



Webinar

Fostering Human Security and Resilience in the future EU-Africa Partnership The Role of Local Communities

Thursday 15 October 2020, 11h00 - 13h00 (CEST)

Background

Moving towards building a partnership of equals with Africa is a high priority for the European Union in 2020, as emphasized in the [State of the Union speech of President von der Leyen of 16 September](#). The year began with the 10th African Union-European Union (AU-EU) college-to-college meeting in February, which was attended by 22 EU Commissioners, the largest delegation of this kind ever on a trip outside the EU. In March 2020, the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS) issued a [joint communication](#) outlining their proposal for a new comprehensive strategy with Africa. In June 2020, the Council of the EU adopted [conclusions on Africa](#), outlining the views of EU Member States for the future EU-Africa relations.

The EU-Africa partnership is however not only a matter of governments and intergovernmental institutions. In line with the 2030 Agenda principles and with the EU's commitment to create a people-centred partnership, it should count on the participation of all stakeholders and all people, including meaningful contributions from Church and civil society actors. It is thus of paramount importance to broaden and strengthen the voice and participation of African local communities and faith actors in decision-making, norm-setting and governance of the future partnership, notably in light of the 6th AU-EU Summit planned for 2021.

One of the foreseen priority areas of cooperation in the renewed EU-Africa partnership is resilience. In particular, the EC and EEAS propose that future EU-Africa cooperation focuses on securing resilience “by linking humanitarian, development, peace and security interventions at all stages of the cycle of conflicts and crises”. This in line with the EU Global Strategy (June 2016), which established that the EU would promote resilience in partner countries, focusing on “the most acute dimensions of fragility” and “targeting those where a meaningful difference can be made”.

In this context, the webinar “Fostering Human Security and Resilience in the future EU-Africa partnership: the role of local communities” proposes a discussion that goes beyond state resilience and state security, and that is based on a broader concept of resilience, which encompasses all persons and the whole of society, and on the concept of *human security*. Given the relevance of EU-Africa cooperation in these areas, but also that significant progress in fostering resilient societies and in applying a human security approach still needs to be made, this webinar aims at shedding light to the importance of supporting and promoting the role of local and faith actors and communities as an important contributors to achieve these objectives. Discussions will thus focus on how the root causes of conflict, instability and lack of social



cohesion can be addressed at grassroots level, through community engagement and building upon the resourcefulness of local actors.

The webinar will count with the participation of speakers from different African countries who will talk about local initiatives undertaken in various fields and policy areas, illustrating ways in which local actors play a role in building resilience and human security.

Objectives

- Offer a platform for an open dialogue among civil society, religious and faith-based actors from Africa and Europe together with EU policy-makers;
- Offer an opportunity for Europe-based stakeholders to listen to grassroots voices from African partners presenting their perspective on the EU-Africa partnership;
- Explore how faith actors can bring an added-value to initiatives undertaken under the framework of EU-Africa relations aimed at fostering resilient societies and applying a human security approach;
- Share concrete experiences and good practices of initiatives by Catholic partners in Africa related to resilience and human security;
- Contribute to shaping discussions of the 6th AU-EU Summit and the framework for the future EU-Africa partnership regarding resilience and human security.

Format

The discussion is intended to be structured around some guiding questions (please see them below). It will proceed in an interactive format.

Participants

Invitation to participate in this event will be extended to EU and AU policy-makers, African and European Church representatives, faith-based organisations and civil society organisations from Africa and Europe.

Language

The webinar will be conducted in English with simultaneous French interpretation.



Programme

11:00 - 11:05: Welcome

- Josianne Gauthier, CIDSE Secretary General

11:05 - 11:15: Introductory remarks

- [Fr. Manuel Barrios Prieto](#), General Secretary of COMECE
- [H.E. Mgr. Sithembele Anton Sipuka](#), 1st Vice-President of SECAM and President of the Justice, Peace and Development Commission; Bishop of Mthatha, South Africa (*tbc*)

11:15 - 12:00: Stories of resilience from Africa

- Ms. Gertrude Chimange, Diocesan Coordinator at CCJP-Mutare, on defending human rights of communities at risk in Zimbabwe
- Fr. McDonald Nah, National Director of the Catholic Justice, Peace and Caritas (NCJPC) in Liberia, on building social cohesion in divided communities
- Mr. Samuel Mwangi, entrepreneur and past VET pupil, on running vocational education & training (VET) and fostering resilience in Kenya
- Ms. Victoria Madedor, Business Development Consultant, on providing capacity support for networks of family farmers in Nigeria
- Mr. Ibrahim Hassan Frede, on the role of young people and communities in peacebuilding in Central African Republic
- Ms. Nazik Hamat Djido, on education in Iridimi refugee camp in South Sudan

12:00 - 12:25: Remarks by EU decision makers (EP, EEAS/DG DEVCO, German Council Presidency)

- MEP Lukas Mandl (EPP, Austria)
- Jonas Jonsson, Director for Pan-African Affairs in Service of Deputy Secretary General for economic and global issues, EEAS (*tbc*)
- Mario Ronconi, Head of Unit B2 (Resilience and Fragility), DG DEVCO (*tbc*)
- Representative from the German Permanent Representation to the EU (*tbc*)

12:25 - 12:55: Q&A session

- Josianne Gauthier, CIDSE Secretary General

12:55 - 13:00 Conclusions

- Maria Nyman, Caritas Europa Secretary General



Some guiding questions for the discussion during the Webinar

- What is the role of local communities, including religious and faith-based actors, in fostering resilient and peaceful societies and applying a human security approach in the EU-Africa partnership?
- Does the current EU-AU policy framework sufficiently reflect this role of local communities as promoters of resilience and human security?
- How could the future EU-Africa partnership enhance the engagement with local communities in order to better tap into their grassroots expertise and resourcefulness in view of promoting resilience and human security?

Background documents

- [EC/EEAS joint communication on the Africa strategy](#) (March 2020)
- [Council Conclusions](#) on Africa (30 June)
- [Development committee's draft report](#) on Africa strategy (July 2020)
- [Foreign Affairs' committee draft opinion](#) on Africa strategy (June 2020)
- [COMECE-SECAM joint statement](#) (June 2020)
- [Caritas Europa-Caritas Africa joint position paper](#), with CIDSE's contribution (May 2020)
- [Conclusions/report of the 'Eurafrica revisited' conference organized by Sant'Egidio and ECDPM](#) (May 2019)
- ['Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy'](#) (2016)
- [European Commission Action Plan for Resilience in Crisis Prone Countries, 2013-2020](#) (2013)

Registration

Click [here](#) to register. You will receive a confirmation email with the details to join the webinar before 15 October.