

EU-Africa 2.0? The Challenges and Opportunities of Resetting EU-Africa Relations



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By

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Abstract

After more than a year of delays marked by tensions and misunderstandings, the European Union and African Union concluded their sixth summit in February 2022. The two organizations have committed to a “renewed partnership” and promised a “A Joint Vision for 2030”, including a range of commitments in areas such as public health, trade, investment and security. Does this represent a new beginning? What has really changed? The purpose of this brown bag lunch presentation is to take stock of these commitments in light of the long-standing and persistent asymmetries between the two sides, as well as in the context of a global order in profound flux. The presentation will explore the shifting dynamics between the main actors involved in the renewal of EU-Africa relations (e.g. the EU, the AU and the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States), revealing some of the intra-European and intra-African tensions about the future direction of the larger relationship. The conclusion is that, while Europe’s status has waned, and forms of African agency have increased, lack of cohesion – and sometimes will -- on either side has made plotting a completely new course difficult.

About



John Kotsopoulos is the acting head of the Foresight Unit at Global Affairs Canada. He is also a Research Associate at the University of Pretoria (South Africa). John holds a PhD in International Relations (University of Kent). He has research interests in North-South relations, African international relations and foreign policy analysis. John also holds Master’s degrees from the London School of Economics and Carleton University. He is a member of the secretariat of the Africa Study Group of the Canadian International Council. Dr Kotsopoulos writes and speaks in his personal capacity.

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