



EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue
on
Science, Technology and Innovation

Brussels, 28-29 November 2013

Conclusions





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We, the senior officials of the European Commission, the African Union Commission and Research and Innovation Ministries in the European Union and Africa have gathered in Brussels on 28-29 November 2013 for the second meeting of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). The EU-Africa HLPD is a key milestone in the implementation of the Joint Africa EU Strategy (JAES) and was endorsed at the third Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli in 2010.

The organisation of the second meeting of the EU-Africa HLPD happened at an important time when there are a number of policy developments on both sides. The African Union is reforming its Consolidated Plan of Action on Science and Technology (CPA) into a decadal African Union Strategy on Science, Technology and Innovation (STISA-2024). The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), in support of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), is coordinating the preparation of a science agenda for agriculture in Africa. In the European Union's growth strategy (Europe 2020¹), science, technology and innovation play a prominent role (Innovation Union²) and the upcoming EU programme for research and innovation, Horizon 2020, will have a more focussed and strategic approach to addressing the grand societal challenges and in this context strengthen international cooperation. The achievement of sustainable and inclusive growth through the application of knowledge and innovation also clearly figures in the new EU development strategy 'An agenda for change'³. Finally, it is opportune to raise STI higher on the cooperation, political and development agenda during the fourth EU-Africa Summit which will take place on 2-3 April 2014.

In view of the above, we, the senior officials, have agreed on the following points:

1. There is clear and ample evidence that investment in research, science, technology and innovation create growth, jobs and improve competitiveness of countries and regions to the benefit of people's lives and societies as a whole. Investments in STI are vital to identify and deal with pressing global societal challenges such as climate change, affordable renewable energy, infectious diseases or food and nutrition security. Moreover, it will contribute to the post-2015 development agenda. EU-Africa cooperation on STI strengthens knowledge based societies and enhances the development and deployment of effective solutions for the societal challenges of common concern. EU-Africa cooperation on STI is cross-cutting in nature, contributing to the attainment of all other socio-economic development objectives. For this matter, STI is underpinned as a driver of socio-economic growth.
2. The EU-Africa HLPD on STI aims at enhancing the dialogue between the EU and Africa on STI and strengthens the overall cooperation framework in this domain. It further serves as a platform for better common understanding, build mutual trust and ownership and define and agree on shared priorities of mutual benefit for current and future implementation. For this matter, the EU-Africa HLPD should become the key platform for priority-setting and implementation design in the domain of STI in the future JAES.

¹ COM(2010) 2020

² COM(2010)546

³ COM(2011)637

3. We recognise that there is a need for the EU-Africa HLPD to focus on a reduced number of common challenges for the STI cooperation to be effective, although there are many common challenges such as climate change, global health, and improved livelihood. Furthermore, there is a need to prioritise among this reduced number of challenges for an impactful implementation, but without compromising existing or future initiatives, which stakeholders may wish to implement. Following the prioritisation process led by the EU-Africa HLPD Bureau and outlined in the concept note of this meeting, we agree to start working towards the implementation of a first priority for EU-Africa cooperation, focussing on the 'the role of STI in securing food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture development, including water management' An integrated approach is taken recognising the important cross-cutting nature of innovation/entrepreneurship, research infrastructures and technical competence building.

4. 'The way forward', which outlines the short-, medium- and long-term steps and milestones towards the implementation of a long-term jointly funded research and innovation partnership between the EU and Africa in general, and particularly promoting food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture. The way forward is annexed to the present conclusions.

5. The revised version of the Terms of References of the EU-Africa HLPD on STI, which is also annexed to the present conclusions.

We, the senior officials, agree to send points 1 to 4 for endorsement by our leaders at the EU-Africa Summit 2014. We recommend these points to be reflected in the statement of the EU-Africa Summit 2014. The European Commission and African Union Commission will follow the most appropriate way of channelling these conclusions to the EU-Africa Summit 2014 (e.g. EU Council Research Working Party, AMCOST, Joint Task Force).

Annexes: - Document 'the way forward'
 - Terms of References of the EU-Africa HLPD on STI