

Commission adopts a Communication on the future Joint EU-Africa Strategy

The European Commission has adopted today a proposal presenting key flagship policy initiatives that embody the new approach to EU-Africa relations which will be put forward by the future Joint EU-Africa Strategy. These joint policy initiatives will be discussed with the African partners and shall be launched in Lisbon during the second EU-Africa Summit. The Communication further details the rationale and historical background at the heart of the current elaboration of a Joint EU-Africa Strategy initiative.

Two years after the adoption of the EU Strategy for Africa the EU and Africa will redefine their partnership in light of the profound transformations they experienced over the last few years. The Joint Strategy, to be adopted during the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December, will outline a long term shared vision of the future of EU-Africa relations in a globalized world.

The European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel, stressed that "the emergence of a genuine strategic partnership between our two continents is a priority for the EU. It will help us to define joint answers to our common challenges and to Africa's development needs."

The Joint Strategy aims to strengthen the EU-Africa political dialogue so as to bring the EU-Africa partnership (1) beyond development cooperation by opening up the EU-Africa dialogue to issues of joint political concern and interest; (2) beyond Africa by moving away from a focus on Africa matters only and openly address European and issues of global concern and to act accordingly in the relevant fora to make globalisation work for all; (3) beyond fragmentation in supporting Africa's aspirations to find regional and continental responses to some of the most important challenges; (4) beyond institutions in ensuring a better participation of African and European citizens, as part of an overall strengthening of civil society in the two continents.

The Lisbon Summit should embody this innovative approach and reinvention of the EU-Africa partnership. Five joint EU-Africa policy initiatives which would be launched on this occasion are therefore proposed by the Commission:

- EU-Africa Partnership on Energy
- EU-Africa Partnership on Climate Change
- EU-Africa Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment
- EU-Africa Partnership on Democratic Governance
- EU-Africa political and institutional architecture

Seven years after the first EU-Africa Summit in Cairo, the Lisbon Summit will bring the EU-Africa dialogue back to the highest political level. Commissioner Michel emphasised: "The Lisbon Summit will offer the best opportunity to demonstrate that Europeans stand ready to launch audacious initiatives and to reaffirm our commitments towards Africa".