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Africa-EU partnership of equals: how can we get there? Is the Global Gateway fit for purpose?

Panel discussion based on contributions from religious & faith-based organisations and local communities for a Global Gateway that supports locally-led development

Location: European Parliament (room ASP-1G369), co-hosted by MEPs Saskia Bricmont and Carlos Zorrinho & Online

Date and time: Tuesday, 7 March at 11h15-13h00 (CET)

Language: EN-FR interpretation available to online participants

Organisers: ACT Alliance EU, AEFJN, Baha'i Community International, Caritas Europa, CIDSE, COMECE, Don Bosco International, EU-CORD, World Vision EUREP

[Click here](#) to register until **27 February** (there are limited seats for physical attendance. They will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Before the event you will receive an email confirming your registration for virtual or physical attendance and including the connection details in case of virtual attendance)

In the context of the 6th AU-EU Summit, African and European civil society, including faith-based as well as Church actors, have continued to highlight the need for a more balanced partnership between Africa and Europe. The aspiration to build a 'partnership of equals' has been a longstanding one – the first [joint Africa-EU Strategy adopted back in 2007](#) had already emphasised the need to forge “a real partnership characterised by equality” however, the benchmarks of this equality are yet to be defined. How much progress has been made so far? And is the Global Gateway – the “future of the EU’s development cooperation”- going to help pave the way towards a balanced partnership with Africa?

Since the announcement of the Global Gateway in late 2021, African and European civil society, alongside members of the European Parliament, have raised pertinent questions about its funding, transparency, governance structure, and dependence on traditional business models.

This panel discussion will **offer a space for frank, respectful and constructive dialogue amongst stakeholders with different perspectives on the Global Gateway’s strategy**. Such dialogue is of relevance as the EU moves forward with implementing the Global Gateway Africa Investment Package and in light of the upcoming AU-EU ministerial meeting in Spring 2023.

Faith-based and Church actors are deeply rooted in local communities in Africa and share the values that should assure the Global Gateway as “a positive offer” to partner countries – democracy, human rights, transparency, trust, sustainability. Naturally then, we want to **contribute to treading paths of coherence so that the implementation of the African window of the Global Gateway stays truthful to its own principles and is an adequate tool for the objective it has set – fostering sustainable development in Africa, reaching the furthest behind.**

Discussions will touch upon the following **guiding questions**:

The need to re-orient the Global Gateway to another economic and development model

1. Why is it important that the Global Gateway puts local communities' needs, knowledge, ways of living, interests, aspirations, and understanding and vision of development at the forefront? How can the Global Gateway governance be re-structured to do that?
2. Which type of private actor should the Global Gateway work with? Which production, business, and development models do these actors support?
3. How can the Global Gateway be reoriented, so it does not continue to fund business models that are in need of change? How can it prioritise working with and investing in local, sustainable, and inclusive business models, such as social economy businesses and cooperatives?

Concrete recommendations for an improved Global Gateway governance

4. How can the Global Gateway help strengthen territorial markets and local supply and value chains?
5. How will the EC ensure that the principles and criteria of the NDICI regulation are respected and that development impact and financial additionality are achieved when implementing the EFSD+ in Africa? What will be the prevailing criteria when selecting proposals submitted by DFIs and private actors through the EFSD+ investment windows? How far will the Parliament be able to play its scrutiny role on EFSD+ implementation?

Expected outcomes:

- Increased awareness, amongst members of the European Parliament and European Commission and EEAS officials, of the inherent contradictions in the Global Gateway's development model, and increased political commitment to turn the Global Gateway Africa Investment Package into trust-based investment in local knowledge, solutions, and vision of development.
- Recognition by European Commission and EEAS officials of the need for the Global Gateway governance structure to be revised (including partner countries' representation, a role for the European parliament, a mechanism for civil society and other stakeholders engagement and ensuring diversity of private sector actors).

Panel moderator: M. Floris Faber, ACT Alliance EU Director

Introductory remarks: Fr. Manuel Barrios Prieto, General Secretary of COMECE, and MEP Ms. Saskia Bricmont

Panelists:

- M. Paul Renier, Deputy Head of Unit at DG INTPA Unit A1 (Strategic Partnerships with Africa and with the ACP)
- M. Ivano Casella, Trade Affairs Officer at DG TRADE Unit C1 (African, Caribbean and Pacific, Overseas Countries and Territories) – *joining virtually*
- Ms. Claire Améyo Quenum, Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA) (Togo) – *joining virtually*
- Ms. Lucy Esipila, Caritas Africa Advocacy Officer (Kenya)
- M. Masaidio Kalenga, Kimanya-Ngeyo Foundation for Science and Education (Uganda) – *joining virtually*

Concluding remarks: MEP M. Carlos Zorrinho