



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 6.1.2021
C(2021) 65 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council ‘Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa’ {JOIN(2020) 4 final}.

The Commission appreciates that the Camera Deputaților supports the proposed strategy with Africa as outlined in the Joint Communication, aiming at a stronger and true partnership between equals.

The cooperation with Member States is marking a new era of unprecedented success. The Team Europe approach towards the COVID-19 pandemic has seen the reallocation of EUR 38.5 billion to fight the pandemic in some of the world’s most vulnerable areas, a significant part of which is provided to Africa. The Commission fully agrees with the Camera Deputaților’s recommendation that the support for promoting investment in basic healthcare and developing infrastructure and capacities to deal with outbreaks of disease has to continue beyond the urgent pandemic response.

The Team Europe approach must now be continued, having shown what can be achieved when Europe acts together as a Union. As the EU moves to renew its partnership with Africa, the excellent collaboration with Member States, at national, regional and continental level, remains essential. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the continued interest of the Camera Deputaților in the Africa-EU Partnership.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, long-term strategic priorities must remain at the forefront of the partnership with Africa, all of which are even more important and urgent in a post-COVID world. The green transition, digital transformation, sustainable investment and jobs, migration and mobility, peace, security and governance, as laid out in the Joint Communication, remain relevant for the post-COVID recovery; building a more resilient society to prevent future similar crises; and creating a future-proof and sustainable growth model for future generations.

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This includes maintaining a focus on education, and stepping-up cooperation in mutual knowledge at all levels, with the aim of creating equal opportunities. We must work with the business sectors in Europe and Africa, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as civil society, in order to put our priorities into action. The Green Transition should be at the core of recoveries globally, in order to build back better, and this includes access to technologies and support of adaptation, as well as a focus on renewable energy as a key deliverable of our partnership. The Commission also appreciates the call for Romania to participate in cooperation in governance, the green transition and energy access and the digital transformation, and attributes significant importance to youth.

Across all cooperation activities with African partners, the EU will continue to pay particular attention to respecting its core values and in particular to taking into account the particular needs of persons in vulnerable situations, including women, children, and persons with disabilities. Good governance, effective and inclusive economic, social, education and health policies, equal access to basic social services will remain a key trait of our partnership. In this regard, the safeguard and protection of children's rights merits particular attention. The EU is committed to the reduction of socio-economic inequalities in all relevant policy areas. In this respect, the EU will join efforts with selected partners to form a High-Level Expert Panel on Inequalities to build international consensus and political momentum at global level to address inequalities, especially in the context of COVID-19 recovery plans and investments.

In the coming months, in the run up to the 6th EU-African Union Summit, outreach to African partners to agree upon joint priorities and find ways to converge on diverging issues is the priority. Member States' outreach in this regard will be crucial.

The Commission looks forward to continuing this fruitful cooperation with Member States and national Parliaments in the context of the Africa-EU Partnership.

The Commission hopes that the clarifications provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaților and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*

*Jutta Urpilainen
Member of the Commission*