



**Europe Africa
Policy Research
Network**

**MAPUTO EARN/CEEI
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Emerging actors in Africa:

Impact and opportunities for EU-Africa and global relations

Concept Note

Introduction

The increasing interest in Africa by emerging economies (particularly China, India, Brazil, among others) and their role in the ‘scramble’ for African natural resources has been under focus for some time now. Competing interests, different perceptions and lack of clear information and data on the role and impact of emerging actors in Africa are feeding very different (and not always well founded) discourses in Africa and in/with Africa’s traditional development partners, as well as and in the relations between the latter (e.g. the EU) and emerging economies like China.

Much has been said about the engagement of the ‘new’ global players in Africa. The discourse is often dominated by perceptions and examples of often controversial or obscure deals involving companies from emerging economies. Although these are real concerns, they provide only a limited part of the picture of emerging economies’ engagement and impact in Africa, but there is clearly a lack of data and analysis on its impact in the economic and political governance of African states. There is also the need to differentiate between emerging players in Africa, who aren’t either a homogeneous group in their interests and capacities, nor do they share a unique agenda. EU-Africa relations are perceived to be changing too as a result of the presence and role of emerging economies in Africa, but how, and to what extent this is re-shaping relations between the two appears to be more in the realm of speculation.

There is generally a lack of policy dialogue between African governments, its traditional development partners and emerging actors. Some dialogue initiatives exist, but they appear still rather tentative and the parties uncertain about the benefits they could yield. The potential benefits and opportunities of triangular cooperation and coordination are yet to be explored and the main challenges of achieving greater complementarity between these actors have hardly been addressed. Nonetheless, the attention paid to the increasing role and importance of the engagement of these players in Africa is already contributing to a rethinking of development policies towards Africa by both traditional and emerging actors and to a greater focus on concrete analysis.



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About EARN

EARN is a network of African and European Policy Research Institutes, aiming to contribute to the EU-Africa Policy Dialogue. EARN intends to bring added value on pooling and fostering policy research capacities, dialogue, information and partnership between European and African non-governmental research institutions on issues relating to EU-Africa relations.

More information in:
<http://europafrica.net/earn>

About CEEI

The Maputo based Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CEEI) is the research department of the Higher Institute for International Relations (ISRI). CEEI main thematic areas of research are: (i) Economics and Development, (ii) Peace and Security, (iii) Socio-Political and Cultural Studies, and (iv) International Relations and Foreign Policy.

Objectives

- To discuss the *impact* of the increasing presence of emerging actors *in Africa* (e.g. on economic and political governance, national development, domestic accountability, regional integration processes), *on EU-Africa relations* and, more widely, *on global relations*.
- Devising *risks and opportunities* that arise from changes brought by the presence and operating modes of emerging global actors.

EARN aims also to *stimulate and broaden the partnership* between European and African think tanks and organizations, and *create new opportunities for dialogue and interaction* between them, with policy makers and other relevant actors. The conference will thus:

- Provide an opportunity to *dialogue and exchange with policy-makers* on the role and impact of emerging players in Africa and in global relations, and thus feed into the promotion of dialogue between these actors;
- Provide a *sounding board for the research* of different EARN members on these issues and take stock of the concerns and priorities of policy-makers and African civil society and private sector;
- Provide *inputs* into the preparation of a wider and longer term *EARN project* for networking and dialogue on issues of common concern to Europe and Africa.

Outcomes

- A *Conference report* (summing-up and analysis of the debates, and the conference papers) will be available shortly after and widely disseminated through EARN members and their own contacts and networks.
- A *EARN policy brief* aimed at policy-makers in particular.

Conference Themes

Theme 1:

The role of emerging players in mineral resource-rich African states: best practices and lessons learned for improved governance.

Theme 2

Understanding land investments and politics in Africa: the role of international actors and the impact of land deals on local development and national governance

Theme 3

South-South Cooperation and African Regional Integration Agendas: which implications for regional integration policies in Africa and potential synergies?

Theme 4

Opportunities for Change: What are we learning and can do better to promote sustainable development and governance in Africa?

Date and Organisers

The Conference will be held on 23-24 of April 2012, in Maputo. It will be hosted by the EARN member and Maputo based **Centre for Strategic and International Studies/Higher Institute for International Relations** (CEEI/ ISRI), and organised jointly with other EARN members: the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM, the Netherlands) and the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (IEEI, Portugal).

For more information on this EARN initiative, please contact Fernanda Faria: ff@ecdpm.org / ff@ieei.pt