

GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ORDER

# AFRICA POLICY AFTER THE GERMAN FEDERAL ELECTIONS

Five Impulses

**Henrik Maihack**  
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Within the framework of the EU, Germany can work toward a more strategic, more predictable, and more coherent Africa policy. This would improve the likelihood that the 2030 Agenda will be achieved.



Jointly strengthening vaccine equity, helping to adapt to the climate crisis, and maintaining closer cooperation between the two continents toward democratic multilateralism would make the achievement of the Agenda 2030 more likely.

# AFRICA POLICY AFTER THE GERMAN FEDERAL ELECTIONS

## Five Impulses



Germany's and the EU's mainly developmental partnership with the African continent is not sufficient, there is no real migration policy partnership that would be based on joint interests, and a broader foreign-policy partnership is still being developed.



For German and European foreign policy, the question therefore arises as to what concrete political offers it can make to the neighboring African continent after the end of the Merkel era that will better correspond to the foreign, social, and economic policy priorities in the African partner countries.



This would include developing joint responses to future global challenges. This does not mean turning away from development cooperation, but rather aligning foreign policy more coherently with the processes and actors in Africa that will most likely be considered for cooperation on those challenges now and in the future.

Further information on the topic can be found here:  
<https://www.fes.de/en/africa-department>



In the next ten years, the cooperation with African countries should play a more important role in German foreign policy than in previous decades.

Elsewhere, the possible effects of global megatrends are still being discussed as challenges of the future, while in Africa they are already being acutely felt: in the Sahel, for example, temperatures have already risen threateningly, making droughts more likely and increasing the risks of violent conflict. Democratic space is shrinking in parts of southern and eastern Africa, and in response a young urban population is protesting loudly and in new alliances. By 2030, there will be 500 million job seekers in Africa, the vast majority of whom have been working in the precarious informal sector until now. Against this background, it will be decided in African countries whether the objectives of the Paris Agreement will be achieved globally in solidarity, whether the goals of the Agenda 2030, the global social contract adopted by United Nations in 2015, can be achieved, and whether a democratic or an autocratic-compatible multilateralism will be more successful in times of systemic competition.

Implementing the Paris Agreement, the Agenda 2030, and strengthening democratic multilateralism are both external and domestic policy goals of German foreign policy. There is however a limited amount of time to achieve them. African countries have contributed the least to the climate crisis, and over half of the continent's population is not even connected to the power grid yet. Therefore, there is a need for ambitious proposals on how to meet global climate goals while still improving the prospects for economic development. This requires international support for new economic models in African countries that can create fair employment and ensure social protection for those who are unlikely to find decent jobs in the growing informal sector at present. And because more than 70 percent of all UN Security Council resolutions in 2020 have dealt with Africa, where already seven peacekeeping missions are currently active – for example in Mali (currently the largest foreign deployment of the German armed forces), in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in South Sudan – the future of foreign missions to ensure peace and security will also be decided between Bamako, Kinshasa, and Juba.

Against this backdrop, the question that arises for German and European foreign policy is about which specific political offers it can make to the neighboring continent after the end of the Merkel era that will better correspond with the foreign, social, and economic policy priorities in the African partner countries in the future. At the same time, it is long overdue for African governments to be finally perceived by German and European governments as primarily foreign-policy partners, not primarily partners for development cooperation, and to be won over for joint responses to global challenges of the future. This would also be more in line with the way that those African partners see themselves. This does not mean turning away from development cooperation and humanitarian assistance,

but it would mean aligning foreign policy more coherently with those processes and partners in Africa that are the best fit for a value-based cooperation on precisely such global challenges. Last but not least, clearer signals are needed that Germany will consciously and concretely examine its colonial past of murder, raids and crimes in Africa. All of these are basic prerequisites for building new trust in Africa among governments and among civil society, which in turn is the starting point for the overused formula in Germany of »partnership at eye level« with African countries.

Against this background, Germany should cooperate with African countries in a more strategic, predictable, and coherent manner than in the past. The following five impulses are by no means sufficient to achieve these goals, but can offer starting points for short, medium, and long-term political prioritization.

## AVOIDING LONG COVID IN AFRICA

Many parts of the global South are being affected by Covid-19 but lack access to vaccines: this is the most urgent crisis of justice of the 21st century to date. The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit most African countries harder than any of the major international financial crises since 1997. Over 30 million people in Africa have fallen into extreme poverty since the pandemic began, and many – especially women – have been thrown into unemployment. In Nigeria for example, one fifth of the workforce lost their jobs as a consequence of the pandemic. The pandemic has particularly affected the so-called informal sector in the continent's growing cities, where the majority work without employment contracts and/or access to health insurance.

Without enough vaccine, economic recovery will be difficult. To date, less than ten percent of the population on the African continent has been vaccinated. This alone makes the implementation of the 2030 Agenda a distant prospect. Therefore, in the short term, access to vaccines on the African continent must be guaranteed as quickly as possible. So far, Africa has not sufficiently benefited either from the globally coordinated distribution of vaccines by the COVAX initiative, or from the international market for vaccines, because vaccine doses remain rare and expensive. Incidentally, in Germany, in order to produce a coronavirus vaccine, trust was not placed in the market alone; in fact the federal government provided public funding of 750 million euros for research and development of the vaccine and then made the vaccination available free of charge to the German public.

In the current situation, The EU should and can afford to do more to fight Covid-19 in Africa. After the 2008 financial crisis, Germany alone spent at least 59 billion euros on combatting the banking crisis. According to the Center for Global Development (CGD), offering vaccinations to everyone worldwide would cost a similar amount:

50 to 70 billion US dollars, or about 0.1 percent of global economic output in 2021. (CGD, June 11, 2021) Because further viral mutations, which develop particularly easily in unvaccinated groups, trigger enormous economic costs worldwide, this would be money very well invested also for Europe. In this regard, one can only agree with the economic historian Adam Tooze, who speaks of a »staggering failure of rationality« when considering the absence until now of a functioning global vaccination program, because not even 50 billion US dollars in funding can be raised for a program with an estimated economic global benefit of eight trillion US dollars. (*New York Times*, 17.9.2021) Beyond the economic benefits, more equitable access to vaccines would be an investment in international solidarity that African countries will remember.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

In the short term, access to vaccines in the Global South depends on an increased and more predictable export of vaccine doses from the Global North and, at the same time, financial support for the development of vaccination production in Africa, which would create supply chains specifically tailored to health protection on the continent. An improved European-African cooperation to enhance access to vaccines would strengthen political trust in the cooperation between the two continents, which has suffered during the pandemic. Such a vaccination campaign also requires increased cooperation with non-state actors such as those, for example, combatting »fake news« about vaccination risks – especially in African autocracies, where many people distrust their government and therefore demand additional independent information.

The European Commission has already announced that it will make additional vaccine doses available for African countries. Countries such as Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, and Rwanda are already setting up their own vaccine production facilities. Two major priorities continue to be an even more rapid transfer of technology, and additional funding for vaccine manufacturing. Accordingly, a temporary patent waiver should also be discussed, as argued by a majority of the members of the World Trade Organization and the African Union (AU). Even though such a patent waiver would not necessarily increase the availability of vaccine doses in the short term, it would promote both the fight against the pandemic and the development of vaccine production in Africa in the medium term.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Africa Center for Disease Control (Africa CDC), which operates under the AU, has been competently demonstrating what a regional pandemic policy based on solidarity could look like if the necessary technical and financial resources were made available. The CDC also has acquired expertise in this area based on its experience with the Ebola pandemic.

## MULTILATERAL COOPERATION INSTEAD OF GEOPOLITICS

The German Federal Government Africa Policy Guidelines describe the convergence of interests between Europe and Africa in jointly shaping a rule-based world order on the basis of the UN's Agenda 2030 and the AU's 2063 Agenda. Both continents are particularly dependent on a rules-based multilateral order because they lack states that can almost single-handedly assert their foreign policy interests on a global scale, unlike on both edges of the Pacific. Given its geographic proximity and some common foreign and security policy interests, Europe is in many ways a closer partner for Africa than China or the United States.

In the UN General Assembly, the group of African countries holds more than a quarter of all votes. According to the AU's Agenda 2063, the 54 member states call for African countries to play a more influential role in multilateral institutions in the future and are demanding a greater say in the Security Council. Through a reform of the Security Council, Germany also wants to gain influence and strengthen democratic multilateralism. In addition, both the EU and the AU are seeking greater foreign policy sovereignty.

The EU remains the most important trading partner for African countries. The continent carries on 32 percent of its foreign trade with the EU. Europe, on the other hand, will increasingly depend on the import of raw materials for the energy transition, such as lithium and cobalt, which are often imported from African countries but whose supply chain has not yet been sufficiently transparent. One advantage for closer cooperation between the two continents in the future is that the largest markets on the African and European continent are not controlled by autocratic governments: this could facilitate multilateral cooperation at various levels, for example between the AU and the EU.

At the same time, African countries have more foreign policy options than before. 39 of them are involved in the Chinese »New Silk Road«. Even though China recently reduced lending to the continent, the People's Republic remains an important financing and trading partner for Africa, with which 17 percent of Africa's foreign trade is conducted. China is also successfully soliciting support in multilateral bodies on the African continent and is the largest provider of troops for blue helmet missions among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Additional foreign policy options are emerging for African governments as a result of the increasing presence of other international actors. Turkey, the Gulf States, and Russia, for example, often try to exert targeted influence on the governments of states dealing with violent conflict such as Mozambique or Mali, and states that are economically of interest to them, for example because of their wealth of raw materials. (Müller/Vorrath 2021:93)

However, in African countries just as in European countries, foreign policy is not decided by governments alone; it is accountable internally to well-organized civil society actors who monitor the foreign policy of their governments. In

representative surveys on the African continent, the US and China are about equally popular. (cf. Selormey, 3.9.2020) This popularity seems to not extend to the Chinese political model, because clear majorities in African countries continue to argue in favor of democratic governance. Civil society networks in Africa are also becoming more influential across borders and putting pressure on the foreign policy of their governments. In the Horn of Africa, arms purchases from the Gulf States are being criticized by civil society networks. Civil society representatives in African countries with high indebtedness in China are critical of their governments turning to Beijing for more loans. However, representatives of civil society also criticize the continuously unjust trade regimes of the EU which, for example, only negotiates with part of the continent south of the Sahara under the Post-Cotonou Agreement, while the new African Continental Free Trade Area integrates all member states of the AU.

Against this background, Germany's strong focus on flight and migration or on the mobilization of foreign direct investment – for example, within the framework of the G20 »Compact with Africa« initiative – will not do justice to the necessarily more comprehensive future cooperation with the African continent. African partners are for example more likely to advocate greater mobility on the continent (Tull/Zilla 2021) and integration into local and regional value chains. Too close an orientation to France's Africa policy, with its strong anti-terrorism focus, which often proves unpopular among the population in many African countries (see below) also falls short, and is not a sufficient guideline for future German and European Africa policy.

It is also not sufficient for a future German and European cooperation with the African continent to be conceived by foreign policy makers in Europe merely as geopolitical positioning in competition between China, the US, or other countries. This distorts the larger picture; it would also constitute foreign policy paternalism towards a continent whose countries have the foreign policy options described above, and who see themselves as partners for foreign policy and not primarily for development policy.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Only those who reach agreements that are legitimate for governments and civil societies on both continents will enjoy long-term trust and credibility. The EU should make specific offers in this regard, such as a common global health policy and a fairer trade policy. Such a trade policy has long been demanded by African governments and trade unions, but continues to be complicated by subsidy payments to Europe, in the agricultural sector for example. In an emerging global geopolitical competition, fairer trade policy is at the same time in Europe's self-interest, precisely because African countries now have more options for trading partners. Therefore, Germany should lobby within the EU to end the focus on regionalized trade agreements and instead support the African Free Trade Area. Such support would also include the development of instruments to

ensure due diligence along supply chains and ILO core labor standards if it wants to also be legitimate »internally« and accountable to citizens. This will increasingly apply to supply chains that are essential for the energy transition that Germany and Europe have committed to and which involve several African countries.

In return, the EU should support the AU's Agenda 2063 with its commitments to democracy and multilateralism, commitments the EU shares. Both continental organisations can hold each other accountable for such commitments. This would mean that the EU should be concentrating its cooperation especially on countries where democratic space is respected and where power is transferred through elections. In places where this is not the case or where democracy is threatened, preference could be given to civil society partnerships and humanitarian aid, a form of partnership that the Federal Government in Germany is already striving for in its Africa policy guidelines anyway.

Therefore, a necessary reorientation of German and European cooperation with the African continent would involve a focus on multilaterally oriented partners in Africa with democratic mechanisms for changing power and their civil societies. There is a unique window of opportunity for this prioritization. Whereas during the Cold War and then from 2001 onward in the »War on Terror« the focus was primarily on stability through the support of pro-Western and mostly autocratic governments, today it is worth focusing on multilaterally oriented democracies and their civil societies in Africa. Such a shift in focus could lead, for example, to intensified cooperation with Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, and Senegal. What these countries have in common is that elections are recognized as a mechanism for changing power despite problems in conducting them, that judiciaries play a more important role than in other countries on the continent, that there are term limits, that a vocal civil society makes their voices heard, and that all four countries are committed to a multilateral order.

Because the EU needs more time than individual member states for such a reorientation, Germany can lead the way. Whether opportunities of political participation and democratic space exist would then become a stronger criterion for privileged partnerships in German foreign and development policy. At the same time, on a continent with almost half a billion people in extreme poverty, such a focus cannot replace important development cooperation with the continent's least developed countries or those in which war is raging. But here too, in addition to strengthening humanitarian aid, the focus should be on those processes and actors that make democratic change and dialogue more likely.

## CREATING FUTURE PROSPECTS IN THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The climate crisis in Africa is not only a future to be avoided, but an acutely felt present. Nearly 20 percent of the world's population live in Africa today, but they are re-

sponsible for less than five percent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Even though the African continent has contributed the least to the climate crisis, according to the African Development Bank (ADB), seven of the ten countries most affected by climate change are in Africa. (Germanwatch 2021) The climate crisis will cost these most affected countries up to 15 percent of their gross domestic product by 2030. (Songwe 2021) The climate crisis also makes violent conflict more likely because the risk of violent conflict increases by up to 20 percent for every half degree of warming. According to the World Meteorological Organization, the climate today in Africa is already almost two degrees warmer. Thus, more than anywhere else, the climate crisis is limiting the chances for present and future generations in Africa to have access to and realize their capabilities.

Dealing with the crisis will require resources that are not yet available. According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), adapting to the climate crisis will cost African countries around 50 billion US dollars a year by 2050. At the same time, according to the World Bank, there is a shortfall of 290 billion US dollars alone to deal with the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis. The pressure to cut public budgets in Africa in the wake of the current economic crisis is exacerbating inequality. In the Global North, restrictions on fighting the pandemic were combined with a fiscal policy zeitgeist of »deficit spending«. In African countries, there is often a lack of resources for such deficit spending and sometimes also of political will, especially on the part of those governments that do not have to fear being voted out of office.

Economic and industrial policy space is also needed, for example, for the development of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), so that it is attractive not only to multinational companies, but workers as well. When discussing the design of the AfCFTA, trade unions, which in more and more countries also represent the informal sector, therefore deserve a place at the negotiating table.

In large parts of the African continent, a structural transformation of the economy that would generate decent jobs and tax revenues has not yet taken place. The majority of Africans continue to work in the informal economy, where incomes are volatile, usually far below the official minimum wage, and where there is also only limited access to social protection systems. The urgently needed decarbonization of global energy production will foreseeably lead to a collapse in gas and oil exports in a number of African countries that have been dependent on these revenues until now. At the same time, illicit financial flows continue to leave African countries instead of being invested productively in African countries. In this way, economic growth in many African countries still fails to be accompanied by the creation of formal jobs, while incomes in agriculture are affected by the climate crisis, which is endangering harvests. Worldwide, moreover, there is a decoupling of productivity and the demand for jobs. This primarily affects people without higher education qualifications, and thus the vast majority of the almost 500 million job seekers expected in Africa's labor markets by 2030.

It is becoming apparent that the old »development sequence« will no longer work in Africa. In Europe and parts of Asia, the increase in agricultural productivity, the expansion of public services, and a strategically controlled and protective industry and trade policy led to the creation of jobs in export-oriented factories that benefited from international demand and foreign investment. The demand for these jobs accelerated urbanization, increased the demand for services, and sometimes brought about sociopolitical and economic pluralization – especially when labor parties and unions won new freedoms and better wages. This economic modernization model is passé for many reasons, has been repeatedly accompanied by political coercion, and has proven to also be harmful to the climate.

In Africa there is currently neither the necessary trade policy space for governments or the AU, nor the necessary economies of scale or economic productivity to emulate this old sequence. Foreign direct investment has not yet shown the hoped-for employment effects on the African continent. For example, one recent study commissioned by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) shows that one million US dollars of direct foreign investment in Sub-Saharan Africa creates fewer than three jobs because these have not yet been adequately linked to local value chains. (Kappel 2021) The African IT and startup sector, which has given rise to optimism, employs only a minority. Overall, there is too little domestic economic demand, which also cannot be solved by the current focus on vocational training in German development cooperation.

All of this shows that the African continent cannot expect much from the old development sequence. However, the development of an equitable new sequence is crucial for a globally just socio-ecological transformation.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

One necessary and urgent step would therefore be debt relief for those African states whose debt has reached a critical level as a result of the pandemic. Instead of tying such debt relief to fiscal austerity, as in the past, it could instead be worthwhile to make it contingent on democratic participation and, for example, comprehensive social protection policies. Only if debt relief does not only benefit the government apparatus, but strengthens the social contract, will it help those particularly affected by the pandemic crisis. Germany can exert greater influence towards debt relief, also aiming to involve the increasingly relevant private creditors to Africa, through its influence in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the upcoming G7 presidency, and in the context of the G20. The introduction of the global minimum tax by the G20 shows that joint action by this forum is also possible in the fight against tax havens, into which money from Africa continues to disappear. The Tax Justice Network Africa has made promising and concrete proposals on how to stop the outflow of illicit funds leaving Africa. (cf. Tax Justice Network Africa)

Another step would be to simplify and ensure a more decentralized access to the Green Climate Fund, which, according to the Paris Climate Agreement, is to provide 100 billion US dollars a year to finance measures against the climate crisis. Such improved access would make it easier to finance adaptation measures on the African continent, which should not be left to African governments alone, but be available to local authorities and civil society organizations as well. So far, however, they have hardly benefited from this, partly because the focus of the Green Climate Fund financing continues to be on reducing emissions in Africa, rather than on adaptation. In this case, it is crucial to prioritize: In Africa, adaptation to climate change is an absolute priority, which is hardly surprising in view of the almost 700 million people without access to electricity, countries with significant infrastructural deficits, and export industries that are still only emerging. When it comes to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, however, others should lead the way or support this goal more pragmatically in Africa.

At the end of this century, the world's three largest cities will be Lagos, Dar es Salaam, and Kinshasa. Consequently, one area that has considerable potential for CO<sub>2</sub> savings in Africa and where the need for finance and jobs will grow in the next few years is the development of urban infrastructure. Already, 70 percent of all CO<sub>2</sub> emissions today are generated in cities, making it all the more important to design urban infrastructure in Africa in a socially and climate-friendly way with international support. The G7, under the German Presidency in 2021, can make a particular commitment to this, and in doing so, improve access to financing for adaptation measures.

The establishment of comprehensive social protection systems for the informal sector and cash transfer models, as they already exist in many countries, is not only socially and gender just, but it would also generate domestic demand and thus stabilize local economic cycles. Here, German and European development policy can shift the focus towards social security for informally working people, because in the medium term not everyone who works in this sector will have the opportunity to find a formal job.

## OFFERING DIALOGUE WITH ARMED GROUPS

In parts of the continent, statehood, peace, and security are being threatened from different sides. Several states in Africa maintain inflated security sectors, sometimes with international support, but fail to organize public services; the resulting socioeconomic frustration among marginalized populations makes it easy for fundamentalist and separatists to attract followers. When the state provides hardly any public goods, other actors become more attractive: while some radical evangelical churches are enjoying increasing popularity in parts of Africa, radical Islam seems to be gaining ground in some parts of the East African coast and in the Sahel. The degree of organization and willingness among African »jihadists« to use violence is currently

on the rise. Local incentives to join an armed militia are almost always more important for its momentum than recognition as an affiliate of Al Qaeda or IS. On the contrary, interpreting such actors primarily as »franchise users« of international terrorist brands actually makes it more difficult to find a solution to the root causes, because it obscures the necessary focus on the multiple local causes of violence.

Wherever social and political participation improves, violent militancy has fewer opportunities. Better social and economic opportunities for the long term and at the local level, accompanied by better provision of public services, constitute active peace policies. Specifically, this means that, for example, the public sector, especially at the decentralized level, is not forced by policies of structural adjustment to cut costs in the public education or health sector, while military support is provided elsewhere to fight terrorists.

The events in Afghanistan in 2021 clearly demonstrated that in fragile states, training and equipping of the military by international actors is not enough to prevent the breakdown of state order. The international community's counterterrorism campaign repeatedly claims civilian victims, which increases anger directed at the state and its international supporters among marginalized groups, for example in the Sahel. Today, in parts of Mali, Somalia, and Burkina Faso, people often feel threatened by international anti-terror campaigns that have sometimes failed to differentiate between civilians and military opponents. The indicators for a functioning strengthening of security forces would therefore need to change. Only if the support of security forces is democratically embedded and the relationship between the state and the population is measurably improved – for example, because public security at the local level is improved for women and men – should this be viewed as successful. A far better measure of the success of the international community's »train and equip« measures would be the freedom of movement of the civilian population, rather than the number of trainings for military personnel or terrorists killed.

Therefore, in April 2021, the Citoyenne Pour le Sahel (People's Coalition for the Sahel), an alliance of civil society organizations, called for a reorientation from militarized counterterrorism to protection of the civilian population and political dialogue (People's Coalition for the Sahel 2021). Politically, matters become tricky when it comes to who should be involved in such a dialogue, especially in countries where fundamentalist actors control entire parts of the country. In this sort of situation it is important to clearly prioritize the protection of the civilian population and to take a more pragmatic approach. Sooner or later, most armed actors who exercise substantial territorial control or offer governance services that the state does not currently provide will somehow need to be involved in dialogue initiatives. If this is accomplished first at the local level, the question of political recognition is less acute. Those who are primarily concerned with global jihad, which is presumably only true for a minority, should however be excluded. Therefore, instead of red lines, the international



community should rather think about supporting those local actors and areas that facilitate the solution of such conflicts through dialogue and that reduce the incentives to armed struggle.

Local dialogue initiatives can also lead to the division and weakening of armed groups when they offer concrete incentives to participate for those who have joined because of feeling economically and politically marginalized. One way to make more radical factions weaker is to offer amnesties and access to public services to such members.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Compared to the US and France, Germany is perceived less as a geopolitical actor in Africa. This is an advantage. Supporting dialogue initiatives for purposes of containing armed conflicts, to support peacekeeping, and ensure humanitarian access is therefore a particularly credible German foreign and development policy approach in Africa. Such an objective would build on the Federal Republic's Africa Policy Guidelines and can consolidate a credible European division of tasks, for example with France.

Dialogues initiated by civil society are sometimes more effective than state-controlled national dialogues. A dialogue process that began between hostile actors as a result of the Women's Peace Convention in Cameroon in July 2021 is one example of the effect that greater involvement of women in peace processes can have.

However, dialogue serves to achieve long-term stabilization only if it is accompanied by reforms in the security sector. Only when the state is perceived as a provider of public services and not as an armed threat will the incentive to join armed militias decrease. In many cases, this still requires protection from regional and continental actors. In the Horn of Africa, on the East African coast, and in the Sahel, conflicts have long been transnational. Neighbors often become spoilers in the process of achieving peace. (Hansen/von Gienanth 2021) This makes a functioning regional and continental security architecture all the more important.

Scenarios developed by FES with African experts on the future of the AU's Peace and Security Architecture indicate, for example, that if the EU's military support becomes more flexible, the AU's importance as a coordinating actor must not be diminished. (FES AU 2020) Here, it is important to carefully weigh short- and long-term stability interests and to continue strengthening the AU as a coordinating actor in conflict prevention and transformation, even if this is not as effective in all contexts, as it was recently in Chad or Ethiopia. Ad hoc initiatives, such as those under the new European Peace Facility, should also be measured against this goal.

UN peacekeeping operations will continue to prevent violence and protect civilians, and must be distinguished from military training missions in the current foreign policy de-

bate. Such peace missions, from South Sudan to Mali, protect large parts of the civilian population and secure humanitarian access. For example, surveys conducted by FES in Mali show that where people have direct contact with the UN peace mission MINUSMA, its services for the protection of the civilian population are more strongly recognized. (FES Mali 2021) At the same time, it is important to continue to speak out in favor of humanitarian access and dialogue in conflict regions where this is currently not guaranteed.

## TAKE PROTEST SERIOUSLY, EMBED COOPERATION

Stability tops the list of goals of German and European Africa policy in an increasingly turbulent world. However, it is often unclear where this stability is supposed to come from. Can we speak of stability when there is supposedly political calm in a country, good international access to a government, and development cooperation is firmly agreed with project matrixes – but where a democratic replacement of the current state leadership is hardly conceivable? Probably not.

In places where free elections take place and lead to changes of government, these will increasingly be decided in urban rather than rural areas. Growing protests in Africa's cities will also lead to political change. A look at urbanization dynamics, demographics, and labor market data is enough to foresee that protests in African cities will soon grow louder and louder, especially where political and social participation is restricted. In 15 years, the majority of people in Africa will live in cities, but living conditions are likely to be unjust for them as well. Surveys by FES as part of a project on the »Just City« in Kenya and Uganda show that moving to the city is associated with high expectations of public services and that political frustration increases accordingly when political, economic, and social participation fail to appear.

The mix of urbanization, informalization, and marginalization by states that currently function only for a wealthy elite will be one of the greatest political challenges on the African continent in the near future. In Africa, a young and urban majority with a median age of just over 20 years faces almost exclusively male heads of state of a median age of 62. Here, in many ways the current political elite will not be the future of the continent. Thus, the dilemma for Germany's Africa policy is this: in order to support stabilization of regions or countries of the continent in the short term, cooperation with autocratic heads of state and their government apparatus often appears attractive. However, this cooperation carries a price in the form of legitimacy on the part of those who protest more and more successfully against such autocrats and who will also remember their supporters in the foreseeable future.

One crucial question for future German Africa policy therefore is what form cooperation with today's elites can take without losing credibility with future elites and the popula-

tion at large. German and European foreign policy will therefore need to spell out the popular but abstract demand to »involve and strengthen civil society« more precisely in their own interest. The question to be answered is: How much of a loss of credibility can be accepted in the future in order to support governments today that supposedly guarantee national or regional stability, but at the same time suppress legitimate protest and political opposition by violent means, prevent free elections, and thus hinder long-term stability?

## WHAT CAN BE DONE?

In the future, the German government should decide more strategically who should be prioritized as a partner for increased development cooperation and foreign policy and according to what criteria. The above-mentioned orientation towards African democratic multilateralists can be helpful in this regard. At the same time, the existence of democratic space for civil society actors should be more clearly stated as a criterion than in the past.

Against this background, it is important to better embed cooperation with African countries in civil society. It would be worthwhile to focus less on investments, migration, and counterterrorism and more on the political and social participation of those who have so far been absent from the table in government negotiations on future cooperation. This would also be in line with the commitments of the Agenda 2063 of the AU which strives for the continent to be a place where »citizens will actively participate in the social, economic and political development«. More than in the past, this prioritization should be justified as a foreign policy offer for increased cooperation, but not as a conditionality for development cooperation.

Two things must be avoided: In the cooperation with Sub-Saharan Africa, foreign policy hope is repeatedly personalized. Disappointment often ensues when the would-be reformers ultimately follow deeply rooted structural logics of political economy that make reforms difficult. Therefore, if the next hopeful change of power on the continent is greeted euphorically by the international community, it will be necessary to examine more closely what must change structurally and institutionally so that those hopes are fulfilled. Especially in the case of such supposedly positive changes at the top of the state, it is important not to lose sight of those who are supposed to democratically control the hopeful heads of state. On the other hand, good governance must no longer be accepted as an excuse for authoritarian governance in development cooperation. The best instrument for good governance is democracy, which, according to repeated Afrobarometer surveys, large majorities in Africa also consider the best form of government. (cf. Mattes 2019) Democracy is also the best vehicle for long-term stability. Partners for reform and stability in Africa can then only be those who can also be voted out and accept this outcome.

## OUTLOOK – WHERE IS IT GOING?

Germany's Africa policy is facing a transition. The partnership primarily based on development cooperation with the African continent is coming to an end, the so-called migration policy partnership is de facto no partnership, the focus on foreign direct investment under the »Compact with Africa« is too narrow, and a more comprehensive foreign policy partnership is still being developed. The five impulses outlined above show that Africa policy is increasingly becoming a cross-cutting task for a long-term oriented cooperation policy that cannot be handled by one German federal government department alone. (Hornidge 2021) African governments increasingly see themselves as partners for foreign policy; however, many of the challenges presented are simultaneously foreign and developmental policy, and also climate policy as well. Civil society networks in Europe and Africa, on the other hand, look equally at European and African climate and trade policy. It is the task of the EU to respond to this and to make credible offers. But because the EU is increasingly divided internally, impulses from the ranks of the member states are more important than ever. Germany, which benefits from and supports the multilateral order, can provide such important impulses in Europe as a »co-leading power« oriented towards dialogue and crisis prevention. (Lübke-meier 2021) These would be, again briefly summarized:

- Urgent sharing of vaccines and at the same time support for the development of vaccination production in Africa in order to avoid Long Covid in Africa and new viral mutations;
- Stronger foreign and development policy orientation towards multilaterally oriented democracies and their civil societies in Africa in order to promote stability;
- Conditioning of debt relief on democratic participation, not fiscal austerity, and improving decentralized access to the Green Climate Fund for the priority financing of adaptation measures, with a focus on urban areas in order to enable social participation in Africa in times of the climate crisis;
- Supporting dialogue initiatives at the local level, including with factions of armed actors, while at the same time continuously supporting peacekeeping to contain military conflicts in order to avoid »Forever Wars« in Africa; and
- Less personalization of political hope that is focused on the ostensible hopeful heads of states, and more cooperation with those who will become important in the future and who are currently protesting in order to strengthen future credibility.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Henrik Maihack** is Head of the Africa Department of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, before that he was leading FES projects in Kenya, South Sudan, Rwanda, as well as in Bangladesh. He is a political scientist.

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President: Martin Schulz  
Secretary General: Dr Sabine Fandrych

Responsible for content:  
Henrik Maihack | Head of the Africa Department  
Phone: +49-30-269-35-7440 | Fax: +49-30-269-35-9217  
**<https://www.fes.de/en/africa-department>**

Contact/Orders:  
**[Konstanze.Lipfert@fes.de](mailto:Konstanze.Lipfert@fes.de)**

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