

# Africa in International System: From Eurafrique to Afro-Europa

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**Abstract**—*The international insertion of African states both in economic and political realms has redefined Africa's relations in the international system. Africa's role in international trade negotiations, military and humanitarian intervention and other forms of bilateral discussions has increased over time. Africa has been able to metamorphose from what The Economist tagged 'the hopeless continent' to 'a rising continent'. It is against this background that this paper critically appraises Africa's inspiring change through comprehensive political and socio-economic reforms driven by the shared values of ownership, leadership and partnerships, based on the AU vision of an integrated, forward-looking, prosperous, dynamic and peaceful Africa in the global arena. This paper examines Africa's transition from a continent aimlessly dependent on Europe for survival; EurAfrique to that which is able to enter into mutual partnership with Europe with both the former and latter operating at par; Afro-Europa. Afro-Europeans is used on the model of African Americans by associations and movements militating in favor of equal opportunities for black, mixed-race and mulatto people from overseas territories and Europe. The paper also assesses the contending issues currently bedeviling EU-Africa partnership and further explores what hope there is for the revered partnership. The paper however concludes that Europe and Africa who have a common interest in maintaining a balanced and dynamic global partnership, despite their different situations, have to face the same challenge: promoting a model of economic growth that is both sustainable, inclusive and generates jobs.*

**Keywords**—*EURAFRIQUE, AFRO-EUROPA, Africa, EU-Africa.*

## I. Introduction

African states have over the past decade become increasingly prominent actors in international politics which is more evident in their role in international trade negotiations, processes governing the distribution of aid and discussions over climate change, as well as military and humanitarian intervention. African governments and non-state actors have responded to changing international circumstances (the rise of China, increasing economic integration) with renewed diplomatic and political activity on world and regional stages. In a more indirect way,

social processes shaped by African actors (both state and non-state) are generating new areas of interdependence between the continent and outside powers in the form of 'new' transnational security issues-migration, environmental degradation and health among them. Thus, the impetus for assessing the impact of African states acting collectively in international forums (and the nature of that collectivity) as well as the extent to which Africa as a category is utilised by other actors becomes more pressing. It is equally important to appraise ways in which African political actors themselves, both state and non-state, utilise the notion of 'Africa' as a means to further their actions in the external world (Brown, 2011).

As further posited by Brown (2011), there are four range of areas over which Africa participates in the international system: first, and perhaps most prominent are the multilateral arenas of inter-governmental negotiations. Here African states have been making their mark in the WTO, where there is substantial evidence of increased agency in the large number of proposals, chairs of committees, Idc coalitions and delegations involving African states in the climate change negotiations where Africa as a block and South Africa, Sudan and Ethiopia in particular, have risen to prominence); and in the central UN system itself (Lee 2011; Zondi 2011; Hoste 2011; Chevallier 2011 cited by Brown, 2011). Second there are the various sets of bilateral relationships African states are engaged in. The most notable, perhaps is in aid relationships where African governments engage donors on an individual basis (although the donors at times act collectively through donor consultative/coordination meetings and the like, it has been a feature of aid relations that recipients rarely do the same). But for some African states like Uganda there are also substantial bilateral discussions that range over a wider range of issues, particularly security and counter-terrorism (Fisher 2011) and many states have engaged in bilateral dealings on trade and climate change outside of, alongside and at times in contradiction to the collective African presence in the multilateral forums (Fraser 2011; Chevallier 2011 cited by Brown, 2011).

Third, and overlapping with both of the above, is a set of intra-regional processes and arrangements, most notably the African Union itself which, founded in 2002, has gained a continental and international presence far beyond

that achieved by its predecessor the OAU. This has included the AU role in multilateral negotiations and an increasing role in responding to conflicts, security problems and processes of military and humanitarian intervention on the continent (Zondi 2011; Tiekou 2011 cited by Brown, 2011). Finally, there are a variety of studies of the role of non-state actors in sub-state arenas but ones which interact, either directly or mediated via their national state, with international organisations and agencies of various kinds. Areas where these issues arise include the new security issues of environment, health and migration where the role of international and national forces shape and constrain the agencies of particular groups and communities in ways that may both marginalise those agents and undermine successful policy responses (Perera 2011; Hammerstad 2011; Seckinelgin 2011; Raleigh 2011 cited by Brown, 2011).

As a new emerging continent, Africa needs to reposition itself towards its traditional partners-moving away from an aid recipient approach to a more assertive and balanced relation - as well as towards other emerging and Southern partners. By the same token, Europe should frame its relation with Africa in a renewed paradigm. It should no longer be dominated by a donors-recipient framework, which is still too often perceived as tainted with reminiscent paternalism. Instead, the European approach should more explicitly acknowledge and reflect its own economic and political interests in Africa, while maintaining the strong principle-based and value-driven approach that characterize EU international relations. It is only by building on their common interests and objectives, with clearly defined priorities for action, while recognizing their differences, that truly effective strategic relations between Africa and Europe can flourish, away from some of the technocratic modalities that have too often dominated the Joint Africa-EU Strategy so far. The economic partnership agreements (EPAs) are a case in point. The EU has too often failed to recognize the political dimension of these new economic agreements, apparently more concerned about avoiding that EPAs capture the Summit, than trying to understand the concerns expressed by some African capitals. Instead, the political and strategic dimension of the EPA dossier would be better addressed head-on, so as to jointly identify differentiated solutions reflecting the diversity of situations and interests in Africa (Barroso, 2013).

In relation to the economic ties between Africa and Europe, the trade relationship between the 28-member European Union and the 79-member African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group was established in 1975 on the principle of non-reciprocity. The EU recognised that the developing countries in the ACP often lacked the productive capacity to offer goods for mutual trade on an

equitable basis, and thus sought to support their economic development by giving them non-reciprocal access to the European market. However, in 2000, economic partnership agreements (EPAs) were introduced by Brussels to replace the earlier preferential nonreciprocal trade deals agreed with ACP members. Subsequently, the EU's partnership with Africa has appeared increasingly shaped by European trade interests rather than Africa's development priorities. The European Union's paternalistic insistence on implementing the EPAs in their current form has damaged trust in the relationship between Africa and Brussels. An October 2014 deadline was set for the ratification of all economic partnership agreements. This deadline has weakened the negotiating positions of African countries, since states failing to ratify the EPAs are to incur substantial economic penalties. In particular, conditions are attached to the disbursement of aid by the European Development Fund (EDF), which has allocated a total of €28 billion to ACP countries from 2014 to 2020. If the EU considers that insufficient progress has been made towards signing EPAs, it can thus apply pressure at the country level. Meanwhile, these agreements, which will bind African economies for terms of between 50 and 60 years, will grant Brussels considerable leverage over the continent. The financial returns for Europe from the EPAs are estimated to be 10 times greater than the €28 billion that Brussels is offering to ACP governments in the form of aid (Gilbert, 2012).

## II. METHODOLOGY

The paper is qualitative and mainly descriptive. It was based on a literature study and available factual data. The study investigates the role of Africa in the International System: from Euro-Afrique to Afro-European. Specific qualitative measures such as scheduled interviews, questionnaires and field research were not used for this paper. Only secondary sources were used. Interviews and surveys could not be used for the paper because the researchers lack the financial resources and time to operationalise such a methodology.

**Theoretical Framework** - The theoretical underpinnings used for this paper are Role Approach and Europe Integration Theory.

### **Role Approach**

Broadly, Role Approach is a theoretical framework devoted to the study of behavior using the notion of role. In the field of foreign policy, decision-makers imagine and suppose that their state should adopt and accomplish a range of duties, tasks and commitments in the international system or in subordinate regional systems. According to the proponents of the Role Approach, these duties, tasks and commitments are known in the field of

foreign policy as “roles”. Based on the Role Approach, the world’s states can be presented as playing a variety of roles, the best known of which are Liberation Supporter, Regional Leader, Regional Protector, Active Independent, Anti-Imperialist Agent, Defender of the Faith, Mediator, Developer, Model, Peace Maker, Policeman, Faithful Ally and Anti-Terrorism Agent. It is significant to highlight that an individual state may play several roles simultaneously, for instance an individual state may be: Liberation Supporter, Anti-Imperialist Agent, Regional Leader and Regional Protector (Sekhri, 2009).

### **European Integration Theory**

This thesis is geared towards analyzing EU-Africa relations in the external realm of European integration. The European Union is a distinct actor in the International system, hence it is imperative to understand its role in the international system. The EU has developed an ambitious policy to play a big role in the international relations especially in issues such as trade, development, environment and social issues (Mujivane, 2011). European Integration is a process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new center, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over pre-existing national states. The end result of a process of political integration is a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones. Thus, the EU is a unique supranational integration of European democratic countries that came together to promote peace and prosperity. European Integration theory employs three major approaches of federalism, functionalism, and inter-governmentalism.

*Federalism* formed the guiding principle of early European integration. Federalists plan to form a small nucleus of nonconformists seeking to point out that the national states have lost their proper rights since they cannot guarantee the political and economic safety of their citizens. Their main objective being to establish a federation of European states instead of competing nation states where cooperation is layered at state, interstate and the EU level. The EU is not the traditional nation state, but a unity consisting of member states.

*Functionalism*: Classical theory of regional integration that holds that a common need for technocratic management of economic and social policy leads to the formation of international agencies. Such agencies promote economic welfare, thus eventually gaining legitimacy, overcoming ideological opposition to strong international institutions, and in the long-run evolving into a sort of international government, though perhaps not a true state (Dinan, 2000).

*Intergovernmentalism* its basic assumption is European integration is based on actions and decisions of European

nation states. Hence national interests define the nature of cooperation geared towards pooling or sharing of sovereignty. States will adopt a cost and benefit analysis where they will engage in with other states in low denominator deals that will not compromise their core national interests vis-à-vis sovereignty (Mujivane, 2011).

### **Conceptual Clarification**

#### **Africa**

Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. At about 30.3 million km<sup>2</sup> (11.7 million square miles) including adjacent islands, it covers six percent of Earth's total surface area and 20.4 percent of its total land area. With 1.1 billion people as of 2013, it accounts for about 15% of the world's human population. The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, both the Suez Canal and the Red Sea along the Sinai Peninsula to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Africa contains 54 fully recognized sovereign states (countries), nine territories and two de facto independent states with limited or no recognition (Gudmastad, 2013).

Today, Africa contains 54 sovereign countries, most of which have borders that were drawn during the era of European colonialism. Since colonialism, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and authoritarianism. The vast majority of African states are republics that operate under some form of the presidential system of rule. However, few of them have been able to sustain democratic governments on a permanent basis, and many have instead cycled through a series of coups, producing military dictatorships. Independent African nations are faced with many problems notable of which is boundaries of the new states often bore little or no relation to racial or tribal divisions, autocratic rule, global financial and economic crisis. African states are continentally grouped under the aegis of African Union (AU). The African Union (AU) is a 54-member federation consisting of all of African states except Morocco. The union was formed, with Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as its headquarters, on 26 June 2001. The union was officially established on 9 July 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The African Union aims to transform the African Economic Community, a federated commonwealth, into a state under established international conventions (Mbeki, 2002).

In spite of the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on Africa, the continent has been growing at unprecedented rates. It is now important to ensure that Africa’s growth becomes more inclusive, broad-based and sustainable. In the current global equation, Africa has two main advantages - the density of its natural resources in a

context of increasing scarcity and its human capital, particularly its youth. Governance is another unlocking factor. The debate on whether New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) represents a step forward or whether it will become still born like many other African development initiatives of the 1980s and 1990s was a cause for concern amongst Africans. Peace and Security remains vital to Africa's development aspirations. The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), championed by the AU, have been instrumental in advancing sustainable conditions for development on the continent. The number of conflicts and fragile states on the continent has declined, with rising economic growth recorded in many post-conflict countries in the course of the past decade.

Overall, Africa itself is inspiring change through comprehensive political and socio-economic reforms driven by the shared values of ownership, leadership and partnerships, based on the AU vision of an integrated, forward-looking, prosperous, dynamic and peaceful Africa, representing a dynamic force in global arena. Making significant progress in governance policies has led to sound macro-economic performance despite the adverse impact of the current global financial and economic crises. Democratic, just and accountable governance is pivotal to the attainment of Africa's development effectiveness agenda, including the critical role of African State and non-State actors (NEPAD, 2012).

### ***The International System***

According to McClelland (cited by Ikedinma 2012) any system is a structure that is perceived to have some identifiable boundaries that separate it from its environment. An international system according to Frankel consists of a number of units which interact. He further contended that it is clear that these units conduct their relations not in a social vacuum but within a broader system which evolves its own structure, norms and rules of behaviour.

While it is true that the contemporary international system has units, states, which are in constant interactions, as well as rules or norms, and sometimes clear cut boundaries which by definition also qualify it as a 'system', there are nonetheless very important differences between it and a natural or biological system. First of all, a biological system is 'natural', whilst the international system is artificial. Besides, it is largely a 'cultural' and 'conceptual' creation of the international politics and international relations analyst. This major feature of the international system is acknowledged by McClelland when he said that it is abstract, descriptive and theoretical. To him, therefore, the description of the international

system as a 'system' constitutes an expression to stimulate thoughts. Thus, from such a perspective, states in the international system are conceived to be in contact and associate in a complicated framework of relationships, which is formed through the process of interactions (McClelland cited by Ikedinma 2012).

Ikedinma (2012) contends that the relationships and interdependence between members of the international system are weak and tenuous especially in the political sphere. Besides, some members of the system or sub-systems may choose to isolate themselves off from the rest of the world, or to have minimum contacts with other states, without affecting the overall global system in an appreciable manner. China, for example, isolated itself from the rest of the world for nearly four decades without any serious impacts on the overall functioning of the world system. Again, a war may be raging in one sub-system of the world while the rest of the international system goes about its affairs in a relatively 'happy mood' with only occasional concern about the events in the affected areas, as reported in the media. This is still the case even in age of unprecedented globalization. The contrary is the case with regard to natural sub-systems in their relationships with their dominant system, the human body, for instance. The 'circulatory system' for example, cannot be cut-off from the rest of the body without serious and even fatal consequences.

The international system unlike the biological system, is voluntary. Its members, basically states, join it on their own free will-a phenomenon which is very common to the former colonial territories of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America- to constitute themselves as a system. Besides, they also have to set their own objectives and rules of procedure. For example, we have the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), or the European Union (EU). What is important to note is that all these organisations, irrespective of how powerful or rich they may be, are superficial in many ways, when compared with a biological system, which actually exists below what we can call the surface of appearances and therefore can be called 'real.' Put differently, you can 'feel' a biological system, be it a human being or not, because it is physical, while the international system is abstract. Also, another difference between the two types of systems is that the 'sub-systems' of a biological system are more closely knit and coherent than their counterparts in the international system. As Spiro rightly noted, biological and physical systems at least seem to the observer or analyst to have an 'objective coherence' while imperfect interdependence and relationships seem to be the most important features of international system. However, he argues further that since the principal point of departure of the political scientist is the emphasis on

interdependence, it is therefore, also the greatest weakness of the system approach to the study of international relations. True, there is interdependence especially in the economic sphere, among states in the international system but there is not much interdependence in many other vital areas (Ikedinma, 2012).

### *Euro-Afrique to Afro-Europa*

Eurafrique (otherwise Eurafrica or Eurafrika), refers to the idea of strategic partnership between Africa and Europe. In the decades before World War II, supporters of European integration advocated a merger of African colonies as a first step towards a federal Europe. As a genuine political project, it played a crucial role in the early development of the European Union but was largely forgotten afterwards. In the context of a renewed EU Strategy for Africa, and controversies about a Euromediterranean Partnership, the term went through a sort of revival in the last years (Peo & Stefan, 2014). The term Eurafrica was already coined in the high imperial period of the nineteenth century and was aimed to integrate African colonies providing raw materials with Europe. Erich Obst was one of its propagators during World War II. Luiza Bialasiewicz refers to Karl Haushofer's vision of an 'Eurafrican' pan-region as base of the vision of Eurafrica as the most central third of the world. Eurafrica remained a remote political dream until the end of the World War II. Then it gained actual political impact as part of the driving forces to European Unity. Given its geographical and legal positioning, former French territory Algeria, in the 1950s a part of the European Union, was the focal point of the French vision of Eurafrica. Léopold Sédar Senghor's concept of Eurafrique was closely connected with Négritude that put African cultural achievements, including the sub-sahara region, on the same level as European ones and saw them as part of the same cultural continuum. After decolonization, Eurafrica played an important role in forging the European Union and associated treaties, as the Yaoundé Conventions in 1958 and later. The Treaty of Rome 1957 set an important milestone, as France (and Belgium) now were willing to enter a stronger European market based on the condition of association of and the provision of European funds for the remaining colonial realm.

Eurafrica still has an influence on Europe's Postcolonial Role and Identity, as the Future of EU-African Relations is still being framed as a 'Strategic Partnership' in relation to other world regions as e.g. China. With regard to trade agreements and development aid, the Yaoundé-Convention has been superseded by the Lomé Convention (1975) and the Cotonou Agreement 2000 respectively.

The Lomé Conventions (Lomé I-IV) were designed as a new framework of cooperation between the then European Community (EC) and developing African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, in particular former British, Dutch, Belgian and French colonies. They provided for most ACP agricultural and mineral exports to enter the EC free of duty and some preferential access based on a quota system for products in competition with EC agriculture, as sugar and beef. The EC committed several billion ECU for aid and investment in the ACP countries.

Meanwhile, the term Afro European often refers to people who come from regions that are geographically south of Sahara, or former colonies. The concept of 'Afro-Europeans' is used on the model of African Americans by associations and movements militating in favor of equal opportunities for black, mixed-race and mulatto people from overseas territories and Europe. In the European Union there is a record of 12 million people of African or Afro-Caribbean descent. 'Eura' for 'Europe' being predominant and primary to 'Afrique,' the French word for Africa in 'Eurafrique,' then changing to "Afro" for Africa and "Europa" for 'Europe' with, seemingly, more equality between the two terms, rather than one dominating or colouring our understanding of the other, is a theme that is returned to by most scholars (Adebajo & Whiteman, 2012). The previous characterization of Europe's relationship with Africa was an exploitative and self-enriching relationship, to Africa's detriment. This relationship must be reformed so that there is greater equity in the future as this is not only in Africa's benefit, but will go some way to break Africa's dependence on the West, thus making it better able to empower itself, but, in time, has become a geopolitical necessity for Europeans themselves. With the United States' continued, even if diminished, economic dominance to the West, and India and China's emergence as rival power bases to the East, European countries find themselves individually too weak to rival either of these nations, but collectively more able to act in the continent's individual nations' best interests when they do so as a trade and political bloc. Thus, reform should not be viewed as caving to the demands of Africans, but rather as a strategic necessity to ensure that Europe's benefits continue.

The Eurozone crisis, the rise of nationalism in response to it, the arbitration of justice and questions of sovereignty, are issues that, as the AU moves for greater continental and regional integration, must be considered. Comparatively, the EU is a much stronger institution (it has had a few decades head start and did not have to deal with the nasty effects of colonialism). But if it manages to just limp on from crisis to crisis, can it serve as a model for the AU. In allowing the AU to look to its northern

neighbours and learn the lessons they have to offer, some of the more calamitous mistakes that the EU has made, can be avoided (Adebajo & Whiteman, 2012). Further, this historical and holistic approach offers key insights into the mutual benefits that both Africa and Europe stand to gain from a continued strategic relationship. It is clear that the historical ties and financial interests which exist is enough of an incentive for this to continue. Leveraging off Europe's need to remain relevant to and, in some respects, dominant of world affairs, is something that international relations and foreign policy is made of. What may have previously been an exploitative relationship, has by chance or design, morphed into one that is predicated on mutual interest. When policy makers realize this, as well as the people of both continents, Europeans will, hopefully, no longer feel that they are being exploited and, likewise, Africans will no longer feel entitled. Rather, this relationship must be fully cognizant of the past while not allowing it to determine current and future relations, for a preoccupation with settling old scores may render it impossible to govern for today and tomorrow. This is not to say, at all, that an ahistorical approach must be taken which allows Europeans to abdicate their responsibility for Africa's present problems. Rather, it is an approach which accepts European responsibility and African accountability as well: not all problems, or at least their manifestations, can be blamed on the past (Adebajo & Whiteman, 2012).

### **EU-Africa Partnership: Arena for International Relations**

The first transcontinental summit between the EU and Africa was held in Cairo in 2000, 16 years ago. Since then, the relationship has grown stronger, in a close institutional partnership based on a shared political vision and tighter cooperation in all areas. In 2007, the Joint EU-Africa Strategy further deepened this community of values and interests in the fields of peace and security, energy, mobility, governance, the fight against climate change, scientific cooperation, and social as well as human development Implemented for over five years now, this strategic partnership has already produced significant results in many of these areas. They should encourage Africa to pursue the path of mutual commitment, to deepen political dialogue and cooperation while taking up the developments that have been seen on both sides (Barroso, 2013).

According to Traynor (2007 cited by Helly et. al., 2014), in the early 2000s, five elements drove the African and EU leaders to develop this ambitious partnership. The first driver was the need for more political relationship on an equal footing both bilaterally and on the global scene. For Europeans, that would allow for discussions on

governance, democracy and human rights and enhanced leverage internationally. For Africans, it was at last the recognition of their new role in global politics as well as their emerging economic transformation. In the late 90s ACP states opposed discussions beyond trade and aid, judging them as interfering with state sovereignty: a reset was needed. An initial attempt to develop a continent-to-continent relationship was made at the 2000 Africa-EU summit with the Cairo declaration, a broad document covering several issues from debt and development to security. Secondly, the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002 created fertile ground for a continent-to-continent relationship.

Third, the EU's efforts came also as a response to the growing importance of other players in Africa. The 2006 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing was widely attended by African leaders while India finalised its own Africa-India framework for cooperation in 2009. Fourth, international momentum around Africa consolidated, pushed also by the MDGs agenda. More agency on African side was noticeable, with the creation of NEPAD in 2001 followed by other Pan-African initiatives, the establishment of the UK's Commission for Africa and the 'Year of Africa' in 2005. From depicting Africa as a continent in need, the narrative started to describe it as a land of opportunities. The EU responded to the evolving context with its 2005 Strategy for Africa which was however criticised for its unilateral nature and the two sides agreed to develop a joint strategy. Fifth, Portugal's presidency of the EU, eager to have a deliverable for its 2007 Africa-EU summit in Lisbon, provided the political drive for the consultations. The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) saw the light of day after a series of negotiation meetings between EU and African partners held in Brussels and Addis Ababa in the first six months of 2007.

Barroso (2013) went further to argue that, since the Lisbon Summit in 2007, the world has experienced profound changes. The emergence of new economic powers, the globalization of the financial crisis, and the revolutions of the 'Arab Spring' are factors that have had a major impact on both continents. The EU has deepened its integration and a new Treaty has been adopted, bringing significant changes both institutionally and politically. Africa has changed with unprecedented speed. Democratic consolidation progresses, economic growth is sustained, domestic and foreign investment is rising sharply, and the development of a continental architecture for peace and security is in progress. All this shows that a positive momentum exists despite the persistence of crises and conflicts, notably in Mali, the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau, and in spite of the

challenges that lie ahead in terms of governance and a vulnerability that still affects part of the population. If Africa is changing, the relationship of the world to Africa is also changing due to the new economic and geopolitical reality of a multipolar world in constant motion. Africa has moved from a forgotten continent to a coveted one.

This new interest in Africa is primarily based on three types of issues: economic, security, and environmental. Today more than ever, Europe and Africa have a common interest in maintaining a balanced and dynamic global partnership in order to take full advantage of new opportunities of today's world and to meet its challenges. Europe and Africa, despite their different situations, have to face the same challenge: promoting a model of economic growth that is both sustainable, inclusive and generates jobs. On the European side, the agenda 'Europe 2020' sets out growth strategy for 2020. The "Agenda for Change" strengthens the European development policy, focusing on sustainable growth, governance and the private sector while recalling the priority for Africa in EU cooperation. Africa has embarked for its part on the development of a strategic framework for the long term. It can also rely on a number of programs and policies in major sectors vital to its development, such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), or even in the area of governance, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), to name but a few (Barroso, Dlamini-Zuma, Chissano, and Lopes, 2013).

Barroso et.al. (2013) further opined that in the light of security issues on the African continent, joint efforts, both on the regional and on the continental level, to strengthen African capacities for conflict prevention and peacekeeping have to be pursued. Peace and stability in Africa are also fundamental to help Europe fight against trafficking, piracy and terrorism. African conflicts cause, among other things, internal displacement and migration, which primarily affect neighbouring countries but also Europe. It is for these reasons that the EU supports the efforts of African partnership politically and financially, notably through the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), but also the African Governance Architecture (AGA). In order to have a real impact on the international agenda, Europe and Africa share the same major interest to better coordinate our positions on the long list of our common interests in the light of global challenges such as peace, climate change, environment and biodiversity, trade and human rights. This joint work has begun, but it must be reinforced significantly.

### **EU-Africa Partnership: Contending Issues**

As the African Union (AU) and European Union (EU) are celebrating years of existence, similarities and differences can be observed. Both institutions have been suffering peculiar challenges. The EU's power is shared by its institutions whereas the AU structure is very leaders-oriented. Dlamini-Zuma is the first woman to lead the AU, but the Commission still struggles to establish its role. The EU Commission in contrast initiates most legislation, is the guardian of the Treaties and has judicial power over member states if they refuse to comply. The EU members always pay their parts of the budget, unlike AU members. The EU is often compared to a bicycle so that you have to keep peddling to reach the goal. The AU is more described as an African mini bus on which you can read: 'no condition is permanent' (Adebajo and Whiteman, 2012).

For Africa, relations with Europe are (important because of the scale of trade; as most important trading partner) only one of several strategic partnerships. One needs to redefine Afro-Europa in this context. That is why immigration, agriculture are important, because if Europe wants to maintain special relations it has to pay more attention in these sectors. Security partnerships will also feature more and more. The lesson drawn is that Africa has to be sure that it is defending its own interests and not prosecuting Europe's own (Adebajo and Whiteman, 2012). Eurafrique had been tried in the Yaounde convention born from the Rome Treaty, but it had been perceived as too one-sided and was denounced by Pan-Africans as neo-colonial: Lome was to represent a new deal. But imperfect and incomplete though it was, the Lome Convention probably represented the high point of the notion that there could be a genuine mutually beneficial partnership between united Europe and at least an important part of the developing world. It generated a spirit that has never really been recaptured, in part because of the new unity forged by the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP). This spirit used pan Africanism to set up something that would contribute to Africa. The whole thing was a bit too good to be true, began to go downhill, even in the seventies, hypocrisy of 'unequal partnership'.

Trade provision was under fire from the beginning, especially from General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), against good free trade principles, and the whole notion of equal partnership submerged in Africa's 'lost decade', as the convention grew in size, it became less effective, damaged by European bureaucracy. So by '90s the relationship was back to reciprocity in Cotonou, especially as World Trade Organisation (WTO) played an influential role in the trade relation. This led to the birth of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) drama, which has done so much damage to the political

atmosphere of the negotiations – not just ending non-reciprocity, as fouling up regional cooperation even with the best of intentions.

Serious dysfunctionalities set in with the development of the idea of a Europe Africa Strategic Partnership, born of summits (Cairo 2000, delayed by Zimbabwe but eventually Lisbon 2007). Encouraged by the arrival of the AU and as pan African security needs developed in the 90s, this was later fuelled in 2001 by Europe's anti-terrorist concerns. Important portions of European Development Fund from 2005 onwards began to go to AU forces, first in Sudan, then more successfully in Somalia, at the same time as Europe developed its own European Union Forces (EUFORs), mainly in Congo, then Chad-CAR (Central African Republic). All of which by-passed the ACP completely, even though the funding came from European Development Fund (EDF). There is a strategy that coexists with Cotonou, but there is a lack of relations between both (Adebajo and Whiteman, 2012). More so, uncertainty about the future of the strategic relationship between the EU and the ACP has been further exacerbated by tensions arising from negotiations to establish Economic Partnership Agreements. These continue on a bilateral and regional basis in most of Africa and the Pacific. However, between 2007 and 2009, a full regional EPA was agreed with the ACP's Caribbean countries and an interim EPA was signed and has begun to be implemented in Eastern Africa. The flexibility and progressive approach demonstrated by China and the United States (US) in forging trade relations with ACP countries has contrasted sharply with Brussels' dogmatism when negotiating EPAs—and highlights how Europe often fails to see its economic relationship with ACP countries as an opportunity to invest for long-term growth. Instead, the EU has frequently adopted a functionalist approach, negotiating trade deals on separate sub-regional and national bases and prioritising bilateral deals with middle-income countries. In addition, the Brussels-based ACP secretariat has been sidelined by EPA negotiations, shifting the management of trade relations to sub-regional and regional bodies at the expense of the ACP's role as the coordinating body. The European Commission often appears to predicate the terms of the EPAs on the broader outcomes of free trade negotiations being held at the level of the World Trade Organisation, although the WTO's leadership has not indicated that it is putting pressure on the EU over this issue. EPAs should not be imposed through fear and coercion (Paterson and Virk, 2014).

#### **EU-Africa Partnership: Future**

Europe and Africa have been important to each other with ties stemming from their history and geography and the

fact that their relationship connects two continents. Europe has been more of a trade, development and investment partner while Africa has been a crucial source of hard and soft commodities for Europe, such as strategic metals and minerals and captive market. Having said this, perhaps the most successful area in its long partnership has been in the thematic area of peace and security. The EU-Africa partnership over the last decade has evolved under framework of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy from one that was criticised for being an unbalanced donor recipient relationship to one that promised a profound change in its approach to Africa. In 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was premised on principles of equal participation and representation, as well as to treat Africa as one. However, development and political cooperation between the two continents has not resulted in any fundamental transformation; instead the gap has only become wider. This is attributable to factors such as dwindling development budgets that have been impacted by the Euro zone's sovereign debt crisis; in turn the financial expectations under the Joint Strategy have not been delivered. The emergence of new economies, rivals Europe's historic role and style of development aid cooperation in Africa. Several partnership agreements have also mushroomed since such as the Cotonou Agreement, fragmenting the strategy.

The 4th Africa–EU summit therefore addresses ways in which both continents can develop consensus on what they want and how to transform the Africa–EU relationship. In the new landscape of multipolar partnerships, Africa needs a coherent strategy so that its development is not compromised by competition amongst potential partners. In doing so, mutual accountability, mechanisms of enforcement, mechanisms that foster compliance of multinational firms to international norms and standards should be indispensable features for the future partnerships. It is time for Africa to capitalise on the geopolitical changes but by driving and owning the process (Lopes, 2013).

### **III. CONCLUSION**

Africa, though referred to as a third world continent consisting of 54 independent nations with similar experience of colonial rule has its own place in the international system among the comity of nations. Whether as a producer of goods or as a consumer of goods across the globe, the place of Africa cannot be downplayed. Owing to the long lasting relationship between Africa and Europe spanning across years of slave trade, imperial rule, colonial rule and post-colonial trade, it is not out of place to find Africa and Europe uniting on the same front *-trade*, for sustenance of bi-lateral relations. The major difference now is that instead of



relying aimlessly on Europe for survival; EurAfrique, Africa must find her footing in trading with the erstwhile colonial masters at par; Afro-Europa. In other words, this paper has been able to explore the intricacies of situating Africa on the international scene with particular reference to her mutual [rather than parasitic] relations with Europe. Thus by implication, EurAfrique; the era of exploitation of Africa's resources by the European powers has passed and the replacement by mutual and equal partnership; Afro-Europa, should be entrenched and sustained. By way of departure, have this 'replacement' not been replaced by exploitation by different players to engender Chinafrique, BRICafrique?

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