

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE APO HIGH LEVEL ROUNDTABLE

Africa-Europe Relations:
Agenda and Priorities
Towards 2050

Held in Brussels on **22th May**
Side Event to the **AU EU**
Ministerial Meeting



Context

As European and African Union ministers convened for their pivotal May 21st meeting, this roundtable event, held the following day, of the Africa Political Outlook offered a unique space for reflection and forward-thinking dialogue on the future of Euro-African relations. Anchored around the theme “**Africa-Europe Relations: Agenda and Priorities Towards 2050**”, the gathering brought together key actors from both continents to engage in a process of co-construction, grounded in the analysis of the EU-AU Joint Communiqué and subsequent report. Participants collectively identified concrete ideas, policy solutions, and avenues for implementation to advance a more strategic and balanced partnership. At a time when global challenges—from climate change and security to digital transition and migration—demand renewed ambition and inclusive governance, this session aimed to move beyond traditional diplomatic frameworks. It sought to forge a roadmap that is both transformative and rooted in shared values, leveraging the complementary strengths of Africa and Europe in building a common future towards 2050.

The deliberate choice to structure our discussions around five thematic tables, each bearing the names of iconic African and European figures, reflects our commitment to building a truly equitable dialogue. By pairing visionaries like **Yazami with Curie** for science and innovation, **Mandela with Merkel** for global governance, **Nasser with Schuman** for economic prosperity, **Ahtisaari with Annan** for peace and security, and **Malraux with Senghor** for culture and identity, we acknowledge that the solutions to 21st-century challenges must draw from the rich intellectual and political heritage of both continents. These partnerships transcend symbolic representation—they embody the practical reality that sustainable progress requires the fusion of European expertise with African innovation, European resources with African dynamism, and European institutional experience with African entrepreneurial spirit.

This day’s discussions emerge at a critical juncture where the traditional paradigms of North-South cooperation are being fundamentally questioned and reimaged. From the digital revolution transforming how we connect and create, to climate change demanding new models of sustainable development, from migration flows reshaping demographic realities to security challenges requiring multilateral responses, our agenda reflects the complexity and interconnectedness of contemporary global issues.

The Africa Political Outlook platform recognizes that these challenges cannot be addressed through outdated models of aid dependency or one-sided technical assistance, but rather through genuine partnership based on mutual respect, shared responsibility, and complementary capabilities.

As we embark on these deliberations, we carry the collective aspiration to transform rhetoric into actionable recommendations, to bridge the gap between high-level ministerial declarations and ground-level implementation, and to ensure that the voices of young Africans and Europeans are not merely heard but actively shape the partnership architecture of tomorrow. The insights generated from these roundtables will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how Africa and Europe can work together not just as partners of convenience, but as co-architects of a more just, prosperous, and secure world order.

Table composition:

01	MALRAUX SENGHOR:	CULTURE, IDENTITY, DIASPORAS, CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND SPORT
02	NASSER SCHUMAN:	INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY, GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT
03	AHTISAARI ANNAN:	COLLECTIVE SECURITY ARCHITECTURE, PEACE AND DEFENSE
04	MANDELA MERKEL:	PLURILATERALISM AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE
05	YAZAMI CURIE:	SCIENCE, INNOVATION, AI AND DIGITAL BRIDGES



As part of the discussions, each of the five tables was asked to propose three concrete recommendations related to the specific theme of their group. This collective exercise aimed to generate actionable ideas rooted in African and European realities, driven by a shared vision for transformation. Participants reflected on innovative, sustainable, and inclusive solutions across key areas such as science, energy, governance, climate, and social dynamics. These recommendations reflect a common ambition: to build strong and lasting bridges between Africa and Europe by harnessing talent, resources, and strategic partnerships to address the challenges of the 21st century together.

Table 1: Yazami - Curie

Topic: Science, Innovation, AI and Digital Bridges

Rachid Yazami and Marie Curie exemplify science in service of humanity, transcending borders. Yazami's research on lithium-ion batteries and Curie's pioneering work in radioactivity reflect a legacy of innovation that unites Europe and Africa. This table affirms that digital transformation and artificial intelligence must narrow—not deepen—the technological divide. Through equitable cooperation, the potential of African youth and European expertise can be harnessed to accelerate energy transition, digital access, and inclusive innovation ecosystems.

Key Recommendations:

- ▶ **Harness the Congo River's potential** – Launch strategic initiatives like the Hinga Dam, combining infrastructure with youth inclusion and investor commitment to generate massive renewable energy.
- ▶ **Deploy AI for health and energy** – Develop tools tailored to African realities—e.g., intelligent medicine distribution and rural energy optimization—drawing on localized models like M-PESA in remote terrains.
- ▶ **Boost local pharma production** – Expand support for transparent manufacturing ecosystems, as seen in Senegal and South Africa, underpinned by EU-Gates Foundation cooperation and regional innovation hubs.

Table 2: Nasser - Schuman

Topic: Inclusive Prosperity, Growth and Sustainable Investments

Gamal Abdel Nasser and Robert Schuman embody contrasting yet complementary development philosophies—economic sovereignty through national planning, and integration through supranational cooperation. Their pairing highlights the need for a hybrid model: self-reliant yet globally engaged. This table promotes a prosperity agenda rooted in good governance, local value creation, and trade relations that empower African economies while strengthening interdependence with Europe.

Key Recommendations:

- ▶ **Link governance to local value chains** – Anchor economic growth in transparent institutions that stimulate domestic production, job creation, and social returns on investment.
- ▶ **Plan long-term with shared priorities** – Shift from fragmented, reactive strategies to coordinated, forward-looking policies using joint monitoring, policy reviews, and adaptive mechanisms.
- ▶ **Revise trade partnerships** – Build alliances based on mutual interest, updating tariff systems and easing access to regional markets to foster balanced and reciprocal trade dynamics.

Table 3: Malraux - Senghor

Topic: Culture, Identity, Diasporas, Industries Creatives and Sport

Malraux and Senghor shared a universalist humanism rooted in cultural empowerment. This table emphasizes culture as both an economic force and a medium of dialogue. The African and European diasporas co-create hybrid identities that fuel creativity and solidarity. Valorizing this dynamic space—through education, diplomacy, and industry—offers a compelling path to inclusive development and renewed global narratives.

Key Recommendations:

- ▶ **Launch diaspora leadership platforms** – Amplify diaspora voices and connections, reinforcing solidarity across African, European, and even Asian partnerships like those with Morocco and China.
- ▶ **Institutionalize diaspora dialogue** – Recognize diaspora communities as strategic actors through mapping, formal consultations, and mechanisms that integrate them into policymaking.
- ▶ **Promote future-facing cultural identity** – Leverage creative industries and cultural education to assert a confident African identity and shift narratives beyond postcolonial victimhood.

Table 4: Ahtisaari - Annan

Topic: Collective Security Architecture, Peace and Defense

Ahtisaari and Annan embodied multilateral diplomacy and pragmatic peacemaking. Their joint legacy illustrates the value of preventive strategies and African-led solutions. This table calls for a Euro-African security architecture grounded in partnership, where African institutions lead and Europe supports through resources, coordination, and respect for regional legitimacy.

Key Recommendations:

- ▶ **Build a joint security architecture** – Strengthen African leadership by designing inclusive frameworks under AU coordination, focused on prevention, mediation, and capacity-building.
- ▶ **Create a permanent AU-EU peace dialogue** – Institutionalize a standing platform for early warning, policy alignment, and real-time coordination between the African Union and European Commission.
- ▶ **Support African-led peacebuilding** – Encourage African proactivity in designing and leading missions, while Europe facilitates resources, scaling, and legitimacy of locally driven solutions.

Table 5: Mandela - Merkel

Topic: Plurilateralism and Global Dialogue

Nelson Mandela and Angela Merkel led through moral clarity and institutional strength, showing that principled dialogue can shape global consensus. In the face of global fragmentation, this table advocates for plurilateral engagement where Africa and Europe jointly defend inclusive governance and democratic values, and reshape institutions to reflect today's multipolar realities.

Key Recommendations:

► **Reform global finance and taxation** – Ensure African voices shape global financial systems, focusing on taxing multinationals fairly and maximizing value retention from natural resources.

► **Engage in sectoral diplomacy** – Integrate African perspectives into platforms like the Indian Ocean Summit and G20-B20, ensuring sectoral talks reflect both development and human rights.

► **Advance global governance reforms** – Prioritize peace and climate reforms in bodies like the UN Security Council and COP processes, where Africa must gain voice, influence, and institutional leverage.



Represented Institutions

International-Multilateral Organizations:

- Chinese Mission to the EU - Diplomatic mission with deputy chief representation
- Organization of African Caribbean and Pacific States - Major international organization with multiple senior experts
- United Nations Development Programme - UN agency
- World Customs Organization - International customs body
- Cities Alliance / UNOPS - UN-affiliated urban development organization
- IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement) - French research institute

National Government Institutions:

- Belgian Senate - National legislative body
- Brussels Parliament - Regional legislative body
- Malawi Embassy to Belgium - Diplomatic mission

Regional-Trade Organizations:

- AWEX (Wallonia Export-Investment Agency) - Belgian regional trade promotion
- OCP AFRICA - Major African phosphate/fertilizer company

Think Tanks and Research Organizations:

- Bruegel - Prominent European economic think tank
- Ars Geopolitica - Geopolitical research organization
- Re-Imagine Europa - European policy organization

NGOs and Foundations:

- Justice et Paix - Social justice organization
- Hand in Hand Foundation - Development NGO
- The Institute for African Knowledges - Research institute
- African Non-state Actors Platform on Migration and Development - Advocacy platform
- Migration Youth and Children Platform - Advocacy organization

Private Sector-Consulting:

- STROPCIM.COM - Consulting firm
- Niatala - Finance company
- Effective Horizons - Advisory firm
- C4S-Africa - Development organization
- Cellule-Appui Politologique en Afrique et dans les Caraïbes - Policy organization



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