

Regional Meeting Africa of the Policy Forum on Development Gaborone, Botswana 8-10 October 2018



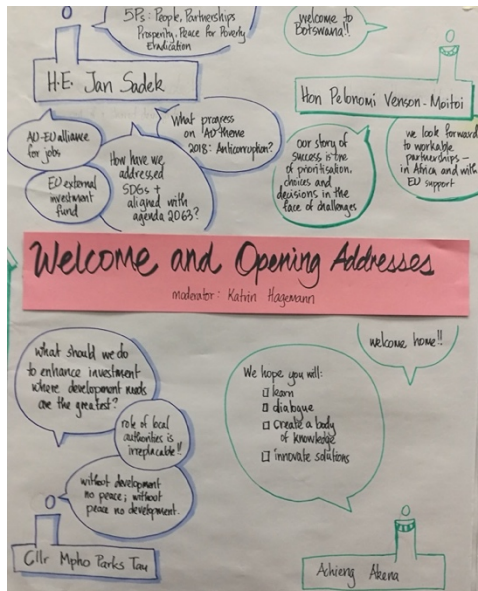
More than 100 representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs), including the private sector, Local Authorities (LAs), the African Union (AU) institutions and representatives of European Union (EU) institutions gathered in Gaborone (Botswana), from 8 to 10 October 2018, for the Regional Meeting Africa of the Policy Forum on Development (PFD).

Welcome speeches

Claire Frost, Programme Manager, Commonwealth Local Government Forum and Member of the Task Team made a presentation on how the PFD works as a dialogue platform bringing together development actors from around the world and representatives of EU institutions to discuss development policies and how to best implement the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In his welcome remarks, **Jan Sadek**, European Union Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana and the South African Development Community, underlined the timely nature of the meeting as it provided an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the African Union – European Union Summit, to develop resilience to the “rising threats to multilateralism” and to discuss the opportunities presented by the new Africa - Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs. The EU is Africa’s largest trading partner at present and “we are part of a common development agenda; working together is the only way to achieve the SDGs,” he stressed.





Honorable Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development of the Republic of Botswana, reflected on the country's pathway to sustainable development and pointed to the competing tension between prioritisation and multiplicity of development objectives as a key challenge. She encouraged a shift from grants to more "trade-based investment," inviting European investors to partner with their counterparts in Africa.

Mpho Parks Tau, President of the South Africa Local Government Association and Africa Vice-President, United Cities and Local Governments, encouraged the building of more resilient communities through investment in cities to "capitalise on Africa's demographic dividend." He pointed to education, training, employment and entrepreneurship of youth as tools to achieving sustainable development. He also underscored the vital role of LAs as being at the forefront of service delivery and democratic accountability.

Achieng Akena, Executive Director, Pan African Citizens Network welcomed the opportunity to meet with stakeholders from all over Africa to develop innovative solutions together and encourage good practice exchanges. She referred to Botswana as a positive example in achieving sustainable development and appealed to all to ensure that development solutions were responsive to ordinary African citizens. In addition, she encouraged participants to use the opportunity to participate in the PFD in the spirit of "collective thinking."

Lessons from Botswana on Attaining Sustainable Development

This session showcased Botswana's experiences in implementing the SDGs. Key players introduced what worked well, the challenges they were facing and how they sought to overcome them.

Honorable Moiseralele Goya, Assistant Minister of Investment, Trade and Industry of the Republic of Botswana, identified good governance, anti-corruption strategies and the tax system combined with high investments in education as the three pillars that contributed to Botswana's success story. He observed that Botswana's history encouraged "a culture of tolerance and pluralism," reflected in the national ethos.

Rev Mpho Moruakgomo, President of the Botswana Association of Local Authorities, recognised leadership and participatory planning as important tools in contributing to state-building. He explained how past leaders gradually encouraged a devolved governance structure that encouraged social cohesion in the country. Increased participatory planning also helped in identifying transformative development choices including encouraging private sector participation with the notable example of the strategic partnership in mineral led export industries.



Lorato Morapedi, Chief Executive Officer of the National Development Bank, spoke about people-centred development priorities including the focus on education, health and poverty eradication as key features of Botswana's success story. She also mentioned that specific measures were put in place to ensure that vulnerable groups such as women and the elderly were not left behind. She did note, however, that challenges remain with respect to income inequality, child nutrition and mortality as well as rural-urban migration.



Dichaba Molobe, Director, Business Development Services, Business Botswana, talked about the current challenges such as dependency on food imports and the need to improve areas such as innovation and infrastructure development: "We are a prosperous but not a productive country." He stressed that the private sector had an important role to play in the creation of employment, while the State needed to pave the way to attract foreign investors by introducing tax incentives and other support structures.

Matching Africa's and Europe's Development Agendas

This session assessed whether Africa was on track in achieving its developmental goals. It reviewed key development policies for Africa including the Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and their level of coherence and co-ordination with European Development Agendas and national development plans.

William Carew, Regional Desk Officer – Peace Movement, Citizens and Diaspora Directorate, Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, expressed optimism that the Agenda 2063 would contribute to Africa's transformation, meaning "a people-centred and prosperous Africa based on sustainable development, politically united and independent, respecting human rights and the rule of law." He also stressed that the fight against corruption was vital in the implementation of Africa's development agenda.

Karen del Biondo, Policy Officer, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, talked about the New European Consensus on Development and the need for shared policy frameworks and joint-programming between Member States and the EU as a key solution to its implementation. She also underlined the need for strong monitoring frameworks for the delivery of development priorities.



Cristian Roger Okemba, Mayor of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, spoke about the need to review local development plans to reflect the realities of urban environments. He proposed to do this through funding research on urban development, standards of living and food security in order to address demographic changes and rural and urban landscapes. He also proposed peer evaluation and benchmarking visits to assess the progress in development between cities in Europe and Africa.



Rachel Kagoiya, Senior Manager, African Women's Development and Communication Network underscored the importance of eradicating poverty and tackling inequalities. She proposed broadening the tax base and eliminating the loopholes that facilitate illicit financial flows. According to her, "there is a cure against poverty: the empowerment of women."

The participants broke out into working groups to discuss trade and coherence for development; enabling environment; the European External Investment Plan and how to enhance economic development and investment opportunities.

The Evolving AU-EU partnership

This panel discussed the stakeholder engagement at the AU – EU Abidjan Summit and the progress made in relation to the agreed four areas of work: youth, peace and security, migration and mobility and governance.

Domenico Rosa, Head of Unit, European Union-Africa, African Peace Facility, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, described the general context of the EU-Africa strategy and how each summit produces a political declaration and an associated action plan, and the strong focus on periodic evaluation of the implementation. He also stated that "the EU is an honest broker" in advocating for greater participation of non-state actors, as the EU did in convening the preparatory summit activities.

Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments Africa, expressed his concern about the restricted space for LAs and stressed the need to include them at future summits. A particular challenge was the slow pace of response from the AU side in accepting their request to attend. In reflecting on the Abidjan Summit, he encouraged the EU side to "shift perspective on the migration debate away from a purely security- oriented lens to one that is linked to development and co-development of both regions and the world at large."

Nondumiso N Hlophe, Fellow of the AU-EU Youth Plugin Initiative, expressed her satisfaction with the ground-breaking dedication to youth empowerment during the summit. She noted that the selection of youth through a transparent and participatory open call process was welcomed but further engagement was needed to "ensure that the future calls reach a much broader and diverse demographic."



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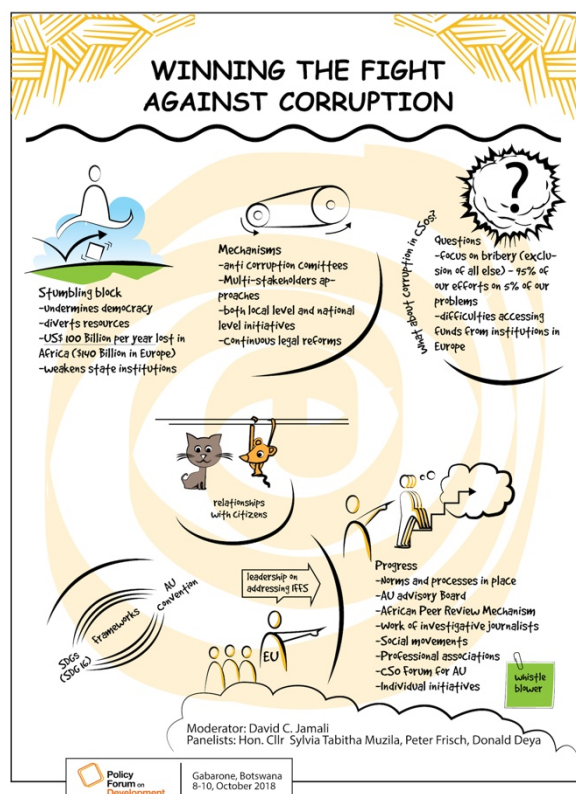
The Post 2020 EU-ACP and EU-Africa Relations

The session reflected on the lead up to the Cotonou Agreement, its present status and its future goals. The panel debated key aspects of the proposal for a new partnership agreement in the context of other existing intra-continental arrangements.

Domenico Rosa, Head of Unit, European Union-Africa, African Peace Facility, Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, reflected on the need to revisit the Cotonou framework due to the changing landscape over the past 20 years. He stated that the post-Cotonou framework must build on the existing strengths, including engaging civil society, the private sector and LAs as key stakeholders. He highlighted the willingness to “deal with Africa as one through the conclusion of an association agreement” that reflects the spirit of a partnership of equals.

Honorable Pheny Segokgo, Council Chairman for South East District Council, Botswana, recommended that the post Cotonou framework address new challenges such as migration and mobility, the emergence of Asian powers and the contestation for space between civil society, LAs and the private sector. He recommended that, to give effect to future agreements and ensure implementation, LAs should participate much more actively as well as be engaged to monitor and evaluate development projects.

Tamzin Hudson, Advocacy Senior Specialist, Habitat for Humanity International, noted the timeliness of the negotiations of a post-Cotonou framework in relation to the emerging challenges of climate change, migration and rapid urban migration, which cannot be confronted solely by the State. She emphasised the opportunity for civil society, the private sector and LAs to collaborate in identifying solutions to developmental challenges.



Winning the Fight Against Corruption

The panel reflected on the AU theme of the year dedicated to winning the fight against corruption, described the challenges that corruption had on development and the opportunities for Africa and discussed a number of recommendations in the fight against corruption and illicit financial flows.

Honourable Sylvia Tabitha Muzila, Mayor of Francistown, Republic of Botswana, introduced Botswana’s journey in fighting corruption. She recommended leveraging partnerships to tackle illicit financial flows, dedicating



sufficient resources to fighting corruption, focusing on asset recovery and ensuring adherence to international commitments as key solutions to ending corruption in Africa.

Peter Frisch, Senior political economist, Development Cooperation Coordination Division, European External Action Service, referred to the latest Corruption Index published in February 2018 and the increase of illicit financial flows from Africa. In order to combat corruption, he recommended synergies between parliamentarians and anti-corruption bodies to ensure effective oversight, and he also encouraged the

“strengthening of youth and civil society networks that could act as watchdogs over government.”

Donald Deya, Chief Executive Officer of the Pan African Lawyers Union, recommended the expansion of the definition and application of corruption to cover state capture, abuse of office and illicit business activity. He noted that Africa had done relatively well with respect to norm-setting and establishment of institutions; however, challenges remained with respect to their effective implementation. He also recommended smart partnerships between civil society, academia and professional associations in the north with their counterparts in the south to end illicit financial flows.

Conclusions

The meeting adopted a Communiqué that detailed the key observations and recommendations to the AU and EU at the end of the third day. The Communiqué can be downloaded on the website of the Policy Forum on Development on Capacity4Development:

<https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/policy-forum-development>

