monitor the commitments made in May 2005 of ODA worth 0.56% of GNI by 2010, with half the additional billion euros going to Africa, and 0.7% GNI by 2015?**

There are a number of issues of concern here: (i) the EU Member States are past masters in disguising their actual level of delivery on their aid promises, (ii) a number of escape-roots exist for EU Member States (e.g. changing the OECD/DAC definition of ODA, exceptions to the promises made etc.) and (iii) the EC can only hold the EU member states accountable to a certain extent as it is reluctant to criticise individual EU member states directly. The EC can thus monitor progress, but actual delivery depends on collective political will on the part of the Member States.

That being said, a number of monitoring mechanisms already exist: the EU Africa Strategy requires a bi-annual review of progress with implementation. In addition, one could imagine that the EC could also highlight the delivery of the commitments made to Africa in its monitoring of EU MS's contributions to the MDGs and Monterrey commitments via the annual reports submitted by each EU MS. Other options are to include a specific chapter on monitoring of aid commitments in EuropeAid's Annual Report or in the Annual Orientation Debate.

- **How best can funding for the Africa Peace Facility be continued? Should funding continue to be taken from the EDF (or its successor)?**

As evaluators of the African Peace Facility ECDPM has made a number of recommendations on this issue<sup>3</sup>. Our point of entry is that it is first important to establish certain key principles for continued EU financial support to African led peace support operations: ownership, sustainability, longer-term funding, predictability, the value of an integrated approach to conflict<sup>4</sup> and differentiation between small or forgotten crisis (e.g. the FOMUC operation in CAR) and politically sensitive conflicts (e.g. AMIS in Darfur)<sup>5</sup>. If one follows these basic principles then one option is to ensure that the EC can take the lead and/or manage the funds for urgent needs and small scale PSOs (while of course coordinating with the Council Secretariat and EU MS) from, for example, the EDF. At the same time a different management system could be found for larger or more politically sensitive PSOs that need stronger involvement of EU MS and/or the Council (and/or NATO). In this latter case further and additional funding from non-EDF instruments such as Athena or the ESDP/CFSP budgets could be envisaged.

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<sup>3</sup> The Report of this Evaluation from January 2006 will soon be available on the EuropeAid website.

<sup>4</sup> Tackling conflict does not just imply the funding of PSOs but also supporting conflict prevention work and post conflict reconstruction. This broader work need not be funded from the APF but reducing the incidence of conflict by working on conflict prevention or moving promptly on post-conflict rehabilitation so as to reduce the risk of sliding back into conflict will also relieve pressure on the APF, hence the importance of an integrated approach. An overview of what the EC does and can do in the conflict prevention area in Africa can be found in: *Alexander, L. Higazi, A. Mackie, J. Niño-Perez, J. and A. Sherriff. 2003. Regional approaches to conflict prevention in Africa; European support to African processes. (ECDPM In Brief 4). Maastricht : ECDPM*

<sup>5</sup> To date the APF has provided funding for two Peace Support Operations and some capacity building work. The two PSOs are the FOMUC, Force multi-nationale du CEMAC, in Central African Republic and AMIS, the African Mission to Sudan, in Darfur. FOMUC is run by the sub-regional organization CEMAC (Communauté économique et monétaire de l'Afrique centrale) while AMIS is run by the AU.

- **What level of control will the AU have over the disbursement of the Facility's funds in the future?**

The answer to this question depends, to a large extent, on where the EU funding will come from. If it comes from the EDF, then the AU will have more room for manoeuvre than if the funds are coming from the CFSP/ESDP or the EU budget instruments, as the EC has generally closer relations to the AUC and is more willing to work in partnership with the AUC than the Council Secretariat. The APF evaluation report shows that the APF principles of ownership, partnership and solidarity are essential to the future of the APF and strengthening of cooperation between the EU and the AU. It is also doubtful whether the AU would accept too many EU conditionalities on the funding and/or cooperation. In the end, the APF is just one out of several funding sources the AU can turn to.

- **Following agreement of the financial perspective 2007-2013 at the European Council on 16 December, what further firm financial commitments could the EU make towards implementation of the Strategy?**

The key question is not about further financial commitments but rather about delivery on the existing ones. EU and donors have made many aid commitments since the mid 1970s. Not all of them have been honoured, so for most African countries it is about how to ensure that the EU Member States are also doing what they promise. The levels of funding agreed in the Financial Perspectives package and for the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF in December 2005 do not reflect the commitments the EU has made on increasing ODA levels up to 2015. This implies EU member states do not *a priori* see the EU budget or EDF as the channel through which they intend to disburse these increases. The EU, collectively, should therefore be clarifying what channels it is expecting to use to meet the pledges for increased development assistance declared in the Strategy. That being said, apart from Member States each simply increasing their bilateral aid, opportunities could still be found for further collective delivery on these commitments, for example: (i) establishing new EU-wide financing mechanisms for Africa which should clearly involve new and additional funding; or (ii) moving collectively to total debt-relief (based on governance reforms).

## 5. Conditionality

- **To what extent should support to African countries be conditional upon achieving certain criteria in terms of good governance and respect for human rights and the rule of law?**

The Cotonou Agreement already has what are known as *essential elements* (human rights, rule of law, democracy, non-proliferation of WMD) and a *fundamental element* (good governance). Abuse of the essential elements can lead to the suspension of EU aid through the process of what is known as *Article 96 consultations*<sup>6</sup>. This is also possible in cases of serious corruption under the good governance criteria.

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<sup>6</sup> ECDPM has published a series of Discussion Papers on the use of Article 96 that is available on the website: [www.ecdpm.org](http://www.ecdpm.org). The series includes an introductory paper that explains how the process works: Mackie, J. and J. Zinke. 2005. *When Agreement Breaks Down, What Next? The Cotonou Agreement's Article 96 Consultation Procedure.* (ECDPM Discussion Paper 64A). Maastricht: ECDPM.

- **How should the EU determine those criteria?**

There are however practical difficulties in applying this process. The essential elements themselves are defined in international and UN law. The real value of the process however lies more in the dialogue that it provides for. If a serious dialogue can be established in which both parties are willing to engage fully this can lead to measures to correct the problems encountered and the avoidance or at least progressive reduction of sanctions. Once aid is suspended, this can cut off any hope of further dialogue and therefore any viable route to resolving the differences. Sanctions are thus a blunt instrument which do not necessarily open the way to achieving the objectives donors seek. They should therefore only be used as a measure of last resort.

The concept of good governance is however not defined in international law which is why the ACP argued that it should not be seen as a Cotonou ‘essential element’ which could provide the basis for suspension. Given the lack of a clear, internationally agreed definition of good governance it is difficult to see how the EU could in practice determine criteria for conditionality that would be generally recognised and accepted.

- **How much reliance is being placed on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to promote governance?**

In such a context the APRM provides a more hopeful avenue to explore. Because the APRM is a voluntary process of peer review of good governance it stands a much higher chance of initiating open dialogue and debate out of which should emerge action to improve governance standards than any externally imposed process would.

- **Should cooperation with the APRM be specifically linked to aid?**

Whether or not to link cooperation with the APRM to aid is a delicate question. A priori it would seem an ideal solution for donors to do so, but the strength of the APRM lies precisely in the fact that it is a *voluntary* mechanism that AU member states can choose to join or not. A government freely choosing to join is the first guarantee of its willingness to collaborate fully with the process of review. Was membership to be a condition for receiving EU aid it is likely that some states would join but then not collaborate with the process. What would be far better is for membership of the APRM to become the accepted norm in the African community of nations. This would be more likely to ensure the system was taken seriously. It should be noted that already half the member states of the AU have joined the APRM

## **6. Delivery of Aid**

- **Should the EU be moving towards greater budget support for those countries which meet the conditions laid down?**

Direct budget support has over the past few years become an important aid modality for the EC<sup>7</sup> and some EU Member States; though others are concerned about its use feeling that it is too risky. On the positive side it is clearly a way of giving maximum *ownership* of the aid to

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<sup>7</sup> Volker Hauck, Oliver Hasse and Martin Koppensteiner. 2005. *EC budget support: thumbs up or down?* (ECDPM Discussion Paper 63). Maastricht: ECDPM

the recipient government and equally it ensures maximum alignment with the beneficiary country's own development programme. From the EC's point of view it is also an attractive modality because the procedures for its administration are considerably simpler than those for regular EDF programme so as a modality it drastically reduces transaction costs.

Certainly direct budget support carries risks, but these can be minimized by careful consideration of the recipient entity's institutional ability to manage its own budget and ensure transparency and accountability. Budget support should probably also always be used in conjunction with a programme to strengthen any weak governance procedures or mechanisms and in a context where there is a high degree of effective dialogue between the partners.

## **7. Security & Peace-Keeping Capabilities**

- **How can the EU most effectively support the development of the African Standby Force (ASF), in line with the Roadmap for the Operationalisation of the ASF, at both continental and sub-regional levels?**

The APF provides substantial ear-marked funds for capacity building which so far have not been fully used. These should be devoted to building up the capacity required to establish the African *continental peace and security architecture* agreed by the AU, one component of which is the ASF. Funding for the ASF is a key element of the support the EU can provide, but there is also considerable technical know-how that can be provided as and when required. Building up operational planning capacity is one key issue for instance. The EU does however need to coordinate its inputs better in this latter respect, as there are still major differences of approach between the military thinking of different EU member states in a position to provide the assistance. A lack of coherence in the support will lead to wastage and delays.

- **What lessons can be learned from previous EU operational experiences in Africa?**

The main conclusions and recommendations of the EC evaluation of the African Peace Facility outline a series of lessons. Some of the most important ones are: (i) African ownership and partnership between the EU and AU/Sub-regional organisations are essential; (ii) the funding basis for small and large scale operations needs to be improved at the EC, EU and international levels (UN); (iii) the EC/EU faces a number of challenges to ensure a more comprehensive and integrated approach to conflict prevention and resolution in Africa; (iv) institutional capacity building is absolutely necessary and should be the main focus of EU donors; and (v) close linkages between capacity building and implementation of PSOs should be ensured. Useful experience is being acquired in the African PSOs supported by the EU and the collection, analysis and use of lessons and best practices from these PSOs should be done systematically during the course of each operation.

In addition to the two operations supported by the APF (FOMUC and AMIS, see above) three further PSOs in Africa have been supported financially by the European Commission before the African Peace Facility was established. PSOs in Liberia (Euro 8 million), Burundi (Euro 25 million) and Ivory Coast (Euro 12.5 million) were funded from the EDF B-envelope in the National Indicative Programmes for those countries. Actual spending was

lower in all cases and unused amounts were decommitted and then used for reconstruction including support for elections. In all cases, the Cotonou Agreement's Article 11 provided the legal basis for support to the enhancement and running of the PSOs. The timeframes for EC financial support were relatively short (less than a year). In most cases, additional direct or indirect support was provided either before or after through the NIP, RIP or the Rapid Reaction Mechanism. All three PSOs were also relatively small scale (max 3,200 troops) and had estimated total annual budgets of Euros 100-110 million. EC funding never stood alone and supported: the establishment and running of office for ECOWAS Special Representative; troop allowances, military observer daily allowances, food, water, fuel, medical consumables, TA on financial management, monitoring and evaluations. These budget lines are similar to the current support provided by the APF. The EDF procurement rules proved too cumbersome and unworkable so now the EC avoids support for articles that need to be procured. This lesson came out of the support to Liberia where ECOWAS had serious problems with the procurement system. Financing Agreements were signed with the National Authorising Officers (NAOs) whereas the individual Contribution Agreements were made directly with either ECOWAS or the AU. The NAOs had to be involved due to the joint management responsibilities listed in Annex IV of the Cotonou Agreement. The APF later avoided this legal issue by first decommitting the NIP contributions from all Sub-Saharan NIPs and then consolidating them in the APF budget.

On the EC side the support programmes for Liberia and Ivory Coast were initially managed by the EC headquarters but then devolved to the EC Delegations. The EC Delegation in Ethiopia was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the support provided to the AU for AMIB (Burundi) from the beginning. AMIB was also the first mission managed by the AU. At the handover of AMIB to the UN in May 2004, the AU chairperson expressed his 'appreciation for the excellent work done by AMIB, in spite of the very severe financial and logistical constraints the Mission was faced with'.<sup>8</sup>

The exit strategy for both the missions in Burundi and Ivory Coast was a UN take-over. There was no explicit exit strategy foreseen in the case of Liberia. All the support programmes show concern with the institutional capacities, financial management, planning and implementing capacities of the AU or ECOWAS. Budgets for technical assistance in financial management, monitoring and evaluation are foreseen in all the EC support programmes. None of the three EC support programmes have a dedicated budget for capacity building and none work as on-going facilities but rather as specific projects/programmes.

- **Given the post-conflict focus of the Peace building Commission, what initiatives will the EU undertake to support African capacity to prevent conflicts?**

The EU, that is both EC and Member states, has a long-standing record of undertaking work in post-conflict areas and extensive experience has been gained in what measures are most effective. Any initiatives undertaken should be based on the lessons that can be drawn from this experience<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Communiqué from the African Union, 22 May 2004: 'The Chairperson of the AU Commission welcomes the Decision of the UN Security Council to authorize the deployment of a Peacekeeping Operation in Burundi'

<sup>9</sup> In 2000-2001 ECDPM conducted a series of 6 case studies of the EU's political and development response to the situations in: Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda, Congo, Burundi and Guinea Bissau. These were published along with an overview paper as ECDPM Discussion Papers Nos 25-31.

- **Should the EU focus its peace-keeping efforts on indirect support such as AU funding and the provision of expertise, or on playing a direct military role in peace-keeping missions?**

It is clear that the EU should focus on indirect support to the AU and sub-regional organisations as a long-term strategy. The EU's experience with the AU, CEMAC and ECOWAS detailed above shows that this option has good potential. It is also the cheapest option for the EU and it is the only way to ensure that African organisations (and countries) can solve their own problems and provide sustainable stability on their own continent. In the short to medium term, the EU might occasionally – depending on the country and the situation, and ideally in close consultation with the AU's Peace & Security Council – play a more direct military role in PSOs in Africa. African organizations, whether the AU or sub-regional organizations, may also benefit from using EU expertise in an African led PSO, but again this should be done in the framework of building up African capacity for the continental peace and security architecture. If the EU chooses to play a direct military role itself, it is important that it finds a balance and that the military option does not become predominant.

- **What further support does the AU require in order to play a significant role in peace-keeping in Africa?**

The five key areas of support the AU probably requires most are:

- i. Sustainable, flexible, reliable and long-term funding for the implementation of the AU peace and security architecture including PSOs – the lack of such funding is the Achilles heel of AU lead PSOs at the moment;
- ii. Sustained institutional capacity building support;
- iii. A good media/communication strategy so as to sell better what African PSOs are capable of achieving and improve their international image;
- iv. Less direct interference from EU politicians/leaders and a more coordinated, coherent and integrated EU/donor approach, and
- v. That international partners (UN, US, EU, China, Russia...) actively help to solve the crisis via diplomatic means rather than basing their activities on self-interest.

## 8. Ownership

- **What is meant by African ownership and responsibility in the context of this Strategy?**

By identifying *African ownership and responsibility* as an underlying principle of the Strategy, right from the start in its introduction, the EU Council emphasises the importance it attaches to the concept. This is directly in line with the spirit of NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, proposed by African leaders to the international community some 5 years ago and is consistent with the policy approach the EU has adopted to its dealings with the African continental institutions since then. It is also in line with the well established development principle that projects tend to be more successful the more they are *owned* by those directly involved.

- **Many of the Strategy's initiatives focus on relations with the AU. How can the EU grant ownership of the Strategy to African sub-regional organisations and individual African States?**

One of the recent high profile examples of the practical programming implications of the EU adhering to this principle is the Africa Peace Facility where *ownership* stands alongside solidarity and partnership as the three principles upon which the Facility's strategy is built<sup>10</sup>. In this case the EU institutions used the principle of *ownership* as the basis for establishing the Facility as an instrument that would place funds at the disposal of the AU and the African regional organisations to conduct African peace support operations (PSOs). In other words it is the African institutions that are responsible for using the funds and implementing the work by establishing and operating the PSOs. Requests for funds therefore have to emanate from the AU or an African sub-regional organisation and be approved by the AU's Peace & Security Council before they are submitted to the EU for consideration.

The European Commission and Council have adhered to this principle of African *ownership* more widely in all aspects of the relationship they have built up with the African Union Commission since 2003. At the same time the principle is not foreign to EU cooperation with Africa and clearly has roots in the Cotonou and Lomé tradition of partnership and joint management.

- **What steps can the EU take to support the AU's and sub-regional organisations' institutional capacity as primary mechanisms through which to achieve progress in Africa?**

The EU, that is both the EC and Member States, can continue their already existing institutional development support programmes to the AU Commission and the sub-regional organisations. Increasingly, as the AU and the SROs strengthen their own coordination amongst themselves<sup>11</sup>, it should become more and more possible for the EU to provide this support in a coherent fashion across the continent that is closely aligned with the AU and SROs own planning. On the EU side there is also an effort to be made to ensure maximum coordination between the bilateral programmes of individual Member States and with the EC in this area.

- **How can the Strategy be transformed into a joint EU-Africa Strategy as envisaged by the last ministerial Troika on 2 December 2005?**

Given the historical background of the emphasis that has been placed on African ownership and joint management in the Cotonou Agreement and the EU's relations with the AU, it is reasonable to assume that this new EU Strategy for Africa can be transformed into a joint European-Africa strategic partnership through dialogue. Institutionally this can be envisaged at different levels: national, regional and continental: the European Commission is already in dialogue with the state organisms at each of these levels and these links can certainly be further exploited to build a common strategic understanding of the collaboration. Individual EU Member States also have relationships with these African

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<sup>10</sup> This subject is explored in some depth in the recent Mid-term Evaluation of the Africa Peace Facility conducted by ECDPM, ISS and CECORE for the European Commission. The study will be available on the European Commission / EuropeAid website in the next few weeks.

<sup>11</sup> The rationalisation and coordination of the different roles of the institutional structures for regional integration in Africa is a key element of the AU's Strategic Plan and work is currently on-going to refine and approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the SROs.

entities that can further bolster the effort towards a joint strategy. What is likely to be most difficult however is how best to derive a single coherent message and strategy out of these different levels of dialogue with multiple state actors. This goes not just for African actors, the same is often also true within the more limited confines of the EU.

An answer to this dilemma is to invest in the unifying and coordinating structures created by each set of actors in Africa and in Europe and consistently use these as the framework through which to build higher levels of consensus and more cohesive and unified strategy. Hence the importance the Council's strategy document rightly attaches to the AU.

## 9. Dialogue

- **What role do the AU and other regional organisations have to play in the development of an action plan for the Strategy?**

The AU and the sub-regional organisations in Africa will to a large extent be the coordinating and implementing agencies of any action plan for Africa and if they are in any sense to *own and take responsibility* for this they must be involved in its development. The conversion of the OAU into the AU at the beginning of this decade is a major historic opportunity on the institutional side in this respect, especially when combined with the willingness to engage and take on their own responsibilities that a group of far-sighted African leaders exhibited in launching NEPAD about the same time. However, the task that faces these forces for reform and renewal in Africa are immense and far reaching radical change cannot be expected overnight. The AU for instance cannot and should not be the only actor for reform and development in Africa any more than the EU can be in Europe. It has to rely on proactive collaboration with a wide range of existing state and non-state organisations and take advantage of whatever dynamism and capacities these exhibit. In terms of a Joint Strategy for Africa the regional economic organisations (RECs) are thus crucial players. The AU sees them as the 'pillars' on which much of the work of the AU can be built. Ultimately the RECs should thus be the actors that execute a lot of the pan-African development work that is required. The AU is therefore engaged in an on-going dialogue with them building up an active collaborative framework based on common understandings and a gradual harmonisation of approaches. Implementation at the national level is also important but many African states are weak and have limited capacity. Ideally the framework provided by the RECs and the AU and the support from NEPAD should help bolster the efforts of national state organisations that cannot make much headway on their own.

A good example of the type of support that can be useful for national governments is the APRM set up by NEPAD and operating under the AU umbrella. The first APRM country report for Rwanda, which came out in late 2005, demonstrates a good level of constructive criticism and commentary on the national governance procedures. It is also a concrete indication of the willingness of African state institutions to take on the responsibility themselves for tackling some of the more difficult governance questions with which they are confronted. The APRM is a voluntary and purely African process: ownership and responsibility are therefore fundamental to its *modus operandi*.

The role that the AU can play in providing a framework for dialogue with the EU has already been alluded above. The two Unions, though very different from each other in

various respects, also have similarities and are ideal counterparts for each other in many ways. There is also a strong interest on the AU side in dialogue and collaboration with the EU and the two Commissions have already built up an active dialogue process.

- **What are the realistic prospects for a second EU-AU Summit?**

This Commission to Commission dialogue also extends to the member state level but has so far only been conducted at ministerial level, or, more regularly, using a troika model. Whether this can be extended further to holding a full blown EU-AU Summit depends largely on the willingness of the EU to invite all African leaders to attend a summit on European soil and not exclude any that may be subject to sanctions at the time. The only other political obstacle to resolve is Morocco's non-membership of the AU. In 2000 the EU insisted that Morocco should attend and that the Summit should therefore be called the EU-Africa Summit rather than the EU-OAU Summit. The OAU was flexible in accepting this nuance and many Africans feel that the EU should equally show some flexibility on attendance at the delayed Lisbon Summit. There are on-going discussions between the AU and Morocco on the latter's possible adherence and so it could be envisaged that the next Summit is a real AU-EU Summit with states on both continents that are candidates for membership being also allowed to attend. In both EU and AU circles there is a growing recognition of the importance of organising such a Summit in the not too distant future.

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