



**Sommet Union Africaine - Union Européenne 2017
African Union - European Union Summit 2017**

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Investment in Youth, at the center of discussions of Fifth African Union - European Union Summit in Abidjan



Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 30 November 2017 - *"Investment in Youth for Accelerated and Inclusive real growth and sustainable development"* was at the center of discussions of 5th African Union (AU) - European Union (EU) Summit, held from 29-30 November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. More than 80 Heads of State and Government from both continents took part in this important event as well as about 5,000 participants. The year 2017 has been a decisive year for relations between the EU and Africa, ten years after the adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

Highlighting the theme of the 5th AU-EU Summit: *"Investment in Youth for Accelerated and Inclusive real growth and sustainable development"*, the Chairperson of the African Union (AU), and President of the Republic of Guinea, H.E Alpha Conde, emphasized underscored the relevance of the theme to the African Union who considers the demographic dividend as an essential factor of development. "This is why we are optimistic about this summit," President Condé reiterated.

The AU Chairperson also emphasized the need to put in place mechanisms to promote youth development, the empowerment of women and the protection of girls so as to seize the advantage of the population explosion in Africa as opportunity for economic and sustainable growth. (See President Alpha Condé's full speech on the AU website: www.au.int)

Speaking at the official opening of the 5th AU-EU Summit, the Chairperson of the AU Commission H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat, recalled that since the last summit in Brussels, the African Union has undergone significant changes. "These are part of the dynamics of restructuring impaled by its leaders to make it an effective instrument of development and integration, commensurate with the aspiration of our peoples. He also noted that the theme of this summit overlaps with that of theme of the African Union for the year 2017, namely "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend by Investing in Youth".

To this end, Chairperson Faki explained that far from being a mere coincidence, this thematic convergence confirms that Africa and Europe share the same concerns in the face of the exigencies of the time. "It invites us to build a strategic alliance, more than just a simple partnership dedicated solely to the quest for mercantile interests." The AUC Chairperson added that through a more fruitful dialogue between both cultures and civilizations as well as building of bridges of friendships between the two continents, "we teach our children, our youths, that diversity is the driving force of our movement, the soul of our live".

Furthermore, Chairperson Faki underlined that the vastness of the challenges we face requires us to further strengthen our partnership. "In this exercise, we can build on the tremendous work already done", he noted. (See the full statement by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, HE Mr. Moussa Faki on the AU website: www.au.int)

The Ivorian President, HE Alassane Ouattara on his part, called on African youth to have faith in the future and not to embark on an adventure at the risk of their lives. "You embody the future of the continent, by your dynamism, your ingenuity and your fulfillment on this continent that so much needs you," said President Alassane Ouattara.

Worth noting that, the AU-EU Summit is a platform for reflection and dialogue for the Heads of State and Government of the African Union and the European Union, on the common challenges facing both continents, such as peace and security, and around common interests, including the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable growth as well as job creation for young people, among others.

NOTE TO PUBLISHERS

The objective of the 5th African Union / European Union Summit held on 29 and 30 November in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, remained the same objectives as in the previous summits which is to strengthen the partnership between the two continents.

Historical background of the African Union - European Union Summit:

First Africa-EU Summit, Cairo 2000

The first edition of the Summit was held in Cairo in 2000. At this first meeting held at continental level, African and European leaders pledged to unite and give a new dimension to their partnership. As a result, considerable changes have taken place in both continents.

Democratization and reform processes have been launched and are being deepened in both continents while efforts have continued in Africa and Europe to resolve conflicts and crisis situations. At the same time, integration processes on both continents have accelerated - on the one hand, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has been transformed into an African Union (AU) with its socio-economic program, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and, on the other hand, the European Union (EU) has almost doubled in size and is deepening its structure. The world has also changed: new international and global challenges have emerged, globalization has accelerated and the world has become increasingly interdependent.

Second Africa-EU Summit, Lisbon, Portugal, 2007

The second Africa-EU summit in Lisbon adopted the "joint strategy" that allowed the two continents to open a new era, as equals, in their relations. It was agreed to make room for a real partnership and to face new challenges and new perspectives on a global scale. The Heads of State and Government present approved a "strategy that must be guided by the principles of Africa's unity, the interdependence of Africa and Europe, ownership and responsibility, respect for human rights and democratic principles and the rule of law, as well as the right to development".

Third Africa-EU Summit, Libya 2010

The third summit took an inclusive approach and did not involve only the institutions. A series of side events brought together representatives of civil society, youth, the private sector, researchers and scientists from both continents. The aim was to give a new impetus to the Africa-EU Joint Strategy by placing people at the heart of the partnership and inviting all stakeholders to contribute to its implementation. It is during this third summit that the second action plan (2011-13) of the Africa-EU strategy was adopted.

Fourth Africa-EU Summit, Brussels 2014

The theme of the fourth edition of the Africa – EU summit was: "Investing in People for Prosperity and Peace". Participants discussed key topics such as peace, security, investments, climate change and people. In the final declaration, the "willingness to hold regular political dialogue meetings at the ministerial level, especially in the margins of international events" was reaffirmed. A roadmap for the 2014-2017 period was also endorsed to define the strategic priorities and identify the means of its implementation.

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