



Joint EU-Africa Strategy

6th Meeting of the Reference Group on Infrastructure

(Energy, Transport, Digitalisation, and Water)

Addis Ababa, 17-18 May 2018

Joint Conclusions

1. We, AU and EU partners for Infrastructure development, gathered at the 6th meeting of the Reference Group on Infrastructure (RGI) acknowledge the conclusions of the 5th AU-EU Summit 2017 that took place in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in November 2017.
2. We welcome the renewed joint commitment to the promotion and implementation of actions of Priority Area 3 of the Summit Declaration "Mobilizing Investments for African structural sustainable transformation" which puts sustainable infrastructure at its heart.
3. For the realisation of this endeavour, partners acknowledge the pivotal contribution of infrastructure (Energy, Transport, Water, Digitalisation) and the need to better promote and mainstream gender equality and climate change resilience in our sectoral response frameworks.

To this effect, we, African and European partners of the Reference Group for Infrastructure inform the 6th African Union Commission-European Commission College-to-College Meeting taking place in Brussel as follows:

4. We recognise the essential role of the AU-EU Partnership for steering our AU-EU cross-sectoral infrastructure agenda.
5. Partners agree to extend the mandate of the Reference Group on Infrastructure for the JAES 2018-2020 period for the purpose of strategic cross-sectoral infrastructure coordination, building on the experience and lessons learnt from the previous 2014-2017 JAES framework.
6. We recall the importance of the Abidjan Action Plan 2018-2020 as strategic roadmap and framework of cooperation for that period. Partners confirm their joint commitment for contributing to the implementation of this framework in a coordinated, coherent and complementary manner within the existing

partnerships and mechanisms. In addition, we strongly advocate for the explicit inclusion of water programs and projects in the Abidjan Action Plan 2018-2020.

7. We aim to promote intra-African trade and support the advancing of greater economic integration by further developing sustainable connectivity, building on the Programme for Infrastructure Development for Africa – PIDA, NEPAD programmes, the AU Agenda 2063, the European Consensus on Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change - in coherence with the overarching Agenda 2030 orientations.
8. Partners anchor the principle of quality infrastructure delivery and financing in their sectoral response framework to ensure better value for money and to ensure social, environmental and economic sustainability of actions across infrastructure networks.
9. Whilst recognising the fundamental need for upscaling investment, we focus on building capacity and skills development, engage in enhanced project preparation and strive towards policy and governance reforms as safeguards for the needed investments to create a conducive and enabling environment that attracts the private sector.
10. Under the scope of PIDA, we seek to build on the momentum gained to date to effectively undertake our common endeavour of "Energising Africa, Interconnecting Africa, Digitalising Africa and achieving Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water in Africa" for the prosperity and well-being of our people.
11. We recall the importance and our joint commitment to guide and support the preparation of a new medium term PIDA strategic foundation for the period 2020-2030, inter alia the PIDA Priority Action Plan (PAP) II and other supporting PIDA instruments, that build on the lessons learnt of ongoing programmes established through the PIDA PAP I Mid Term Review.
12. Synergies between the different PIDA instruments¹ and the three pillars of the European External Investment Plan will be explored to promote further private investment in infrastructure in Africa.
13. We strive to gather for the 7th RGI meeting in Brussels in 2019, to assess progress and refine our actions vis-à-vis the Abidjan Action Plan and others.

Energy

14. **Energising Africa** will focus on energy transition towards the achievement of SDG7, the Paris Agreement objectives, the European Consensus on

¹ notably the Continental Business Network, the Service Delivery Mechanism, the NEPAD Project Preparation Facility, and the Africa 50 Fund

Development and Agenda 2063. The Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) will be instrumental in the endeavour of deepening strategic alliances and coordination between Pan African institutions and EU as well as international organisations and key bilateral partners.

15. The EU will continue supporting the implementation of the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI), thereby assisting Africa to implement the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and creating new opportunities for growth and job creation.
16. The EU will continue supporting the increase of public and private sector investments in renewable energy, including by deepening the partnership between the European and African private sectors, in order to boost power generation and energy access in Africa. Priority will be given to the electrification of rural and isolated areas through an integrated approach catalysed and driven, notably by the digitalisation across the board.
17. At regional level, actions will be taken to foster cross-border energy interconnections (including between Africa and Europe) and regional integration of energy markets in Africa, in line with the priorities set out in PIDA PAP.
18. At local level, partnering with local authorities will be reinforced, by building on successful initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa (COMSSA) as well as the Cleaner Energy Saving Mediterranean Cities (CES-MED) in North Africa.
19. We commit to enhancing the involvement of women and youth in the sustainable energy value chain as entrepreneurs and active users.
20. We will set up a collaborative scheme between researchers and innovators and think-tanks from Europe and Africa to jointly find solutions to the challenges of sustainable energy and climate change.

Transport

21. Our sectoral interventions will be geared towards removing physical and soft infrastructure bottlenecks to support transport connectivity that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.
22. We are committed to promote safe and secure, integrated, multi-modal transport corridor development, interoperability and enhanced transport services as key drivers for growth and job creation.
23. Interventions aim at enhancing efficiency and safety, at reducing emissions, at reducing transport costs and the cost of doing business, as well as ensuring access to services in all transport modes.
24. Land transport will be framed by the PIDA PAP and will focus on linking coastal and landlocked countries to Africa's major ports and connect African regions and

countries while ensuring continued support towards the road safety target in line with the African Road Safety Charter as well as the African Road Safety Action Plan (2011-2020). Given the very high number of road fatalities, road safety should be a policy priority and mainstreamed in all decisions related to road infrastructure development, vehicle use and education of road users.

25. Maritime transport will benefit from intensified cooperation in fields of safety, security and protection of the environment. Efforts should be pursued to ensure competitive provision of maritime transport services and promote business partnerships with the view to develop local expertise. This will take into consideration the African Maritime Transport Charter.
26. We shall further continue improving air transport through the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision and the full operationalization of the Single African Air Transport Market and its building blocks, notably in relation to improving aviation safety, security and the protection of the environment. We aim at intensifying support to the development of a navigation infrastructure, notably based on the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) in African countries.

Digitalisation

27. We recognise the importance of starting the work of building an African Digital Single Market that can significantly contribute to boosting growth and jobs on the continent. The digital window in the EU External Investment Plan will be one of the tools of engagement on the digital sector.
28. Building an African digital economy and implementing the AU-EU partnership on Digitalisation for Development and the conclusions of the 5th AU-EU Summit require the involvement of relevant stakeholders. In this regard, we recommend the establishment of a **Joint Task Force on Digital Economy** on multi-stakeholder principles that should guide our future work.
29. The European Commission will support the transfer of expertise towards African institutions that are developing digital policies at national, regional and continental levels.
30. In order to better promote intra-African digital trade, more evidence is needed. We will join forces with other partners and stakeholders to analyse the barriers and opportunities for digital trade in Africa in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
31. We will engage with the private sector to map the existing broadband infrastructure, and to identify the missing links that need investments.

32. We will take stock of the private sector initiatives promoting digital skills in Africa and assess how to build public-private partnerships in scaling up the number of youth being trained. Also, we will support efforts to increase the number of digital hubs to deliver digital skills in Africa.
33. We will work to create links between different Startup networks in Africa and connect them to those in Europe, increase their access to finance, support ecosystem builders and work on an initiative that can give access to the African and EU markets mutually for Startups.
34. We will strive to mainstream digital technologies and services across different sectors and to step up efforts to boost e-ID and registry interconnection across the African continent as one of the key e-Government services.

Water & Sanitation

35. For the achievement of Equitable and Sustainable Use of Water in Africa, our action will respond to the AMCOW Strategy 2018-2030 and related priorities as well as corresponding AUC and partners work programmes. All our actions will be framed in the context of SDG6 and the Paris Agreement objectives.
36. We will work in partnership to reinforce monitoring and use of data for evidence based decision-making towards concrete action aimed at ensuring equitable access to water and sanitation, and improved accountability of water, especially in water scarce regions.
37. Recognising the importance of water infrastructure to enhance living standards, create decent jobs, and in turn address one of the root causes of migration, we will promote the implementation of the Water Resources Management Priority Action Programme 2016-2025 and the African Water Investment Programme to improve the investment outlook for water-related infrastructure.
38. We will promote and facilitate the application of the principles of valuing water and of a water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus approach as viable implementation mechanisms to enhance financial viability, development impacts and the overall quality of all infrastructure.
39. We will continue to strengthen the cooperative management of transboundary water resources. Water offers opportunities as a source of cooperation and can serve as a driver for conflict resolution and resilience.
40. Recognising the strategic priorities identified by the 5th AU-EU Summit Declaration to invest in people through education, science, technology and skills development, we will continue to support AU/AMCOW programmes, including

the NEPAD Water Centres of Excellence, in conducting research and capacity development for improved decision making in the water and sanitation sector.

41. We will work to build on and advance the progress in accessing finance for water infrastructure made through the AU-EU Water Partnership Programme.

Done in Addis Ababa on 18th May 2018.