



# The AU & EU Programmes and their Supporting Cooperation Frameworks – Priorities, Implementation Status, and Remaining Challenges

## **Session co-chairs**

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## **Panellist list**

- **Luis Magalhaes, UMIC (Knowledge Society Agency), Ministry of Education and Science, Portugal**
- **Rached Hamza, CERT (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche des Telecommunications)**
- **Moctar Yedaly, African Union Commission (AUC)**
- **Harry De Backer, EU Delegation to the African Union, European External Relations Service**
- **Edmund Katiti, NEPAD e-Africa Programme**






## **Setting the scene**

Session objectives

**The main purpose of the session was to share information on the programmes and policy priorities of the AU-EU Strategic Partnership which included the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Partnership.**






## Report - Slide #1

***Luis Magalhães*** presented the EU-Africa 8<sup>th</sup> Partnership on Science, Information Society and Space as he is the designated European Co-Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> Partnership. The main reasons to strengthen EU-Africa cooperation in S&T is the special strategic interest for both regions, the importance of international knowledge networks, and collaborative work involving cultural and regional diversity is particularly productive. The main instruments for this cooperation is FP7 2007-2013 and the EDF allowing cooperation to develop visibly as there are around 800 participations from Africa with around 120M€. Hence, Africa has a special place compared to other major regions of cooperation such as Asia and Latin America with ICT being on the 4<sup>th</sup> place within the different areas of cooperation. He also outlined the different levels of governance, among others, the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika, the Joint AU-EU Task Force, the Joint Experts Group (JEG8) and the European Experts Group (EEG8). He concluded that the ultimate goal must be a focus on people as the knowledge based economy shall benefit people whereas trust, confidence, and personal relationships among researchers as well a bottom up approach is significant.





## Report - Slide #2

(summary part II)

As African Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> Partnership Implementation Group *Rached Hamza* provided an African perspective on the 8<sup>th</sup> Africa-EU Partnership. He outlined the historic development with the Lisbon Summit in 2007 and the Action Plan I (2008-2010) as well as the Tripoli Summit and the Action Plan II (2011-2013) which has three priority actions: S&T capacity building for the implementation of Africa's S&T Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), supporting the development of an inclusive information society in Africa, as well as enhancing sustainable development. He concluded by mentioning JEG8 aims in Action Plan II which are the following:

- Set up a permanent dialogue between European and African stakeholders
- Autonomy in decision making for retaining and funding of joint research projects
- Enhance scientific cooperation between African and European institutions
- Ensure complementarities and synergies of research programs
- Mobilize resources for collaborative research with the objective of establishing excellent research projects and networks able to attract researchers and investments from Europe and the entire world
- Strengthen coordination of national research programs
- Find out more flexible means to react to emerging needs and unforeseen policy needs
- Reach an optimal participation of private sector.






## Report - Slide #3

*(summary part III)*

**Moctar Yedaly** presented the four AU programmes: the Reference Framework for Harmonisation of Policies and Regulations, ARAPKE (Africa Regional Action Plan for Knowledge Economy), the PIDA (Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa) Project and the EU-Africa Partnership on Infrastructure. The Reference Framework is intended to provide common guidelines to facilitate the harmonisation of national and regional policies and regulations and to allow for better coordination with the Regional Economic Communities. Two ARAPKE projects have been funded: AXIS - African Internet eXchange System and ALICT - African Leadership in ICT. The PIDA aims to develop an infrastructure master plan for Africa and ICT infrastructure is one of the components to be addressed. In the 9th EU-Africa Partnership, the ICT sector was allocated approximately 10% of the total funding, yet the funds could not be used due to challenges with EDF procedures. Generally, the AU aims to build an integrated and inclusive African Information Society that will enhance the integration of African economies and improve the quality of life of African citizen. The current situation of ICT in Africa is characterised by fragmentation of activities, despite the Constitutive Act and the Abuja Treaty. Hence, there is a need to harmonise policies and establish and improve networks and services which the four AU programmes aim at.

**Harry De Backer** complemented Mr Yedaly's presentation by mentioning that the HIPSSA Project is very successful but the funds will expire in 2013. Moreover, he regrets a new development policy from the EC's DG DevCo as they will not consider ICT and science in the future the way they used to do.






## Report - Slide #4

(summary part IV)

**Edmund Katiti** spoke on the AU-NEPAD ICT Broadband Infrastructure Programme which is part of PIDA. The absence of adequate infrastructure results in increased costs, reduced competitiveness, negative impact on foreign direct investment and affects the rate of socioeconomic development. Hence, PIDA's purpose is to develop a vision and strategic framework for the development of regional and continental infrastructure, including ICT, and it aims at promoting socioeconomic development and poverty reduction in Africa through improved access to integrated networks and services. One of the key critical needs identified by the PIDA study was the transposition of agreed enabling regional and continental policies, regulations, guidelines and directives, into national laws. More specifically, the AU-NEPAD Broadband Infrastructure Programme aims to ensure that all African countries are connected to one another by a broadband fibre-optic cable network that is linked to the rest of the world by submarine cables. Hence, an enabling policy and regulatory framework was developed which was signed into the so called 'Kigali Protocol' by 12 countries in 2006. The Protocol's key provisions include the principle of open access, transparency and affordability and non-discrimination, it urges Governments to facilitate the licensing of the SPV(s), to amend where necessary their policy and to consider license fees to cover costs, and it calls for charges to be independent of distance.





## Report - Slide #5

**The main outcomes of this session was to share high level strategic programmes and policy priorities under the Africa –EU Strategic Partnership. These included the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE) and perspectives on EU-Africa cooperation on ICT.**





## Report - Summary

**In this session the policy framework for EU-Africa collaboration, funding instruments, programmes, and different projects have been presented as well as at least three main reasons to strengthen EU-Africa Cooperation in ICT have been identified: a special strategic interest for both regions, the importance of international knowledge networks and collaborative work involving cultural and regional diversity being particularly productive. Yet, challenges regarding implementation due to limited capacity remain.**

**Concluding remarks included:**

- **How to increase participation from West and Central Africa?**
- **How can African experts be funded to participate in the JEG?**
  - **Are the funding mechanisms suitable?**
- **How can they be modified to better suit prevailing conditions and realities?**

