



Confédération européenne des ONG
d'urgence et de développement

The EU must do more and better for Africa

For more than 30 years, the African states and the European Union (EU) have been working together to develop new and mutually accountable models for their relations. From Yaounde to Cotonou, the EU and Africa have jointly committed to cooperation and partnership through International Treaties.

Over the past year, we and our Southern partners have become increasingly concerned about trends that are undermining the potential of the existing framework for relations between the EU and Africa.

The EU is failing to deliver on commitments towards joint ownership, and inclusive and participatory policy making. We are concerned about the limiting of policy space for partner countries and their citizens and the imposition by the EU of conditional development co-operation based on migration, counter-terrorism, and free trade on those countries.

We urge the European Union to take urgent measures to rebalance its relations with Africa at the following levels: political dialogue, trade negotiations and development assistance. We call upon the European Union to build these relationships within a joint project, owned by both parties, that actively engages with citizens and civil society organisations.

Real ownership and participation

Ownership can only be achieved if it is based on mutual accountability and honest political dialogue between the EU and Africa. The EU must demonstrate its willingness to question its own policies and go beyond traditional development models which reinforce unequal donor-recipient relations. To achieve real partnership, the EU must be ready to learn from African experience and analysis.

One of the key challenges in achieving development and peace in Africa today is the strengthening of domestic accountability: reinforcing the relationship between States and citizens in Africa. The EU must support African efforts towards the meaningful participation and engagement of civil society in policy-making at local, national and international levels.

Tackling poverty and human rights needs consistency and transparency

There is an urgent need to increase the consistency between the various policy and financial frameworks governing EU relations with Africa: the Cotonou Treaty, the Neighbourhood policy, the EU's Africa strategy and the response to NEPAD.

The ability of Parliaments and civil society in Europe and in Africa to monitor these processes is critical to ensure accountability and effective implementation. However, the growing number of European Funds, Facilities and Instruments make transparency and accountability increasingly difficult.

All partnership between Africa and the EU must be based on a commitment to all human rights. The EU must demonstrate its unswerving support for achieving and going beyond the Millennium Development Goals rather than trying to advance its own short-term political and economic interests in the fields of free trade, security and migration.

CONCORD therefore urges the European Commission and the Member States:

- ◆ To base real partnership between Africa and the EU on serious political dialogue rooted in mutual accountability and respect;
- ◆ To engage in an in-depth dialogue on governance with all African and European stakeholders. Every effort must be made to avoid a one way European concept of governance being imposed resulting in new conditions placed on developing countries;
- ◆ To demonstrate this shared commitment to the promotion of all human rights and the fight against poverty by delivering on MDGs and the development aims of the Cotonou Treaty.
- ◆ To enhance regional integration in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states before implementing Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and to open a real debate on alternative processes with ACP authorities and civil societies;