



SPAIN AFRICA

2025-2028

*Working together through
a strategic relationship*



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA





SPAIN
AFRICA
2025-2028

*Working together through
a strategic relationship*

Contents

1. Executive Summary	7
2. Introduction	11
3. Opportunities and challenges for Africa	15
Ample opportunities	15
Youth playing a central role in the transformation of the continent	15
Higher profile and greater influence of Africa and its regional organizations	17
Good prospects for economic growth	19
Abundant strategic resources for sustainable growth, the energy transition and the digital revolution	20
An emerging middle class driving social and political change	22
Improvements to physical infrastructure and digital connectivity	22
Commitment to democratic values and principles of the population	23
Robust regional organizations	23

...and huge challenges	24
Incomplete political and economic integration	24
Discrimination on the basis of gender	25
Insufficient access to financing	25
Inadequate infrastructure	26
Most vulnerable continent to the effects of the climate crisis	28
Limited access to digitalization and research and development	28
Insufficient schooling and inadequate access to health care	29
Violence and armed conflict	29
4. Our assets	33
Geographical, historical, cultural and social ties	33
Spain's dual Atlantic and Mediterranean identity, and its European dimension	38
High-level dialogue with African stakeholders. Network of cooperation agreements and mechanisms	41
Instruments to support bilateral trade and Spanish investment. Spanish companies heading strategic African sectors	43
Spanish Cooperation projects with an impact in Africa. More than 40 years of engagement and high-level dialogue	46
Creation of value in Africa through youth training	49
Spain's position as a close and reliable partner, committed to peace and security	51
Experience in migration	55
Commitment to defending the rights of the most vulnerable	58
Commitment to a just digital transition as part of the process of building an inclusive, equitable and sustainable society	60

Together in the ecological transition, environmental cooperation and the fight against climate change	60
5. Principles: 5 goals and 100 lines of action	61
1. Strengthening	63
2. Growing	67
3. Connecting	72
4. Protecting	75
5. Living together	79
6. Monitoring and evaluation	83
7. Appendix. Table of 5 goals and 100 lines of action	85



© Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation

November 2024

Print edition official publication identification number: 108-24-044-8

Online edition official publication identification number: 108-24-045-3

Legal depositary: M-23949-2024

Published by: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation

Translated by: Office of Interpretation of Languages, Technical Secretariat-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation.

Design and printing: Directorate-General for Communication, Public Diplomacy and Social Media / www.nolsom.com

Photographs: Archive of the D.G. for Communication, Public Diplomacy and Social Media, Agencia EFE, www.nolsom.com and AECID.

Catalogue of Publications of the Central Administration: <https://cpage.mpr.gob.es>

This publication has been produced using chlorine-free recycled paper and/or FSC-certified virgin fibre paper from sustainably managed forests pursuant to public procurement environmental requirements.

In accordance with the Intellectual Property Act, this publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part, nor may it be processed or transferred in any form or by any means, whether electronically, in a photocopy or record, nor any other method. Neither may it be loaned, leased or its use be transferred in any other form, without the prior written permission of the author, except for those copies made exclusively for use by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation.

Foreword for the new Africa Strategy

Not only Spain and Africa, but also Africa and Europe, form part of the same geopolitical space, with common challenges requiring joint responses and opportunities that can only be truly maximized if we work hand in hand with our African partners. With ambition, our goals will be attainable; without ambition, impossible. For Spain, the European country closest to Africa, the present and future of the continent, its progress towards inclusive and sustainable development, its peace and security, are all essential goals.

It is this understanding that inspired the preparation of a new strategy for Africa, presented at the Council of Ministers' meeting of 17 September under the title "Spain-Africa 2025-2028. Working together through a strategic relationship".

Defining a new strategy for our action with Africa has been a collaborative effort, launched at the beginning of 2024 with a consultation period lasting several months and

involving a number of ministries as well as civil society, businesses, academia and think tanks, both in Spain and in Africa. This dialogue was fostered in Madrid and at our embassies in Africa, and during the visits I have made to numerous African countries over the past year.

The Strategy, which will guide Spanish foreign policy regarding Africa over the coming years, proposes 100 lines of action grouped under five strategic goals: to strengthen a relationship that facilitates joint action; to grow towards sustainable development in Africa, focused on youth; to connect the societies and economies of Africa, Spain and the rest of the world; to protect, ensuring security in Africa; and to live together in open societies with robust and inclusive institutions.

Combining ambition with realism, these measures will boost and expand political dialogue, development cooperation, trade relations and Spanish investment, and include

the creation of an Africa advisory committee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation; the strengthening of our diplomatic deployment on the ground; and the establishment of a new foundation for Africa aimed at fostering relations and the development of African talent.

This Strategy takes into account the substantial changes that have occurred in recent years, both on the continent and in the broader international context. For the first time, our strategic approach to Africa is not limited to Sub-Saharan Africa but instead has a continental scope, paying special attention to our immediate neighbours, North Africa and West Africa.

Today there are 1.25 billion people living in Africa. By 2050 there will be 2.5 billion. By that same year, almost half of all people under the age of 18 will be African. More than 450 million Africans are living in poverty,

and the continent is faced with the challenge of creating new jobs for its growing population, at a rate of 30 million per year. At the same time, according to World Bank projections, Africa's contribution to global GDP, which today stands at 3%, will be six times greater by 2050.

The Spanish people need to be aware that, to a very large extent, the future of Europe, and that of Spain in particular, is at stake in Africa. This strategy, which is above all a national strategy, lays the foundations for a revitalized partnership between Spain and Africa that seeks to be comprehensive and inclusive, leaving no one behind. It is time for us to act together with all the resources at our disposal.

José Manuel Albares
**Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union
and Cooperation**



Executive Summary

The new Spain-Africa Strategy seeks to guide Spain's activities on the African continent. This is a strategic necessity, given Spain's location and the various current tendencies in Africa. It extends to the whole continent, rather than being restricted to Sub-Saharan Africa, like the preceding Plan Africas.

The continental scope of this document is coherent with the decision to focus the majority of its proposed activities on the portion of Africa that is closest to Spain, comprising West Africa and North Africa, as these subregions are critical to Spain's economy, security and stability.

The other distinguishing feature of this Strategy is that it sets out how Spain, as a Member State of the European Union (EU), is equipped to play a more prominent role in guiding and implementing EU policy with respect to Africa, and to make greater use of the instruments offered by that policy to

support development on the continent, as well as a number of strategic goals agreed with our African partners.

During preparation of this Strategy, consultations were conducted with numerous sectors by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, by the State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs and by the Ambassador-at-Large for Plan Africa. As part of the consultation process, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation travelled to Senegal, The Gambia and Cabo Verde and the State Secretary visited Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa, Mozambique, Mauritania, Egypt, Mali and Ethiopia. During the visits, they heard the opinions and concerns of governments, of African and Spanish firms, of civil society organizations and of African and Spanish think tanks.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation speaking at the African Union Summit held in Ethiopia in February 2023.

During the consultation process, the Minister also hosted his counterparts from Ghana and Mozambique. The State Secretary welcomed his counterparts from Namibia, Senegal and The Gambia and held meetings with the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Both the Minister and the State Secretary participated in the meetings of the Africa Round Table and conversed with experts on specific aspects of the African agenda, particularly with regard to West Africa and the Sahel. In addition, the Directorate-General for Africa received input from other ministries and from other departments within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (hereinafter, the Foreign Ministry) and from Spain's embassies in Africa.

The Strategy is based on an analysis identifying a number of opportunities: the rising global profile of Africa in a more competitive international environment and its aspiration to take on a central role; the priority attached by the EU to its relationship with Africa; the transition on which Africa is embarking towards a more productive, diversified, digital and integrated economy with more green energy; the impulse from African youth and women in economic and political change; the increasing support for democracy; and the possibilities offered by mobility and by safe, orderly and regular migration for countries of emigration and immigration, in Africa and Europe.

The challenges that the Strategy highlights are: the obstacles to sustainable development; costly access to external financing;

deficiencies in terms of energy and connectivity; the lack of security owing to conflicts, terrorism and organized crime; democracies being undermined by difficulties in ensuring prosperity and security for citizens; the impact of climate change; and irregular migratory flows.

The Strategy then outlines the assets that Spain possesses, as the European country closest to Africa, with increasing political dialogue with AU and ECOWAS; as a partner in trade, investment, development cooperation, security and migration management; as a leader in the transport, energy infrastructure and fisheries sectors (with the largest fishing fleet in the EU); and as a country represented in several African countries through cultural and educational cooperation instruments and programmes to promote the Spanish language.

Spain's approach to Africa is based on the principle of partnership, mutual respect and benefit and listening to partners' needs and aspirations, with an emphasis on multilateralism.

The Strategy sets out five strategic goals: (i) a relationship between Spain and Africa that builds on and expands knowledge and dialogue, facilitating joint activities ("strengthening"); (ii) involvement in the inclusive sustainable development of Africa by Spanish, EU and international institutions, firms and organizations, but above all by young people ("growing"); (iii) closer ties between the societies and economies of Africa, Spain and the world ("connecting"); (iv) cooperate to strengthen capacities in justice and security ("protecting"); and (v) open African societies with robust, inclusive institutions ("living together").

These goals are broken down into 100 lines of action, listed in the Appendix to this Strategy, including:

- Strengthening dialogue with African countries and organizations; extending political consultations to a greater number of African countries; strengthening Casa África, Casa Árabe and Casa Mediterráneo; expanding Spain's diplomatic, cooperation and education network in Africa.
- Launching initiatives such as Alianza África Avanza to offer institutional support for Spanish investment.
- Taking advantage of the investment opportunities for projects in Africa offered by the Global Gateway strategy.
- Supporting the reform of the international financial architecture to improve Africa's participation in and access to financing.
- Strengthening relations between Spain's embassies and Delegations of the European Union and among EU Member States with representations in the countries; monitoring implementation of EU instruments.
- Launching new higher education and vocational training programmes for young people in Africa and increasing related grants.
- Expanding mobility and circular migration programmes to countries in West Africa and the Maghreb.
- Strengthening Spanish cooperation with Africa in the area of security.
- Building relations with the African diaspora and combating racism and xenophobia.
- Establishing an advisory committee on Africa within the Foreign Ministry and



The President of the Government with the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi during the President's official visit to Kenya in October 2022.

a foundation for strengthening relations between the different African societies and Spanish society, focusing on young people in particular.

- Creating a monitoring mechanism, through the Directorate-General for Africa and the network of embassies, and also through an inter-ministerial committee for Africa, whose operationalization is proposed herein. In addition, seeking an external evaluation, in keeping with the experience begun under the Third Plan Africa.

2

Introduction

Spain is increasingly aware that the present and future of Africa—encompassing its prosperity, security and progress towards truly inclusive and sustainable development—are of utmost strategic interest for Spain. This pursuit of closer partnerships with Africa is also a reflection of the deep-rooted values of the Spanish people, as demonstrated by their solidarity during humanitarian crises, and the ever-closer ties between our civil societies, academic and educational institutions, creators and researchers, media and foundations. The strengthening of these ties is also evidenced by the growing demand in Africa for Spanish language lessons and the increase in visits to Spain by African authorities and businesspersons.

Africa is important for Spain and is increasingly important in the world, as demonstrated by the continent's growing involvement in issues concerning global governance, financing for development, climate change adap-

tation, reform of multilateral institutions, continental and global peace and security, and its desire to play a role that is more befitting of its population size, its political influence and the opportunities it offers. These African aspirations are being met by other countries and regions with proposals and offers, some of which complement those made by Spain and the European Union and others that compete with them.

Previously, the strategic documents prepared by Spain were restricted to Sub-Saharan Africa. There were multiple historical and cultural reasons for such a limitation. Nonetheless, the continent's interdependence and political trends warrant a unified approach, aligned with the drives for integration within Africa and in keeping with the transnational nature of many of the phenomena that are affecting all of the subregions of Africa, without exception. This is particularly true for the areas of Africa nearest to



Group photo of the Africa Round Table meeting held at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation on 22 March 2024.

Spain, namely North Africa, West Africa and the Sahel, which are critical to our country's economy and security, and which require more concentrated operational efforts. This vast geographical area is unified by the significant interdependence between political, cultural, economic and human trends in these subregions.

One of Spain's aims as part of this revitalized relationship with African countries is to strengthen multilateral coordination in the framework of the multiple organizations, forums and programmes that address global issues.

As a State with a prominent profile within the EU, Spain aspires to play an even more important role in guiding and implementing EU policy with respect to Africa. The declaration signed in 2022 by the EU and the AU,

entitled "A Joint Vision for 2030", sets out a road map for the Africa-Europe Partnership and defines aspirations. Spain wants to help realize those aspirations, drawing on all of its capabilities, actively participating in EU instruments and initiatives such as the Global Gateway strategy and exploring synergies and complementarities through its own foreign policy and cooperation initiatives. Spain will strive to ensure that the interests of African partners are taken into account in EU decision-making processes, especially in cases that can have a notable impact on their societies and economies.

The size of Africa, geographically and demographically, requires a capacity for action that exceeds the capabilities of almost any individual State. That is why Spain needs the EU to be present and stronger in Africa, among other reasons because it implements

several projects using EU funds. Similarly, international financing—be it public or private—is vital to unlocking the continent’s full potential. As a country that is committed to economic growth and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also as a neighbour to Africa and thus a country with a special interest in the continent’s stability and prosperity, this vision will form part of Spain’s position in international forums.

One of the milestones in this regard will be the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Seville, Spain, in July 2025. The fact that Spain has been chosen to host the Conference is a reflection of our commitment to consensus-building, to being open to dialogue and to nurturing ties between the so-called Global North and South.

This Strategy is a collective work and a result of an extensive process of consultations with governments, organizations, firms, civil society and think tanks, in both Africa and Spain. It is a Spanish Strategy, but one that aims to align with the assessments, goals and aspirations of Africa, which have been conveyed through a dialogue between equals, based on respect and on finding areas of shared interest.

In order to defend Spain’s national interests and promote our country’s values, we must support African countries’ and peoples’ pursuit of progress, stability, economic growth and inclusive sustainable development for their continent.

In the analysis of opportunities and challenges and in the proposals for specific activities, this Strategy aims to do justice to the complexity of Africa’s circumstances, which are by no means uniform across the continent, striking a balance between ambition and realism. Each subregion of the continent—North Africa, West Africa, East Africa,



Construction of the first water network of the Communities of Ribeira Grande de Santiago in Cabo Verde, funded by Spanish Cooperation.

Central Africa and Southern Africa—has its own specific characteristics and trends.

The Strategy examines the opportunities offered by: an expanded and stronger relationship between Spain and the EU, on one hand, and Africa, on the other, in a more competitive global context; the structural transformation on which Africa is embarking, towards a more productive and diversified economy that is more digital and integrated, with more renewable energy; the central role of civil society and above

all of African youth in economic and political change; the pressing need to continue making progress on gender equality; support for democracies; Africa's enormous cultural and historical wealth, which is increasingly represented at international events by artists from the continent; the growing interest among the African population in the Spanish language, with several African countries among those with the highest numbers of students of Spanish in the world.

However, the Strategy does not shy away from the challenges: obstacles to economic development; the large informal economy; poverty and inequality; costly access to external financing; deficiencies in energy and connectivity; insecurity caused by conflicts, increased terrorism and organized crime; some democratic governments being undermined; the impact of climate change; and lastly, irregular migratory flows and people smuggling.

Spain has key assets with which to approach this context, in the areas of policy, security, economics, and social and cultural cooperation, which are the fruit of policy that has become increasingly ambitious and strategic since the turn of the century. In the strategic dimension, however, the partnership with Africa requires Spain to do more and to do it better, building on what we already have and adapting it to ensure that it can respond more effectively to the historic period of change occurring at the global level and within Africa, working together to strengthen, grow, protect, live together and connect. The new Spain-Africa Strategy aims to contribute to achieving this.

3

Opportunities and challenges for Africa

Ample opportunities...

Africa is a continent of many **opportunities** for its own population, for the world and also for Spain.

The governments and societies of Africa are increasingly aware of their rightful place in the world and the influence they want to have on decisions affecting them, such as the transformation of the global order.

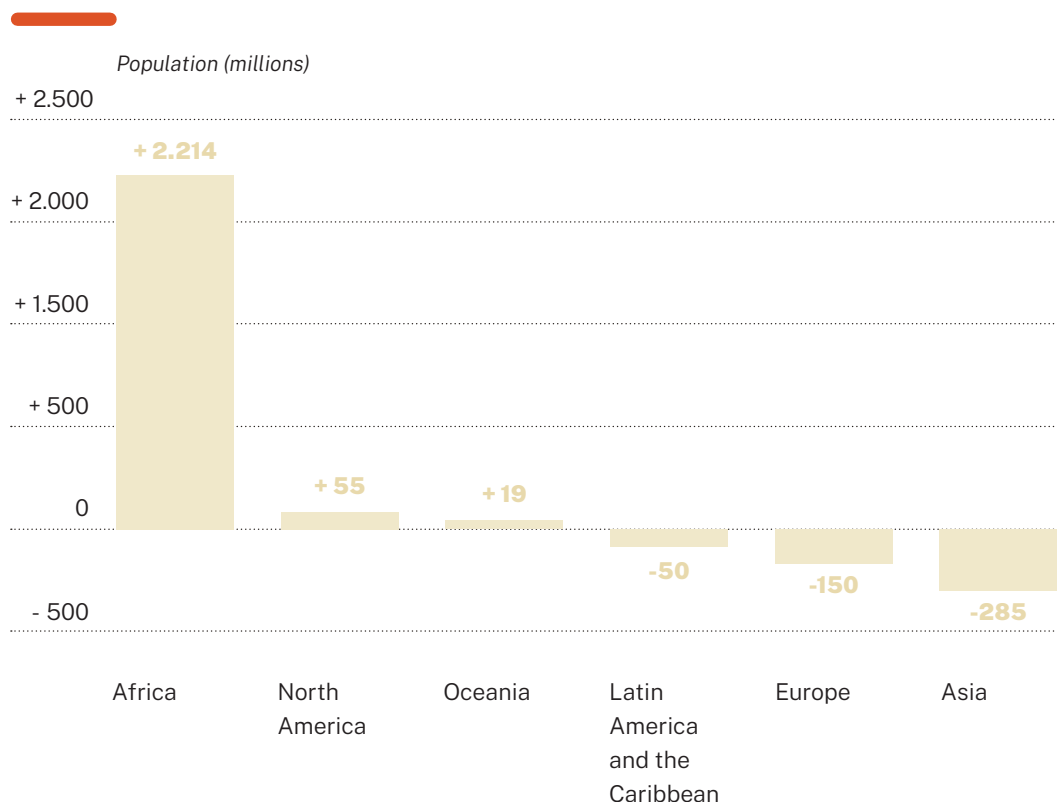
Youth playing a central role in the transformation of the continent. Commitment to democratic values and principles

Demographic factors also offer another substantial opportunity in terms of econo-

mic growth, progress and development in Africa, if proper advantage is taken of them. High fertility rates and gradual rises in life expectancy, especially as a result of advances in health care and education, are putting the African continent at centre stage of the sweeping demographic changes affecting our planet.

United Nations projections suggest that by 2050 the population of Africa will have doubled to 2.5 billion people. Just eight countries will account for over half of the world's population growth, five of them African: Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Egypt and Ethiopia. Nigeria is on course to becoming the third most populous country in the world, surpassed only by India and China. Moreover, by 2050 around half of the world's population of people aged under 18 years will be African.

WORLD REGIONS: **POPULATION** CHANGE (2030-2100)



Africa is a young continent now (the average age is 19 years, compared to 42 in Europe) and will be for the remainder of the century. Young people will play a central role in the transformation of Africa, provided that their demand for training, employment, mobility and civic responsibility is met by African States with the support of their international partners.

The demographic bonus—in the form of improved productivity resulting from expansion of the adult population, urbanization and a smaller dependent population in relative terms—will be realized provided that the right policies are adopted now, especially concerning quality basic education for African children, higher education, vocational training and labour market inclusion and decent work for young people. The economic and social transformation of Africa

and its greater integration into global value chains call for Africans who are able to lead the process and perform work in sectors that offer more added value.

The demographic trend on the African continent contrasts with that of the EU. According to the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), by the middle of the twenty-first century, people aged over 65 years will account for 30% of the total EU population, twice the percentage of young people aged 15–29 years.

African youth's attitudes, interests and values are both the cause and the effect of the aforementioned encouraging patterns. They have ever more urban and globalized lifestyles, but are increasingly proud of their roots and African identity. The younger generation is more involved and also more

demanding than preceding generations, and does not settle for certain forms of governance. This generation is more connected and able to take advantage of new technologies. It is at the heart of the boom in African universities, scientific institutes and think tanks, and of the increased capacity for entrepreneurship. African youth are calling for more participation by the continent on the international stage, and they want to be part of its transformation and of major global changes and challenges.

In keeping with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report *Africa's Development Dynamics 2024*, Spain will consider how to increase the supply of high-quality skills in Africa by supporting the creation of quality jobs and entrepreneurship to drive growth and productivity, in line with the vision of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and its aspirations.

Population growth in Africa is also leading to a rise in the number of people with access to education, meaning that an enormous body of talent is being cultivated. Support for the AU and ECOWAS commitments to better education and job prospects for this young labour force will be key. Improved access to and quality of training that matches job opportunities is part of African economies' path towards production transformation.

Higher profile and greater influence of Africa and its regional organizations

This shared awareness and determination of African countries is exemplified by the **African Union**, of which all the States on the continent are members. The AU is a forum for coordination of policy and security, with its interlinked African Peace and Security Architecture, trade and economic inte-

THE 7 ASPIRATIONS OF THE **AU AGENDA 2063**: THE AFRICA WE WANT

Our aspirations for the Africa we want

- 1** A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- 2** An integrated continent, politically united based on the ideas of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance.
- 3** An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.
- 4** A peaceful and secure Africa.
- 5** An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics.
- 6** An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.
- 7** Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ECOWAS **VISION 2050**



PILLAR 1. Peace, Security and Stability.



PILLAR 2. Governance and Rule of Law.



PILLAR 3. Economic integration and Interconnectivity.



PILLAR 4. Transformation, Inclusive and Sustainable Development.



PILLAR 5. Social Inclusion.

gration framework (the African Continental Free Trade Area, AfCFTA) and **a tool to promote the shared development of the entire continent** (the African Union Development Agency, AUDA-NEPAD).

Beyond the continental level, in the multi-lateral sphere, the 54 African States account for **28% of votes in the General Assembly of the United Nations** and act as an increasingly aligned bloc that the rest of the world must take into account in responses to global challenges.

The **AU recently became a full member of G20**, which is a transformational step toward a single, unified voice of the African continent being heard within the global governance mechanism, which already had a key stakeholder from the region as a member: South Africa. The **BRICS group is also expanding in Africa**, with the accession in January 2024 of Egypt and Ethiopia to the new **BRICS+** group. In this respect, Africa is also arguing for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

This new emergence of Africa on the international stage has been met by fresh interest from third countries and regions in increasing their presence and influence on the continent, which is rich in strategic resources and has considerable growth potential.

An ever more fragmented global situation is, for many African countries, an opportunity to diversify foreign relations and become freer in selecting partners and offers, based on their needs.

The governments of African countries, having listened to the demands of their populations, have taken on the responsibility of shaping their aspirations and aims into continental strategies, the exemplar being Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, adopted



The majority of Africans have been abandoning the countryside and rural jobs to seek employment in the city. The photograph shows the cotton harvest in a village in Burkina Faso.

by the African Union in 2013, with seven key shared aspirations.

Subregional organizations have also prepared strategic documents. Given its proximity to the subregion of West Africa, **ECOWAS Vision 2050 is particularly important to Spain.**

Good prospects for economic growth

Several more opportunities stem from **Africa's prospects for economic growth and development.** Although 33 of the 46 countries classified by the United Nations as developing economies are in Africa, and even though the continent's GDP represents just 3% of world GDP, **the World Bank forecasts that Africa's contribution will be six times larger by 2050.**

In addition to this forecast growth—also influenced by factors that are external to

the continent such as demand for commodities, energy resources and agricultural products—significantly, over the past two decades the African economy has been undergoing a **structural transformation** as the rural population, which until now has accounted for the majority of the population of almost all African countries, has **abandoning rural work to seek opportunities in retail and other services in cities.**

However, the industrial sector (also under threat from Asian competition) remains small in relative terms, so an increase in agricultural productivity is still vital to Africa—**home to almost 60% of the world's uncultivated land—continuing to make progress towards food self-sufficiency. In 2020, the agricultural sector still employed half of Africa's labour,** primarily on smallholdings, making little use of technology and relying heavily on rainfall.

Abundant strategic resources for sustainable growth, the energy transition and the digital revolution

With its abundant strategic resources, including minerals that are critical for the energy transition and the digital revolution on the continent and globally, **Africa offers significant opportunities for investment from abroad.** The restructuring of global value chains through diversification, friend-shoring and near-shoring, together with the growing importance of critical commodities, have the potential to drive development of regional value chains in Africa, and, given the continent's geographical proximity to the EU and particularly to Spain, to integrate African countries into European value chains.

Provided that the challenges originating from investors' heightened risk perceptions and lack of confidence are mitigated, greater advantage can be taken of opportunities for direct investment, which is a key ingredient of industrialization and vital to Africa's output generating more added value and better jobs.

The economic transformation and ecological transition must take place in parallel and drive each other. **The different subregions of Africa have room to improve use of their assets and thus accelerate the production transformation sustainably. For example, Southern Africa is home to around 60% of Africa's installed solar power capacity,** while the Great Rift Valley, in East Africa, has the most geothermal potential on the continent. Africa has the greatest hydroelectric potential on the planet and 50% of renewable energy potential, which has barely been exploited to date: for example, it is home to 60% of solar resources, but just 1% of the world's installed solar capacity.

Electrification of Africa is compatible with distributed generation of electricity using renewable sources and with self-supply. The model for investments in energy infrastructure in Africa must therefore be an advanced one, not that applied before the oil crisis of the 1970s.

In view of its renewable energy potential, **abundant space and water and natural ports,** Africa is well suited to playing a central role in the emergence of a new **economy linked to green hydrogen.** The sector has enormous potential for the countries of North Africa. Mauritania, for example, is well positioned to become a regional hub of green hydrogen production, which is crucial to ensuring a stable energy supply and to meeting the goal of tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030.

The **woodland of Central Africa** accounts for 35% of forested land on the continent and **11% of world carbon reserves in the forest biomass.** Conservation of the region's natural ecosystems and biodiversity has clear environmental and economic benefits, provided that ways are found to make sustainable use of the resources, promoting their maintenance and making their long-term use viable.

In the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action (Nairobi Declaration) adopted at the end of the Africa Climate Summit in September 2023, African countries announced the aim of maintaining a common position and their refusal to be forced to choose between development aspirations and climate action. The African bloc argues that the challenges of climate change must be addressed in a coordinated manner and in parallel to the SDGs, and therefore advocates measures such as increasing financing and establishing mechanisms to compensate for loss and damage caused



Africa's blue economy is a driver of growth. The photograph shows workers at the Cape Maclear port in Lake Malawi National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

by climate change and to convert debt into green investments.

Another aspect that should not be overlooked is the enormous potential that Africa has for development of the **blue economy**, an area in which Spain is one of the leaders in Europe. Africa's blue economy is already driving sustainable growth, with 13 million square kilometres of exclusive economic zones in the seas and oceans surrounding the continent.

The sector has not, however, been given due consideration. Strategic partnerships and innovative investments in Africa's blue economy will be vital for generating income and creating jobs, improving the local economy, eradicating poverty, improving food security, and increasing environmental sustainability in coastal communities.

Economic sectors such as tourism and fisheries are directly dependent on the coastal environment being clean and healthy. It is

likely that innovative projects will be carried out in these spheres in relation to biotechnology, fish farming, food production, recycling and sustainable shipbuilding, all of which are of great interest for Spanish firms. The sea and maritime natural resources are prime sources of economic growth for African countries. Following decades of work in this area alongside African countries, particularly those of North Africa, the aim is to shape a sustainable model that contributes to generating wealth and creating jobs in Africa.

Integrating the blue economy into the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement may also drive sustainable economic growth in coastal countries. In short, by consolidating the progress made in ecosystem management, Africa can become a global leader in conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development.



Two thirds of Africans prefer democracy to any other form of government.

An emerging middle class driving social and political change

Buoyant economic growth in many African countries since the turn of the century, rapid urbanization and improved productivity have also facilitated the appearance of an emerging middle class, which is driving changes in lifestyles and consumer behaviour as well as social and political change.

One phenomenon that is closely linked to the different demographic trends on neighbouring continents such as Africa and Europe is **international migration**. In contrast with common perceptions in Europe, the majority of migratory movements are between African countries. Africans that migrate from countries in West Africa predominantly do so to other countries from the same subregion, generally to those along the Gulf of Guinea, where there are more job opportunities, and to North Africa. Migration is therefore a complex phenomenon, whereby African countries are not only places of origin of migrants, but also of transit and hosts to them.

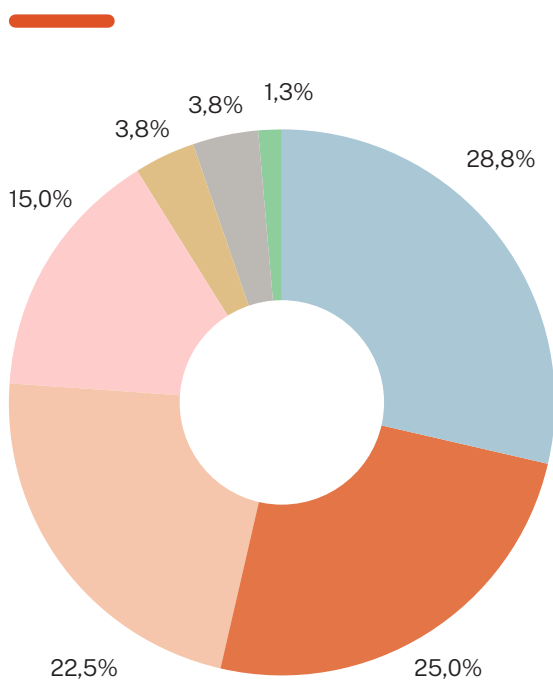
African migrants residing in Europe significantly benefit both their host country and their countries of origin, to which they contri-

bute substantial remittances (in total surpassing the sum of foreign direct investment and Official Development Assistance) and valuable expertise when they return. There are around 1.2 million African nationals living in Spain, over half of whom are of Moroccan origin.

Improvements to physical infrastructure and digital connectivity

Improvements to physical infrastructure and expansion of **digital connectivity** promote more exchanges among African societies, and between African societies and the rest of the world, including Spain. Information, knowledge, scientific and technical progress, goods and services and people all move more easily than ever between the two continents. Some African societies, particularly in urban settings, have entered the Digital Age without having to complete the stage of implementing analogical communications, meaning that opportunities for social and economic development are accelerating.

MOST CRITICAL ASPIRATIONS ACCORDING TO THE 2023 MO IBRAHIM



Commitment to democratic values and principles of the population. Robust regional organizations

A predominantly young population and expanding urban middle class are behind the commitment to democratic values and principles among the vast majority of African citizens, as reflected by surveys such as those conducted by Afrobarometer or the Ibrahim Index of African Governance. According to the survey results, **two thirds of Africans prefer democracy to any other form of government**. As in the rest of the world, healthy democracy in Africa calls for greater

Which on the African Union's Agenda 2063's aspirations is most critical to you at this stage?

- **ASPIRATION 3.** An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- **ASPIRATION 1.** A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.
- **ASPIRATION 6.** An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children.
- **ASPIRATION 7.** Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.
- **ASPIRATION 2.** An integrated continent, politically united based on the ideas of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance.
- **ASPIRATION 4.** A peaceful and secure Africa.
- **ASPIRATION 5.** An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics.

well-being, freedom and security and societies that are more inclusive.

Improved basic services—such as electricity, drinking water, education, health care, security and anti-corruption measures—are the only means of restoring citizens' trust in public powers in the areas where the social compact has been damaged.

The **preference for democracy of the majority of African societies is a result of a continent-wide movement**, whereby the previous one-party regimes that arose following independence gave way, at different points in history, to more pluralistic systems of government. **Periodic elections being held**



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Political Dialogue and Sectoral Collaboration, at Madrid in May 2022.

became the norm, even though they were often contested and sometimes led to severe crises or even violent civil conflicts.

Contributions were made to the reaffirmation of democratic principles by the AU and other regional organizations from the continent, which have recognized in their founding documents the desire of Africans to participate freely in the decisions that affect their futures through genuinely democratic institutions, and which defend those aspirations through their policy measures.

For Spain and the European Union—whose external action has the aim of promoting democracy—the democratic aspirations of large swathes of African societies are a powerful incentive and a source of cooperation opportunities.

The aforementioned opportunities in the diplomatic, economic, demographic, environmental, technological, social, cultural and institutional spheres exist at a time when the EU has resolved to structure its relations

with Africa around the concept of partnership and around pragmatism, as Spain has been advocating for many years.

This thinking is based on recognition of the need to pinpoint shared opportunities through ongoing open dialogue, opportunities which, if realized, will generate prosperity for all stakeholders. The processes of political and economic integration on the two continents, with their specific characteristics, magnify the potential benefits of partnership.

... and veritable challenges

The range of opportunities described in the preceding section should not distract from the challenges, both long-standing and new, which jeopardize the African continent's goals of prosperity, peace, involvement at the global level and sustainable development. These factors are also challenges with regard to the partnership between Spain (and the EU) and Africa. According to the AU, although progress has been made on the seven aspirations set out in Agenda 2063, just one—political integration—is considered to be closer to being achieved.

Incomplete political and economic integration

On the issue of political and economic integration of Africa, there are differences within the AU and subregional organizations such as ECOWAS. The evident interrelatedness of the different African subregions is not always supported by effective institutional frameworks. In addition, AfCFTA, which has been in place since 2019, has yet to become a reality on the ground, through fulfilment of all of the intended stages of trade liberalization.

Discrimination on the basis of gender

Discriminatory social norms and prejudices linked to women's access to training and financing are an enormous obstacle for the entrepreneurial spirit of African women and for their access to the formal job market. Most of these women are obliged to participate in the informal economy, which is characterized by instability and irregular income.

Although African women represent 50% of the African population, they account for only 33% of the continent's GDP. The vast majority of African women are self-employed—90% of working women are self-employed in some African countries. There are countries where fewer than 1 out of every 10 women has access to loans or financing from financial institutions. Women even encounter difficulties in opening bank accounts. Another barrier faced by the majority of women is a lack of access to land.

In many African countries, gender-based violence is another scourge that has proved difficult to eradicate and which has yet to be recognized as a social issue, but rather as a marital or family problem, which must be resolved within that sphere. Women's access to justice in cases of gender violence remains limited owing, among other factors, to family and social pressure and to a lack of access to resources and to legal information.

Female genital mutilation—despite generally being unlawful and despite the progress made—continues to be practised across Africa. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), this practice affects more than 200 million women and girls in the world and more than 140 million in Africa. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), each year in Africa 3 million women and girls are at risk of being mutilated.

Insufficient access to financing

Africa's increasingly powerful voice on the international stage has not been enough to make international financial institutions more representative or to obtain more favourable financing terms for the continent. Twenty low-income African countries are currently in debt distress. The average debt ratio of African countries has doubled over the last decade (“African Debt”, ONE Data & Analysis).

From Africa's perspective, a global innovative ecosystem is needed to promote development, driving fairer and more sustainable international financial flows, while preserving the fiscal sovereignty of developing countries, to enable them to adopt the policies that are best suited to their circumstances.

Remittances from the African diaspora are an important source of financing for the continent. Despite this, it is **considerably more expensive to send remittances to Africa than to other regions**, thereby restricting the vast transformational potential of these transfers. Lower remittance fees and measures to facilitate investments by the African diaspora would support local production instead of fuelling consumption-based rentier economies.

Many African economies still depend on a small set of export products, primarily commodities; this explains the marginalization of Africa in the global economy and its limited contribution to trade exchanges (just 2.9%) and value chains.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation during his visit in 2023 to the village of Ganguel, Niger, where Spanish Cooperation works to improve the food security of the local communities.

Inadequate transport, communications and electricity infrastructure

The aforementioned situation is partly a result of **inadequate transport, communications and electricity generation and distribution infrastructure**, which severely limits the capacity to transform economies. Africa is suffering from a pressing shortage of connectivity, in physical terms but also in terms of services, data and information. The African Development Bank has highlighted that investments in infrastructure in Africa have not matched the pace of growth in demand: **less than 40% of the African population has access to electricity**, just one third of the rural population has access to roads and a mere 5% of farming employs irrigation. While Africa occupies 23% of the surface area of the planet, its rail network accounts for just 7% of the world total.

Structural imbalances that have worsened in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine

Over the first two decades of the twenty-first century, Africa recorded sustained economic growth—at around 4.5% a year according to World Bank data—owing to favourable environments, both external (high commodity prices) and internal (greater macroeconomic stability).

However, the Covid-19 pandemic and the repercussions of the Russian invasion of Ukraine brought the upward trend to an end and cast light on structural imbalances, in the form of **limited diversification, overdependence on exports of natural resources and ores and ballooning external debt**, aggravated by a new cycle of interest rate hikes that hampered debt service.

In 2023, the continent's GDP growth returned to pre-pandemic levels, with the second highest rate in the world, surpassed only

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE IN AFRICA AND OTHER COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Selected countries and regions: global share (latest data year)



	Road Network	Rail Network	Air Traffic	Surface Area	Population
Africa	7,45 %	6,9 %	2,2 %	22,8 %	18,0%
China	13,0 %	11,7 %	14,5 %	7,4 %	17,8 %
EU	14,4 %	15,9 %	17,6 %	3,2 %	5,6 %
US	16,4 %	22,9 %	20,3 %	7,6 %	4,2 %

by Asia. Even so, Africa is still afflicted by a lack of production transformation, which would lead to extensive job creation and integration of the continent into global value chains.

One of the foremost economic challenges that African States face is ensuring that the economic growth of recent years results in creation of quality jobs and sufficient livelihoods for the majority of the population. Therefore, the different countries must adopt strategies, policies and programmes that favour creation of quality jobs.

In addition, despite economic growth, increases in life expectancy and reductions in infant mortality, population growth and high levels of inequality have limited the benefits in terms of improved living conditions for Africans. In the 30 years from 1990 to 2019, while annual per capita GDP growth for India and China averaged 5% and 8% respectively, the figure for Africa was just 1%.

Poverty levels continue to rise

At the same time, over 450 million Africans are living in **poverty**. In the Sub-Saharan subregion, the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty is even higher, at 40% (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP). Furthermore, urbanization puts further pressure on the environment and on administrations, magnifying challenges in areas such as water supply, waste management and disaster prevention.

The African States are aware that economic growth must be sustainable and fair and that attention must be paid to the most vulnerable. The concept of the social and solidarity economy (SSE) has gained traction as a powerful guiding criterion at the global level, and five African countries (Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Djibouti, Tunisia and Senegal) have already passed laws in this area. Other countries, such as Morocco, are working on legislation.



Spanish Cooperation project in Ethiopia: “Women, coffee and climate”.

Africa, the most vulnerable continent to the effects of the climate crisis

Africa is the continent that contributes the least to the climate crisis (just 2.5% of global emissions of greenhouse gases) but it is also the most vulnerable to its devastating effects. Indeed, 35 of the 50 countries most exposed to the effects of climate change are located in Africa. If climate change continues at its current pace—a pace that is faster in Africa—**output from farming** (which currently employs over 40% of the economically active population in Africa) **will decline by around 3% by 2030 and by around 18% by 2050**, according to projections prepared by the Center for Global Development (CGD). Water management and access are a challenge for the whole continent, with increasingly frequent droughts and shortages, and they are the subject of targeted public policy, for example, in North Africa.

The **climate emergency** is another threat to Africa’s security, with a direct impact on levels of discord, as reflected, for example,

in the Sahel and in **disputes among sedentary and pastoral communities over access to water and other scarce resources, in an extremely fragile context.**

Limited access to digitalization and research and development

The opportunities offered by the digital transformation in terms of disseminating expertise, creating businesses and jobs and, in a wider sense, of combating poverty and inequality run into the obstacle of limited and expensive internet access. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), just 36% of the African population had broadband internet access in 2022. In its Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa (2020–2030), the AU set an ultimate aim of a more integrated and inclusive digital society and economy in Africa.

The digital transformation has the potential to be a major driver of economic growth in Africa, but inadequate infrastructure is a se-

vere restraint, as are poorly suited regulatory frameworks and human capital that has not always received sufficient or relevant training.

In terms of innovation, **Africa accounts for just 0.1% of the global total and spends a mere 0.45% of GDP** on innovation and development activities. Indeed, Africa is responsible for only 0.5% of global patent applications, a very low proportion when compared to Asia's 66.5%.

Insufficient schooling and inadequate access to health care and the labour market

According to UNESCO, Africa remains the **continent with the highest rates of illiteracy**, even though significant advances have been recorded in recent years. Schooling, particularly of girls, is still a priority mission, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where **dropout rates remain high**, and school attendance rates are very low on average (less than 50% of young people aged 15–17 years). This problem is also **linked to the frequency of forced or child marriages**, which in the Sub-Saharan subregion affect 39% of girls, and to pregnancy in under-18s. **A quarter of African youth are estimated to be unemployed and with insufficient education or training** and this disproportionately affects young women, with only a few exceptions, such as Uganda. On the southern shore of the Mediterranean, job creation is a priority goal, as the societies there have high percentages of young people.

As regards health care coverage and social protection, the Covid-19 pandemic, millions more Africans fell into poverty and inequalities rose dramatically. When the pandemic was declared, over half the population of Sub-Saharan Africa had inadequate health-care access and 80% had no social protection

or labour rights with which to tackle the aftermath.

Violence and armed conflict

Turning to peace and security, some progress has been made, but there have also been setbacks, especially in fragile States. Africa is the continent that suffers the most **violence and armed conflict**. At present, half of the conflicts in the world are in Africa and 43% of all terrorist attacks take place in the Sahel subregion.

Organized criminal groups, specializing in all forms of trafficking and smuggling, are extremely active on the continent of Africa. Some of the items they traffic—arms, oil, drugs, for example—are for consumption within the region, while others are headed for Mediterranean coastal areas, with the aim of introducing them into Europe or Asia.

Because territories within Africa contain large deserts and unpopulated areas and have porous borders, the continent is conducive to criminal activities and terrorism. The severity of this threat has led to establishment of large militarized zones with restricted access in some countries, where there are often confrontations with criminal groups.

The INFORM 2024 Report by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the European Commission, which analyses different humanitarian risk factors by country, found the Sahel (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad) and the Horn of Africa (Sudan, Somalia and South Sudan) to be the subregions that are most exposed to multi-factor humanitarian crises. In recent years, owing to political instability in the two subregions, structural crises have worsened, leading to an increase in internally displaced persons and in refugees to neighbouring countries.

Pre-existing food insecurity has become more acute as a result of ongoing conflict and violence, but also because of climate change, which has led to an increase in droughts and natural disasters, with severe repercussions for the population, including dwindling livelihoods. Given this situation, current humanitarian priorities focus on protection, food security and nutrition and education in emergencies.

The epicentre of terrorism has shifted in recent years from the Middle East to Africa. In 2007, around 7% of deaths caused by terrorist attacks occurred in Africa, but the percentage is now close to 50%. According to data from the Global Terrorism Index prepared by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), in 2023 three of the five countries that suffered the most attacks in the world were African: Burkina Faso, Somalia and Mali.

Within the continent, the subregions that have been most affected by terrorist acts, including those perpetrated by groups affiliated with Al-Qaida and with Islamic State, include the Sahel and, in the Horn of Africa, Somalia. There are also hotspots of violence and instability in the Sudan, in the wake of the internal conflict that erupted in 2023, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region, and the province of Cabo Delgado in the north of Mozambique.

It is important to remember that **one of the effects of terrorism is that States lose control over their territories and have difficulties in providing basic services**, leading to crises of confidence, delegitimization of institutions and breaking of the social compact.

Deteriorations in security and recurrent violent conflicts are especially damaging because of the close link between peace, security and development, which has been

acknowledged by the AU and by its partners such as Spain. Under this comprehensive approach to conflict in Africa, the political, social and economic factors at the root of violence—such as poverty, inequality, partial democracy or human rights violations—must be addressed, rather than solely cases of violence. The greater the stability and security, the better the investment climate, the more jobs are created, the greater the development of production capacities, and the more adequately the population's needs are met. Of all of the social groups, women and girls are those who lose the most through violence and those who benefit the most from peace.

Fragile institutions

Although democracy is highly valued by African societies and despite there being examples of democratic resilience and transfer of power, such as Cabo Verde, Ghana and South Africa, in recent years there have been **coups d'état, unconstitutional changes of government and a decline in the quality of democracy** in terms of pluralism and freedoms, particularly in West Africa and above all the Sahel, where the sway of the EU is being partially dislodged.

These crises are reflected in the dissatisfaction felt by the younger population, which accounts for a large portion of society, whose basic needs and aspirations concerning institutions and the labour market are not being met. The repercussions include migration, both within Africa and to Europe. Youth's frustration is often exploited to undermine democracies and cast doubt on their capacity to fulfil Africans' legitimate aspirations.

Irregular migration, human trafficking and people smuggling

Rapid population growth, recurrent situations of instability and conflict, the repercussions of the climate crisis and the pursuit of better economic and life opportunities are driving steady rises in African migratory flows. Most of the flows—over 70% according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM)—are within the continent, either from rural areas to urban areas or between African countries. In West Africa, this is the case for 9 out of every 10 migrants.

In recent years, however, there has been an **uptrend in irregular migration** from Africa to Europe and particularly from West Africa and the Maghreb. According to data from the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), in 2023 around 47% of the irregular migration into the EU was from Africa. Almost all arrivals are through human trafficking or people smuggling networks, whose members do not hesitate to put human lives in danger on the deadly routes across the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

The networks also have close ties to other types of organized crime; therefore, not only are thousands of migrants putting their lives in danger, the networks are also a source of threats to security and public health in the two regions.

4

Our assets

Geographical, historical, cultural and social ties

Because of its geographical location, historical ties, sense of responsibility and national interest, Spain can significantly contribute to the fulfilment of the aspirations, priorities and goals that African governments and societies have set themselves in their continental and subregional strategies. Spain has **invaluable resources, knowledge and relations** with which to seize the opportunities offered by being Africa's neighbour in Europe and to address shared challenges.



Facade of the headquarters of Instituto Cervantes in Tétouan, Morocco.

OUR AFRICAN NEIGHBOURS: WEST AFRICA, THE SAHEL AND NORTH AFRICA

Because of their proximity to Spain, the strength of the ties and their interdependence, the opportunities and challenges of **West Africa, the Sahel and North Africa are critically important for Spain** and will be paid special attention under this Strategy. This proximity is not only geographical, it is also historical and cultural in the case of the Arab world, forming a unique bond, ranging from interaction over the land borders of Ceuta and Melilla, to the extensive Mediterranean and Atlantic connections with the Maghreb and beyond. These ties extend from the Canary Islands to the Sahel, West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. Significantly, five of the countries in North Africa form part of the Southern Neighbourhood of the European Union and six are in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

With its 16 countries and fifth of the continent's land area (6 million square kilometres, 30 times the size of Spain), **West Africa** is home to a third of the population of Africa (412.5 million people in 2021, nine times the population of Spain). The subregion has a fertility rate of 5.2 births per woman, which is in decline but remains above average for the continent. In addition, there has been a considerable fall in infant mortality over the past decade (from 81.2 deaths per 1,000 births in 2010 to 57.3 in 2021), reflecting progress in health care and education. People aged under 15 years account for 43% of the total population, three times the percentage for Spain.

The economy of West Africa grew by almost 50% from 2010 to 2021 (from 459.23 billion euros to 653.88 billion euros at current prices), and employment rose in the industrial sector (13.9% of the total) and services (46.2%) but fell in agriculture (39.9%). At the same time, the urban population expanded in relative terms from 41% of the total in 2020 to 47% in 2021, signalling a growing

middle class and demand for products and services that are suited to their new needs, including mobility and energy infrastructure. At present, exports from ECOWAS countries are primarily of energy, mineral and agricultural products.

Spain is West Africa's fifth largest export market (ECOWAS countries, figures from 2021) at a total of 7.21 billion euros, ahead of France, the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom. However, Spain's exports to the subregion amount to just 2.04 billion euros, 1.36% of the total.

Overall, Africa was the top source region for Spain's oil imports in 2023, with Nigeria accounting for 10.4%. In terms of natural gas, Algeria (29.3%) and Nigeria (13.6%) were Spain's largest and fourth largest suppliers, respectively.

At the institutional level, although there have been coups d'état in Mali (2020), Guinea (2021), Burkina Faso (2022) and Niger (2023), the position of other countries in West Africa (Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Sierra Leone and Senegal) in the Fragile States Index has improved, despite facing challenges such as terrorism and organized crime.

In terms of migration, citizens of countries in West Africa account for around a fifth (233,947 out of 1,193,947) of African nationals residing in Spain.

What are we currently doing?

Spain has been **strengthening its presence in the countries of West Africa since the launch of the first Plan Africa in 2006**, opening new embassies, subsidiary diplomatic offices and Spanish Cooperation offices in 10 of the 15 ECOWAS States, including an Instituto Cervantes centre and university-hosted learning facilities.

Spain considers ECOWAS to be a key stakeholder in the subregion of West Africa and, for that reason, is **in constant political dialogue with the**



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation with the President of the ECOWAS Commission, during the Minister's visit to Nigeria in January 2023.

Community and has a close cooperation relationship with it, materialized among other initiatives in a Memorandum of Understanding on Political Consultations signed in 2023.

In applying the aforementioned Memorandum of Understanding and the declaration of intent signed on 12 January 2023, Spain and ECOWAS will present a new programme of work in the area of sustainable development cooperation. Spanish Cooperation's Master Plan for 2024–2027 updates and strengthens the commitment with ECOWAS.

The **Sahel**, the climate and geographical transition zone to the south of the Sahara, faces the same significant challenges as the rest of the continent, but in the subregion the challenges are more frequent and severe.

Although it has a young population, abundant natural resources and rich cultural heritage, the Sahel is also facing a situation of severe insta-

bility resulting in humanitarian impacts—**with regard to which Spain is especially attentive and proactive**—caused by a combination of terrorism, criminal networks including people smuggling networks, coups d'état and climate change aggravated by the subregion's particular vulnerability and fragility. The Sahel has also become a fertile ground—often cultivated by foreign powers—for sowing destabilizing narratives.

The increasingly unstable situation in the Sahel has led to a rise in migratory pressure on Spain and the rest of Europe. Equally concerning are the risk that the terrorist threat could spread to neighbouring countries, the impact of the civil war in Sudan, and the unrelenting criminal activity in many areas, such as the Lake Chad subregion.

What is more, countries in the central area of the Sahel that have experienced instability leading to coups d'état have formed the Alliance of Sahel States, which prioritizes security links with Russia and other actors.



Third General Assembly of the Sahel Alliance, chaired by José Manuel Albares, held at the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation in April 2022.

Spain has spared no effort in its contributions to peace, stability and sustainable development in the Sahel, for example, through our leadership of EU training missions, the participation of Spanish law enforcement agencies in EU projects to strengthen institutions and through our work with the Sahel Alliance, the main platform for coordinating cooperation stakeholders in the subregion. Spain chaired the Alliance's General Assembly for three consecutive years, owing to our country's credibility and our understanding of the subregion and our historical and cultural ties. In this context, Spain has taken the lead in acknowledging **Mauritania's role as a pillar for the stability and development of the Sahel; Spain has therefore advocated greater attention from the EU** with a view to strengthening its programmes and building its capacities.

What is more, in recent years Spain has strengthened its relationship and support for the OECD Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC/OECD).

For the first time in Spanish law and with broad parliamentary backing, **Act 1/2023 of 20 February on Global Solidarity and Sustainable Development Cooperation** (hereinafter the GSSDC Act) established **West Africa and the Sahel as priorities for Spanish Cooperation**.

While Spain's ties with the whole of the continent are strong, with **North Africa** the bonds are even closer for geographical, historical and human reasons, **as described in Spanish Cooperation's Sixth Master Plan**. All events in the Maghreb have a direct and immediate

impact in Spain, which aims to have excellent relations with all the countries of the subregion.

Spain has contributed to **political dialogue** in the region in different ways, through platforms such as the Western Mediterranean Forum (also known as the 5+5 Dialogue) and by hosting events such as the Seminar on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in May 2022 in Toledo, which was attended by Libyan authorities.

The 5+5 Dialogue is the only initiative that specifically brings together the countries of the Maghreb, thus providing a space for coordination for an area that lacks any other multilateral forum in which to address issues that affect its two coasts. The Dialogue takes the form of a series of ministerial meetings, which have proven enormously useful on a range of issues, from water to security and defence.

As part of the European Union's Southern Neighbourhood and of UfM, the countries of North Africa have historically received priority attention and have been strategic partners in designing and implementing agendas in areas of common interest, and this will continue.

In 2021, Spain spearheaded the relaunch of the **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) concerning the Southern Neighbourhood**, through adoption of the new Agenda for the Mediterranean. Today, as part of discussions on the review of the Agenda, Spain is leading work to strengthen the policy, with a clear aim of forging a bi-regional EU-Southern Neighbourhood dynamic that complements the efforts by the EU and its Member States at the bilateral level. In this respect, Spain supports and actively fosters dialogue with the countries of North Africa, taking their interests and needs into account.

Simultaneously, complementing these activities, Spain has championed and continues to advocate **strengthening of UfM**. The Union is a particularly important body, as it is the only one that brings together the 27 Member States of the EU and 16 countries from the Eastern and Southern Mediterranean, including 6 States from North Africa (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, and Libya as an observer), enabling political dialogue, sectoral cooperation and implementation of projects that produce impacts for citizens.

Looking ahead to the thirtieth anniversary of the Barcelona Process and in order to adapt UfM to the regional reality and present and future needs, Spain is advocating a reformulation of its strategic priorities, greater political scope and a larger endowment of resources to enable the Union to fulfil its mandate effectively.

Spain, **as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and an active proponent of its Mediterranean Dialogues**, has been particularly involved in strengthening the NATO approach to the Southern Neighbourhood, especially during the Summit in Madrid in 2023. The strengthening process, which also encompasses the Sahel and Africa, included adoption at the Washington Summit of a new action plan and appointment of a Spaniard as the first Special Representative for the Southern Neighbourhood.

At the economic level, macroeconomic stability and investment opportunities in North Africa are increasingly important for Spanish businesses. There are ever more business opportunities in sectors in which Spain has a genuine competitive advantage such as construction, food, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy, water treatment and sanitation.

Spain's dual Atlantic and Mediterranean identity, and its European dimension

Spain's dual identity as an Atlantic and Mediterranean country affords it a key role in the configuration of a shared Euro-African space.

As an EU Member State, Spain actively contributes to determining and implementing EU external policy on Africa, which includes the Joint AU-EU Innovation Agenda and the European Neighbourhood Policy concerning the Southern Neighbourhood. The trips made by Spanish authorities alongside senior EU officials, the monitoring of EU policies by the Council Working Parties and the permanent contact maintained with EU ins-

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND AFRICA

The **European Union considers Africa a geopolitical priority**, as its closest neighbouring continent with which it has significant historical, economic and cultural ties. **The EU is Africa's main trade partner and investor and the principal donor of development and humanitarian assistance to the continent.** Since 2007, the relationship between the two has been considered a "strategic partnership", and coordinated through a system of periodic summits, ministerial meetings and joint meetings of the EU College of Commissioners and the AU Commission. In addition, the EU and Africa engage in multiple lines of dialogue, instruments, mechanisms and sectoral initiatives on a broad range of issues.

Recently, the EU and Africa have undertaken an exhaustive reform of the general legal framework within which their relationship is structured, with the signing, during the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2023, of the Samoa Agreement between the EU and the countries of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). This agreement, the successor to the Cotonou Agreement of 2000, adapts pre-existing commitments, principles, mechanisms and institutions to a changing global context.



The President of the Government during the Fourth European Union-African Union Summit.

Furthermore, the Sixth EU-UA Summit, held in February 2022, marked a turning point leading towards a new era of balanced, modernized and action-focused relations. The leaders of the two continents **signed a declaration entitled "A Joint Vision for 2030" based on: an Investment Package of at least 150 billion euros in the framework of the Global Gateway strategy; a renewed and enhanced cooperation for peace and security; an enhanced and reciprocal partnership for migration and mobility and mobility; and a commitment to multilateralism** within the rules-based international order, with the UN at its core.

This investment package is intended to contribute to the achievement of the priorities set forth in the AU Agenda 2063. Specifically, **it is intended to drive the competitiveness and**

tutions and services (European Commission and European External Action Service), are reflections of the European dimension of our efforts.

Spain also facilitates policy coordination and the identification of cooperation opportunities with EU financing through its partnership policy with Africa. Taking into account the strategic importance of the continent for

Spain and the EU, Spain will take the interests and concerns of African countries into account during EU debates on policies that have a particular impact on the continent, in particular in the economic sphere (renewal of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs), new rules or conditions on specific matters, such as agreements on the promotion and protection of investments).

sustainable development of Africa, foster the consolidation of modern economies, strengthen the infrastructure connecting the two continents and create a business climate conducive to investment and growth. Moreover, the creation and strengthening of value chains will help to consolidate the foundations for the success of AfCFTA.

As regards trade and economic affairs, both continents are paying particular attention to nurturing relations through regional partnership agreements and through the consolidation of AfCFTA. These efforts have facilitated an increase in the intensity of trade and investment, with the additional aim of favouring sustainable development. Similarly, in recent years Europe has sought to strengthen economic and trade relations with specific African partners through the signing of Economic Partnership Agreements (EU-Kenya) and other innovative instruments, such as the EU-Angola Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement and the EU-Rwanda Memorandum of Understanding on Sustainable Raw Materials Value Chains.

On the basis of the shared strategic goals and positions reflected in the EU-AU declaration “A Joint Vision for 2030”, Spain will also contribute to more intense dialogue and coordination between the EU and Africa in multilateral forums.

Due to Spain’s geopolitical position, our close ties with the African continent, and the perception of our country as sharing a special affinity with Africa, **Spain aspires to exercise greater leadership in the efforts to enhance EU relations with Africa**, thereby contributing to the fulfilment of the commitments adopted at the Sixth EU-AU Summit.

We must foster a renewed partnership, based on equality and mutual respect, and together address the challenges faced by Africa. In the current international context, the African States have a broad range of partnership options in several spheres. It is incumbent upon the EU and its Member States to design proposals that are better suited to the development needs of our African neighbours.

To achieve this goal of renewing our relationship with Africa, the EU must prove itself a reliable partner, setting and achieving realistic goals and honouring its commitments. It must deliver on its promises and statements with action, both in the sphere of political dialogue, duly attending and paying political attention to coordination initiatives such as summits and ministerial meetings, and with respect to the provision of financing.

ADAPTING OUR PRESENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS TO OPPORTUNITIES

What are we currently doing?

Having years of experience of undertaking development cooperation projects, participating in peace and security missions, forging political agreements and designing cooperation mechanisms, Spain enjoys excellent dialogue with our African partners.

For many years now, Spain has maintained high-level meetings and consultation mechanisms with Spanish civil society and the Spanish private sector. Meanwhile, our diplomatic, trade and cooperation presence on the ground in Africa has been indispensable to building networks of relations, producing tangible impacts and generating first-hand knowledge of the continent's situation and circumstances.

All of this has helped to shape the strategic goals of the bilateral agenda and fostered cooperation from a political perspective.

What more can we do?

Spain is aware that a more strategic relationship calls for enhanced dialogue and broader-reaching and more frequent contact which will lead to a better understanding of our actions and priorities.

To achieve this, Spain's foreign action should ideally be planned based on our capabilities, identifying the sectors—trade, scientific, cultural—in which to capitalize on national competencies. Public-private partnerships and economic, cultural and scientific diplomacy instruments enable the creation of markets in emerging countries for the export of Spanish services of high added value.

SPAIN AND THE AFRICAN UNION

The African Union is a key stakeholder in the global and continental order and its influence only continues to grow. At a global level, the organization enjoys the legitimacy accorded it by the fact that its membership includes all the African States; at a continental level, its commitment to democracy and human rights, its promotion of AfCFTA and its engineering of the African Peace and Security Architecture have earned it a central role in the efforts to make Africa an integrated, stable and prosperous space, inspired by the Agenda 2063.

Spain considers the AU a key partner, with the authority to speak on behalf of the continent, and recognizes its leadership in all regional and international efforts aimed at consolidating democracy, stability and sustainable development on the continent. The signing, in May 2022, of a memorandum of understanding established an institutionalized political dialogue that we must expand and develop in the coming years.

The AU, moreover, is a forum of great potential for the relationship between the continent and Ibero-America. The official status of Spanish within the organization and its growing use in communications must be supported through voluntary contributions and other language diplomacy actions.

High-level dialogue with African stakeholders. Network of cooperation agreements and mechanisms

Spain's **political dialogue** with Africa is based on the recognition of the **key role of the AU** as a pan-African organization with broad powers encompassing economic integration, development, peace, security and democracy.

Spain has entered into a growing network of cooperation agreements and mechanisms with the AU, such as the Memorandum of Understanding on **Political Dialogue and Sectoral Collaboration signed in 2022 and the collaboration agreements between the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency (Spanish acronym: AECID) and AUDA-NEPAD**. In addition, Spain also promotes other forums for cooperation, such as the **5+5 Dialogue**, whose flexible and informal nature offers added value, favouring sectoral cooperation with North Africa.

Spain also maintains excellent relations with **ECOWAS** and has lent its support to implementation of the ECOWAS Vision 2050.

In parallel, Spain has also been making a substantial effort to strengthen political, economic, trade and cooperation relations with the countries of **Southern, East and Central Africa**, including through high-level visits and regular political consultations. Consideration could also be given to enhancing this relationship by increasing engagement with subregional organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Africa's increasing importance for Spain led to the creation, in 2017, of a Directorate-General for (Sub-Saharan) Africa—an offshoot of the Directorate-General for the Maghreb, the Middle East and the Mediterranean—within the organizational structure of the Foreign Ministry. Of all the bodies forming part of the Spanish diplomatic system, this Directorate-General manages relations with the largest number of sovereign African States (48) and international organizations, with a growing bilateral and regional agenda, in addition to working in coordination with the Directorate-General for the Maghreb, the Mediterranean and the Middle East on a comprehensive policy for the entire continent.

MULTILATERAL COORDINATION

Inclusive multilateralism is crucial to achieving the SDGs and to tackling mounting crises.

Strengthening cooperation, accountability and inclusivity in multilateral forums is essential to increasing trust in the system and to guaranteeing its effectiveness, acceptance and transparency.

Spain seeks to develop its relationship with Africa not only at the bilateral level, but also

within the multilateral sphere. We share many common interests and, through synergies and support for our decisions and initiatives, we can achieve real progress. We consider it important to forge **robust partnerships with African partners** to give impetus to collective action and we will listen actively to their concerns through continuous contact, with a view to building consensus and interregional partnerships.

What are we currently doing?

Spain's engagement to host the **Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development** is a reflection of our commitment to achieving consensus, to initiating dialogue, and to nurturing ties between the North and the South.

In the multilateral sphere Spain collaborates closely with a number of African countries on the following matters: the women, peace and security agenda (WPSA); the fight against female genital mutilation; the fight against and prevention of violent extremism; humanitarian concerns such as the protection of schools during armed conflicts; international justice; and drought—Spain and Senegal launched the **International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA)** during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27).

In the regional sphere we support the **AU** (in 2023 Spain announced a contribution of 50 million euros for the AU and 20 million euros for AUDA-NEPAD) as well as subregional bodies such as **ECOWAS** (Spain's annual contribution to the latter is close to 4 million euros).

Access to international financing must be prioritized. It is practically impossible for a State acting alone to produce a decisive impact on the development of a continent with more than a billion inhabitants and rapid forecast population growth. International financing is crucial to development in Africa. This is why Spain is hosting the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in 2025.

Considering the current context, characterized by rapid population growth and signi-

ficant deficiencies, the financing needed to make decisive progress towards the SDGs must necessarily be based on the four lines of action defined below, taking into account that each source of financing matters.

- 1. Strengthen the lending capacity of multilateral development banks.** Spain has reached an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to channel an additional 1.5 billion in special drawing rights (SDRs) to the Resilience and Sustainability Trust.
- 2. Reduce the sovereign debt burden.** This is a collective undertaking in which all creditor countries must participate, each making a similar effort. In this regard, Spain advocates creating multilateral instruments for this purpose.
- 3. Promote private investment.** International investment flows greatly exceed the total sum of Official Development Assistance. However, only a small proportion of these flows reach Africa. The principal obstacle is the perception of investment risk. In this regard, mechanisms to guarantee, insure and promote investments must be improved and strengthened at the national and multilateral levels. States that seek to attract investment must also adopt the regulatory measures that will reduce this perception of risk.



The President of the Government at the presentation of the Alianza África Avanza initiative to foster investment in Senegal, during the President's visit to Dakar in August 2024.

Instruments to support bilateral trade and Spanish investment. Spanish companies heading strategic African sectors

Economic relations between Spain and Africa have been characterized in recent years by growing bilateral trade. This has been due in part to the rise in energy imports resulting from the need for diversification (created in turn by Russia's aggression against Ukraine), but it also reflects the prudence of shortening value chains in a changeable geopolitical context. Spanish trade with Africa is largely with North Africa (66% of the total). Spain's principal trade partner in Africa is Morocco, followed by Algeria, Nigeria, Libya and South Africa.

Significantly, the value of Spain's exports to Africa exceeds that of its exports to Latin America (10.43 billion euros compared with 9.76 billion euros in the first half of 2024, respectively, but this has generally been the case for a number of years) and the value of the goods we import from Africa greatly exceeds that of the goods we import from Latin America (18.23 billion euros compared with 11.87 billion euros in the first half of 2024, respectively).

As regards Spanish foreign direct investment, Spain's stocks in Africa totalled close to 5.95 billion euros in 2022, with Morocco, Algeria, South Africa and Angola being the main recipients.

Spain must build or strengthen supply chains for critical commodities with African countries. In this regard, Spain has implemented a reference framework (a road map for the sustainable management of mineral raw materials) to strengthen and improve its strategic autonomy with a more sustainable, circular, safe and efficient extractive activity, improving the competitiveness of its companies and collaborating actively to achieve the goals of the energy transition, climate neutrality and the demographic challenge.

Africa's energy system should progress towards renewable resources, and steer itself away from fossil fuels. It needs to focus on distributed generation and self-supply and to adapt its power grids accordingly.

The State Secretariat for Trade approved the Horizon Africa Strategy in July 2020, revised in November 2023, to increase the corporate, institutional and financial presence of Spain on the African continent.

PARTNERS IN ENERGY AND THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

Faced with the **challenge of increasing access to electricity** in Africa, in a manner compatible with the decarbonization goals adopted by the international community, **Spain and its companies must position themselves as key partners for African countries.**

The International Energy Agency (IEA) calculates that Africa needs an investment in reliable, sustainable and accessible electricity infrastructure amounting to approximately 2 trillion euros over the next two decades. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), **a systematic transition in Africa from fossil fuels to renewable energy could increase**

GDP by 6.4%, jobs by 3.5% and the Energy Transition Welfare Index by 25% by 2050, if an appropriate policy basket were also applied.

The generation and distribution of electricity are sectors offering enormous opportunity, in which Spanish companies are already present.

For its part, the rise of renewable energies, including solar, wind and green hydrogen energy, is in line with the Global Gateway priorities set for countries such as Mauritania, Kenya and Namibia.

In this regard, Africa's blue economy has great potential that has yet to be fully recognized. The AU forecasts that by 2030 the blue economy will have created 57 million jobs.



Solar power plant in South Africa.



Lagos port, Nigeria.

THE GLOBAL GATEWAY

The Global Gateway, launched on 1 December 2021, is an EU connectivity strategy to promote sustainable investment, aligned with the goals of the digital and ecological transitions.

At the EU-AU Summit held on 18 February 2022, the EU announced an Africa-Europe investment package of at least 150 billion euros with a view to strengthening the ties between the two continents and forging mutually beneficial partnerships whose added value will make it possible to counter the offers of other actors, such as China. Spain advocates adopting a Team Europe approach to implement these funds, with the coordinated participation of all key stakeholders, including public stakeholders from EU institutions and Member States, private sector stakeholders, and multilateral development banks.

Spain champions the effective mobilization of these resources in collaboration with our African partners, with a permanent focus on sustainable development outcomes, to identify partnership opportunities that will respond to the true priorities of the African continent.

Spanish companies must place their international experience at the service of this initiative. In addition, export credit agencies, financial development institutions and bodies offering financial instruments to support the internationalization of companies must coordinate with each other to remove obstacles to financing.

Global Gateway is not free from challenges, including communications with and the visibility of partner countries, the mobilization of financial resources, the structuring of instruments with governance institutions and the coordination of operations.

On the occasion of the visit of the President of the Government to Senegal in August 2024, Spain launched the Alianza África Avanza initiative, which seeks to establish a stable and flexible common strategic framework that maximizes the impact of investments on economic development and social progress, especially in West Africa. Senegal has been selected, not only as the host country of Alianza's secretariat, but also as the country in which it will commence its activities, which may be extended to other countries in the region.

To achieve its goals, Alianza aims, firstly, to tackle horizontal challenges and clear bottlenecks that could hinder growth, fostering access to basic financial services and addressing the digital divide. Secondly, it intends to favour investment in strategic sectors with the potential to create jobs, including finance, infrastructure, telecommunications, agricultural transformation and tourism, focusing on the African country's own agenda and priorities.

Lastly, Alianza is committed to training, which is essential if the continent's human capital is to fulfil its potential. To this end, Alianza will involve all key stakeholders in the country's economic development, including national public authorities and companies and international financial institutions, all following a single shared road map.

The fight against energy poverty is a distinguishing feature of Spain's energy policy. Inter-ministerial collaboration at the service of specific AECID programmes to combat energy poverty within ECOWAS States will maximize programme outcomes and contribute to the international prestige of our policy.

Spain has leading companies and institutions in those sectors identified by the Global Gateway strategy as of key interest for

Africa: digital, climate and energy, blue economy, transport, health, research, and education and training. Coupled with the role of Spanish Cooperation in supporting these same priorities through financing and technical cooperation, this situation constitutes an excellent point of departure for promoting sustainable investment in Africa, to which half of the Global Gateway budget has been assigned.

Spain's network of economic and trade offices at embassies in Africa (15 offices providing services across the continent) offers essential support to our companies to maximize the business potential of African markets.

Spanish Cooperation projects with an impact in Africa. More than 40 years of engagement and high-level dialogue

Official Development Assistance

The GSSDC Act sets forth Spain's goal of allocating at least 0.7% of gross national income to Official Development Assistance by 2030. This effort must be made with the aim of advancing achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Accordingly, Spain will continue to strengthen and increase its cooperation with African countries. In this regard, Spanish Cooperation's Master Plan for 2024-2027 includes three lines of action of particular relevance:

1. Strengthening work on inclusive economic development. In this sphere, particular emphasis will be placed on the creation of opportunities for young people, especially young women, to enable African countries to effectively combat poverty and inequalities and to create quality jobs for the 30 million Africans that will enter the labour force each year from 2030 onward.

SPANISH COOPERATION

What are we currently doing?

Spanish Cooperation has extensive experience in Africa and is especially important in subregions such as the Sahel, from which other parties are withdrawing. Spanish Cooperation partners with and listens to its local counterparts, whether they be State, regional or local institutions, private sector bodies or civil society organizations, while ensuring accountability and transparency.

The proactive stance adopted by Spanish Cooperation among donors groups and coordination platforms makes **Spain an attractive partner for other stakeholders with a presence in Africa**, thus helping to strengthen our common efforts and our relations with partners such as the EU, the EU Member States that are most active in Africa and the United States of America.

In addition, our presence in the different subregions of the continent could **potentially facilitate triangular cooperation** between them, which could in turn contribute towards strengthening their integration and interdependence. With this same aim, different regional programmes have been established with AUDA-NEPAD, ECOWAS and the Masar Al'an Programme for the Arab world, including North Africa.

Spain rolls out the foreign action educational programmes that it establishes based on the needs identified with its African partners. The aim is to respond to the demand for training from local teachers in teaching Spanish as a foreign language, with particular attention to the need to teach Spanish for specific purposes. The first Instituto Cervantes centre in Sub-Saharan Africa — with offices in Dakar — has been opened and inter-

university cooperation between Spanish and African universities is being supported. There are also plans to extend the work of the Instituto Cervantes centre in Rabat to Mauritania and to open new facilities in Angola.

Spanish Cooperation has long been committed to providing training in the cultural sector through the ACERCA programme. Similarly, in the sphere of educational cooperation, it supports vocational training centres that aim to address the misalignment between the training and skills of the labour force — in particular those of young people — and the training and skills needed for the transformation of the production system and for the ongoing ecological and digital transitions.

The International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), as a cooperation system entity specialized in public technical cooperation, carries out institutional exchange projects to strengthen regulatory frameworks and public institutions and policy in Africa. This work addresses multiple areas of the 2030 Agenda, such as local governance (the Support to Civil Society in Local Governance in Angola [PASCAL] Project), the digital economic transition (support for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement and for digital government and cybersecurity in the Horn of Africa), and the social transition (youth policy programmes implemented in Morocco and Tunisia).

Investment in vocational training and entrepreneurship as well as in food security and nutrition and rural development will be especially important.

2. Intensifying efforts to combat the climate crisis and its impacts within the context of a just ecological transition. This line of action will especially prioritize needs relating to climate change adaptation, natural-disaster resilience, and water and sanitation. In this sphere, Spain undertakes to support African countries in their efforts to guarantee universal, affordable and reliable access to clean energy sources by promoting the use of renewable energy and improving energy efficiency and fostering research, technological development and capacity-building in sustainable energy systems.
3. Recognizing gender equality as an essential, cross-cutting and distinguishing feature of Spain's collaboration with our partner countries in Africa, in line with Spanish Cooperation's commitment to feminism. In this line of action Spain will seek to reduce inequalities between women and men, intensify efforts to close gender gaps, combat all forms of violence and discrimination, promote the political, economic and social empowerment of women, young girls and adolescent girls, and guarantee their sexual and reproductive rights from a human rights perspective.

Pursuant to Article 31.4 of the GSSDC Act, AECID, as part of its Master Plan, exercises the operational coordination of the cooperation carried out by the Spanish sustainable development cooperation system at head-quarter, regional and country level, applying the principles of effectiveness, complementarity and coherence.

With a view to fostering regional cooperation in Africa and the Middle East, Spanish

Cooperation's Master Plan (2024-2027) envisages the following actions:

- a. Drafting of a Spanish Cooperation strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa.
- b. Preparation of a new subregional cooperation strategy for the Southern Mediterranean that adapts Spanish Cooperation's goals and resources to the challenges currently faced by the subregion, prioritizing alignment of activities throughout the Southern Neighbourhood and favouring establishment of lasting partnerships in the subregion.
- c. Renewal of regional cooperation programmes with ECOWAS, especially in fields such as agriculture, renewable energy and gender equality, and with the AUDA-NEPAD, among others.
- d. Continuation of efforts in West Africa, paying special attention to the Sahel and drawing on lessons learned by Spain when chairing the General Assembly of the Sahel Alliance to support countries in the subregion.

In the humanitarian sphere, particular impetus has been given in recent years to programmes related to education in emergencies, gender and protection linked especially to displaced persons and refugees. Given the aforementioned structural problems, health and food security continue to be priority areas for Spain's humanitarian action.

In the humanitarian sphere, Spain also has a humanitarian strategy for the 2022-2023 period for the Sahel and is working to produce the strategy for the following period.

The Foreign Ministry has introduced the "country-team" mechanism for coordinating the actions of public administrations and Spanish Cooperation. The goal is to

structure and coordinate cooperation actions on a country-by-country basis. This mechanism has been adopted with Mauritania and will be rolled out to other countries.

Creation of value in Africa through youth training

Cooperation in the spheres of education and employment

Spain has a long-standing tradition of engaging in educational and cultural cooperation with Africa, fostered by a variety of different stakeholders, concentrated primarily on Morocco and Equatorial Guinea (Cultural Centres of Malabo and Bata).

The **Africa-MED and ASALE study grant programmes (organized by AECID), the Canary Islands-Africa programmes (regional administration of the Canary Islands), the Learn Africa programme (Women for Africa Foundation) and the EU Erasmus+ programme** have been offering training opportunities in Spain to young professionals and researchers from Africa, while at the same time helping to build networks of knowledge and interests connecting participant institutions and beneficiaries alike. **Raisa**, the visitors' programme for **African women leaders** run by **AECID** is another example of this line of work, as is the "Africa for African business people" visitors' programme and the diplomat training programme for ECOWAS countries. Equally important is the programme of assistantships at African universities, which is consolidated by a steady year-on-year increase in the number of participants.

More recently, Spain and Senegal have signed a number of memorandums of understanding on the social and solidarity economy and on labour inspection. Technical assistance for the capacity-building of public authorities and other bodies in the sphere of

labour, occupational health and safety and social dialogue has also been increased.

This Strategy proposes, among other measures, the creation of a foundation to foster relations with Africa, with a particular focus on employment and educational opportunities for African youth.

This new foundation will work to create a Hispano-African space for knowledge and will serve as a public diplomacy tool aimed at ensuring better mutual knowledge between Africa and Spain. The potential activities of this foundation include the provision of courses or study grants to African educators and students as well as exchanges of experts and collaboration in areas of common interest with other African foundations.

Promotion of the Spanish language. Cultural and scientific cooperation

The dissemination of **the Spanish language across the African continent** serves three objectives: strengthening Spain's influence in African institutions and societies; expanding the markets for our cultural and creative industries; and contributing to the capacity-building of the population, with a view to fostering professions that are linked to Spain and the Spanish-speaking world, in the worlds of diplomacy, business, arts and research. The recognition of Spanish as a working language of the African Union in 2020 is a further incentive to continuing work in this regard.

Africa has an ever-increasing number of students of Spanish

Instituto Cervantes is present in 19 cities across seven countries on the continent. The main facilities are in Morocco (six centres and six subsidiary facilities), Algeria (two centres), Egypt (one centre and one subsidiary facility), Tunisia (one centre) and Se-

negal (one centre, opened in 2020, the first in Sub-Saharan Africa). Instituto Cervantes is expected to soon have a facility in Angola. Instituto Cervantes is also present in Côte d'Ivoire (university-hosted Instituto Cervantes facilities in Abidjan) and Mauritania (a subsidiary facility in Nouakchott, which will open soon). These centres also have assigned exam centres and accredited centres in a total of 10 African countries. In addition, the ASALE programme organized by AECID awards study grants to citizens of Equatorial Guinea to enable them to take the Master's degree in lexicography and teaching practices offered by the Equatoguinean Academy of the Spanish Language.

According to the document *El español: una lengua viva. Informe 2023* [Spanish: a living language. 2023 Report], coordinated by Instituto Cervantes and available on its website, some 2,070,000 people in Sub-Saharan Africa are currently studying Spanish (9% of the world total). The countries with the highest numbers of students of Spanish on the continent are Côte d'Ivoire (566,178 students), Benin (412,515), Senegal (356,000), Cameroon (193,018), Gabon (167,410) and Equatorial Guinea (128,895).

One of the channels of our cooperation with potential is **scientific diplomacy**, which serves as a support instrument owing to its contribution to addressing global challenges, such as climate change, food security and public health, and by driving the economic output and competitiveness of States.

Spain's scientific sector encompasses a plethora of specializations and is represented around the world. The sector's activity is largely coordinated by the Spanish National Research Council (Spanish acronym: CSIC).

Spanish companies in different sectors export products and services or operate abroad. In order to do business abroad as

they do in Spain, these companies need the countries to which they export, or in which they operate, to strengthen the capabilities of their scientific sectors. One example is the fisheries sector: there is a sizeable Spanish fishing fleet in Angola, Namibia and South Africa that is required to comply with the rules of the EU Common Fisheries Policy and, therefore, to provide scientific evidence of a surplus of fish stocks in any waters in which they operate.

To maximize the return on cooperation actions in the sphere of science, Spain cannot rely solely on public sector resources, but must also seek supplementary support from the private sector. This will ensure that outcomes are sustainable, which is key to continued activity.

There are already groups of Spanish scientists in Africa, such as the Association of Spanish Scientists in Southern Africa (Spanish acronym: ACESDA) and the Spanish scientists that collaborate with the Manhica Health Research Centre in Mozambique (Portuguese acronym: CISM). These scientists' efforts are invaluable to our scientific cooperation.

Openness to civil society

African civil society—both from the continent itself and from the diaspora—is calling on Spain and other partners to listen to their diverse voices when designing, implementing and evaluating policies and initiatives concerning and affecting Africa. Spain is mindful of this call and its approach to Africa centres on **listening to African societies, and understanding their visions and priorities**. This interest and openness is reflected, among other measures, by the relaunch in 2020 of the Africa Round Table, which provides a forum for dialogue, and the formulation of proposals by civil society, understood in the broadest sense, to the bodies

that design and implement Spain's policy of partnership with the continent.

Casa África was created in 2006 as a public sector consortium formed by the Foreign Ministry, the regional administration of the Canary Islands and the city council of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Since then, it has cemented its role as an instrument of economic, cultural and digital public diplomacy, with an extensive programme to forge connections between Spanish and African society, and among their companies, creators and cultural industries. Every year, numerous agents of change in Africa through its headquarters in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, and their contributions are reaching an increasingly large audience owing to the possibilities offered by digital media. Among other resources, Casa África maintains a valuable database on African public figures from the world of business, science, the media and the arts, a result of its almost 20 years of activity.

The **Cultural Centres of Spain in Bata and Malabo** are indispensable pillars of the social and cultural space in **Equatorial Guinea**. These centres have been pioneers, not only by offering training in fields related to cultural management, but also by fostering citizen participation and civil society engagement in spaces governed by the principles of freedom and democracy. With a highly extensive and varied cultural programme, these centres have been consolidated as a meeting place for young people, intellectuals, creators, artists and the general public. They have also served as hubs for formation of regional networks and connections and represent an excellent platform for increasing and strengthening Spanish cultural cooperation in other African countries.

Spain's position as a close and reliable partner, committed to peace and security

Women, peace and security

Spain has played a leading role in **promoting the women, peace and security agenda** through programmes and collaborations with African partners, including regional partners such as ECOWAS, national and civil society partners, and UN agencies such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In addition, Spain pays particular attention to the fragility of post-conflict areas, and has been supporting reconstruction projects and initiatives linked to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration with the aim of fostering reconciliation, promoting stability, and preventing relapses into insecure situations.

Spain is committed to strengthening the role of women in conflict resolution and peace-building on the African continent. Through AECID, Spain has co-financed support for the implementation and monitoring of the Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans of Mozambique and Sudan, as well as the preparation of that of Chad, presented in 2023. In addition, Spanish Cooperation carries out capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening prevention and mediation tools, including the training session for women mediators in West Africa and the Sahel, held in Niger in March 2023.

Supporting capabilities

Spain also cooperates by providing intelligence, equipment and support to regional initiatives to strengthen the counter-terrorist capabilities of African States, such as the International Academy for the Fight Against Terrorism in Jacquville (Côte d'Ivoire), the

PEACE AND SECURITY

What are we currently doing?

Aware that violence is an overwhelming obstacle to development, Spain has intensified its partnership with Africa in the sphere of peace and security. In addition to the presence of our armed forces in a number of EU, NATO and UN missions and military operations in Africa, Spain also takes part in forums that foster mutual trust and security and defence cooperation such as the 5+5 Defence Initiative, and is engaged in a growing number of bilateral military cooperation activities. Furthermore, Spain's law enforcement agencies participate in civilian crisis management missions in various subregions of the continent, including the Gulf of Guinea and the Indian Ocean and countries such as Libya, Mali, Niger, the Central African Republic, Mozambique and Somalia. Spain is involved in this sphere both through bilateral frameworks and through EU, NATO and UN actions.

Spain also cooperates by providing intelligence, equipment and support to regional initiatives aimed at strengthening the counter-terrorist capabilities of African States.

Spain considers that both the EU and NATO should extend and intensify dialogue and cooperation with the Southern Neighbourhood, and collaborate more closely with Africa.

Our country promotes and supports the national women, peace and security agendas of African countries, and is assisting regional African mediation processes relating to a number of different regional crises.

Spain advocates a robust partnership between the United Nations and regional orga-

nizations, particularly the African Union, and defends the role of regional peacekeeping operations in addressing conflicts in Africa. Spain and the EU supported Security Council resolution 2719 adopted in 2023 regarding requests from the African Union Peace and Security Council to access UN assessed contributions for African Union-led peace support operations, which represents a significant step forward in that direction.

As regards the Sahel, a priority subregion, Spain considers that the protracted crisis in Libya represents a significant factor of instability. The volatile situation in that country and the porosity of its borders have facilitated the activities of armed groups and traffickers of all kinds, heightening insecurity in the subregion, in particular in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Sudan and Chad.

Mindful of the magnitude of the challenge, Spain is committed to a proactive and future-looking approach to tackling the destabilization of the Sahel subregion as a result of the situation in Libya. Within the framework of the United Nations, Spain is working to foster stability in that country, lending its support to United Nations Security Council mediation initiatives and resolutions aimed at an inclusive political solution as well as to the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Furthermore, Spain supports a number of peace and reconciliation processes by heading diplomatic and cooperation initiatives focused on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. This approach has proven to be fundamental to achieving peace, stability and security in the Sahel.

The meeting hosted by Spain in Toledo in May 2022 and attended by a number of Libyan authorities and members of the 5+5 Joint



The Spanish Navy vessel “Relámpago” during its participation in the European Union initiative Coordinated Maritime Presences, in the Gulf of Guinea.

Military Commission, marked the launch of a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for strengthening regional stability. Spain is backing the establishment of similar forums to foster reconciliation between the east and the west.

Our goal is to contribute to lasting solutions that not only address security issues, but that also promote development and well-being in the Sahel, recognizing the need for strong international backing and the adoption of specific and effective measures for the future.

Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra (Ghana) and the G5 Sahel Defence College of Nouakchott (Mauritania).

Within the EU, Spain supported the contribution of 40 million euros to Mauritania for the G5 Sahel Defence College and the equipping of battalions on the border with Mali and the Sahel G5 joint force. In the context of the African Union Peace Facility, Spain also backed a European Peace Facility contribution of 15 million euros to strengthen the capabilities of Mauritania's armed forces.

Justice and security

In the **sphere of justice and security**, Spain manages a number of EU Delegated Cooperation projects aimed at combating terrorism and serious crime, such as the CT Public Spaces project and the joint investigation teams (JITs). These projects enable Spain to share with its African partners the knowledge and know-how accumulated from years of experience in maritime safety and in combating terrorism, organized crime, disinformation and hybrid threats, and to acquire new knowledge from them, based on their experience.

As regards terrorism and organized crime, including trafficking in drugs, arms and human beings, Spain shares a number of similar (or identical) challenges and threats with key African neighbours. Africa's security is our security, which is why cooperation with Africa forms part of our daily work. This cooperation is institutional, supportive and operational in nature and entails providing funding, equipment and training. In addition to bilateral actions, Spain is involved in EU projects in Africa such as the CT JUST project (involving multiple African countries), the A-TIPSOM project (Nigeria), the NORPREVSEC project (Ghana), the Common Operational Partnerships (COPs) of Mauritania and Senegal and the NETCOP project

(focused on establishing an operational network between the different COPs and JITs in West Africa and the Sahel).

Within NATO, Spain promotes the monitoring of the decisions adopted at the Madrid Summit of June 2022 and advocates the extension and intensification of dialogue and cooperation with the Southern Neighbourhood through application of the action plan adopted at the 2024 NATO Summit in Washington, as well as support for the work of the Secretary General's Special Representative for the Southern Neighbourhood, and closer collaboration between NATO and the EU in Africa.

Spain's commitment to the Yaoundé Architecture for maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea is reflected in its engagement in programmes such as the Coordinated Maritime Presences, promoted by the EU. Spain has contributed significantly to the fight against piracy through a notable participation, since its launch, in the European Union Naval Force Operation ATALANTA (EUNAVFOR ATALANTA), carried out along the coast of Somalia. In this regard, Spain, which has the largest fishing fleet in the EU, attaches great importance to the fishing and energy resources of Africa's seas and oceans.

Another aspect of Spain's **cooperation in the sphere of defence** is the Spanish-language training being provided to a number of African military commanders to enable their participation in courses offered by our Armed Forces in Spain.

Above all, Spain supports the African Peace and Security Architecture by supporting regional African mediation initiatives that seek to further solutions to the different regional conflicts.

Experience in migration

Spain is a staunch advocate of safe, orderly and regular migration and will continue to promote comprehensive migration management based on three pillars: tackling the root causes of forced migration by strengthening development programmes, especially aimed at young people; engaging in dialogue with our African partners in order to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration; and combating the criminal networks that foster irregular migration and endanger human lives.

The Spanish approach to migration management is characterized by being constructive and permanent. Given the intrinsically multidimensional nature of migration, constant coordination is maintained between those Spanish ministries whose responsibilities include matters relating to migration, with the Foreign Ministry paying particular attention to the foreign dimension of migration through Spain's network of embassies.

The Office for Migration Affairs, within the State Secretariat for Foreign and Global Affairs, monitors data and reports on migration in international forums from a geostrategic perspective.

Cooperation and dialogue with our African partners is maintained both bilaterally and in the multilateral sphere. Together with those partners we are building and fortifying—in close collaboration with IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)—the human rights-oriented multilateral international architecture that is crucial for safe, orderly and regular migration at the national, European and global levels.

With the aim of supporting efforts by African law enforcement agencies to dismantle human trafficking and people smuggling networks referred to above, the Ministry of the

Interior has deployed a significant number of Spanish law enforcement officers to several countries of origin and transit.

Approximately 100 members of the National Police and Civil Guard are deployed at all times in Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia, countries with which Spain enjoys close operational cooperation, with highly positive results. This deployment is strengthened whenever an increase is detected in the activity of such networks.

Of particular note in the bilateral sphere is the recent launch of a number of circular migration programmes with Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia. Spain has substantial experience of managing this kind of programme with other countries, such as Morocco, obtaining encouraging results.

Action in this sphere must show particular sensitivity towards countries of transit, such as Mauritania and Morocco, which are facing major flows of migration owing to economic instability and internal conflicts. The significant pledges made by Spain and the EU to support Mauritania in addressing the migration and refugee crisis caused by the situation in Mali, are an example of this approach.

MIGRATION

African communities account for 1,158,092 Spanish residents, most of whom belong to the Moroccan community (787,317). Despite Africa's geographical proximity, the communities of citizens from Sub-Saharan countries in Spain are relatively small. According to the 2022 data collated by Spain's National Statistics Institute (Spanish acronym: INE), the collective community from Sub-Saharan Africa in Spain amounted to 261,976 people, representing just 4.73% of foreign residents.

The vast majority of the members of this community are nationals of one of seven countries: Senegal (1.5%: the twentieth largest group of foreign nationals in Spain); Nigeria (0.66%: thirty-third); Mali (0.57%: thirty-fourth); The Gambia (0.42%: thirty-seventh); Ghana (0.37%: thirty-ninth); Equatorial Guinea (0.22%: forty-eighth) and Guinea (0.20%: fifty-second).

According to a study conducted by Spain's Ministry of Equality in 2020, 47% of people of African descent in Spain were born in our country. The typical profile is that of a woman (62% of the total) with an average age of 31.9 years.

These communities represent a major asset for strengthening Spain's relations with countries of origin.

The European Commission has identified that 63% of European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) cannot find the talent they need in Europe owing to the demographic trends of our continent. Migration management is, therefore, a matter of common interest for Europeans and Africans alike, because of both to flows between Africa and Europe and to intra-African flows.

What are we currently doing?

Over the past two decades, Spain has applied a **comprehensive and balanced approach to migration, maintaining continuous dialogue with countries of origin and transit.**

This multidimensional approach—characteristic of Spain's migration management—combines capacity-building in countries of origin and transit, sustainable development policies that target the root causes of migration and that seek to maximize its positive impact on countries and communities, the creation of legal channels for labour migration, efforts regarding voluntary and forced return and readmission, and the fight against human trafficking and people smuggling networks. **The purpose of all these efforts is to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration, pursuant to the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees (both UN compacts), placing the human rights of migrants at the heart of our approach.**

In the fight against the human trafficking and people smuggling networks that endanger human lives, Spain cooperates decisively with countries of origin and transit on the basis of: (i) an awareness of a shared responsibility; (ii) mutual trust and joint and continuous operational collaboration; (iii) the provision of the technical resources needed to dismantle human trafficking and people smuggling networks; and (iv) the training of troops in African partner countries.

In this sphere, FIIAPP has considerable experience in the implementation of COP and JIT projects in Africa, whose objective is to build the capacities of public institutions for combatting human trafficking and people smuggling. Of particular significance in this area is the A-TIPSOM project in Nigeria, which focuses specifically on preventing the trafficking and smuggling of women and girls.



The Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation in 2022 during his visit to the officers of the National Police and Civil Guard deployed to Dakar, Senegal, to combat human trafficking networks.

In the current European demographic context, Spain is paying particular attention to the joint design, implementation and development with partner countries of projects for safe, orderly and regular labour migration. In addition to inter-ministerial coordination, such initiatives also require public-private cooperation and cooperation with civil society.

In this sphere, FIIAPP is carrying out the Migra-Safe project, whose purpose is to foster safe, orderly and regular migration by publicizing and promoting legal channels of migration to the EU. From a geographical perspective, it is important to support multi-country and multi-channel approaches, coordinating approaches and solutions between countries of origin, transit and destination.

In 2022 Spain chaired the ministerial conference of the Rabat Process, the Euro-African platform for dialogue on migration co-created by Spain in 2006. This conference, held in Cádiz, concluded with the approval of a Political Declaration and

Action Plan structured around the five priority domains of the Joint Valletta Action Plan adopted at the Valletta Summit on Migration between EU and African leaders in 2015.

Within the EU, the determined efforts of the recent Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU achieved the adoption of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, which is based on the principles of solidarity and co-responsibility.

The persistence of discriminatory, xenophobic and racist attitudes and behaviours calls for the strengthening of interventions at all levels, including in education, public narrative and the response from law enforcement, paying particular attention to the prevention and prosecution of hate speech crimes. Instruments such as the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE), attached to the State Secretariat for Migration, contribute to that goal with social impact campaigns and initiatives.

Commitment to defending the rights of the most vulnerable

DEMOCRACY, FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY AND DIVERSITY

What are we currently doing?

Spain supports the development of democratic institutions in Africa through capacity-building projects, contributions to UNDP to support electoral processes and through projects aimed at consolidating human rights in Africa.

Spain promotes and supports initiatives championing LGBTI people, both through our support for civil society organizations and through our participation and leadership in organizations such as the Equal Rights Coalition.

Spain's feminist foreign policy is aimed at achieving full equality between men and women and the empowerment of women and girls both in Africa and in the rest of the world.

There has been recent progress on the continent with respect to the empowerment of women (equality laws; greater equality of representation, with women holding almost a third of seats in 11 African national parliaments; closing of the gender gap in primary education). According to a 2020 report by UN-Women, the average Africa Gender Index score for 2019 was 48.6%. Nevertheless, discrimination and inequality persist at many levels.

To address this situation:

- Spanish Cooperation has gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as priorities and these issues have been included in specific programmes and mainstreamed into all of Spain's cooperation activities.
- Spain is supporting policies in different countries championing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- Spain supports the inclusion of ambitious gender equality goals as a policymaking priority in the EU and in the multilateral system.
- Spain is fostering initiatives that favour female leadership in both business and politics.
- Spain is also fostering ties between women's collectives and associations in Spain and in Africa.

Spain's embassies in our African partner countries meet regularly with women's organizations that share their experiences, challenges and milestones, with a view to guiding Spain's action in this area.

In all its high-level communications with its African partners, and through the implementation of its projects, Spain reaffirms its commitment to the political, economic and social empowerment of women and the eradication



The President of the Government delivers a speech at the conference organized by the Women for Africa Foundation in Madrid in May 2022 entitled “Women as bridge builders. Proposals from the South for global change.”

of all forms of violence, including sexual violence in armed conflicts.

At the multilateral level, Spain has worked with a number of African partners to promote the rights of women and girls, including in the Feminist Foreign Policy Plus (FFP+) Group and in the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-based Online Harassment and Abuse.

Also of great importance to Spain are the rights of people with disabilities, in particular women and girls, as well as accessibility and inclusive education.

Inclusive education is vital to overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities in Africa due to stigma and the negative perception of children with disabilities, often aggravated by factors such as gender, type of disability and degree of dependence. Such education is also essential to full recognition of the rights of children with disabilities.

Commitment to a just digital transition as part of the process of building an inclusive, equitable and sustainable society

In the twenty-first century, internet access has become an essential right, crucial to equal opportunities and progress in terms of education, livelihoods and professional skills, which are key to human development. Spain will maintain its commitment to the global digital transition, as reflected in its support for multilateral actions such as the **Giga Initiative** launched by UNICEF and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), which aims to connect every school in the world to the internet by 2030. In Sub-Saharan Africa, this initiative has worked with Rwanda, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Niger and Zimbabwe, mapping 280,000 schools and connecting 1,500 schools and 630,000 students and teachers. Spain's support includes the establishment of the Giga Technology Centre in Barcelona.

Together in the ecological transition, environmental cooperation and the fight against climate change

According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), in 2022 more than 110 million people in Africa were directly affected by weather, climate and water-related hazards causing economic damages amounting to more than 7.7 billion euros and 5,000 fatalities.

The ecological transition is therefore a key priority for the continent, as made clear at the Africa Climate Summit held in Nairobi in September 2023.

The successful completion of the ecological transition requires appropriation of sufficient funds. At COP28 in Dubai (2023), the

operationalization of the **Loss and Damage Fund**, with an initial capitalization of 715 million euros, represented a significant step forward in terms of addressing vulnerability to climate change. Spain has committed to supporting this fund with a contribution of 20 million euros. Spain is also one of the main contributors to the **Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund**, with adaptation to the impacts of climate change being a priority for African countries.

Also of note was the launch of the **Santiago Network**, conceived at COP25 in Madrid (2019) as a means of catalysing technical assistance to minimize and address loss and damage in countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Spain, to date has made a contribution of 7 million euros to this Network.

In addition, Spain has for years been supporting global efforts on adaptation to the impacts of climate change, paying particular attention to the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund, to which it has contributed more than 130 million euros since 2010.

The vulnerability of African small island developing States to the impacts of climate change must also be taken into account.

IDRA, launched by Spain and Senegal at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh (2022), is the first world coalition dedicated to mobilizing political capital and financial and technical resources for a drought-resilient future. At COP28, the number of members increased to 36 countries and 28 organizations.

5

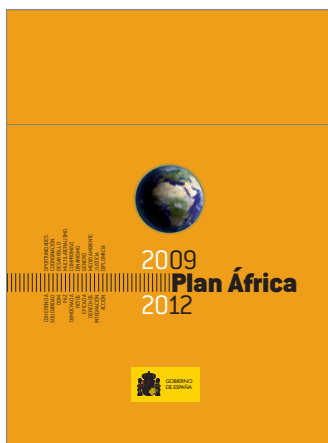
Principles: 5 goals and 100 lines of action

The analysis in this strategy of the opportunities offered by the current situation as part of a renewed relationship between Spain and Africa—in the light of current capabilities—and of the multiple challenges that exist, shows how far we have come since formulating our first Plan Africa strategies at the beginning of this century.

Understanding of the continent, awareness of points of interdependence, and the range of political, economic, cooperation and security instruments available to respond to the shared needs of Spaniards and Africans, within the broadest framework of EU-Africa relations, have grown considerably, but so too has the complexity of the challenges to be overcome. An additional consideration is the presence of third countries with interests and values that are not always compatible with our own.



African Union headquarters, Ethiopia.



On the basis of this analysis, it can be concluded that the **close partnership between Spain and Africa still has potential for development in all spheres**. This partnership has become a strategic need for our country and for a good number of our African partners.

For Spain, this strategic need stems from our country's particular geopolitical configuration, from our position as Africa's European neighbour, and from demographic, economic, socio-political and environmental considerations concerning Africa. The combined sum of these factors calls for more determined and systematic collaboration with our African partners to create shared opportunities and to be prepared for the harmful impacts of the challenges described.

For Spain, a prosperous and peaceful African neighbourhood is not just one more goal among many; rather, it must be identified as a true strategic policy priority for Spain, and be cemented as such for a long period of time.

This section of the Strategy sets out clear goals and lines of action which, being broadly shared and achievable, will get us closer to where we need to be in terms of mutual understanding, joint influence in making the decisions that most directly affect us, and

impact on the ground. Only in this way can Spain contribute to meeting the stability, prosperity, development and democracy aspirations of African societies, whose fulfilment is also in the best interests of Spain and the EU.

The expressions “strengthening”, “growing”, “connecting”, “protecting” and “living together” have been chosen to refer in very broad terms to the strategic goals of Spain's policy with respect to the governments, societies and citizens of our neighbouring continent. They constitute the “what?” of the Strategy, and encompass a set of more specific proposals and initiatives that will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of its application.

However, experience has taught us that in international relations the “how?” is as important as the “what?” and the “how much?”. As an Atlantic and Mediterranean country, and as Africa's neighbour in Europe, Spain is convinced that in the twenty-first century **its relationship with Africa must necessarily be a partnership based on continuous dialogue and on mutual respect and benefit, drawing on bilateral mechanisms and the opportunities offered by interregional (EU-AU) relations and the multilateral system**. Because they are indispensable,

these characteristics constitute principles as well as distinguishing features of Spain's collaboration with Africa, whose purpose is to facilitate relationships based on mutual trust and benefit.

1.

STRENGTHENING

Strategic goal: a Hispano-African relationship that consolidates and expands reciprocal understanding and dialogue and facilitates joint action

1.1. Increase our high-level interaction with African partners, especially with West Africa and North Africa

> Spain will propose holding high-level meetings with a larger number of African countries, selected according to the number of shared interests and opportunities. The agendas of these high-level meetings will include the political, economic, development, migration and security matters that Spain and its African counterpart jointly identify with a view to advancing the goals of the partnership and of conveying to the respective economic, social and institutional stakeholders the support for the prioritization of bilateral cooperation. Efficient mechanisms, such as sectoral working groups, will be adopted to monitor and implement the commitments adopted.

This form of working is proposed because of the usefulness of establishing a more technical structure for sectoral working groups, in which action plans are defined for each respective area. Periodic meetings will enable us to jointly complete

an entire project cycle encompassing the identification, preparation, implementation and evaluation stages.

- > The ministers with a particular involvement with Africa, in addition to the Foreign Minister, will increase the frequency of their contact in order to assure our African partners of Spain's interest in maintaining broad-reaching and balanced relations including bilateral meetings held on the side-lines of international summits.
- > Efforts will be made to ensure that Spain is duly represented at the swearing-in ceremonies of elected African leaders, which shall be attended by His Majesty The King, by the Speaker of the Congress of Deputies or of the Senate, or by ministers or state secretaries, as the case may be.
- > The political consultations already held at the level of the State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs with certain countries will be extended to include additional African partners. Matters of interest to the African continent will regularly be included in political consultations with the EU and third countries.

1.2. Strengthen dialogue and collaboration with the AU and with other regional organizations, in particular ECOWAS

> As an expression of support for regional integration processes, Spain will intensify its institutional-level political dialogue with the AU and ECOWAS, and will hold periodic consultations with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), SADC and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Spain will consult with the African

Union Commission and with the ECOWAS Commission regarding the possibility of holding biennial high-level meetings to promote the lines of work defined in existing bilateral mechanisms (the 2022 Memorandum of Understanding on Political Dialogue and Sectoral Collaboration with the AU; the 2009 Abuja Declaration and the 2023 Memorandum of Understanding on Political Consultations with ECOWAS) or soon to be approved (renewed programme of Spain-ECOWAS cooperation), and to extend them into other areas of mutual interest.

- > The Member States of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (Portuguese acronym: CPLP), of which Spain has been an Associated Observer State since the Luanda Summit of 2021, share special historical and cultural ties with our country. Spain will continue to pay special attention to these countries, with which we will work to identify projects on which to collaborate.
- > Encouraged by the good results obtained, Spain will maintain its collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD through AECID and will present a new cooperation programme for the coming years, focused on creating opportunities for women and young people.
- > Spain will continue to promote the 5+5 Dialogue meetings, in order to strengthen and increase the cooperation opportunities it offers.
- > Spain will foster the exchange of officials for short stays and will continue training programmes with ECOWAS.

1.3. A bigger, more dynamic role for Spain in EU-African relations

- > Due to its geopolitical position and its close ties with the African continent, Spain aims to play a greater role in strengthening EU relations with Africa. To this end, Spain will seek to ensure that the priority attributed by the EU to the relationship with the African continent results in the effective implementation of the commitments adopted in 2022 at the Sixth EU-AU Summit and is reflected in the agendas of the EU institutions and in particular of the Council of the EU, as during the recent Spanish Presidency (second half of 2023).
- > Spain will take into account and highlight the interests of the continent in debates and decision-making processes in the EU on policies affecting Africa (new rules for investment promotion and protection agreements, revision of SFPAs).
- > We will work with our African partners to improve the identification and implementation of projects that are eligible for EU funding through different mechanisms, such as the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), International Partnerships, the Global Gateway and Team Europe initiatives (TEIs).
- > On the basis of the shared strategic goals and positions reflected in the EU-AU declaration “A Joint Vision for 2030”, Spain will contribute to closer dialogue and coordination between the EU and Africa in multilateral forums.
- > The situation in Africa, and especially in North Africa, the Sahel and West Africa, will feature in the regular communications between Spain and the President of the European Commission and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs

and Security Policy, thus ensuring that Spanish interests and perspectives are decisive in EU policy-making concerning Africa. To this end, internal and inter-ministerial coordination will be improved.

- > Spain will make greater use of individual and joint position documents on African affairs for Council meetings of all configurations. In addition, efforts will be made to increase the presence of Spanish civil servants in the units that design and implement policies on Africa, both in Brussels and in EU Delegations on the ground. The relationships of our embassies with EU Delegations on the ground will also be strengthened.
- > Spain will work to foster triangular relationships between Africa, Ibero-America and Europe in the economic, cultural and development spheres, focusing on our common interests as continents bordering the Atlantic Ocean, as well as triangular Euro-Arab-African cooperation, open to any countries interested, and carried out in close association with partners such as Morocco and Egypt.
- > Efforts will be made to increase collaboration on the ground with third-country embassies and between the latter and EU Delegations and accredited Member States. The Foreign Ministry will undertake specific monitoring of this matter, as well as of the “country-team” mechanism established, at Director-General level. Initiatives of this kind have already been carried out with Mauritania, and could be extended to other countries of the Maghreb and West Africa.

1.4. Strengthen our inter-ministerial and inter-territorial coordination of policies with Africa

- > To favour inter-ministerial coordination, the Foreign Ministry will seek to create an inter-ministerial committee for Africa, which will hold biannual meetings at ministerial level, chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, and quarterly meetings at the State Secretary level, chaired by the State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs. This committee will monitor the implementation of this Strategy and update it as necessary.
- > The Foreign Ministry will propose a schedule of ministerial trips and visits to African countries and organizations, to be made at least on a quarterly basis, to maintain a sustained and balanced dialogue with our African partners, in particular with the countries of North Africa and West Africa. In preparing for these trips, the Foreign Ministry will continue to compile the assessments, priorities and expectations of companies, cooperation stakeholders and civil society organizations with interests in the country in question..

1.5. Greater guidance and training on the complexity of African affairs

- > The Foreign Ministry will establish an Africa advisory committee, comprising eminent African public figures from key professions, and ensuring that all the cultural, geographical and language areas of particular interest for Spain are duly represented. At its annual meetings, the Africa advisory committee will convey expectations and demands, and will be up-

dated, in turn, on the policies implemented by Spain with its African partners.

- > The role of the Africa Round Table will be strengthened as a forum specifically dedicated to dialogue between Spain's Central Administration and non-government organizations, the business sector and the scientific and academic spheres. This forum will be invited to collaborate more closely on the development of specific initiatives and proposals, in particular those involving civil society stakeholders.
- > Work with the African diaspora(s) in Spain will be intensified, integrating their criteria into the process of defining our foreign policy, maximizing the impetus from the meeting of the African diaspora(s) and African civil society, *Building bridges between Africa and Spain*, held in May 2024, which was the starting point for formal dialogue and collaboration between the community, experts and the Administration. Connections between this and other similar initiatives will be promoted in the European and Latin American spheres.
- > The Diplomatic School of Spain will appoint a specific official to oversee its cooperation with Africa and will programme training activities on African affairs for staff of the Foreign Ministry seconded to Africa, open to staff from other ministries. This training will focus on the priorities set out in this Strategy, both in its bilateral aspect and its European and multi-lateral aspects. Within its sphere of action, the Diplomatic School of Spain will maintain communications with its African counterparts regarding the possibility of carrying out programmes of collaboration of mutual interest.
- > The different Spanish public administrations, at national, regional and local levels, in collaboration with academic and

research institutions and the private sector will undertake diverse efforts to increase knowledge about Africa. As part of this, all the activities carried out by said administrations in relation to African affairs will be mapped.

1.6. Enhance our diplomatic capabilities in Spain

- > In line with this Strategy's prioritization of West Africa, a Deputy Directorate-General for West Africa and the Sahel will be created within the Directorate-General for Africa. The unit will be responsible for promoting bilateral relations with the countries of the subregion and with ECOWAS and other regional bodies, and will contribute to the design of proposals and initiatives tailored to the specific circumstances of this subregion.
- > Synergies and mutual support between Casa África, Casa Árabe and Casa Mediterráneo will be encouraged.
- > Focal points for African affairs will be appointed at certain Spanish embassies in non-African countries.

1.7. Increase our presence on the ground

- > Spain will strengthen its institutional deployment in Africa by opening new embassies and creating new subsidiary diplomatic offices and sectoral offices, including Spanish Cooperation offices. In addition, the Embassy in Nigeria will be furnished with new offices and the Embassy in Libya will be reopened.
- > Efforts will also be made to strengthen the Spanish Cooperation offices for West Africa and the Sahel so that they can assume a

regional role, expanding its work to countries such as Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of strengthening the Spanish Cooperation office in Nigeria (to increase bilateral work with Nigeria, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, in particular in the sphere of financial cooperation), as well as the offices in Ethiopia..

- > In accordance with the prioritization of West Africa and the Sahel provided for in the GSSDC Act, Spanish Cooperation will define a new Strategy for Africa. Additionally, efforts will be made to strengthen Spanish Cooperation instruments on the continent. These efforts will focus on financial cooperation (with operations in more African countries, prioritizing West Africa) and on humanitarian action (which Spain must continue to expand, to cover the entire fragile strip extending from the Horn of Africa to the Atlantic Coast).
- > Participation of all stakeholders: Given the geographical proximity of Spain to Africa, and the ever-growing population of African nationals in Spain, the consolidation of Hispano-African relations must include key stakeholders that are most closely linked to the continent, as well as figures from the world of business, academia, sports, and civil society.

2. GROWING

Strategic goal: sustainable development in Africa favoured by the involvement of Spanish institutions, companies and organizations

2.1. More training to help African youth find decent work

- > Spain will establish dialogues, partnerships and support for African youth to contribute to the development of our partner countries and as a distinguishing feature of this new Strategy, favouring formal employment and decent work.
- > In addition, a foundation will be established to foster relations with Africa and to create academic and employment opportunities for young people through study grant and visitor programmes.
- > Spain, in consultation with its African partners, will foster the creation of new Spanish schools and bilingual departments, support vocational training centres, foreign action educational resource centres, AECID workshop schools and the ACERCA capacity-building and training programme in the cultural sector, to help address the misalignment between the training and skills of the labour force—in particular those of young people—and the training and skills needed for production transformation and the ongoing ecological and digital transitions.
- > Spain will increase its support for programmes teaching skills related to entrepreneurship and the optimal use of new technologies, and promotion of the social economy, consulting with business organizations and trade unions in Spain and in African countries on the design of these programmes.
- > On the basis of the experience with study grant programmes for African students, such as the Africa-MED and ASALE programmes (organized by AECID), the Canary Islands-Africa programme (regional administration of the Canary Islands), the Learn Africa programme (Women for Africa Foundation), and the EU Erasmus+

programme, all of which offer training opportunities in Spain to young African professionals and researchers, allocations for study grant programmes and assistantships will be increased to amounts closer to those of countries such as Germany, France, Japan and China.

- > Spain will consider repeating the Raisa visitors' programme for African women leaders, in particular in those areas identified as priorities in this Strategy and in the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063, paying particular attention to the ecological, digital and social transitions.
- > Spain will continue to collaborate actively to provide training to labour administrations and to promote decent work and occupational health and safety, as well as in the sphere of the social and solidarity economy, agreeing bilateral and multilateral instruments, contributing to pertinent international bodies, and involving experts from the Central Administration and civil society in cooperation programmes.

2.2. Increase our contribution to Global Gateway projects in Africa

- > The different ministries with responsibilities in this area will promote the mobilization of the various instruments supporting sustainable investment (including Spanish financial cooperation) to foster their deployment in Africa. Moreover, Spain will encourage the participation of Spanish investors and guide Spanish companies towards those Global Gateway projects that are of special interest for Spain in all stages of their definition and implementation, in particular those focused on renewable energy and the ecological transition, water and sanitation, public works, agro-industry, air and

rail transport, engineering and consultancy, telecommunications and digitalization.

- > Spain's embassies in Africa and their sectoral offices, including Spanish Cooperation offices and economic and trade offices, will pay particular attention to monitoring the implementation of Global Gateway projects and, in general, of the EU-AU declaration "A Joint Vision for 2030" in their countries of accreditation, collaborating closely with EU Delegations and maintaining their central services duly informed.
- > The Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU will be strengthened with staff from the working groups on African affairs, development and the Global Gateway strategy. In addition, seminars will be held by sector and by country in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Enterprise, the Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge and the Ministry of Transport and Sustainable Mobility, the Spanish Chamber of Commerce, the Spanish Confederation of Business Organizations (Spanish acronym: CEOE), the Spanish Exporters and Investors Club, the Spanish Export Credit Agency (Spanish acronym: CESCE) and COFIDES (a state-owned enterprise specialized in the management of State funds that provides medium and long-term financing for private investments linked to different public policy purposes), among others.

2.3. Strengthen financial support for Spanish investment in Africa

- > The recently created "Alianza África Avanza" will channel the support of all stakeholders, financial instruments and initiatives in the region to optimize their use and ensure that their impact on the continent is as beneficial as possible. The

aim of this alliance is to establish a stable and flexible common strategic framework that maximizes the impact of investments on economic development and social progress, especially in West Africa, in sectors with particular capacity for generating job opportunities, such as telecommunications, finance, agricultural transformation, tourism and infrastructure.

- > New financial packages will be coordinated, modelled on the support package for investment in the ecological transition in South Africa, aimed both at specific countries and at regions and paying particular attention to the needs of West African and North African countries.
- > The coordination and coherence of the financial instruments managed by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Enterprise will be strengthened with Spanish Cooperation instruments such as the new Spanish Sustainable Development Fund (Spanish acronym: FEDES), and Spain's previous Development Fund (Spanish acronym: FONPRODE), maintaining the purpose and nature of each instrument, and risk coverage for Spanish companies wishing to carry out business operations in Africa will be expanded through CESCE.
- > Collaboration on projects with the private sector will be pursued, in the form of public-private partnerships, placing particular emphasis on capacity-building and the training of local senior management staff, and new co-financing initiatives with international financial institutions will be actively promoted.
- > Lines of financing will be extended to companies, making resources available to Spanish companies to facilitate investment through grants and loans, such as the new Spain-Morocco Financial Protocol or the Corporate Internationalization

Fund (Spanish acronym: FIEM) line of credit announced for Mauritania in February 2024.

2.4. Improve information and legal frameworks to facilitate investment

- > Spain will devote more effort to facilitating mutual understanding between Spanish and African entrepreneurs, promoting initiatives such as business forums and trade missions.
- > Given that insufficient knowledge of our respective economies discourages investment and trade, Spain will redouble its efforts, through business organizations and chambers of commerce, to ensure that Spanish and African economic operators have complete, up-to-date and reliable information on aspects affecting their businesses, including current legal frameworks. In addition, an Ibero-African association of chambers of commerce (AFRICO) will be created.
- > Spanish companies will be fully informed about existing support tools for investment, such as the Platform on Investment and Productive Transformation in Africa developed jointly by the OECD (of which Spain is a member) and the African Union.
- > Furthermore, Spain will continue to promote regulatory harmonization and the adoption of rules, agreements and standards that facilitate trade with Africa and investment in the continent. In this regard, work will be undertaken to conclude new agreements on the reciprocal promotion and protection of investments and to prevent double taxation.



The Maguga Dam in Swaziland.

> Spain will actively support OECD collaboration programmes with the aim of incorporating African countries as Organisation members when they meet the conditions for accession. Spain will also support the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Programme.

2.5. Greater Spanish involvement in new financing for development and debt relief for Africa

> Spain will work closely with its African partners to ensure that the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Spain in 2025, results in more substantial, more predictable and more sustainable development finance for Africa. Spain will also seek progress as regards the efficiency of the assistance provided, the mobilization of domestic resources, international tax cooperation and the fight against corruption and trafficking.

> In addition, Spain will join the high-level working group on the global financial architecture created within the framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to make this architecture more effective and better suited to

the development needs of African countries.

> Appropriate proposals for debt relief, restructuring and conversion will be supported, both bilaterally and within the framework of multilateral forums.

> Spain raised its pledge to channel up to 50% of its 2021 SDR allocation and will encourage other countries to commit to increasing their allocations as well, in addition to favouring their innovative use to fund sustainable development.

> To strengthen borrowers' resilience and facilitate debt restructuring, Spain will promote the inclusion of collective action clauses in loan agreements and bonds. Creditors will also be encouraged to include contingency clauses in loan agreements, which will allow for the temporary suspension of payments when faced with events that have a critical impact on the balance of payments and on the borrower's repayment capacity. Spain will encourage the application of these clauses in its new repayable sovereign-guaranteed financing agreements for low- and low-middle-income countries.

> Spain advocates improving implementation of the G20 Common Framework for debt treatments beyond the Debt Service

Suspension Initiative in order to streamline debt restructuring processes and to extend its scope to middle-income countries not currently included in the initiative.

- > Spain will promote reform of multilateral development banks so that they can guarantee that concessional financing is primarily extended to the poorest countries and for the provision of global public goods such as the fight against climate change or pandemics. Spain will also foster the channelling of SDRs through multilateral development banks.
- > Tax reforms will be promoted (enabling tax systems to make more financial resources available) to make systems more progressive, transparent and effective, supported by appropriate technical training and advances in international tax cooperation. To this end, Spain participated actively in the definition of terms of reference for a UN framework convention on international taxation and will continue to foster negotiations for its preparation.
- > As an essential complement to concessional financing, Spain will foster private financing, together with the necessary regulation to ensure it is in line with the SDGs and that it produces significant development impacts. Ownership at the national level will also be promoted.

2.6. Increase Spain's contribution to the development of transport, energy, water and digital infrastructure. Electrification

- > To help reduce the logistics and transport costs that hinder the effective economic integration of the African continent, as envisaged by the States Parties to the

African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement, Spain will encourage its companies and institutions to participate in strategic projects that promote connectivity and digitalization within Africa.

- > Spain will also focus investments on increasing connectivity between Africa and Spain, whether bilaterally, through the Global Gateway or in collaboration with other partners, by means of initiatives for green hydrogen and strategic corridors. The possibility of establishing more direct flights between Spain and Africa will also be studied, in particular with countries of West Africa and with airports that are regional hubs.
- > Spain will encourage its energy companies to rise to the challenge of electrifying the continent, with a focus on renewable energy and with special interest in self-supply systems and improving access to energy in remote areas, in order to overcome the severe deficit in the latter respect, which hinders economic transformation and limits the well-being of the population.
- > Spain will promote economic development, and internationalization and competitiveness of innovative companies by fostering thematic networks and strategic R&D&I projects, with special attention to priority areas of action such as renewable energy, microgrids, storage, the environment and water treatment and purification. Support will be given to Spanish participation in public-private partnerships for the design and implementation of transport networks in Africa, particularly those involving conventional and high-speed railway infrastructure, in line with the Agenda 2063 flagship project for the creation of an African Integrated High Speed Railway Network.

- > Support will also be provided for the development of air and port navigation facilities and satellite surveillance services.
- > Spain will continue to promote the human right to access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the effective exercise of which is an indispensable condition for the enjoyment of other rights such as the rights to health, education and food. Spanish Cooperation will undertake a new line of work focused on water resources, within the framework of the new Masar Al'an strategy for the Arab world.

2.7. Greater Spanish involvement in the development of the tourism sector in Africa

- > As a world leader in the tourism sector, Spain will invite its African partners to sign memorandums of understanding to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, experience and good practices, to provide technical assistance and the exchange of experts in the field.
- > Spain will seek to ensure that the needs of the African tourism sector are given greater consideration in the agenda of the World Tourism Organization, based in Spain.
- > The activities of Spanish companies in the African tourism sector will be fostered through incentives and support programmes, as will those of African companies in the Spanish tourism sector. In this regard, Spain will make an institutional effort to strengthen and increase the Spanish presence at major tourism fairs and events.
- > Spanish Cooperation will support sustainable cultural routes, in collaboration with UNESCO and other organizations.

3. CONNECTING

Strategic goal: closer ties between the societies and economies of Africa, Spain and the world

3.1. Migration that is safer, and more orderly, regular and mutually beneficial

- > Spain will continue to promote comprehensive migration management, through three fundamental approaches: addressing the root causes of irregular migration by strengthening development programmes, especially those aimed at young people; fostering safe, orderly and regular migration; and combating human trafficking and people smuggling.
- > Spain will lead efforts to strengthen partnerships between countries of origin, transit and destination, especially within the framework of initiatives such as the Rabat Process and in line with the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference held in Cádiz in December 2022.
- > Dialogues and cooperation agreements on migration will be strengthened and expanded with a comprehensive, integrated approach, especially with our partners in West Africa and the Maghreb. Collaboration will be strengthened in the area of training for safer and more orderly migration management and in the fight against people smuggling networks.
- > The geographic scope of circular migration programmes will continue to be expanded, with the inclusion of The Gambia and Mauritania, among other countries, while existing programmes with coun-

tries such as Morocco and Senegal will be expanded. Moreover, Talent Partnerships will be fostered and voluntary return programmes will be improved.

- > Spain will work to improve its consular services in Africa, to provide better assistance to Spanish citizens and better service to Africans and others in visa procedures.
- > In collaboration with countries of origin and transit, the fight against irregular immigration and people smuggling will be continued, prioritizing preventive strategies.

3.2. Create more instruments to promote contact and mutual understanding

- > Exchanges of knowledge and increased collaboration between Spanish and African scholars and scientists will be facilitated through agreements between the relevant public bodies, including universities and other educational and research centres. Collaboration at the doctoral level will be further encouraged.
- > Work will be done to establish new Council Foundations for Spain's major African partners, modelled on those for other countries.
- > The public diplomacy capacities of institutions such as Casa África, Casa Árabe and Casa Mediterráneo will be strengthened, with greater coordination of the Casas. Furthermore, more initiatives will be undertaken, building on the Africa Visitors Programme and the ECOWAS Training Programme, to contribute to better mutual understanding and appreciation.



Meeting of African-Spanish Hispanists at Casa África in 2019.

- > Spain will promote the creation of new links between Spanish and African business schools and think tanks, in order to bolster, respectively, joint strategic analyses and networks of African entrepreneurs and managers with a special connection to our country.
- > Spain will continue to develop cooperation and twinning agreements between Spain's Autonomous Communities and local authorities and their counterparts in African countries, paying special attention to the needs of cities in the present context of rapid urbanization within the continent.
- > We will continue to promote scientific cooperation on fishing, in areas such as creating programmes to place scientific observers on board vessels, fostering collaboration between scientific institutes in Spain and the respective third countries and actively participating in the Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF). Greater cooperation could also be achieved via delegated cooperation projects, which might also finance oceanographic campaigns.

3.3. A strong stance against racism and xenophobia

- > Aware that racism and xenophobia are scourges that continue to threaten peaceful coexistence, Spain will strengthen measures to combat prejudice in the educational field and in public discourse. Incitement to hatred on the basis of race or nationality will be firmly pursued, using and refining the instruments available under Spanish law.
- > To combat hate speech and to develop counter-narrative strategies, OBERAXE will continue to analyse hate speech.
- > Spain will step up implementation of its Strategic Framework for Civic Responsibility and Inclusion, against Racism and Xenophobia (2023–2027), seeking to achieve a cohesive, inclusive and diverse society and will continue to implement awareness-raising programmes, together with training in the educational environment, in areas such as analysis of hate speech and the resources available to the public to combat it.
- > Dialogue will be promoted with migrants—from North Africa, from Sub-Saharan Africa, those of African descent and those from elsewhere—and discussions will be held within appropriate forums on how to combat racism and xenophobia.
- > Spain will promote training and awareness-raising projects on the structural causes of racism, as it does in Latin America with the Afro-descendants Programme, run by AECID in collaboration with the Ministry of Equality.

3.4. Increase reliable, verified information to combat disinformation

- > Spain will reinforce its strategic communications to better convey its commitment to Africa and to reach public opinion in the continent, making greater use of digital diplomacy, in line with young Africans' preference for social networks as their main source of information.
- > Frequent, productive contacts among journalists, analysts and experts from both sides will continue to be promoted, exploring ways to improve the channels through which information circulates. A greater presence in Africa of Spanish media, both public (RTVE, Agencia EFE) and private, will also be encouraged.
- > In collaboration with our Embassies, further initiatives will be undertaken to support African countries in addressing the challenges of disinformation and information manipulation.

3.5. Increase opportunities to learn and use the Spanish language in Africa

- > Spain will maintain its strategic commitment to the dissemination of our language in Africa, in all its dimensions: diplomatic, economic, cultural, scientific and educational. The presence of the Instituto Cervantes will be expanded, with more assistantships organized by the Foreign Ministry and AECID at African universities. The ASALE study grant programme will be provided with more resources, and the possibilities offered by distance learning using digital tools will be fully exploited. The Spanish language will also be promoted in collaboration with the institutions from

Latin American countries that are present in Africa.

- > Training for African students will be promoted through the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language, as a resource for personal and professional development.
- > Capacity-building will be promoted for teachers of Spanish as a foreign language in African education systems. The Academic Missions, organized jointly by AECID and Instituto Cervantes within the ACER-CA programme to train teachers of Spanish as a foreign language, will be extended to visit more countries within Africa.
- > Further support will be given to establish assistantships and to provide other forms of support to teachers and departments that teach Spanish in secondary schools and universities, with a specific focus on countries in West Africa and North Africa.
- > Spain will continue to support the use of Spanish in the AU and in subregional organizations such as ECOWAS by strengthening and expanding existing agreements. This support will be extended, firstly, to ECCAS, which has Spanish as one of its official languages.

3.6. Strengthen our cooperation through culture and sport to drive development and inclusion

- > Spain will strengthen its cultural diplomacy programmes and activities in Africa, providing them with greater flexibility and expanding their technical and financial resources. Contacts and collaborations between Spanish and African cultural stakeholders will be promoted and creative industries in Africa will be supported, with particular emphasis, again, on creating opportunities for young people. The experience

gained from successful programmes will be shared with other countries and cultural agents.

- > Within UNESCO, Spain will work with its African partners to broaden the recognition of cultural and natural properties and sites in Africa that form part of the heritage of humanity.
- > Efforts to promote Spanish culture will be intensified through the network of embassies and cultural centres. Initiatives and campaigns will be developed to highlight Spain's past, thereby improving mutual appreciation of significant historical figures of Spanish origin and supporting the work of African Hispanists. Activities such as the Hola Bamako festival will also continue to be fostered.
- > Mindful of the great contribution of sport to social inclusion, Spain will extend its collaboration in sports matters with Africa, supporting cooperation and training initiatives undertaken by Spanish associations and clubs with their African counterparts.

4. PROTECTING

Strategic goal: cooperate to strengthen capacities in justice and security

4.1 Increase our support for African States' and organizations' peacekeeping and security responsibilities

- > Spain will respond to its regional partners' requests for cooperation in security and defence through capacity-building, provision of equipment and intelligence

cooperation and through bilateral instruments such as cooperative security operations. It will also avail of the possibilities offered by the renewed common security and defence policy of the EU, with tools such as the European Peace Facility, EU-AU cooperation, the Security and Defence Initiative in support of West African countries of the Gulf of Guinea and the EU's civil and military missions in Africa. In addition, it will use security-enhancing instruments such as the 5+5 Defence Initiative, which encourage cooperation based on trust amongst equals.

- > Spain's security cooperation with Africa will be increasingly meshed within the African Peace and Security Architecture, in line with our belief that it is the governments and organizations of the continent that must determine their priorities, setting objectives and drawing up appropriate peace and security strategies, thus ensuring full ownership by the beneficiary societies of multilateral efforts in this field. Spain will support a new generation of peacekeeping missions, more sustainable and effective, led by the African Union and other organizations on the continent and co-funded by the international community, including contributions to the United Nations regular budget.
- > With respect to maritime security, Spain remains firmly committed to the Yaoundé Architecture for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, through programmes such as the EU Coordinated Maritime Presences. With our African and European partners, efforts to combat piracy will be continued with missions such as ATALANTA, deployed off the coast of Somalia, to which from the outset Spain's navy has made a significant contribution, achieving very positive results.

> Spain's collaboration with African partners, especially those in West Africa and the Maghreb, will also be strengthened through the navy's periodic African Deployments, with respect to maritime surveillance and rescue, the prevention and combating of pollution, supporting the creation of green shipping corridors to raise environmental standards, and advancing towards decarbonization of maritime transport.

> In West Africa, Spain will support subregional security training initiatives such as the International Academy for the Fight Against Terrorism in Jacqueville (Côte d'Ivoire), the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra (Ghana) and the G5 Sahel Defence College of Nouakchott (Mauritania).

> Within the NATO framework, Spain will promote the follow-up to the conclusions of the Madrid Summit of June 2022 and will support the deepening and intensification of dialogue and cooperation with the Southern Neighbourhood, with instruments already available to Spain and its allies. One such resource is the Defence and Related Security Capacity Building (DCB) Initiative, which provides training and advice on strengthening national security architectures to Mediterranean Dialogue countries. Spain will also promote the consistent application of the Alliance's action plan for the Southern Neighbourhood and will provide support to the Secretary General's new Special Representative for the Southern Neighbourhood.

> Spain will intensify its bilateral defence cooperation relations through programmes to build and strengthen military capabilities, and by extending its network of defence attachés and advisors in strategic countries and areas of Africa.

4.2 Greater Spanish involvement in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa

- > Spain will continue to advocate the use of diplomatic tools for conflict prevention and resolution, such as good offices or mediation, and will put its experience and infrastructure in this area, such as the Toledo International Center for Peace, at the disposal of its African partners. Spain will study the creation of new instruments to support the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa, without prejudice to its contribution to initiatives undertaken by regional and global multilateral organizations, especially the United Nations.
- > Spain will also continue to promote the women, peace and security agenda through programmes and collaborations with its partners in all spheres—local, regional (such as ECOWAS) and international, and also with civil society—and will work to limit the harmful effects of armed conflicts on the most vulnerable populations.
- > Spain will support gender mainstreaming in peace processes, and women’s participation in those processes. Specifically, in collaboration with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Spain will promote political dialogue to ensure that those responsible for conflict-related sexual violence are held accountable.
- > In a comprehensive outlook on security, we must recognize the fragility of post-conflict areas. In this respect, Spain will support reconstruction projects in areas affected by conflict, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiatives, to underpin stability and prevent relapses into violence.

- > Partnerships with major humanitarian agencies, UNDP and other international organizations will be supported to strengthen the peace dimension in the triple nexus approach and to promote the building of peaceful societies.
- > One of the most serious violations of human rights against children in Africa is that of forced conscription by the parties to conflicts in the continent. Spain has made an extraordinary contribution to the Trust Fund for Victims at the International Criminal Court, so that all the former child soldiers conscripted and enlisted by the Congolese military officer Thomas Lubanga can receive the necessary reparations and reintegrate into their societies. We will continue to work to ensure these reparations are made and that the former child soldiers are demobilized and fully reintegrated.

4.3 Strengthen our collaboration against terrorism, radicalization, organized crime and trafficking

- > Spain will continue to support African States in combating terrorism and other serious crimes, not only instances and their effects, but also their root causes, such as the despair, often caused by a lack of economic and life opportunities, by educational deficiencies and incomplete or manipulated information.
- > Spain will endeavour to play a more prominent role in managing security-related aspects of delegated cooperation projects, as is already the case with initiatives such as CT Public Spaces and other security and justice projects under way on the continent. Spain will thus continue to provide its African neighbours with knowledge and know-how resulting from its experience in counter-terrorism and other areas such



as maritime security and combating organized crime, disinformation and hybrid threats. Furthermore, the Spanish Armed Forces will carry out bilateral cooperative security operations with African countries to build their capacities and improve procedures, enabling them to successfully address threats in the above-mentioned spheres.

4.4 Increase the Spanish contribution to building African resilience against climate and environmental threats

- > Spain will work to raise awareness to prevent and combat environmental crimes, sharing information and cooperating with our African partners in this area. A network to combat environmental crimes in Africa will be promoted, modelled on the one with countries in Latin America (the Jaguar Network).
- > In addition, a partnership for climate resilience will be established with African countries,

developing a network of observatories and early warning mechanisms and improving response capacities. IDRA will be strengthened in Africa. This initiative is co-headed by Spain and Senegal, and supported by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and from contributions to multilateral organizations that play a prominent role in Africa in addressing climate change.

4.5 Strengthen Spanish Cooperation to defend sustainable development and address the structural causes of insecurity

- > Spain is committed to a comprehensive, positive concept of security, addressing not only people's physical integrity but also their protection in situations of vulnerability, the guarantee of essential rights and the provision of basic services such as nutrition, education and health. Therefore, we will continue to work with Africa to

address the structural causes of insecurity, with a comprehensive approach that pursues inclusive and balanced economic development, fair distribution of wealth and environmental sustainability.

- > In accordance with the mandate originating from the GSSDC Act, the Spanish Cooperation Master Plan (2024-2027) pays special attention to West Africa, the Sahel and North Africa.

5.

LIVING TOGETHER

Strategic goal: open African societies with strong, inclusive institutions

5.1 Greater Spanish contribution to democratic consolidation, the rule of law and human rights in Africa

- > Encouraged by the broad social support for democracy in Africa, Spain will promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences in the field of institutional reform and strengthening, to favour the development of participatory democratic systems.
- > Spanish Cooperation will provide support to strengthen democratic governance and decentralization processes, with initiatives such as the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, the PASCAL Project, and projects to support accountability, the rule of law and the fight against corruption, such as the Accountability, Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Programme (ARAP) in Ghana. The regional cooperation strategy for the Arab World (Masar Al'an/ Masar Ahora) presented in May 2024 will be implemented.

- > Spain will maintain the mechanisms to support and strengthen civil society organizations in Africa, their effective participation in processes of change and development and their links with Spanish counterparts. Particular support will be given to initiatives to promote women's full, equal, meaningful and safe participation in politics, as well as that of historically marginalized groups.

- > In coordination with our European partners, based on transparency, commitment and dialogue, and in partnership with African civil society, and seeking greater collaboration with the African countries that are most advanced in these matters, Spain will support initiatives in favour of diversity and against all forms of discrimination, especially on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

- > In the conviction that human rights are part of humanity's common heritage, and that Europeans and Africans have endeavoured to achieve recognition of and respect for human rights, Spain will remain firmly committed to defending and promoting fundamental rights and freedoms, and will work bilaterally and through multilateral mechanisms to remove the obstacles to their full enjoyment, paying particular attention to the rights of the most vulnerable people.

- > Although some progress has been made, the death penalty remains legal in almost two-thirds of the continent, although there are only a few countries in which it is actually practiced. Spain will continue to lead international efforts to achieve abolition of the death penalty across Africa, doing so both through bilateral channels, and through support for the International Commission against the Death Penalty (ICDP).

5.2 Strengthen Spanish support in the fight for equality of African women

- > Through dialogue with our African partners and in alliance with African women, Spain will continue to develop and implement its feminist foreign policy, guided by the objective of achieving full equality between men and women and the empowerment of women and girls, both in Africa and in the rest of the world. To this end, links will be strengthened between women's groups and associations in Spain and Africa.
 - > Spain will work with its African partners on initiatives to promote and protect the rights of women and girls, including their political participation at the highest level, within the multilateral context.
 - > Spain will reaffirm its commitment to the political, economic and social empowerment of women and the eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls, especially sexual and gender-based violence, including that facilitated by technology, whether online or offline, and will strengthen cooperation programmes in these areas with African organizations such as AUDA-NEPAD and international ones such as UNFPA and UN-Women.
 - > Spain will also strengthen programmes and projects related to the sexual and reproductive rights of African women and girls, facilitating their access to sexual and reproductive health services. To achieve these objectives it will collaborate with relevant local, regional and international organizations, such as UN-Women and UNFPA, in addition to civil society, feminist and grassroots organizations working in this area.
- > Specific actions will be pursued to support international and African civil society organizations working to combat female genital mutilation, early forced and child marriage, and other practices that violate the human rights of women and girls. Thematic AECID initiatives for women leaders such as the Ellas+ and Raisa programmes will be strengthened.
 - > Spain will contribute to enhancing African public systems via the exchange of public talent between institutions, seeking to build equal, inclusive societies, in collaboration with FIIAPP and the Ministry of Equality.

6

Monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of this Strategy will be monitored through the relevant coordination mechanisms, especially the inter-ministerial committee for Africa, in order to assure the alignment of the measures adopted. The committee will meet twice yearly at ministerial level, chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation. It will also meet quarterly at the state secretary level, chaired by the State Secretary for Foreign and Global Affairs.

Each year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will request information from the Spanish Embassies in African countries on progress on the lines of action set out in this Strategy, primarily through the Directorate-General for Africa and, in the countries in its remit, the Directorate-General for the Maghreb, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. In the area of Spain's contribution to the EU's Africa policy, this information will be

provided by the Permanent Representation of Spain to the European Union.

A three-yearly evaluation report will be requested from the Public Policy Evaluation Institute, in keeping with past strategic planning exercises.

7

**Appendix.
Summary of 5 objectives and
100 lines of action**



OBJECTIVE 1

Strengthening

1.1 Increase our high-level interaction with African partners, especially with West Africa and North Africa

- 1 Hold more high-level meetings with African countries
- 2 Arrange more frequent meetings between Spanish and African authorities
- 3 Ensure a high-level presence at the inaugurations of African leaders
- 4 Increase the number of countries with which political consultations are held

1.2 Strengthen dialogue and collaboration with the AU and with other regional organizations, in particular with ECOWAS

- 5 Maintain regular political dialogue with the AU and ECOWAS Commissions
- 6 Collaborate with AUDA-NEPAD
- 7 Organize the exchange of officials for short stays

1.3 A bigger, more dynamic role for Spain in EU-African relations

- 8 Foster implementation of EU-AU commitments and seek EU-Africa coordination in multilateral forums
- 9 Work with African partners to improve the identification and implementation of projects that are eligible for EU funding through mechanisms such as NDICI, International Partnerships, Global Gateway and TEIs
- 10 Increase the proportion of African content in dialogue between Spain, the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security
- 11 Incorporate Spanish position documents on Africa and Spanish representatives in European External Action Service (EEAS) and EU Delegations
- 12 Foster Europe-Africa-Ibero America and Europe-Africa-Arab World triangulation

1.4 Strengthen our inter-ministerial and inter-territorial coordination of policies with Africa

- 13 Establish an inter-ministerial committee for Africa
- 14 Schedule ministerial trips and visits, as proposed by the Foreign Ministry

1.5 Greater guidance and training on the complexity of African affairs

- 15 Create a new Africa advisory committee at the Foreign Ministry

- 16** Strengthen the role of the Africa Round Table
- 17** Expand work with African diasporas
- 18** Provide specific training on Africa at the Diplomatic School and engage in dialogue with counterparts

1.6 Enhance our diplomatic capabilities in Spain

- 19** Create a new Deputy Directorate-General for West Africa and the Sahel within the Directorate-General for Africa
- 20** Appoint focal points for African affairs at certain Spanish embassies in non-African countries

1.7 Stronger presence on the ground

- 21** Open new embassies and establish new subsidiary diplomatic offices and sectoral offices, including Spanish Cooperation offices. Open new offices for the Spanish Embassy in Nigeria and reopen the Spanish Embassy in Libya.
- 22** Maintain a greater presence of Spanish Cooperation in the priority subregion of West Africa and the Sahel. Strengthen the Spanish Cooperation office in Senegal. Reopen the Spanish Cooperation office in Tunisia. Define a new strategy for cooperation in Africa.



OBJECTIVE 2

Growing

2.1 More training to help African youth find decent work

- 23** Establish a new foundation to foster relations with Africa and to create academic and employment opportunities for young people through study grants and visitor programmes
- 24** Open new Spanish education and training centres in Africa
- 25** Support entrepreneurship programmes and the use of new technologies
- 26** Organize more study grants and programmes for students from Africa
- 27** Recommence the Raisa visitor programme
- 28** Facilitate access to decent work for people living in poverty
- 29** Promote decent work and the social and solidarity economy

2.2 Increase our contribution to Global Gateway projects in Africa

- 30** Encourage companies to engage in projects in sectors where Spain plays a leading role
- 31** Monitor Global Gateway projects in Africa through Spain's embassies
- 32** Strengthen capacities relating to African and Global Gateway issues within the Permanent Representation of Spain to the EU

2.3 Strengthen financial support for Spanish investment in Africa

- 33** Adapt FIEM and COFIDES to investment needs in Africa
- 34** Introduce new financial packages for investment, especially in West Africa
- 35** Ensure coordination and coherence among Spanish financial instruments
- 36** Promote new public-private partnerships
- 37** Implement and extend initiatives such as Alianza África Avanza"
- 38** Continue the programme of visits with African businesses

2.4 Improve information and legal frameworks to facilitate investment

- 39** Set up business forums and trade missions in the context of official visits
- 40** Improve companies' access to information on investment environments. Creation of an Ibero-African association of chambers of commerce (AFRICO).

- 41** Raise awareness of the Platform on Investment and Productive Transformation in Africa

- 42** Promote regulatory harmonization and bilateral agreements

- 43** Support the strengthening of OECD programmes with Africa

2.5 Greater Spanish involvement in new financing for development and debt relief for Africa

- 44** Coordinate with Africa ahead of the Fourth International Summit on Financing for Development

- 45** Collaborate with ECA to reform the global financial architecture

- 46** Include contingency clauses in sovereign loans

- 47** Seek coordination between Spain and the AU at the G20

2.6 Increase Spain's contribution to the development of transport, energy, water and digital infrastructure. Electrification

- 48** Participate in intra-African connectivity and digitalization

- 49** Invest more in connectivity between Spain and Africa

- 50** Participate in the electrification of Africa

- 51** Participate in the design and building of transport networks

- 52** Support the development of air and port navigation and satellite surveillance

2.7 Greater Spanish involvement in the development of the tourism sector in Africa

- 53** Prepare memorandums of understanding on cooperation and capacity-building in the tourism sector
- 54** Increase the presence of the African tourism sector on the UN Tourism agenda
- 55** Greater presence of high-level officials at UN Tourism
- 56** Support for tourism campaigns by African embassies in Spain



OBJECTIVE 3

Connecting

3.1 Migration that is safer, and more orderly, regular and mutually beneficial

- 57** Promote partnerships between countries of origin, transit and destination
- 58** Strengthen the fight against irregular immigration and people smuggling, in close cooperation with countries of origin and transit. Prevent departures that endanger human lives, by supporting surveillance in third countries.

- 59** Expand circular migration and Talent Partnerships

- 60** Promote comprehensive migration management and create a country-team mechanism

- 61** Improve consular services in Africa

3.2 Create more instruments to promote contact and mutual understanding

- 62** Create Council Foundations between Spain and African partners

- 63** Promote collaboration agreements between Spanish and African universities and research centres

- 64** Strengthen the capacities of Casa África, Casa Árabe and Casa Mediterráneo

- 65** Establish new links between business schools and think tanks

- 66** Promote cooperation between regional and local authorities, especially cities

3.3 A stronger stance against racism and xenophobia

- 67** Reinforce measures in the fields of education and public discourse

3.4 Increase reliable, verified information to combat disinformation

- 68** Strengthen strategic communication and digital diplomacy, and combat disinformation

- 69** Encourage contact between journalists in Spain and Africa and promote the dissemination of Spanish content on the continent

3.5 Increase opportunities to learn and use the Spanish language in Africa

- 70** Increase the number of study grants
- 71** Expand the presence of Instituto Cervantes in new countries (facilities in Angola)
- 72** Promote training for teachers of Spanish (ACERCA programme)
- 73** Promote language teaching assistantships and support where Spanish is taught
- 74** Promote the use of Spanish in the AU and ECOWAS

3.6 Strengthen cooperation through culture and sport to drive development and inclusion

- 75** Support exchanges with African creative industries
- 76** Collaborate with UNESCO partners to recognize heritage of humanity in Africa
- 77** Promote knowledge about shared aspects of our cultures
- 78** Promote cooperation between sports organizations
- 79** Expand the Hola Bamako festival”



OBJECTIVE 4

Protecting

4.1 Increase our support for African States' and organizations' peacekeeping and security responsibilities

- 80** Collaborate on security and defence, both bilateral and through EU instruments
- 81** Support African initiatives and AU peacekeeping missions
- 82** Participate in maritime security actions in West Africa and off the coast of Somalia
- 83** Support counter-terrorist, peacekeeping and defence training centres in Africa
- 84** Promote further NATO dialogue and cooperation with the Southern Neighbourhood

4.2 Greater Spanish involvement in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa

- 85** Support national and multilateral instruments for conflict prevention and peaceful resolution
- 86** Support the women, peace and security agenda, in association with regional, international, local and civil society partners

- 87** Support post-conflict reconstruction and disarmament, and the demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers

4.3 Strengthen our collaboration against terrorism, radicalization, organized crime and trafficking

- 88** Promote mutual support and collaboration in the prevention, prosecution and suppression of terrorism, radicalization, organized crime and trafficking, especially of drugs, arms and human beings

4.4 Increase the Spanish contribution to building African resilience against climate and environmental threats

- 89** Cooperate against environmental crimes
- 90** Promote partnerships for climate resilience

4.5 Strengthen Spanish Cooperation to defend sustainable development and address the structural causes of insecurity

- 91** Cooperate on essential rights, nutrition, education and health
- 92** Recognize West Africa, the Sahel and North Africa as subregional priorities in the Sixth Spanish Cooperation Master Plan



OBJECTIVE 5

Living together

5.1 Greater Spanish contribution to democratic consolidation, the rule of law and human rights in Africa

- 93** Promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences on institutional reform and strengthening
- 94** Support democratic governance, decentralization and the fight against corruption
- 95** Support African civil society, especially marginalized groups
- 96** Promote and support initiatives in favour of diversity in Africa
- 97** Promote the bilateral and multilateral defence of human rights, with special attention to persons with disabilities

5.2 Strengthen Spanish support in the fight for equality of African women

- 98** Support a feminist foreign policy and collaborate with women's associations
- 99** Cooperate with African organizations in empowering women and girls

100 Support actions to combat gender violence and promote women's participation, including through programmes such as Ellas+



SPAIN
AFRICA
2025-2028

*Working together through
a strategic relationship*



SPAIN AFRICA

2025-2028

*Working together through
a strategic relationship*



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

