After the decolonisation process had been started, and the Organisation of African Unity was established, some African and European states were searching for the possibility of cooperation. In 1963 the member states of the European Economic Community (including the European Coal and Steel Community), and some African states signed the so-called Convention of Association in Yaoundé. The Yaoundé system was replaced by the Lomé Convention in 1975, because of British accession to the EEC. The Lomé process brought some new elements relating to Euro-African cooperation, for instance the two export-stabilising systems called Stabex and Sysmin, or the question of food security. The Lomé Conventions were in force until 2000, but because of pressure of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (and the USA), the Lomé system was substituted by the Cotonou Agreement in the same year. The foundation of the African Union in 2000–2001 enabled the European Union to treat its southern neighbour as an equal

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partner. After 2000, African security issues popped up frequently on the European agenda, because of several reasons. One of them was the terrorist attack on New York City in 2001; another was the creation of the AU’s own security and peace architecture which changed official European public opinion of the matter. In addition, leaders of the EU and AU launched a process of African-European summits, and this will result in an African-European pact by the end of the year.

The official European Africa policy is nowadays based on three main pillars: the European Union’s relations with the Sub-Saharan states, the EU-Mediterranean dialogue, and the EU’s special relationship with the Republic of South Africa.

On the one hand the European Community (EC) – the predecessor of the European Union – entered into relations with some African states (mainly from the Sub-Saharan region) by signing the Yaoundé Convention in 1963. This initiative was well prepared, because the constitutive document of the European Economic Community (EEC), the Treaty of Rome (1957), regulates the possibility of cooperation between the continents in question under the title called ‘Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories’.1 The reason the founders of the EEC had adopted such rules was to maintain the relationship between certain European states (especially France and Belgium) and their former African colonies.

In the beginning, the African countries felt repugnance towards their former colonisers, because ‘they had a hangover of colonialism’ (McCleland 1975:112–117). According to Robert Schuman (1991:119), ‘the Rome Treaty was also calculating on the establishment of a EuroAfrica’. The system of Yaoundé was dominated primarily by French interests, and the accession of Great Britain to the EEC in 1973 necessitated the reform of the European-African overture. Accordingly, a new document, the Lomé Treaty, was signed by the parties concerned in 1975. In addition, some other new states – mainly from the Caribbean and Pacific region – had joined this system and these newcomers, together with the African states, founded the group of African-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) states in the same year.

The Lomé conventions reflected on some security questions, including the problem of food security, and the issue of Système de Stabilisation des Recettes d’Exportation (Stabex) and Système de Stabilisation de Recettes d’Exportation de Produits Miniers (Sysmin). Actually, the questions mentioned above represented the interests of European states, while the main goal of the latter measures was to guarantee the tranquillity of bilateral commerce, without any moral underpinnings.

The Lomé conventions were in force until 2000, but because of the pressure of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Faber 1999), and also that of the USA, the Lomé system was replaced by the Cotonou Agreement in the same year. The signatory parties
decided to discontinue the system of Stabex and Sysmin but to extend their cooperation to political issues.

Long after the Yaoundé-Lomé-Cotonou process had been started, the EU sought the opportunity of cooperation with North African states (except Libya). Accordingly, they launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (nowadays known as the European Neighbourhood Policy) by the Barcelona Declaration in 1995. The Barcelona Process – as it was known unofficially – planned cooperation in three fields, but the first chapter of the declaration, entitled Political and Security Partnership, spoke only in general terms.

The third pillar of the European-African relationship, between the EU and South Africa, was established immediately after the downfall of the apartheid regime in South Africa. One of the most important elements of this cooperation is the joint fight against transnational crime, organised crime and drug trafficking.

However, the relationship described above was inadequate in terms of the challenges of the 21st century. Leaders in both Africa and Europe knew that a paradigm shift was necessary. On the one hand Africa’s value has been growing significantly since the 1990s, and on the other, the great powers such as the USA, China and Russia are keen to develop the African continent. Although the EU can hardly be compared with the great powers mentioned above, the leaders of Europe do not want to be left out of the game.

The European states are not complete strangers to the African continent. In addition, the African integration process has been speeding up (notably around the turn of the millennium) as a result of the establishment of the African Union (AU). The EU became able to treat its southern counterpart as a more or less unified, legal entity. Finally, the AU’s own security architecture is seen to be appropriate to address the problems of Africa from the viewpoint of Brussels.

At a summit in Cairo in 2000, the leaders of the EU and the African states agreed to launch a Euro-African dialogue in order to establish a new basis for cooperation. In a joint statement they announced that they would hold an African-Europe summit each year to harmonise their policies, including their security policies. The European and African leaders devoted an entire chapter of the Cairo Declaration 2000 to the issue of security. The aims of the parties concerned can be summarised in terms of an old cliché, namely that ‘peace and security are the first essential prerequisites for sustainable development’.

Thus the questions of security and development are strongly linked in terms of European-African cooperation. EU support for the AU’s efforts is primarily financial, since the EU’s own security architecture is less developed than the other global players’ security framework. The greater part of this financial support is administered through
the European Development Fund (EDF) and in terms of a decision of the Council of
Ministers of the EU and ACP states an African Peace Facility (APF) was established
in 2003. The APF initially allocated €250 million for three years and supports only
African-owned projects. Within the scope of this system, the AU has a primary role to
distribute the resources and plan the measures of the APF. The only question is whether
or not €200 million for peacekeeping operations, €35 million for capacity building, €12
million for contingencies, €2 million for evaluations and €1 million for audits (European
Union Database 2004) is sufficient. However, the EU has confidence in the current
security architecture of the AU, as proved by the findings of the 2003 European Security

The brand-new European Africa strategy is three-pronged and its most important pillar
is the promotion of peace and security in Africa. Accordingly, the EU would support
Africa in all aspects of conflict, namely conflict prevention, management and resolution,
as well as post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building (European Union Database
2005). Virtually the only aim of the African strategy is to achieve the UN Millennium
Development Goals (MDGs), since the UN is one of the most prominent players in the
European-African relationship. Both an African and a European interest is to underline
and strengthen the role of the UN in the contemporary world order, to counterweight
the influence of the great powers on African and European issues.

In addition to above, the terrorist attack on New York in 2001 helped foster cooperation
on security between Africa and Europe. The EU adopted the theories primarily worked
out by American scientists on weak states and failed states. After the terrorist attacks
in Madrid and London, peace and security in Africa became even more important in
European public opinion. According to the European Africa strategy:

Security has become a top priority worldwide since 11 September
2001. Both the EU member states and North African partner countries
(Mediterranean Dialogue 1994) have suffered major terrorist attacks. The
security of citizens is now a major priority for both Africa and Europe.
Ensuring security and the rule of law, with equity, justice and full respect
for human rights are now fully recognised as fundamental, shared priorities
(European Union Database 2005:4).

In line with the above, the EU would like to take part in so-called state-building and
would do so by means of the EDF structure.

In summary, the EU believes that peace and security in Africa basically depends on the
AU. The EU treats the AU as a completely equal partner and ally, which differs from its
treatment of the now defunct Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The AU presents an
historical opportunity to its 53 member states, because the only way towards permanent
peace is to foster the integration process in Africa. However, African integration is set back by several facts. On the one hand, African borders of state, as well as tribal/ethnic/cultural borders, are inadequate, and because of the international legal principle of *uti possidetis iuris*, the situation can hardly be changed without bloody conflict. In addition, one of the missing conditions of the (European-styled) integration is the evolution of nations, and the formation of nation states, which was launched by the French Revolution in the 18th century. And, while the AU was founded on the principles of democracy, good governance, human rights and rule of law, most of its member states currently do not meet these requirements. Finally, African integration seems to be expensive from an economical aspect – perhaps the states concerned undertook too much.

In spite of the above, the EU is optimistic about the current African integration process. On the one hand, African states unequivocally declared their commitment to break with the policy of dead end by establishing the AU and its security architecture. And on the other, the legal and political documents of the AU are proving their intention. Last but not least, the most important question for the near future is whether the African-European Dialogue, launched in 2000, and the planned joint African-European Strategy would yield appropriate answers to present-day challenges. There can be only one appropriate answer, namely the alliance and harmonisation of interests of the two unions within the framework of democratic principles.

**Notes**

1 See the Fourth Part of the 1957 Rome Treaty on the establishment of the European Economic Community.
2 See the 2000 Cairo Declaration section 41.
3 See the 2005 EU Strategy for Africa section 3.

**References**


