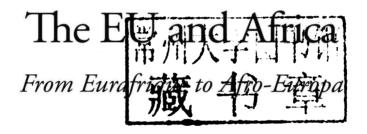
THE EU AND AFRICA FROM EURAFRIQUE TO AFRO-EUROPA

Adekeye Adebajo | Kaye Whiteman (eds)



ADEKEYE ADEBAJO AND KAYE WHITEMAN (editors)



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Even though the European Union (EU) has been Africa's largest trading partner over the last five decades, this is an area in which few African institutions have produced academically rigorous and policy-relevant knowledge. This volume seeks to correct this anomaly and to contribute to a better understanding of the historically difficult relationship between Africa and the EU in the areas of history, politics, economics, security, migration, and identity. The Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Cape Town, South Africa, organised two research and policy seminars on relations between Africa and the EU in October/November 2007 and September 2008. Both meetings sought to foster greater understanding of the political, economic, and security aspects of this important relationship. We thank the 21 authors on three continents involved in this volume who demonstrated great professionalism, perseverance, and punctiliousness during what must sometimes have seemed a tortuous editing process. The editors also wish to thank all the participants at the two meetings in 2007 and 2008 who shared their rich insights with us and provided substantive and candid feedback to the authors in this volume which greatly strengthened their chapters. These have all been revised and updated to take into account the tremendous changes that have occurred in the world over the last few years.

The two policy briefs and policy reports produced from the seminars in 2007 and 2008 have been widely employed by African and European policymakers, academics, and civil society actors in their work. This unique 22-chapter book will be similarly disseminated, and contains rich insights from African and European scholars and practitioners, as well as an Asian and an American scholar. We hope that it will be useful for African, European, and other scholars and policymakers with an interest in relations

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between both continents. It is important that academic institutions on both continents engage constructively on these issues for the mutual benefit of both Africa and the EU. In conducting research for this book, the editors also visited Brussels twice between 2008 and 2010 and interviewed key officials in both the Secretariat and government of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) Group, as well as EU Commission, Council, and Parliament officials. We wish to thank all the officials—too numerous to mention—who patiently and generously shared their practical insights and vast experience with us. We aim to disseminate the main findings of this project directly to these policymakers as well as to key regional organisations in Africa. There are many others in the academic world and in the private sector, as well as in diverse parts of the media, whose perceptions and insights have played a part that would often surprise them in moulding our own appreciation of such complex and multi-dimensional subject matter.

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Adekeye Adebajo and Kaye Whiteman

Adekeye Adebajo has been Executive Director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Cape Town, South Africa, since 2003. He served on United Nations (UN) missions in South Africa, Western Sahara, and Iraq. Dr Adebajo is the author of four books: Building Peace in West Africa; Liberia's Civil War; The Curse of Berlin: Africa After the Cold War; and UN Peacekeeping in Africa: From the Suez Crisis to the Sudan Conflicts. He has edited or co-edited six books on: managing global conflicts; the United Nations; the European Union; West African security; and South Africa and Nigeria's foreign policies in Africa. He obtained his doctorate from Oxford University, where he studied as a Rhodes Scholar.

Adebayo Adedeji has been a proponent and architect of regional integration in Africa since the early 1970s, beginning with the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Between 1971 and 1975, he was Minister of Economic Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria. During his tenure as Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa from 1975 to 1991, Adedeji led the development of the Preferential Trade Agreement, which later became the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. He is the editor of Africa Within the World: Beyond Dispossession and Dependence; Towards a Dynamic African Economy: Selected Speeches and Lectures; South Africa and Africa: Within or Apart?; South Africa: The Post Apartheid Era and many publications on African political economy, development and security. He is the Executive Director of the African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies in Ijebu Ode, Nigeria, and the former Chair of the African Peer Review Mechanism Panel of Eminent Persons.

Aldo Ajello was the European Union's Special representative for the Great Lakes Region between 1997 and 2007. He previously served as the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Mozambique between 1992 and 1995, worked with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and was an Italian legislator. He is the author of *Brasiers d'Afrique: Mémoires d'un émissaire pour la paix*.

Talitha Bertelsmann-Scott is an independent analyst. She is also Research Associate at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Johannesburg, South Africa. She has worked extensively in the areas of EU-South and Southern African trade relations, as well as Southern African integration. Her co-edited publications include: *Regional Integration and Economic Partnership Agreements: Southern Africa at the Crossroads*, and *The EU-SA Agreement: South Africa, Southern Africa and the European Union*.

Andrew Geddes is a Professor in the Department of Politics at the University of Sheffield, United Kingdom. He specialises in the comparative analysis of politics and policymaking with a particular interest in international migration. He has published a large number of books and articles on European and international migration, as well as work on British elections and British relations with the EU.

Liam Halligan is Chief Economist at Prosperity Capital Management in London. He holds an MPhil in Economics from the University of Oxford. Previously he held positions at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the Social Market Foundation, and the London School of Economics (LSE).

Anne Hammerstad is a Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Kent in England, an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Fellow, and a South African Institute of International Affairs research associate. Before joining the University of Kent, she was a Research and Teaching Fellow at the Royal Holloway College, University of London. She has published articles, chapters, reports and monographs, as well as an edited volume on topics relating to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and regional security in Southern Africa, South Africa's role in Africa, the African Union, and the relationship between displacement, conflict, and development.

Shada Islam is Head of Policy at the Friends of Europe, a think-tank, in Brussels, Belgium. She was previously Senior Programme Executive at the Brussels-based European Policy Centre (EPC). She is an experienced journalist, columnist, policy analyst and communication specialist with a strong background in geo-political, foreign, economic and trade policy issues involving Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the United States. She is also a regular contributor to Asian, African and Middle Eastern publications on issues relating to the EU, including foreign policy, security issues, economic and monetary union, immigration, and institutional reform and enlargement.

George Joffé is Deputy Director and Professorial Research Fellow at the Global Policy Institute, London Metropolitan University, England. He was Deputy Director and Director of Studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) between 1997 and 2000. Professor Joffé is also a Research Fellow at the Centre of International Studies, Cambridge University; and Director of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Qatar.

Gilbert M. Khadiagala is the Jan Smuts Professor of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. He has taught African politics in Kenya, Canada and the United States, most recently at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, DC. He is the editor of Security Dynamics in Africa's Great Lakes Region; co-author of Sudan: The Elusive Quest for Peace and co-editor of Getting In: The Entry of African Mediators in the Settlement of African Conflicts. He has consulted for various governments, NGOs and international organisations.

Winrich Kühne is the Steven Muller Professor in German Studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of International Studies at John Hopkins University, Bologna, Italy. He is the founding Director of the German Centre for International Peace Operations (ZiF), Berlin; former Deputy Director of the German Research Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP); consultant to the Association of European Parliamentarians (AWEPA); member of the international advisory group to the UN Peacekeeping Lessons Learned Unit; senior adviser to the former EU Crisis Prevention Network; member of the United Nations and Civilian Crisis Prevention advisory

groups of the German Foreign Office; and a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of International Peacekeeping* and *Global Governance*.

Hartmut Mayer is a Fellow and Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at St. Peter's College, University of Oxford, England. Prior to becoming a Fellow of St. Peter's, he held College Lectureships at Worcester, St. John's and St. Peter's Colleges, University of Oxford. He received his doctorate from Oxford University. His publications include two co-edited volumes: *A Responsible Europe? Ethical Foundations of EU External Affairs*, and *German-British Relations and the Spirit of Cadenabbia*.

Ali A. Mazrui is Director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies at the State University of New York. Previously, he was Head of the Political Science department and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Makerere University in Uganda; and Director of the University of Michigan's Centre for Afro-American and African studies. In 1986, Professor Mazrui wrote and narrated the influential nine-part documentary, 'The Africans: A Triple Heritage', which established his global reputation. The author of more than thirty books and hundreds of essays, he holds a doctorate from Oxford University, and has served in an advisory capacity to numerous organisations, including the United Nations.

Mareike Meyn is a Consultant with GFA Consulting Group in Hamburg, Germany, focusing on EU/ACP Relations. She was previously a Research Fellow in the International Economic Development Group (IEDG) at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in London.

Charles Mutasa is an independent development policy consultant and development studies doctoral student at the University of Zimbabwe. He served as Deputy Presiding Officer of the first African Union–Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Bureau and as a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2008 Aid Effectiveness CSO working group. He is the former Head of Programme Policy at Christian Aid and the former Executive Director of the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD). He has written extensively on Africa's development challenges and state-civil society relations.

Garth le Pere is the former Executive Director of the Institute for Global Dialogue (IGD) in Midrand, South Africa, a position he held for fifteen

years until joining DAJO Associates as a senior partner in January 2010. He is also Extraordinary Professor of Political Science at the University of Pretoria. His academic research and publishing record includes work on China's increasing role in Africa, a focus on state-society dynamics in Africa, EU-Africa relations, theories of international relations, South African foreign policy, multilateral trade, global conflict, regional integration and South-South cooperation.

Alex Vines is Research Director, Regional and Security Studies and Head of the Africa Programme at Chatham House in London. Between 2005 and 2007, he was a member and later Chair of the UN Panel of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire and a member of the UN Panel of Experts on Liberia between 2001 and 2003. He is the author of *RENAMO: Terrorism in Mozambique*.

Rob de Vos is Consul-General of the Netherlands in New York, United States. He previously served as Ambassador of the Netherlands to South Africa. He studied economics at the University of Amsterdam and entered the Dutch Foreign Service in 1978. He served at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation and acting Director-General for International Cooperation. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC).

Kaye Whiteman is a journalist and writer on African affairs. He is currently a London-based editorial adviser to *Business Day* (Nigeria), and writes for other publications such as *Africa Today*, *The Annual Register*, and *Geopolitique Africaine*. He was based at *Business Day* in Lagos, served as Director of Information and Public Affairs at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, and was Editor-in-Chief, General Manager and Managing Editor of the London-based weekly magazine *West Africa*. He was also a senior Information Official at the European Commission in Brussels, working on development issues between 1973 and 1982. He is the author of *Lagos: A Cultural and Historical Companion*, and has an MA in history from Oxford University. He has written extensively on West African affairs, Europe-Africa relations, and the Commonwealth.

Paul D. Williams is Associate Professor of International Affairs and Associate Director of the Security Policy Studies Programme at the Elliot School

of International Affairs, George Washington University in Washington, DC. He previously taught at the Universities of Aberystwyth, Birmingham, and Warwick in the United Kingdom. He has also served as a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Peace and Security Studies at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia. He currently serves on the editorial boards of two journals, *African Affairs* and *Global Responsibility to Protect*. His latest book, *War and Conflict in Africa*, was published in 2011.

Douglas A. Yates teaches political science at the American Graduate School of International Relations and Diplomacy in Paris, international relations at the American University of Paris, and Anglo-American jurisprudence at the French state law school of the University of Cergy-Pontoise. He is the author of the *Rentier state in Africa: Oil-Rent Dependency and Neo-colonialism in the Republic of Gabon*; and *The Scramble for African Oil*; co-author of *Oil Policy in the Gulf of Guinea*; and co-editor of the third edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Gabon*.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Kaye Whiteman

This book offers a holistic and comprehensive assessment of the relations of the European Union with Africa, focusing on their historical, political, socio-economic and cultural dimensions. In the high imperial period in the early twentieth century, some in Europe advocated the idea of Eurafrique a formula for putting Africa's resources at the disposal of Europe's industries. After tracing Europe's historical attempts to remodel relations following African independence beginning in the 1960s, and Europe's own quest for unity, the book examines the current strategic dimensions of the relationship, especially the place of Africa in Europe's own need for global partnerships. Key issues are then analysed, from trade and investment to the growing priorities of security and governance, through case histories of the role of key European players in Africa-France, Britain, Portugal, and the Nordics—within the context of the EU. The volume concludes by examining the important issues of migration and identity, especially in view of Europe's controversial immigration policies and complex relations with the Maghreb and the Mediterranean, as well as perceptions of past and current European identity.

For some time, there has clearly been a need for an overarching study of the relations of the European Union with Africa. This is a pioneering volume focusing on this important relationship, written mostly by African and Euro-

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pean scholars and practitioners, but also involving a Pakistani and an American citizen. The book is sponsored by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Cape Town, South Africa—which organised two policy seminars on Africa-Europe relations, in November 2007 and September 2008—and represents a groundbreaking effort by an African think-tank to enter a field hitherto largely dominated by institutions in Europe. The aim of this study is to encourage a constructive dialogue between scholars, policymakers, civil society groups, and the general public interested in Africa and Europe.

The EU-Africa Strategy put forward at the summit in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon in December 2007, and reviewed at the Tripoli summit in Libya in November 2010, has refocused on a subject that had seemed to drift down the Brussels agenda, even as the question is repeatedly asked: what kind of relationship should there be between the two continents? At present, Africa and Europe seem still not to have fully escaped from the burden of history. Also, their relations are beset by the ambiguities that surround this particular 'partnership' in the context of a wider European development policy. Does the 'African priority' in European policy—once an important theme—mean very much anymore? As Europe faces the buffeting of the global financial crisis, affecting the very future of the euro currency zone, does the relationship with Africa assume more significance, or is a new subtle process of marginalisation at work?

This is why the subtitle of this book, 'From Eurafrique to Afro-Europa', has a particular relevance. The expression *Eurafrique* is very much a hangover from the colonial past, from the less attractive areas of European history. It was a theory of empire devised by a Frenchman in the 1920s, which later became attractive in Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, as they saw advantages in a pan-European strategy for exploiting Africa's resources and markets (which individual European colonial powers had for long been doing). While for the French and Italians this concept was part of an extended Mediterranean strategy that extended Europe to the south in a zone of continuous domination, for Adolf Hitler's Germany in the 1930s it represented a way of recovering lost colonies, while fuelling Germany's industrial powerhouse. This was also taken up by the Nazi-allied Vichy regime in France in the Second World War (1939–1945), but was revived, very much with French inspiration, as a postcolonial strategy.

By the 1960s, France found that its former sub-Saharan African territories were the only part of its former empire where it could maintain a powerful influence (unlike North Africa and Indo-China). The system of

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intensified cooperation that had been developed by France's President Charles de Gaulle at that time was seen as having a European extension, using the 'association' policy that had been included in the Rome Treaty of 1957 at France's insistence. This was often referred to as the 'Eurafrican Association', and posited a special symbiotic relationship between the two continents, involving prioritised markets and privileged aid, modelled on France's own special relationship with its former territories.

The relationship was incarnated in the ten years of the Yaoundé Conventions of 1963 and 1968, which were criticised heavily by radical African leaders such as Guinea's Sékou Touré and Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah.¹ While the successor to Yaoundé, the Lomé Convention of 1975, eliminated the by now discredited language of 'association', and indeed of *Eurafrique*, the idea of an African priority for Europe (this time including all of independent sub-Saharan Africa) remained dominant in the twenty-five years of the Lomé Convention, which even Sekou Touré's Guinea was persuaded to join. It also remained implicit in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement of 2000, although the geopolitical priorities within the EU Commission in Brussels had changed substantially.

There was a bizarre resuscitation of the *Eurafrique* concept by France's President Nicolas Sarkozy on his first African tour in 2007,² encouraged by one of his advisers, Henri Guaino, who also revived the idea of a Europe-Mediterranean-Africa bloc, with the new Mediterranean Union as a central building brick. (See chapter 7 in this volume.) If this produced a negative reaction in Africa where *Eurafrique* is still equated with the neocolonial notion of *Françafrique*, the idea can sometimes be detected (without having its name spoken) in some of the new security-conscious thinking about Europe and Africa increasingly prevalent in Brussels. The purpose of this book is thus in part to examine how far attitudes have changed in this relationship, and whether a new, more balanced concept, which we choose to baptise 'Afro-Europa'—that is, an equal partnership of mutual interests without suggestion of a special relationship of more significance than others—can now become predominant.

One of the problems of writing about the relations that the European Union has with the developing world, and more particularly with Africa, is that this large and complex subject covers several disciplines. This means that the book has to deal not just with politics and economics but also with security, governance, migration, and identity. Most academic studies of the EU and its predecessor organisations, however, have focused disproportion-

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ately on economic aspects to the disadvantage of other critical subjects in this relationship.³ Even the substantial and serious body of work carried out by research institutes and think-tanks in Europe has steered around grappling with the more overtly sensitive political subject matter that is an essential part of the EU's external relations. In short, there is a shortage of all-embracing treatments of the subject, extending to the history of European institutions and activities as a critical part of the history of the continent, including the history of ideas.

It is to be regretted, for example, that most of the major players in this relationship have never written memoirs of their experiences, from commissioners such as Claude Cheysson and Edgard Pisani, to some of the architects of Cotonou, and to more recent commissioners such as Louis Michel. The same can be said of the main Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) participants in this drama, with the exception of Nigeria's former ambassador to Brussels, Olu Sanu, whose 1998 account offered an illuminating appraisal of Nigeria's relations with Europe. 4 Pius Okigbo, another former Nigerian ambassador to the European Economic Community (EEC), also wrote an early study on Brussels's relations with Africa in 1967.5 There were a few helpful academic studies of Lomé in its early days, notably John Ravenhill's Collective Clientelism,6 one of the first analyses of why the convention was not functioning well. More recently, the work of Kunibert Raffer⁷ has contained a series of telling arguments as to why Cotonou marked a definite step backwards from the positive aspects of Lomé, from the point of view of all developing countries.8

This absence of personal accounts may be one of the reasons why the relationship is, to put it mildly, underpublicised, and in many cases unsung. This has sometimes meant that while it has been convenient and advantageous to operate without the glare of publicity, the relationship has often not received the sort of scrutiny that would have been useful to a deeper understanding of EU-Africa relations. Moreover, there are major changes going on in Brussels, arising notably from the enlargement of the EU from its initial six members in 1957 to twenty-seven countries and the consolidation of EU institutions in the Lisbon Treaty of 2007, that now inevitably demand much more attention.

On top of which, the dramatic troubles of the euro in the context of the EU's poorer member states—such as Greece, Portugal, and Ireland—mean that a coherent global trade and development policy, targeted on a series of equal partnerships, especially in the 'emerging markets', seems to have