



## **Joint EU-Africa Strategy Reference Group on Infrastructure**

(Transport, ICT, Energy and Water)

Addis Ababa, 25-26 February 2016

### **Africa and EU Respond to the Evolving Challenges Arising from the Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Migration.**

*“Africa and the EU should take proactive measures in contributing to the attainment of the SDGs, the global fight against climate change and tackle some of the root causes of migration by investing more and in a smarter way in infrastructure projects in Africa”. This is one of the main conclusions reached by the Reference Group on Infrastructure (RGI) at the closure of its two days annual meeting that was held on 26 February 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The RGI, whose mandate is to coordinate the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy Infrastructure Agenda covering Transport, Energy, ICT and Water, also examined the critical issues pertaining to the implementation of their joint Action Plan and validated a set of projects for possible funding through the blending mechanism under the African Infrastructure Facility (AfIF).*

The meeting brought together representatives from African and European Union Member States, African Union Commission (AUC), European Commission (EC), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), International Financing Institutions (IFIs), Public and Private Sector and Non-Governmental Organisations.

This year’s meeting, hosted by the AUC and the second since its establishment at the 4<sup>th</sup> Joint Africa-EU Summit in 2014, had a more strategic dimension as a result of the outcomes of high-level policy dialogues, namely the global agreements reached through Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and COP 21, as well as the conclusions of the Africa-EU Valletta Summit on migration that took place in November 2015.

One of the concrete measures taken by the RGI, is the validation of an indicative pipeline of continental infrastructure projects, covering the four sector, for possible funding under the DCI Panaf instrument under the EU blending framework.

In recognition of the critical relationship between infrastructure and the emerging global policy issues, the meeting agreed on affirmative strategic policy responses for addressing them. These include:

- Enhancing support to Smart Cities in Africa as a new priority, with a particular focus on support to Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) drawing from the synergies between Transport, Energy, ICT and Water in order to tackle issues related to the exponential growth of Africa's cities;
- Prioritising programmes that enhance the multi-sectoral approach and create stronger links between infrastructure and other sectors, in particular, the nexus water-energy-food security, energy-transport-climate change;
- Promoting better coordination at the regional, national and local levels, including the civil society, through initiatives such as Covenant of Mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa and the integrated development programmes for Climate Change Adaptation in the Niger Basin;
- Intensifying efforts towards maritime and air safety and security, namely through the deployment of the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) in Africa;
- Boosting private sector participation for example in the Energy sector through initiatives such as ElectriFI;
- Deepening cooperation in the ICT sector to reap the full dividend from the development of the digital economy, the single most important driver today for innovation, competitiveness and growth; and
- Leveraging funding from institutional financing institutions and private through the use of innovative financing mechanisms, such as blending, namely through the use of the AfIF.

The relevant presentations made during the meeting are available [here](#).