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**THE JOINT AFRICA-EU STRATEGY IN COMPARATIVE
STUDY**

Master's Thesis

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I declare I have written the master's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
ABSTRACT	6
INTRODUCTION	7
2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW – BACKGROUND TO THE JOINT AFRICA- EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY	10
2.1. The Joint Africa-European Union Strategy	17
2.2 Challenges of the Joint Africa-European Union Strategy	26
2.2.1. Internal incoherence and policy rhetoric of the European Union	27
2.2.2. The presence of China in Africa.....	32
3. THE EUROPEAN UNION-SOUTH AFRICA TRADE RELATIONS	39
4. THE EUROPEAN UNION-SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL PARTNERSHIP	46
CONCLUSIONS	50
REFERENCES	54
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	62

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABF	Associated British Foods
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific states
AU	African Union
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
EEC	European Economic Community
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Co-operation
FTA	Free Trade Area
G7+5	The Group of 7+5
G20	The Group of Twenty
IBSA	India, Brazil, South Africa
ITI	Integrated Territorial Investment
ICC	International Criminal Court
JAES	Joint Africa-EU Strategy
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPE	Normative Power Europe
OAU	Organization of Africa Unity

ODA	Official Development Assistance
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TDCA	Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement
UK	United Kingdom
WTO	World Trade Organization

ABSTRACT

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) was adopted at the EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon in 2007, and it was aimed at doing away with the traditional donor-recipient relationship that existed between Europe and Africa; to cement a long-term relationship, one that would foster and ensure stronger collaboration between both parties, as well as a sense of shared ownership in the framework. This study will therefore critically examine the JAES on the developments, both positive and negative, that have occurred, as well as the challenges that have been encountered by the framework.

The historical heritage between Africa and Europe is one that is difficult to overcome, however, it has also served as a starting point to a better and more equal relationship, which the JAES framework is supposedly established to portray. However, with the new challenges faced by the JAES, coupled with the increased strength of many African states as a result of China's increased ventures in Africa, assumed to be motivated mainly by China's quest for energy security, there is the need to re-examine the place of the EU and to a larger extent the role and place of the West in Africa. In addition, it is interesting to see how the relative success and implementation of the JAES would unfold, particularly given that the strategy of the JAES is mainly based on ownership by the states and peoples of Europe and Africa.

The JAES has properly rebalanced the relationship between the EU and Africa, as it has been a clear departure from previous frameworks, and has to an extent been beneficial for both Africa and the EU, and to a large extent, the wider international system. This research however highlights the fact that some of the strategic goals and objectives of the JAES framework, which on paper appears to be oriented towards achieving partnership, has however failed to displace previous frameworks.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between Africa and Europe is a complex and unique one. Over the past fifty years, there has been huge interaction between the two regions, one that has a deep history rooted in economic, political, social, institutional, cultural ties, and most important and pronounced, a relationship between the former colonial powers and former colonies. This intense relation has been attributed to the geographical proximity that exists between them. Although, relations between both entities are deeply rooted in the historical past from the colonial arrangement, relations between them in present times have been largely dominated by an extensive aid programme as well as huge interdependence on issues that range from security and migration, but it has been mainly conducted on European terms due to the stronger economic prowess of Europe as well as superior political and military capabilities. It has therefore made relations between Africa and Europe an unbalanced relationship, even after the end of colonialism, which had a fragmented and painful impact on the continent of Africa. Basically, the EU has continually acted as a 'big brother' to Africa as a whole, and has also been largely responsible for the terms of agreement that exists between Africa and the EU, which accordingly, as admitted by the EU, and this basically is the motive behind the introduction of the JAES agreement which aims to rebalance relations between Africa and the EU. This therefore finally culminated in the adoption of a Joint Africa-EU Strategy during the second Africa-EU Summit that was held in Lisbon in December 2007. The JAES framework therefore is the main instrument for cooperation and coordination between the EU and mainly Sub-Saharan African states (Scheipers and Sicurelli 2008).

The EU has over time emerged as Africa's most essential and important economic partner with exports of merchandise adding up to € 91.1 billion and imports reaching its peak at €125.6 billion in 2005 (European Commission 2007 a.2). The EU's Official Development Assistance (ODA) also represents 60% of the aggregate ODA that goes to Africa, reaching an estimated total of €48 billion in 2006 and this is a reflection of the relationship both entities have built. Against this background as well, the EU has emphatically stated that, "African economic prosperity is essential for European prosperity" (European Commission 2007 a.2). The two regions have therefore fortified their cooperation in recent years, particularly in areas such as peace and security, good governance and human rights, and the issue of migration and mobility.

Prior to the Joint Africa-EU Strategy that was adopted and subsequently implemented in 2007, there were the Yaounde, Lomé and Cotonou Agreements, which were regarded as substantial frameworks that helped establish and guide formal relations between Africa and the EU. There was also the introduction of the EU Strategy for Africa in 2005 that served as a predecessor to the JAES agreement that presently governs the relation between the EU and most of the sub-Saharan African states. The EU Strategy for Africa was aimed at improving the relationship between Africa and the EU to one of mutual partnership, and the principles that govern their relationship were to be conducted on a mutual level. However, after the agreement was adopted in 2005, it was hugely criticized as a policy of double standards, due to the lack of African involvement in the creation of the new strategy that was supposed to be based on the principles of equality and partnership. This therefore precipitated the emergence of a new discussion for the adoption of an agreement that will involve the equal input of both parties, and this resulted in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) that was formalized and adopted in 2007 with the aim of bringing relations between Africa and the EU to a new level.

It is however imperative to note that the EU also has another agreement referred to as the ‘The EU-Mediterranean Partnership’, which includes North African states like Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as Mediterranean and Mid-Eastern states. This agreement was initiated to cover sub-regional projects such as economy, health, energy, culture, migration, and environment. (EUROMED 2015)

With the adoption of the JAES in 2007, the question that comes to mind for research is how different is this new framework from the previous ones - Treaty of Rome of 1957, the Yaoundé Conventions of 1963 and 1969, Lomé Conventions, and the Cotonou Agreement. It is therefore important to ascertain if the present agreement, the JAES, is a fundamental break from previous agreement or more of the same. One therefore needs to examine and understand the stated objectives of each agreement, the different features, peculiarities and differences of these agreements. Additionally, it is important to examine how the areas of political, trade and economic partnership played out among the different agreements between Europe and Africa.

In order to arrive at an apt examination of the above mentioned, I will be utilizing South Africa as a case study, in its political and trade partnership with the EU. The EU have had tremendous vested interest in South Africa, especially the period after apartheid, and South

Africa is also the largest trading partner of the EU in Africa, and as a member of the African Caribbean Pacific group of countries, South Africa also has one of the strongest economies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Being an important partner of the EU, it is therefore imperative to emphasize that if the policies, agreement and proactive role of the EU fail to materialize or work properly in South Africa, it would be practically impossible for it to materialize in any other African state.

Basically, a qualitative method is adopted for the purpose of this work, as policies and agreements are analyzed for proper insight. Additionally, the historical method is utilized to also give an overview and understanding of past phenomena and agreements that have been initiated between both parties.

Chapter two of this research will examine the JAES Strategy from a theoretical perspective, and will explain why the various policies of the JAES agreement have not been so successful or implemented over the years. Among the probable reason is the internal complex decision making mechanism on the part of the EU, policy rhetoric, the selective approach of EU member states etc. The coming of China into Africa has also been regarded as another reason why the JAES agreement has encountered challenges. The increased presence of China in Africa which has received positive response from many African leaders is argued to have forced the hand of the EU and at the same time given Africa more bargaining power.

In addition, Chapter three of this work will analyze the EU-South Africa Trade Agreement, how this agreement was implemented and also examines the positive and negative impacts of the agreement on South Africa, and the SADC Region as a whole.

Chapter four examines how the EU-South Africa political relations/partnership has unfolded in recent times, with each administration from the period of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma all characterized by dynamic attributes that have had direct and indirect influence on its relationship with the EU, and with the African continent as a whole.

Chapter five ends as the concluding chapter, as it summarizes the findings in the work, highlighting the strengths and weakness of the JAES agreement, and makes recommendations on how the agreement can be revitalized to serve the original purpose it was conceived for.

2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW – BACKGROUND TO THE JOINT AFRICA-EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY

Importantly, the origin of Africa-EU relations can be situated in the context of the Treaty of Rome of 1957 and the Yaoundé Conventions of 1963 and 1969 as many of these former colonies were granted ‘negative sovereignty’ - *as most of these states are externally sovereign meanwhile the totality of legal or political powers exercised within the state is in fact subject to no higher power exercised from without*” (MacCormick 1999), and also had the highest level of preferential access to the European market (Clapham 1996).

It can however be argued that these agreements were more of a continuation of post-colonial relations (Hurt 2003) and represented a period of dependent relationship as most of the African states were at a period of decolonization and were experiencing stringent conditions of negative self-rule, that was evident in all facets of the political, economic, administrative aspects. It is therefore safe to posit that the adoption of the Lomé Conventions was the first formal framework of relationship between Africa and the EU that moved relations drastically from colonial dependency to more ‘partnership’.

The partnership that was struck between the EU and the ACP Group involved 78 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, and 27 EU member states, and it represents the largest and most sophisticated North-South agreement/partnership. In addition, the agreement was a culmination of political dialogue that also incorporates cooperation and collaboration on trade and development finance, with the agreement focused on shared principles and values and co-administration through joint establishments (Frisch 2008).

The Lomé paradigm was conceived in the mid-1970s in the aftermath of the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the first energy crisis that had far-reaching financial effect on the world’s economy. The main purpose of initiating the Lomé framework during this period was to bridge the gap between the North and the South, thereby restructuring the international market system and also the redistribution of global resources (Krasner 1985). Its inventors, partner states, and observers hence touted the Lomé Convention, as the finest representation of North-South relations, to a great extent on the account of the scope of the provisions and the noteworthy number of signatory partner states.

The Lomé Convention, which has been renewed and reexamined three times since it was adopted in 1975, generally symbolized Europe's desire and ambitions to build up new relations with the South. This agreement was referred to as one that helped shield and protect the world's poor nations from the full effect of globalization. The Lomé Convention was therefore regarded as one of the most complete and ambitious endeavour at engineering a dynamic agreement between the North and South. And in addition to providing financial incentives for economic development, the European Union also consented to the idea of giving African states, as well as the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) states, special access to its markets. (Anne-Marie Mouradian 1998)

Additionally, the Lomé Conventions were designed to promote the development of the signatory states primarily in the aspect of trade, economic provision and assistance, and cooperation in the technical aspect; some scholars however argue that it also retained the same nature of dependency that had always existed in North-South relations (Brown 2002). Furthermore, the agreement granted privileged market access to products originating from ACP countries, and also provided a platform for inter-regional dialogue which was held at several levels, for example joint parliamentary assembly took place, intergovernmental meetings were regularly convened, and liaison and the support for civil society among others were also initiated via this agreement (Farrell 2005).

Between the period of introducing and adopting the Lomé Conventions, and to its expiration in the year 2000, there were several conventions that were agreed upon, renegotiated and renewed, which were targeted at moderating and improving issues pertaining to human rights, the rule of law, as well as democracy and good governance in Africa with the sole aim of enhancing North-South cooperation. The Lomé Conventions however failed to achieve many of its goals particularly because it failed to convince many that it was established to resolve common problems that were mainly inherent in Africa, and not as a formal tool or link of dependency between former colonial powers and their former colonies (Koulaimah-Gabriel 1997). The Lomé Conventions, in general, was also contended to be increasingly irrelevant and too bureaucratic, with an excess of separate instruments and techniques (Hurt 2003). With arguments that highlight the lack of concrete achievement from the Lomé Conventions, it was therefore compelling for the two sides to seek changes or a total overhaul to the existing

agreement, which had increasingly become unavoidable.

In spite of the fact that the arrangement of action under the Lomé agreement was to invigorate ACP growth and development, the ACP however deteriorated under Lomé, and therefore resulted in a reform in the partnership between the EU and ACP states. Although the Lomé Convention was an attempt to rectify the inefficiencies that were created in previous agreements, it failed to achieve its goals. In the 25 years between the period of signing the Lomé I agreement to the expiration of the Lomé IV, the share of exports from the ACP states in the European markets has fallen drastically by half, from 8% to 3%, while those of other developing states, especially the South East Asian states, that enjoyed lower level of preferential access compared to ACP states, had substantial increase (Babarinde and Faber 2004).

Another argument for ending the Lomé Convention was that the value of the trade preferences had been eroded under the thrust of two phenomena. Firstly, the EU is logically lowering its trade barriers scheme within the framework of the GATT, in favor of all members of the WTO; the EU was also on the verge of increasing its preferential trade arrangements with certain third nations; Turkey, the Maghreb and Middle Eastern states, Eastern Europe, South Africa etc., and the protocols of this new scheme are affected by components over which the ACP have no control (Dunlop 1999).

Secondly, the type of trade preferences that are granted have become outdated, as the tariff and restrictions that were imposed were no longer the only measures deployed by the EU to protect its market. Other obstacles, such as anti-dumping measures, the use of veterinary and quality standards measures (SPS), the distortions stimulated by national legislation among others, all play crucial role against the preferences system that was inherited from the Lomé Convention.

Furthermore, the incompatibility of the Lomé agreement with WTO rules was also another argument put forward by the European Union to elucidate the termination of trade preference. Basically, preferences contravene the principle of non-discrimination as stipulated by Article I of the GATT agreement, whereby all preferences privilege granted to one member-state must automatically be granted to all other states (Dunlop 1999).

According to the goals and objectives of this new agreement, it differs in many

fundamental ways from the previous Lomé Conventions that guided relations between Africa and the EU. One of the most important features to note is that the new agreement stressed the importance of the reduction and the prospective eradication of poverty as its focal goal, which also corresponds and dovetails with the objectives of the EU's development cooperation policy as expressed in Article 177 of the Treaty of Rome, and thus the Cotonou Agreement was identified as a joint and mutual effort. Additionally, the principles of cooperation between Africa and the EU have been refined in order to accommodate the new political dimension that was to evolve from the relationship of both continents, with more emphasis placed on the respect for human rights, the adoption of democratic principles and the rule of law in an effort to advance the objectives of the agreement. In addition, the agreement also insists on the recognition and participation of other sections of the society, especially those that were not directly under the control of the government, i.e. civil society and the private sector.

Furthermore, unlike the non-reciprocal preferences to ACP countries which was in place under the Lomé Conventions, a new process of reciprocal trade preferences was introduced in the Cotonou agreement and it was negotiated between Africa and the EU and it subsequently led to the establishment of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in the year 2008. Under this agreement however, the governments of least developed ACP states can opt for the prolongation of non-reciprocal terms under the EU's terms for least developed states but for a limited time only. Likewise, these states can also opt out of the EPA negotiation process altogether, this would however be seen as a missed opportunity to instigate regional integration and the benefit that would be derived from access to the EU and the global economy. These trade system and options are designed to make trade relations between the ACP states and the EU compatible with the rules of World Trade Organization (WTO), especially the non-discrimination criterion (Byron 2005). The Cotonou Agreement therefore differs from the Lomé Conventions in a number of aspects. Most important is that the Cotonou Agreement is a framework that consists of objectives, principles and alternatives for instruments, while the Lomé Conventions were self-contained rule frameworks (Babarinde and Faber 2003).

However, the Cotonou Agreement also had its own shortcomings, which lessen its reputation mainly among the ACP states. One of such deficiencies is associated with Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement that states that either of the party to the agreement can take

appropriate measures in the event of a violation to an important element of the agreement. In reality however, it is an imbalanced relationship, as the EU has more power to its favour, with the knowledge that it is the only party to the agreement that can restrict or regulate trade and aid terms since the ACP still largely depend on trade and aid grants from the EU. This therefore makes the 'equal partnership' of the agreement questionable (Banthia 2007), and for (Crawford 1996), the addition of this political clause is a key factor in the weakening of the principles of partnership that is expected to guide the relations between both parties. The ACP states still continued to be one of the most poverty-stricken in the world despite the aid that has been allocated to boost economic development, as most of these states struggled economically during the Lomé years with 1.7% GDP and have further struggled in the past years particularly due to the economic recession that has left most of the ACP states vulnerable as more people particularly in sub-Saharan Africa are forced to live on less than \$1 a day and economically remain ever dependent on aid coming from the EU, although there has been quite tremendous growth in sub-Saharan Africa after this period (Babarinde and Faber 2004).

The EU has always had a special relationship with Africa since its inception. The Schuman Declaration of 1950 that led to the creation of the European Union emphasized on the development of the African continent, as well as the development of ties with Africa as one of its core tasks, and 50 years onward, the EU institutionalized its political relations with Africa through the first EU-Africa Summit that was held in Cairo. Following the cancellation of the second Summit in 2003, an EU-Africa Dialogue was subsequently launched; with the EU Strategy for Africa introduced in 2005; and finally, the 2nd EU-Africa Summit that took place in Lisbon in 2007, and was a precedence to the formulation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.

It is important to measure the strategy and agenda distance between the first Summit held in Cairo in the year 2000, and the 2nd Summit that took place in Lisbon in 2007. The first EU-Africa Summit in April 2000, had the participation of the Heads of State and Government of EU member-states and African states, as well as representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, the President of the European Commission, the Secretary General of the Council of the EU, and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, with the Summit co-chaired by the EU and the Organization of African Union.

With the objective of taking the continental relationship between Africa and Europe to a

new dimension, European and African leaders conveyed the first historic Summit in Cairo, Egypt in the year 2000. The continental dialogue was aimed at accommodating needed changes that would go in line with the reality of economic, political and diplomatic situation on ground. The Summit under the aegis of the OAU and the EU set in motion a continent-to-continent dialogue, and it was expected to forge a new platform or framework that would be apt enough to correct the shortcomings of previous agreements. These dialogues eventually culminated in the formulation of a new strategic partnership and the adoption of a Joint Africa-EU Strategy at the second summit in Lisbon in 2007.

The Cairo Summit launched an in-depth framework for political dialogue between African states and the EU mainly along the following priority areas:

- - Regional integration in Africa;
- - The integration of African states into the world economy;
- - The respect for human rights, democratic doctrines and institutions, good governance and the rule of law, the presence of the civil society and their role in the society, as well as issues related to migration and refugees;
- - Peace-building, conflict prevention and resolution;
- - Sustainable development, eradication of poverty, issues of health and food security, drug trafficking and consumption.

Also, the EU also developed and formulated its own strategy for Africa in the year 2005, and it was centered on the following three assumptions which were outlined by the (European Commission 2007.4):

- i. That without good governance, rule of law, and sustainable peace and security in African states, it is impossible for lasting development to evolve in these states;
- ii. Regional integration, trade and interconnectivity are important factors needed to promote economic growth;
- iii. Also, if Africa is to attain and accomplish the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), more focus and assistance is essential on issues that have direct impact on the living standards of the people.(i.e. poverty reduction)

In addition to the outlined strategies, there was the introduction of the dual concept of ‘One Africa and One Europe’ which became the centerpiece of the strategy, as for the first time, the

EU desired a new path different entirely from previous agreements and frameworks, and to encapsulate another forward-looking vision for relations between Africa and Europe as one single continent, and sets out the all-encompassing political framework characterizing relations between both sides. (Mangala 2011)

Before the introduction of the ‘One Africa and One Europe’ concept, relations between Africa and the EU have traditionally been coordinated through two regional arrangements, which consists of: the African states that comprise most of the sub-Saharan states who are also part of the ACP group, and the African states of the Mediterranean extraction.

The Strategy which was solely formulated by the EU was however received with a great deal of critical remarks mainly by key African scholars as they were critical of the fact that the Strategy had been developed by the EU without consultations and input by African players, a retention of the unilateral donor-client proposition, and was simply seen as ‘an old wine in a new bottle’ (Pádraig 2013). Another criticism against the strategy was that it was too biased and represented more of European agenda, and was therefore unfavorable to the establishment of African ownership (ECDPM 2006.4).

Acknowledging the criticisms against the Strategy, the two entities therefore agreed during the 5th Africa-EU Ministerial meeting that took place in Bamako in December 2005 to alter the agreement that was supposed to cover the relations and take their partnership to another, key level and create a Joint EU-Africa Strategy – a partnership with Africa, instead of a strategy for Africa (European Commission 2007.5). The renewed agreement therefore signaled a transformed political accord, one that is based on equal partnership. Both entities also agreed on the need to seek the ideas and suggestions of reputable actors and stakeholders, mainly persons from civil society, trade unions and simple citizens drawn from both sides in forging the Joint Strategy and it was officially adopted during the Africa-EU Summit in December, 2007 held in Lisbon, and therefore precipitated the emergence of new discussion for the adoption of a new agreement that will involve the equal input of both parties, and this resulted in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) that was formalized and adopted in 2007 with the aim of bringing relations between Africa and the EU to a new level. Additionally, the planned partnership was established on eight (8) broad strategic platforms:

- Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security;

- Africa-EU Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights
- Africa-EU Partnership on Trade and Regional Integration
- Africa-EU Partnership on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Africa-EU Partnership on Energy
- Africa-EU Partnership on Climate Change
- Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment
- Africa-EU Partnership on Science, Information, Society and Space (First and Second Action Plan Agreement - 2008-2010; 2011-2013)

2.1. The Joint Africa-European Union Strategy

The adoption of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) in 2007 was the result of mutual ambitions and a need for a paradigm shift in continental relations. The JAES therefore represents a long-term objective that was aimed at fundamentally changing the relations between Africa and the EU. The continental protagonists of the agreement acknowledged the need for an outlook change or a significant shift away from the pattern of colonial and donor-recipient driven model of interaction, towards a more mutually defined arrangement of equal continents. It is however important to state that the results have been rather disappointing, as the primary stakeholders and partners have showed less obligation and commitment to the JAES in past years.

The implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) through the Europe-Africa partnership demonstrates that the ambitious vision that brought about the agreement is still very much needed; a political continent-to-continent relation, and a joint action, beyond aid, of both parties in all major sectors, serving as the main reference for a Europe-Africa dialogue. Basically, the JAES, as a political statement and the declaration of intent of the parties, remains an important component of Europe-Africa relations, most especially in the period where no ministerial meetings took place between the two parties. Furthermore, the implementation of the JAES partnership evolved into a range of distinct dialogue and policy procedure, with each evolving at their own pace, and in line with the mutual interests of the parties involved. However, some of these components of the framework became split, while others were either

merged or became dormant, in order to fulfill the cooperation and dialogue actions ongoing elsewhere.

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) is therefore viewed as a political vision and roadmap designed to guide the long-term relationship and future cooperation between Africa and the EU in existing areas as well as in new arenas. The agreement which was signed by the African Union (AU) which is the intergovernmental institution with 53 member-states representing Africa, and the EU, with the aim of strengthening political partnership between both entities, as well as enhancing cooperation at all levels, and bridging the existing gap between Africa and Europe through economic cooperation and sustainable development in both continents. (Wohlgemuth and Wallnöfer 2010)

Furthermore, the four main objectives of the long-term strategic partnership are:

1. To improve and elevate Africa-EU political partnership and this includes the strengthening of institutional relations and addressing common issues related to peace and security matters, migration and development; (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)
2. To help ensure and promote peace, security, democratic governance and human rights, basic fundamental freedoms, equality of all genders, sustainable economic development that is beneficial to the states, as well as industrialization, regional and continental integration of both entities, and to also ensure that the set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are achieved in all African states by the year 2015; (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)
3. To jointly promote effective multilateralism, with legitimate institutions that will provide better representation. Also, it aims to address the global challenges and issues such as human rights, health related problems, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, climate change, migration, and plans for an innovative society driven by progression in ICT, science and technology. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)
4. It also aim to enhance and promote a people-centered partnership that will involve non-state actors which comprise the private sector, economic and social partners, as well as civil society groups or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), thereby empowering

them to be able to play significant and active roles in issues ranging from development, conflict prevention and resolution processes among others. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, 2007)

In order to achieve these objectives, there was the need to address and prioritize some important political and strategic challenges, which will make the implementation of the objectives a success, and they are:

1. **Peace, Security and Stability:** Due to the history and experience of both Africa and Europe, they both understand that there was the need to promote a safer world, and also strengthening the role of Africa in the prevention of conflicts, the management and resolution of conflicts, in the event that they occur, as well as mechanism on peace building. Africa, through the AU, will also be cooperating with the EU on the global arena, particularly on transnational security issues such as international terrorism and organized crime. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)
2. **Governance and Human Rights:** The promotion of democratic governance and upholding human rights is one of the major features that characterize the partnership between Africa and the EU. Dialogue between them emphasizes the need to have an effective multilateral system and also the promotion of the values of democracy, respect for the rule of law and that of human rights. Also, in the situations of instability, conflict and crisis resulting from a deficit in the democratic system or weakness in the institutional setup, Africa and the EU will hold dialogue on how to reach a mutual understanding and agree on the steps that should be taken to solve the problem. Additionally, Africa and the EU will be working together in an effort to protect and promote human rights of citizens in Africa, as well as those in Europe, and therefore agree to use the relevant institutions present in both continents such as the European Court of Human Rights of the Council of Europe; African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, among others, to re-emphasize the rights of citizens in both continents. They will also be working together at the international scene to channel this agreement, especially at the United Nations gathering, and will seek the effective role and function of the International Criminal Court to promote peace and to also administer

justice on crimes of concern in the international scene, such as crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide etc. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)

3. **Trade and Regional Integration:** It is essential to raise and improve the potential and strength of economic governance in Africa, as it will enable Africa to finally move away from being reliant on support from donor countries, and effectively make their mark and contribution in the global market. In this regard, developing domestic markets and regional markets, and also the promotion of the private sector will enable the creation of a larger and well-integrated African market to international trade. It will also improve trade relations between South-South and that of North-South, thereby fostering increased productivity, and reduce trade distortion that characterize the international market. Furthermore, the agreement emphasized that the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs) will be supportive of the sub-regional and continental integration of Africa. The EPAs policy was to assist and ensure that African states are able to raise their standards, norms and productivity to the level of the attained in the EU. Finally, according to the agreement, both Africa and the EU are strengthen cooperation in the area of statistics with the aim of assisting policy makers as well as users of statistics to be able to properly coordinate and harmonize statistics in areas of trade, health and developmental ratios within the scheme of the African Charter for Statistics. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)
4. **Key Development Issues: Accelerating Progress towards the MDGs;** For the actualization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is important for African states to be able to sustain economic growth and also make considerable social development, and this can only be achieved by the joint investment of both Africa and the EU to projects that are of essential relevant to the MDGs. The efforts of both Africa and the EU therefore need to be focused on the how to make considerable contributions, and also delivering on policies and promises that have been made in the areas which are the established by the international development goals, and adopted by the United Nations. (The Joint Africa-EU Strategy 2007)

In the areas where the stakeholders of each of the eight (8) partnerships have been cooperative and flexible, there has been remarkable progress, as the JAES has become a useful

and supportive tool in these areas e.g. in the areas of infrastructure, democracy and human rights which is ever evolving among others. On the other hand, where the parties have not been willing to be flexible, there has always been a stalemate in dialogue and cooperation, with the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) as an example, and also the major security crisis on the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC), especially on the part of the African delegation.

Furthermore, the most notable outcomes of the partnership are evident in a number of areas. In the area of peace and security, the pre-existing funding feature has allowed the partnership to progress often beyond the structures of the JAES. In the areas of trade and economic integration, despite the evident disconnect between the JAES framework and the EPAs negotiations, more involvement from the thematic DGs of the European Commission with Africa was accomplished. On the aspect of governance, human right issues and cultural cooperation, dialogue has proved to be tough, as some other contentious issues have polluted other corporate agendas. Despite this setback, innovative solutions were initiated and new perspective of joint actions on the contentious aspects of human rights, and culture have been established and experimented.

The crack of existing initiatives in a shift of heterogeneous formation is not a danger in itself, as long as it successfully and emphatically serves the political purpose of both the European and African parties. As a matter of fact, the legitimate premise of the Pan-African Program (PANAF) contravene with the principle of a genuinely joint procedure. The EU can, best case scenario consult with its African partners and member-states, which implies that the quality and nature of the ongoing arrangement and political discourse amid the consultation stage expressed with the utilization of PANAF will be important for success. However, for this to be actualized, more political leadership and governing will be needed from both sides.

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), is an enveloping consultation, essentially, not a legally binding policy scheme for Africa-EU relations which intends to boost and strengthen the strategic and political partnership between the two parties, while also expanding the scope of their partnership:

a. beyond the development aid and trade, and to include issues of political interest;

- b. beyond Africa, to address issues not restricted to just African matters, but global issues as well;
- c. beyond institutions, to support the participation of the populace and also help in strengthening the civil society;
- d. beyond a fragmented discourse to issues related to Africa, but to infer regional and continental responses to these issues European Commission (2011a);

A large, yet only consultative, operative structure has been set up to implement the JAES, which is fixated on a bi-annual Joint Task Force assembling delegates of the EC and EEAS, the AUC, member states drawn from both continents, and experts. Thus, this work is carried out during the year on a voluntary and independent basis by thematic Joint Experts Groups (JEGs), one for each of the eight thematic cooperation, and it is co-chaired by a African and European partner AUC & EC (2011b).

Since its creation, many on the African side have not owned the JAES framework. While it was formally supported and approved by the Heads of State in both continents, the somewhat overwhelming institutional structure is by all accounts an European creation that is not compatible to the present African institutions and scope The Joint Task Force sessions which are very formal and bureaucratic, is cited for been too overloaded with meetings, with an obvious defect of coordination between the African representatives in Addis Ababa and Brussels, and with the respective capitals of the African states (ECDPM 2012).

The JAES is the first framework recognized by the EU with the aims of 'treating Africa as one', compared to other frameworks that regulates EU relations with African states by separating between states of the north and south of the Sahara, specifically the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (2000-2020) with the African, Caribbean, Pacific group of states, the purported Barcelona Process, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (now known as the European Neighborhood Policy) with North African countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt), and in addition the Union of the Mediterranean (UfM). The EU-South Africa relations on the other hand does not directly fall under either system, as it is being rather controlled by the Trade, Development, Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) with the EU in 1999 and the Strategic

Partnership initially agreed in 2006, and thereafter incorporated into the (EU-South Africa partnership) in the JAES framework.

In the early 2000s, basically five (5) elements propelled the EU and African leaders to develop this goal-oriented partnership:

The first factor was the need for a more political relationship and discourse on equal terms both on the bilateral platform and on the global scene. For the European Union and the European member-states, this would provide the avenue for critical discussions on important issues like governance, democracy and issues of human rights. On the part on the African Union and the African member-states, the partnership was seen as recognition of the new role of Africa in global politics, as well as recognition of the emerging economic transformation and prospects of the African continent. This is in sharp contrast to the situation in the late 1990s when the ACP states opposed discourse that went beyond aid and trade, as matters relating to democracy, governance and human rights were viewed as interference with the sovereignty of states: a reset in relationship was therefore needed by both parties (Sherriff and Kotsopou 2013) Before now, an initial attempt at developing a continent-to-continent relationship was initiated at the 2000 Africa-EU Summit which was concluded with the Cairo declaration, a broad document that covers several issues ranging from debt and development, to issues of security (Sherriff and Kotsopou 2013)

Another important factor was the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which metamorphosed into the African Union (AU) in the year 2002, as this created a fertile platform for a renewed continent-to-continent relationship.

Third, efforts of the EU at this period came as a result and response to the increasingly growing influence and importance of other actors like China, India and Brazil in Africa. The 2006 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, which was hosted in Beijing, was widely attended by leaders of African states, while India also concluded its own groundwork, the Africa-India framework for cooperation with Africa in 2008 (Sherriff and Kotsopou 2013)

Fourth, international drive around Africa was consolidated and was additionally pushed by the MDGs plan. More agencies on the African side became noticeable, and with the

establishment of NEPAD in 2001, it was followed by other Pan-African activities, such as the establishment of the UK's Commission for Africa and with the phrase, the 'Year of Africa' mainly buttressed by the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2005. From portraying Africa as a continent that was in need, the narrative began to depict it as a place where there are opportunities (Sherriff and Kotsopou 2013). The EU acknowledged this evolving situation with its 2005 Strategy for Africa that was however condemned for its one-sided nature and the two sides subsequently agreed to develop a joint strategy (European Commission 2005).

Fifth, with the Portuguese presidency of the EU intent on having a deliverable for the Africa-EU Summit in 2007, it therefore proffer the political drive needed for the consultations.

The JAES saw the light of day after a progression of negotiation sessions between the EU and its African partners that were held in Addis Ababa and Brussels in the initial six months of 2007. The eventual adoption of the JAES agreement was however almost overshadowed by the difference over the participation of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who was at this period under EU's travel bans and sanctions (Traynor 2007). Finally, from the perspective of the EU, the JAES provided an avenue to advance a common European path to dealing with African matters.

However, the disappointing outcome of the Tripoli Summit in the year 2010 served as the first reality-check for the initiative and ambitions of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Ahead of the Tripoli Summit, the progress report analysed by the Joint Task Force pointed that the Partnerships were advancing at different momentum - with the Peace and Security one being the most progressive - although it also had several difficulties, most especially the limited ownership on the part of the member states and other important stakeholders and partners on both sides (European Commission 2009).

In Tripoli, the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, noted that partnership between the EU and Africa has had little progress in the implementation of the collective appropriation of both Cairo and Lisbon (Sherriff and Kotsopoulos 2013). A long-established issue was that the JAES agreement had begun on the wrong symmetry in terms of its expectations: the African side was perplexed by the dearth of committed funding for the operations in the Action Plan. A more

profound challenge was the absence of political buy-in of the Partnership on both sides of the Mediterranean, as it prompted propositions on the best way to resuscitate the enthusiasm of member-states and increase the high-level participation of the involved parties in the JAES (Bossuyt and Sherriff 2010). The Tripoli Summit also ratified and approved the 2nd Action Plan, however it failed to provide a path forward to address the challenges. However, the Action Plan comprised of numerous goals and expected accomplishments – oftentimes process rather than being outcome oriented - to accomplished by the parties. Since 2010, several developments, which have occurred in the two continents, have had remarkable impact on the EU-Africa relations.

The holistic vision that was encapsulated into the JAES – "go 'beyond development', 'beyond Africa', and 'beyond institutions'", has brought about the establishment of an impressive cluster of structures. Political discourse and the monitoring of the implementation of the JAES features prominently on the agenda of the EU-Africa Ministerial troikas, which meets twice in a year. The Commission-to-Commission sessions, which was initiated in 2005, and currently known as the College-to-College Meetings (C2C) has taken, place regularly once a year since 2008. These meetings have supported the momentum for the development of Africa-EU political agendas: and other than observing the implementation of the JAES, the C2C sessions also offer a platform for specific activities of bilateral partnership between the two commissions.

The unique relations between the Economic Commission and the African Union – both a model and a guide in numerous regards – are the foundation of the pledges to "regard Africa as one" and rise above absolutely development-centered agendas. It is on such consideration that the joint appointment by the European Commission and the European Council of a designated representative of the EU to the AU was declared in December 2007 – as the nomination laid the groundwork for the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. Ever since, the C2C sessions, held alternately in Africa and Europe have been regarded as high profile occasions. Some other structures that have been established to implement the agendas of the JAES are the African and EU Implementation groups (ITs), and additionally the eight Joint Expert Groups (JEGs) that have been established to coordinate, develop and actualize the priorities of the Action Plan. The end result is a blend of institutions and procedures intended to promote partnerships on an inter-

hemispheric premise at different levels (the member states, the EU and AU Commission, regional parliaments of the parties, civil society organizations).

The disintegrated and multi-level governance of the European Union also accounts for the formation of specialised structures of coordination of the JAES within the European Commission and among the member states. One African states (AU members + Morocco) and One EU member-state are additionally assigned as the 'lead country' for each of the eight partnership themes.

2.2 Challenges of the Joint Africa-European Union Strategy

Basically, the track record of the JAES has been mixed. For one, the strategy was meant to commit to an improved dialogue and joint stand of both parties on intercontinental and global issues. The strategy is also meant to bring about the closer involvement of non-state actors from both parties, and also bring about a stronger European presence and support for the continental integration of the African continent.

Furthermore, the leaders of the African and EU blocs have highlighted significant differences that exist between these regional groups. These differences are embodied in fundamental issues such as the presence and participation of the civil society in political processes; the role of the media in promoting democratic practices and government accountability; and the contentious division over the place and conduct of the International Criminal Court amongst others.

The initial enthusiasm that ushered in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy has therefore been replaced by a widening gap, between the discourse of the strategic partnership, and the reality of its implementation and practice.

As of today, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy can be said to be in hibernation, with both parties to the agreement at pain to properly display their disappointment, as the main aim of the strategy, which was to initiate a paradigm shift in relations between both parties from the 'donor-recipient' relations to one of equal partners has not fully materialize, and it remains doubtful whether this partnership agreement can make any more progress (Hart 2011).

There are however some other factors that have also contributed to the not so-successful

performance and implementation of the JAES agreement. Internal complex decision making mechanism of the EU which have resulted in incoherent policies and policy evaporation, the asymmetric trade relations; the rise of China in Africa which has resulted in the subsequent declining relevance of the EU in Africa, have been attributed to the widening cracks in JAES agreement and EU-Africa relations.

2.2.1. Internal incoherence and policy rhetoric of the European Union

For many scholars, the policies of the EU in Africa have always been ineffective, and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy is not any different (Smith 2009). The major challenge however is not just to state that EU's policy have not been effective, but illustrating the causes of the ineffectiveness.

Basically, identified as a major factor in the failings and effectiveness of these previous policies, and the lack of full implementation and fruition of the JAES, is the lack of consensus among the member states of the EU, as well as the liberal feature of the JAES agreement, which opposes the realist feature of the policies of most of the EU's member states. The foreign policy of the European Union vis-à-vis its member-states' foreign policy dichotomy is interrelated to the to the peace hypothesis of Kantian vis-à-vis the Hobbesian struggle hypothesis. The European Union and the liberal school of thought argues that the agenda of states in international politics is multifaceted; economic, social and ecological concerns are as important as military issues to this school of thought. Interdependence among states therefore is an important matter such as human rights, monetary, security among others is prioritized. Hence, the EU has cogent policies in the socio-economical areas such as fisheries, agriculture, monetary etc. On the other hand, most of the member-states of the European Union believe and act according to the realism hypothesis. These states look after their individual national interests and exemplify power in military terms; the fundamental aim of their foreign policies approaches is to preserve their sovereignty. This point of view therefore explains the competition among EU member states, as each state aims to maximize benefits and minimize expense (Smith 2009).

The opposition between liberalism and its features and those of realism therefore seems apparent when it comes to the implementation of the foreign policy of the European Union. This selfish attribute of EU member states has also been present since the formation of the EEC, as the individual interest of states have always prevailed against the collective goals of the EU,

most especially with the JAES agreement (Smith 2009). This competition of interest has therefore weakened the effectiveness of the JAES agreement with sub-Saharan African states.

According to Lister (2007), besides the divergence that is evident between the Atlanticists and the Europeanists and their competition of interests, historical links of EU member states to their former colonies is another factor that has played an important role in the not so positive performance of the JAES. With France as one of the Europeanists proponents, it has evidently continued to pursue a neo-colonial policy in its former colonies. With the coined term '*Francafrique*', France has cordial relationship with its former African colonies, in an effort to advance and protect its economic interests, even in states where these leaders have remained unpopular like Mali (Al Jazeera Special Series 2014).

The reality is that the historical link between member states of the EU and their former colonies is stronger, and goes a long way in undermining the collective policy of the EU such as the JAES. This divergent historical link therefore leads to greater differences among the EU member states where nothing concrete can be agreed or achieved collectively, besides the values which have remained abstract. It is therefore difficult to argue with Lister's assertion that although the EU has a vast network of strategies under the JAES agreement, these strategies are however not coordinated and lack collective and coherent policies. Smith (2009) further affirms that since individual EU member states have and still retain their foreign policies, they are therefore reluctant to surrender this control in the name of a collective EU policy like the JAES.

The policies and strategies of the JAES agreement with EU have therefore been watered down and become not so effective because the policies of the EU is determined by the individual interest of its member states.

In addition to this, is the selective approach of the EU in its relations with its counterpart in sub-Saharan Africa. This selective approach is evident in the South African case. With South Africa having one of the strongest economies in the southern region, it has become a top target of EU, which has sought bilateral cooperation with the state. It is in this context that the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement (TDCA) was formally signed in 1999, came into operation on 1 January, 2004 and was further incorporated in the JAES agreement in 2007 (Oliver 2007). The selection of South Africa was basically for its impressive economic performance, in detriment to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the

Southern African Customs Union (SACU) partners of South Africa. This selective approach by the EU which has also been referred to as a 'divide and rule policy' negates the 'One Africa, One Europe' concept of the JAES agreement, and also neglect the collective interests of other southern African states, which the JAES agreement is expected to mitigate. The consequence of this selective approach and policy has therefore been disastrous to some sub-Saharan Africa states, as it has motivated the 'Brain Drain' phenomenon with the mass emigration of well-educated individuals from many of these southern African states to South Africa.

The trade relation between the EU and Africa is another flaw that has been identified in the JAES agreement. These trade treaties have been regarded as asymmetric, with the EU member states, mainly the former colonial states enjoying considerable benefit from this trade relation. Trade between Africa and the EU, which is covered by the JAES agreement, remains asymmetric as the EU sells manufactured goods such as vehicles, mechanical machinery, electrical machinery, iron and steel, pharmaceutical products, cereals among others, which are expensive products, compared to the raw materials such as diamond, cocoa, sugar, coffee, oil and gas, spice, fish products, meat etc. which the African states sell. This asymmetric trade relation therefore further undermines the success expected from the JAES agreement, as it remains in the similar to the previous agreements and treaties that governed Africa-EU relations.

Furthermore, the EU has often been described as an entity in its own particular right, as the EU has over time moved further than the common definition of a traditional state structure, to a 'hybrid supernatural structure' with its own form of governance (Manners 2002). Ian Manners (2002) further argued that because of its unique history, its special constitutional composition, and its hybrid society, the EU therefore has a different basis for its relation with different entities. Derived from the idea of 'Normative Power Europe' (NPE), the EU is identified by its ability to promote its principles of human rights, democracy, good governance, regional cooperation and sustainable development etc. beyond its own borders (Manners 2002). The EU's foreign policy therefore plays an important role in this respect. The eagerness of the European Union to promote these norms in its relations and partnership with other states is most remarkably expressed in the first European framework that deals with the sphere of development policy, the European Consensus on Development of 2005.

For historical comprehension, the sub-Saharan Africa region has constantly occupied an exclusive position in the development policy of the EU and has been identified as a key region for the efforts of the EU in promoting these values and policies (Olsen 1998). To underline the significance of sub-Saharan Africa in the EU's development scheme, experts have commonly referred to the dual track approach of the EU's development project and with the JAES presently serving as the basic framework of co-operation and partnership, a wide range of development policies have been developed which are directly linked to democratic and human rights principles in sub-Sahara African states (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008).

According to Manners (2002), when referring to the normative coordination of the partnership and development policy of the EU with sub-Sahara African states, it is important to stress the importance of political 'aid' conditionality that has been directly linked to the fulfillment of some political conditions, as this relates to the respect for human right, promotion of democracy and good governance. In this regard, the 'negative' conditionality that has been attached to the partnership agreement involves the suspension of 'aid' to the recipient nation(s) whenever there is a violation of these conditions. In the JAES agreement, democracy, good governance, upholding human rights and the rule of law are regarded as essential elements, which implies that a violation of any of these would lead to the suspension of 'aid' that comes alongside the development and partnership agreement (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008). The 'negative conditionality' therefore refers to the sanction policy that is imposed by the EU whenever violation to the terms of agreement occur, and these sanctions come in two forms; the sanctions can be decided upon by the Security Council of the United Nations, or the EU can impose these sanctions autonomously. Basically, the measures these sanctions come in form of arms embargoes, travel bans for government officials who have been directly or indirectly linked to the violations, and the freezing of funds of these persons. However, there is also the EU's 'positive' conditionality, which is meant to promote and actualize the practice of these norms.

Generally, conditionality is a theoretical method of explaining the logical relations between actors. It provides a mechanism whereby it links a state or international organization, or particular benefits desired, to the attainment of certain conditions (Smith 1997). Conditionality basically is perceived as yardstick utilized mostly in institutional agreements. Killick (1998) defined the term 'conditionality' as 'a set of correlative arrangements by which a particular

government takes or commits to take, some precise policy actions, in support of which an international organizations will provide some financial assistance and incentives'. There is in addition to this some analogy, most especially with negative conditionality, as the violations of the agreement results in sanctions and punishments for the guilty party.

In spite of these formal principles, there has been cause to raise doubts as regards the NPE as a logical basis for the foreign policy of the EU, and for the development policy of the EU in particular (Hyde-Price 2008). One of the criticisms leveled against the NPE is that its ideas are from a neo-realist point of view. Hyde-Price (2008) further contends that the EU does not exhibit real normative power in its dealings with external players. Rather, the EU tends to be used by its member-states as an instrument for fashioning foreign policy in a way that is favourable to the member-states. To Hyde-Price, the European Union functions as an instrument for the operations of mutual hegemony in its neighborhood policy, where it imposes its norms and values on its Eastern neighbours. In addition, Bicchi (2006) posits that the European Union has the inclination to replicate itself in its relations with the third world countries. In this process, the EU outlines internal (i.e intra-EU) solutions to issues affecting these external states. According to Bicchi, the normative power of the EU is not based on the universal role of the norms it encourages; rather the EU promotes its own norms, which it claims have a universal value. In addition, to expand upon the arguments made by Bicchi, one can deduce that the ideas of the NPE are predominantly internally oriented policies. On the political level, it entails that these policies of the EU does not intend to seek change in partner states, but rather to gratify the desires of domestic partners and member-states.

The main commitment of the EU in sub-Saharan Africa, which is to advance the stated principles and values, has also been emphatically criticized (Santiso 2008). It has also been argued that amidst a post-Cold war context, which has been indicated by a renewed, and an ideological rhetoric linked to the provision of aid, the EU has shown a lack of commitment to promote these ideals in the international system, and this has often been referred to as the 'rhetoric behavior gap' (Wood 2009).

The policy of the EU to impose sanctions is an illustration of the contradiction. Despite the rhetoric of the EU, the sanctions it imposed have been generally mild and oftentimes unequal. In addition, these sanctions by the EU have only been imposed on a few states that have

unfriendly relationship with the West, like Zimbabwe, and the level of violation to warrant the sanction from the EU still remains unclear (Brummer 2009).

Furthermore, the EU has also introduced and applied to the sanctions, therefore bringing about inconsistency in the enforcement of these policies. To further illustrate this, the president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, was invited to attend the France-Africa Summit in the year 2003; this invitation was extended despite sanctions and travel ban that were imposed on the Zimbabwean government by the EU. Additionally, this scenario played out once more during the EU-Africa Summit in 2007 before the formal introduction of the JAES agreement. The EU obliged to accommodate Robert Mugabe due to the pressure from the leaders of the African Union (Brummer 2009).

2.2.2. The presence of China in Africa

The rapid emergence and rise of China as a dynamic actor in Africa with its approaches are in sharp contrast compared to those of Europe, and the strong reaction to this influence affects the EU-Africa and EU-China partnerships. The role of China in conflict and post-conflict situations, most recently in Darfur, the Democratic Republic of Congo among others, has spurred strong criticism from the EU. Basically, China has become a major player in most of the African states, and has also continued to play a prominent role in different sectors of these states, and this influence is not restricted to resource-rich states (Asche 2008). China's cooperation with most of the African states has mainly focused on the aspects of economic growth, trade and investment, as China has also given detailed attention to funding infrastructures and the resources sectors in these states.

From a historical perspective, the presence of China in Africa is not a new phenomenon. During the Cold War era, the government of China attempted to export its socialist model of governance to the African continent, in its attempt to rival the expansionism policy of its rival, the Soviet Union (Thompson 2004).

The return and increased presence of China in Africa can be attributed to two main reasons. First, its increased presence in Africa has economic motives, as the African continent has continued to serve the fast-growing demand of the Chinese market for natural resources that is needed to fuel the Chinese economic growth. Secondly, Africa represents a vast export market

for China's finished goods, as well as serving as a major investment hub. The effect of the rapid economic transformation of the Chinese economy is also another factor for seeking increased ties with African states, as its economy grew transitionally to a mixed system.

It is also important to analysis the impact of China's increased presence and involvement in Africa and how this has affected the role of the European Union. While the EU Strategy for Africa was introduced in 2005 and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy subsequently adopted in 2007 to renew the long-standing relationship/partnership between both continents based on mutual ownership, the China-Africa Summit of 2006 by contrast was celebrated by both Africa and China (parties to the agreement) as the beginning of a new period in North-South relations (Carbone 2011). The China-Africa agreement therefore has the potential of decreasing not only the relations between the EU and Africa, but also taking full advantage of the financial crises in the Europe and the United States, thereby causing the value of trade transactions with African states to exceed the value of aid brought in by the EU (Maru, Makda, Abraha, Senai and Goa 2011)

Although, both the EU and China share similar objectives in the areas of development, ownership, peace and security, they however have opposing strategies on how to achieve them. On the one hand, the EU supports a comprehensive plan for political, economic and social development, with an emphasis on human rights and the practice of democratic system, China on the other hand put in place a framework that is based on mutual benefits, the principles of equality, and non-interference in political issues, which serves the interest of many African leaders. This therefore challenges the autonomy in relations with Africa that the EU had previously enjoyed, in what is considered its backyard (Berger 2006).

This phenomenon has therefore undermined and affected the strategic nature of the EU-Africa partnership, as it created a scenario of collusion between the EU and China, and an attempt by the European Union to interfere in the bilateral alliance of sovereign states or perhaps attempt to augment the 'donor cartel'. This however will supposedly affect the intended positive impact of the EU-China dialogue, as neither of the two sides desires to estrange their African partners.

Between Africa, both the European Union and China have objectives that cut across fighting poverty, the promotion of economic growth and the achievement and sustenance of the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Basically, the European Union, China and the African Union, all have an active role in the G20 with the task of dealing with the economic crisis and its impact on the African continent, as both the EU and China have continued to urge the international community to adhere to their various commitments to Africa. Besides this cooperative agenda, which has the potential of enhancing global governance, most especially on the African continent, the competition for the resources in Africa may also ultimately contribute to a re-emergence of competition among the Great Powers, which could have negative consequences for concept and doctrine of multilateralism and global governance.

With China having legitimate interests in Africa, it is therefore imperative for the EU to make a strategic choice of either confronting China in areas where the interest of Europe is undermined, or stand by and watch how the situation evolves. Additionally, the EU can also continue with its dialogue with China, with the goal of enlisting and enjoining China to participate in existing frameworks such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The role of the EU in international relations and world politics over the years has increased and it is no longer restricted to the idea of whether it plays a role or is a subject of particular issues in international relations, but rather how the EU interacts and intertwines the issues with its own objectives. Even though the European Union accounts for more than half of the Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) that comes in to Africa, it has shifted over the years as previously explained from a ‘civilian power’ to one with ‘normative power’ (Aggestam 2008). And based on the link between development and security, the EU is also an important actor in the area of security in Africa, mainly through its support via the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) which is present in many African states (DIE Studies 2008), as it has been able to project security beyond its immediate borders. China’s policy in Africa on the other hand has brought about issues that promote development in Africa, without linking them to issues of security, human rights, good governance and development. Additionally, as member states of the EU still have their own diplomacy that they carry out in the EU framework, the EU can’t therefore be regarded as an effective and unitary global actor. For example, the ‘federating’ role of the European Commission in development policy is well articulated by the OECD DAC (OECD DAC 2010).

China's influence has continually grown due to the spectacular economic dynamics experienced in the state, and it has blended this effectively in the international order while also opposing policies and agendas of the EU and major Western states most especially on normative issues. Since the 1990s however, China has made efforts to consent to international conventions in order to gain access to institutions such as the WTO (Delmas-Marty 2005), and this pragmatic strategy of China has yielded economic developments and benefits to China. Also, contrary to the belief that China is a monolithic actor with unyielding tendencies, there is however a multitude of actors that determines the national and international relations of China, much like the system in Western states, although devoid of input from the media and civil society organizations.

The emphasis on the sovereignty of states and the non-interference of external actors is ingrained in its historical experience of foreign suppression and its priority to solidify its territorial sovereignty. With its historical experience, it therefore considers Africa as a 'natural' partner, and has continued to pragmatically pursue policies which it believes are in lieu with those of Western states; development aid, multilateral diplomacy.

Compared to the conditionality which is attached to aid provided by the EU, China's policy of 'no strings and conditions attached' mainly refers to the absence of political conditions in establishing aid relationship with partner states, as the relationship is mainly on the premise of negotiations in line with the needs of these states. In the area of commercial relations, as well as in development aid, China endorses a 'win-win' strategy, with the main goal of promoting mutual economic benefits. The 'no conditions attached' principle is conveyed via two basic ideas: firstly, that 'all states and partners are equal' and, that as equal partners, neither side of the parties have the autonomy or authority to instruct the other, and, secondly, the acknowledgement that political reform and economic structural reforms can only be achieved within the state itself and therefore cannot be imposed by an external actor. This principle basically is in contrast with the normative principle of the European Union and its member-states. Since 1964 when the aid principles of China was first proposed, the 'no conditions' principle has been the focal point of its relations with African states, and this was reiterated in the 2006 China's Africa Policy Paper.

Additionally, the principle of 'no conditions attached' has two fundamental points in its implementation with partner states. One is the provision of concessional aid by the Chinese

government to its partner states, a form of contract that regulates the modes of the implementation of the service that would be provided. These provisions mainly come in the economic sphere and the procurement are acquired through the Chinese market. Another principle is the 'win-win' strategy, which is a mechanism to achieve a 'win-win cooperation', or a mutual economic investment, and the aid grant from the Chinese does not exclude 'rogue countries' like Zimbabwe or 'fragile countries' like Sudan, as China does not expect any form of social or political changes from its partners, thereby, ignoring massive corruption, human right issues and well as good governance related issues, as China believes that the strategy of 'growth at any cost' can be handily implemented in Africa, with the imposition of conditions serving as an obstacle to this objective. These provisions are clearly distinctively different from the economic conditionality of the EU, which effectively compels reform measures on partner states (Condon 2012).

Furthermore, the development aid provided by China to Africa is measured and provided differently, as foreign aid figures are regarded as classified and top state secret (Chin 2012). However, according to the estimations of the World Bank, Chinese aid flow into Africa increased to US\$1.9 billion in the year 2009 (World Bank 2011). However, the aid from China has been often times been estimated by incorporating both the aid flows and other forms of financing i.e. grants which accounts for 40%, concessional loans - 30% and zero interest loans - 30%, and although the Chinese Ministry of Commerce is officially in charge of grants and zero interest loans, the China Development Bank and the China Exim Bank also have substantial share in financing this aid system (Ganzel, Grimm & D.Makhan 2012)

Also, contrary to China's investments which are mostly driven by the demand for natural resources such as oil and strategic minerals, which represents 60% of export from Africa to China (Kohli & Col), China's development aid is also driven by political and diplomatic concerns (Brautigam 2009). According to Brautigam (2009), the suggestion that China's aid to Africa is mainly focused on gaining access to the natural resources in African states is a 'widespread misconception', as the decision to provide aid is regularly an effect of many factors.

China's growing presence and influence in Africa particularly after the first convention of the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC) held in Beijing in October 2000 also yielded new approaches in the way the African continent interacted with the rest of the world. Most

importantly, when the ‘China’s Africa Policy’ was disclosed in 2006, it became evident that the involvement of China was beyond development and trade collaboration and was to cover several other sectors such as financial services, agricultural modernization, industrialization, facilitation of trade and investment, among others. In addition, at the third FOCAC meeting, which was also held in Beijing in November 2006, the Chinese government also promised to increase its development aid by the year 2009, and also offered to provide more loans and a comprehensive approach to debt reduction, put in place a China-Africa Development Fund, and to provide more technical training and assistance (Taylor 2011).

The increased involvement of China in Africa has also received positive response and support from many African leaders, and this makes the pre-eminence and influence of Europe being challenged. Among leaders who have lent their voices to the ‘constructive’ engagement of China in Africa is President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal who in January 2008 said that “*the battle for influence in the world between the West and China is not Africa’s problem. Our continent is in a hurry to build infrastructure, ensure affordable energy and educate our people . . . China’s approach to our needs is simply better adapted than the slow and sometimes patronizing post-colonial approach of European investors, donor organizations and non-governmental organizations*’. President Museveni of Uganda in an interview with African Executive also stated that ‘*The Western ruling groups are conceited, full of themselves, ignorant of our conditions, and they make other people’s business their business. Whereas the Chinese just deal with you, you represent your country, they represent their own interests, and you do business*’ (Tongkeh 2008).

Conclusively, looking at further analysis of the motives for China’s increased interest in Africa, it can be deduced that economic interest is the main objective. As the largest developing state in the world, China seeks to have direct access to raw materials, which are bountiful in Africa, as well as gaining unlimited access to energy sources and a ready market for Chinese manufactured goods, which isn’t different from what the old European colonial interests in Africa entailed. China however projects itself as a post-colonial actor and has also actively sought closer ties with African states thereby gaining their support as a different development model or option to the EU as evidently seen at the 2nd Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in December, 2015. Secondly, in the

aspect of foreign policy, China has embarked on a policy of non-interference in governance and human rights, and this has drawn increased criticism from the EU as they consider this as China's support for undemocratic regimes (Brautigam 2009; Tan-Mullins et al. 2010).

3. THE EUROPEAN UNION-SOUTH AFRICA TRADE RELATIONS

Over the last sixteen years, the economy of South Africa has undergone extensive political, economic, and social changes. The economy has also been metamorphosed by a sequence of reforms, which were aimed at creating a more market-orientated economy. And as part of the process of restructuring the economy, the South African government has centered its macroeconomic approach on stabilizing the economic environment of the state, by attaching specific significance to foreign investment, as it recognized the imperative role investment like this play in the reintegration of the South African economy into that of the international community, particularly after the end of apartheid rule in South Africa (OECD 2006).

In continuation of its ambition to constantly seek to develop untapped markets, the EU therefore sees South Africa as a perfect terrain where it can invest and also trade, as South Africa like many other African states is a nation that has abundant natural resources, coupled with relative low production costs that would be incurred and favourable population figures. The EU also has policies and tools in the area of integrated territorial investment (ITI) which allows EU member-states to package funding from several EU operational programmes to make sure these integrated strategies and policies are implemented. These factors seemingly favor a trade/economic partnership between the EU and South Africa (Gambini 2010).

However, gaining benefits from reciprocal trade from the EU can be a daunting task for states like South Africa, as the EU adheres to a stringent internal trade policy that ensures and take into cognizance, first and foremost, the protection and stability of its own internal market. This protectionist policy towards its own markets is most obvious in its agricultural sector where the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has helped ensure the protection of agricultural producers in the EU from external competitors, and also ensuring that there is little room for external factors to interfere with its internal market. In addition, due to the heavily subsidized market, European farmers basically have the benefit of limited export when their produce enters foreign markets (Goodison 2011). By ensuring aid packages and investing resources into the EU's production, the CAP has ensured maximum value for its own producers, which is often times to the detriment of developing states in the world.

And with the EU utilizing its status as a superpower to sway less developed countries such as South Africa into opening up their markets, it has encouraged an increase in the market availability of natural resources that would have been limited. Therefore, in order for the EU to be able to sustain its supremacy in the global market, it is essential for the EU to constantly seek ways to develop its own internal market, and this can only be guaranteed through untapped markets such as the ones available in South Africa.

In the year 2009, South Africa was recognized as the 14th largest trading partner of the European Union, and the 2nd largest partner from Africa (Gambini 2010), and the European Union is presently the largest export market of South Africa. It is also important to note that South Africa, a country that has abundant natural resources, and with a population of 53 million people, until recently, is one of the most politically and financially stable countries in Africa. While South Africa is regarded as a developed state, a large portion of the population still lives in abject poverty as there is a growing disparity between the rich and the poor, which has grown further due to the under-performing economy of the country since the 2009 recession, which has also coincided with Nigeria overtaking South Africa as the largest African economy. And with the EU providing about 70% of external assistance funds to the state, the EU has therefore become the most important supplier of aid to the country, and is also South Africa's most important trading partner. This has inevitably made the South African economy largely reliant on the European Union for its own internal economy efficiency.

Over the past 18 years, South Africa has made remarkable policy reform and has made progress by transforming its market from an import-substituting industrialization state to one that is export-oriented, and the result is an economy that is more open than before and a market-oriented economy. Before this period, tariff and non-tariff restraint influenced the country's trade system, thereby preventing any form of foreign competition. After gaining entry into the WTO, the country's trade system changed as South Africa now accepted a new liberal trading system. The entry of South Africa into the WTO basically was new testing waters for the country, as it not only tested the quality of South African products, but also tested its ability to service a market bigger than its own – the global market.

Since the year 1994, with the political transformation that evolved in the country, coupled with its admission into the WTO, the agricultural and trading sectors of South Africa has gone

through many positive changes which has further helped integrate South Africa into the world markets. With the negative effects and experience that came alongside the political and social exclusion of the apartheid government of South Africa, the post-1994 administrations were therefore more determined to reintegrate the South African economy into international markets. Economic integration and political symmetry were therefore the foremost prerogative for the South African government.

The diverse range of agricultural and trading produce of South Africa is also a result of the diverse climatic regions present in the country, with the presence of an extensive desert, as well coastal regions, in addition to the diverse natural resources all available in the country. This has therefore precipitated immense interest in South Africa with the EU becoming one of the major trading partners of South Africa.

As a result of the influx of trade and investment into South Africa over the past years, the government established measures that would protect its producers. As most of the agricultural produce and markets of these local producers remain largely unsubsidized by the South African government, the state officials therefore sought to create measures to protect its local producers from pressure that could be brought in from external influences (Gambini 2010).

With an open market in place and immense trade interest and partnership with South Africa increasing, major international trade agreements have been signed, and with this, the economy of South Africa has been revamped, and with immense economic potential, it has become a playground for the ever increasing influx of foreign investment. This success has been mainly attributed to the development of the internal market as it has allowed external players to influence the level of the South African economy (OECD 2006). While it was an integral signatory and member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group of states, South Africa however had limited membership and wasn't privileged to enjoy the preferential trade agreements under the Cotonou agreement that was rendered to the other ACP members, as South Africa was regarded as a relatively developed state during this period, and was therefore not eligible for many of the privileges that were provided to other ACP states. Additionally, in order to force the apartheid regime of South Africa to its knees via economic sanctions, South Africa's most important trading partners: the EU, the USA and Japan imposed sanctions on it, as this also

prevented South Africa from attaining full membership of the Cotonou agreement (Hefti and Staehelin-Witt 2004).

As the European Union and South Africa acknowledge each other as important strategic partners, as they both share mutual economic values and beliefs, thereby making them logical partners in an effort to promote socio-economic and political development and progress, there was therefore the need to formulate a separate agreement. The EU-South Africa economic ties and developmental policies are therefore under the purview of the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement (TDCA). The TDCA was ratified between South Africa and the EU on October 1st 1999 in Pretoria, South Africa (TDCA 1999), while it became fully introduced in May 2004 and this partnership was further broadened and incorporated when the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was introduced in 2007. The aim of the TDCA agreement is to establish a free trade area (FTA) between the European Union and South Africa over a period of 12 years and cover 90% bilateral trade between both parties. The agreement basically deals with the free movement of goods and services, and in addition makes provisions that include investment schemes to the benefit of South Africa and the European Union.

Since the introduction of the TDCA, South Africa has witnessed an upward rise in its exports with the EU, as it has risen from €15.8 billion in 2004 to about €22.2 billion in 2008. There has also been an increase in the trade volume by a $\frac{1}{3}$ from €31.8 billion in 2004 (Europa 2009). There was also increase in EU's export to Africa, as it grew from a minimum value Mio of €50,278 in 2005 to minimum value of €86,816 in 2015 (Eurostat 2015). The outline of the TDCA elucidate the objectives as strengthening the dialogue between South Africa and the EU; providing long term support to South Africa in its economic and social progression; promoting regional and economic co-operation and integration among the southern African states through the Southern African Development Community (SADC) platform; and the expansion and liberalization of trade in capital, goods, and services. The agreement is therefore considered as one that has played a crucial role in further integrating South Africa into the global economy. The TDCA, in accordance with WTO trade guidelines, commits both South Africa and the EU to reduce tariffs as it is expected to reflect the rates at the time of signing the agreement. Under the TDCA, the trade goods between both parties are divided into industrial and agricultural products (Kalaba, Sandrey and van Seventer 2005), with the EU's interest mainly within the agricultural

sector, whilst those of the South African government is mainly focused on the elimination of tariff in the industrialized sector. South Africa's primary exports to the European Union are mining products, fuels, machinery and transport equipment, and other semi-manufactured products. On the other hand, chemicals, machinery and transport equipment, and other semi-machinery products dominate the EU's exports to South Africa (European Commission 2016). Furthermore, under the agreement, the EU is expected to waive 95% of its tariffs on traded goods, whilst South Africa is to reduce 86% of its tariffs (Grant 2006).

The bilateral trade between the EU and South Africa indicates that in 2013, EU's imports was €15.6 billion while its exports was €24.5 billion, therefore resulting in a trade balance of €8.9 billion. In 2014, the EU's imports indicates €18.5 billion, while its exports was €24.5 billion resulting in a trade balance of €4.8 billion. While in 2015, the EU's imports stood at €19.4 billion with exports of €25.5 billion, therefore resulting in a trade balance of €6.1 billion (European Commission 2016).

Despite poor economic conditions, trade between South Africa and the EU, between the year 2000-2008 witnessed a 61% increase from €26.5 billion in the year 2000 to €42.6 billion in the year 2008 (Grant 2006). During this period as well, exports significantly grew by 71% and over 52% increase in imports. However, this remarkable trade and financial growth took a turn for the worse in the space of a year, due to the effect of the economic crisis, as from the period 2008 to 2009, exports from the European Union to South Africa fell by 20%. The effect of this on the market therefore necessitated the EU to rethink and re-strategize its trade mechanism. The EU therefore sought to re-establish and restructure itself in a way that would protect its internal market from prospective disruption or catastrophe of the global market (Gambini 2010).

The relationship between South Africa and the European Union is typical example of a north-south tie. The exports of South Africa to the EU are primarily natural resources, whilst its imports from the EU are essentially manufactured products. There has therefore been an increase in South Africa's dependency on the European markets, thereby making the South African market largely sensitive to volatility in the EU markets, and since South Africa is the weaker in this relationship, it is therefore prone to more knocks than the EU in the financial market. This is evident in the disruptions of the South African internal market, as it is usually triggered and influenced by the EU's demand and supply sequence. Although the increased trade relations with

China coupled with the integration of the Yuan currency has helped to partially alter this phenomenon.

The outcome of South Africa-EU trade agreement has however often culminated in a large imbalance in the South African market. For example, the South African sugar industry has suffered some knocks in its effort to adjust to the standards required by the EU in the trade partnership between both parties. The South African sugar industry is ranked as the eighth biggest in the world, with 50% of its production being exported to the global markets (Illovo Sugar 2011). Sugar therefore plays a big role in the economy of South Africa, and by extension accounting for a large segment of the employment sector in South Africa. The important role of this sector on South Africa as a whole has therefore increased the resolve of the South African government to establish viable trade agreements that will enable its local market to develop and expand in the global sugar sector. In order to maximize its sugar production whilst it has the capability, the South African government has sought to establish an EPA (Economic Partnership Agreement) with the EU granting South Africa a certain export quota of sugar to its market duty-free.

The EPA will be in place until the period when the South African market has the ability to acquire the full duty and the benefits from the quota-free access, as have been acquired for, by the other members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The increased access to the EU's sugar market will also increase the revenues of the sugar sector of South Africa, therefore helping to turnaround the decline being experienced in the market. The trade agreement, when eventually approved, will empower South Africa to establish itself as an equal player and have the ability to compete favorably amongst other sugar-producing states.

South Africa therefore banks on the liberalization of the markets in order to liberate itself from the recurrent trade distortions that appear to overshadow the development of its sugar industry. Since South Africa does not have the economic ability that is needed to support its local farmers in a way that will enable them to have a competitive edge, and protect them from the frequent disruptions that seem to occur within the sugar industry, it has therefore propelled the South African government to seek further trade integration with the EU, as this is one of the ways it can encourage development in its internal market. The South African government therefore hopes that by establishing an EPA with the EU, it will help in eliminating the

discrepancy on the markets. It also believes that the future benefits of such an agreement will lead to the protection of the South African internal market and also open up new business opportunities and increased production that are presently unfeasible. The prospective benefit is therefore one of the reasons why South Africa continues to strive for more bilateral trade treaties with the EU, as it views this as an avenue to securing the future fortune of its markets.

Since the commencement of the trade deal with the EU, South Africa has additionally benefited an increase in political discourse with the EU, as it has resulted in the inclusion of South Africa in dialogues where the impacts of prospective international economic or trade deals and the impacts of global climatic issues are top priorities. The trade deal with the EU is therefore not restricted to just economic benefits.

However, the primary issue, which seems to be an ever-present problem in the trade relations with the EU, is that on the one hand, South Africa is expected to fully open its market, to enable the EU gain unrestricted access, whilst on the other hand, the EU declines to open its own markets to the same extent as South Africa. Another cause of worry is the influence and domination EU-based businesses have in the Southern African market. In a recent development, an EU-based company, the Associated British Foods (ABF) acquired a majority share in an African-based production firm, Illovo Sugar (Goodison 2010). The entry by ABF into this market has effectively helped it secure 40% of the South African sugar production, thereby augmenting the total level of the production of sugar, which ABF controlled internationally. Southern Africans are therefore apprehensive of the effect that the EU influence will have on its market. Government officials and local producers alike also worry whether the acquisition by ABF will lead to mass exploitation of the local markets in an effort to serve the European and international markets. This effect of trade liberalization has therefore brought huge concerns to local producers within the African market. And although the entry of South Africa into the European market has afforded it vast investment opportunities, as well as trade advantages. However, despite this positive capacity, it has also been to the detriment of its southern neighbors, as it precipitated the exclusion or end to previous trading agreements with these parties, which has also often resulted in indignance and loss in national integration of these states.

4. THE EUROPEAN UNION-SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL PARTNERSHIP

The European Union and South Africa have a long-standing relationship and it has evolved through various phases over the years. As there have been changes in international dynamics and an increase in the role of Africa in global politics, the political relationship between South Africa and the EU therefore has an influence, and reflects how Europe and Africa relate to each other.

Relations between the European Union and South Africa have flourished tremendously since the birth and adoption of majority democracy in South Africa in 1994. Therefore, based on shared values and common interests between both parties and in order to forge ahead; there was the creation of a comprehensive partnership between the EU and South Africa.

Since the end of apartheid rule in South Africa, the state's post-apartheid foreign policy has evolved and taken numerous twists and forms. South Africa's foreign policy has therefore been often categorized by stages that correspond with the tenure of the three presidents that have governed the country after the end of apartheid; Nelson Mandela phase which pursued moral power in its foreign policy, the pan-Africanism policy of Thabo Mbeki, or the pragmatism of the Jacob Zuma's administration. The dynamism in the policy of South Africa all through the different administrations has been evident in the political partnership between South Africa-EU (Nathan 2005)

As already mentioned, trade and aid conventions with the ACP states have ensured the prominence of the European Union on the African continent, and the EU still has important economic and political partners in Africa, however this comparative advantage has been slowly eroded by the influence of China, and other emerging states like India and Brazil (UNDP Human Development Report, 2013). While maintaining a comprehensive partnership with the European Union, Africa states have however become resentful of the political influence of the EU in Africa, as they have advocated and seek to apply African solutions to African problems (Fioramonti 2012)

Nevertheless, the EU still considers South Africa as a crucial political partner, and also considers South Africa as the regional leader of governance in sub-Saharan Africa. This

prominent perspective of the EU is evident in the membership of South Africa in key North-South institutions like G20, and the G7+5, where important EU states, as well as the European Commission, are properly represented. South Africa is therefore regarded as the bridge between the North-South divide, and a political ally in the EU's quest for an increased norms-based governance structure in sub-Saharan Africa, and in Africa as a whole (Habib 2009)

The EU-South Africa relationship is an extensive one that is structured along both economic and political lines. With the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement (TDCA) signed in 1999 and re-negotiated during the proceedings to the formulation of the JAES, accounting for 90% of trade relations between the EU and South Africa, at the political level, the EU and South Africa also have a bilateral strategic partnership, the only of such partnership in Africa, with the agreement analyzing the need for a continental co-operation, and identifies South Africa's immense assistance to regional integration through the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) (European Union 2007)

The prominence of this relationship between the EU and South Africa has apparently shifted in the 21st century. When the initial TDCA negotiations took place in 1999, the EU came to the negotiating table from a position of strength, however, there is a new dynamic as the case would be presently, given South Africa's expanding South-South co-operation (Overview of EPA negotiations 2015)

There are also other lingering issues that affect the EU-South Africa political relations, as the power being asserted by the EU to define the position and relationship of its partners, on EU's terms has brewed resentment in South Africa, and among other African states. Evidence of this strained relationship was evident in the annual ministerial dialogues between the EU and South Africa, with the EU making efforts to alter the terms of the EU-South Africa relations, with a proposal to diminish aid and increase trade with South Africa, based on the assessment of South Africa as a middle-income state (Zondi 2013)

Furthermore, in respect to the governance structure that drives the foreign policy of South Africa, and by extension its relations with the European Union, there has been a growing influence applied by the office of the South African President, at the expense of the Department

of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), especially under the administration of Jacob Zuma. Under the administration of Jacob Zuma, long-term foreign policies have been redirected and are now less prioritized, as he decided against attending the EU-Africa Summit in 2014, which is a further indication that the EU has increasingly become a marginal political priority of the current South African government. Basically, South Africa considers itself as a member of the growing South; thus the need to champion the interests of the South, which it considers more important (Alden and Le Pere 2004)

South Africa has continued to play global and regional roles, which has also affected the EU-Africa relations. South Africa has continued to seek significant influence beyond the borders of Africa, with manifestation of this growing influence in its unique standing as the only sub-Saharan member within prominent international institutions such as BRICS, G20, and IBSA (Moore 2012). At the end of apartheid rule in South Africa, Nelson Mandela as president of the state capitalized on this attention and momentum to situate South Africa as an example of global citizen that should be emulated. South Africa during this period sought to encourage other African states to address the issues of democracy and human rights, the respect for international law among others (Marthoz 2012)

The presidency of Thabo Mbeki also systematically continued to enhance the role of South Africa on the continent, as South Africa played a pivotal role in the reconstruction of the moribund Organization of Africa Unity (OAU), to become the African Union (AU), and also helping to establish a new vision for the development of the African continent, which was enshrined in the act that constituted NEPAD. The Mbeki's administration also provided political leadership as it encouraged other African governments to readjust their domestic policies in order to help actualize the objectives of sub-regional and continental integration (Alden and Le Pere 2004)

Whereas the administration of Nelson Mandela used the method of naming and shaming other African states that violate particular norms, Thabo Mbeki adopted a diplomatic approach, which was interpreted as a reflection of the weakness and lack of exemplary suasion (Nathan 2005). Jacob Zuma's administration has also kept this approach, despite criticism that Zuma's diplomatic method has been more pragmatic and less of structured dialogue compared to the process that characterized Mbeki's administration (Landsberg 2010). One obvious change in the

foreign policy of South Africa under Zuma's administration towards Africa has been one of discretion to states with poor democratic governance, as illustrated by the decision of South Africa not to apprehend the president of Sudan, Al-Bashir, when he visited South Africa in 2015, despite a International Criminal Court's warrant which South Africa is a signatory to (Fabricius 2015).

As illustrated above, South Africa wields significant, although sometimes challenged, influence on the African continent as a whole. The contribution of South Africa to the multilateral relationship between Africa and the European Union is proof of South Africa's influence, which has taken direct and indirect forms. For example, this direct influence comes through the important role South Africa plays in the inter-continental partnership with the EU, through the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), as well as its significant contribution to EU-Africa high-level meetings, and interregional discourse between the European Union and numerous sub-regional institutions, like SADC. South Africa also influences Africa-EU discussion in a number of indirect forms, specifically through its important contribution to NEPAD and the AU, as well as involvement in the management of regional conflict among others.

South Africa also played a pivotal role in the negotiation and implementation of the JAES. For example, South Africa was represented in six of the eight thematic discourses than any other state, with the themes serving as implementing tools of the partnership agreement until 2014. In the same vein, South Africa was the only sub-Saharan African state to co-chair an area of the partnership agreement (Tywuschik and Sherriff 2009)

CONCLUSIONS

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), which was established by African leaders and the EU during the 2007 Lisbon Summit, has failed to achieve its key goals of fundamentally transforming political development and cooperation between the two continents. Over the period of the partnership, the overall context of the relations between the EU and Africa has fundamentally been altered. In the course of the years, many African states have experienced unprecedented economic prosperity, mainly as a result of many extractive sectors.

On the one hand, many of the African states have also been confronted by an increase in the rate of unemployment, political instability and conflicts in many states like Libya, increasing inequalities and poverty among the populace, terrorism among other vices. It is also imperative to note that most of these African states don't have viable and performing institutions, as these institutions are either overly weak, or are dependent on funding from donor states, and are therefore not up to the required standards to tackle the multifaceted problems that affect African states.

On the other hand, the EU is also struggling with its own economic and financial crisis that has affected its credibility in not just in European states, but in other parts of the world as well. Despite the successful negotiations that preceded the Lisbon Treaty and the eventually JAES agreement, the EU has been unable to reinforce its role as a global political actor. On the contrary, it is skepticism that has been on the rise in many of the EU member states, and this has negatively affected the cohesion of the EU in its partnership with Africa.

The relationship between Africa and the EU has grown considerably especially in areas of trade and security issues especially after the adoption of the JAES agreement. Many observers however still see the relation between Africa and the EU as an imbalanced partnership with the EU as the dominant party in the relation. It is also argued that in almost all interregional and interstate relations, there is always evidence of unevenness, and therefore term Africa-EU relations as an asymmetrical design. It is however important to note that the EU has been able to initiate an equal relationship in interregional cooperation. Also, there has been considerable involvement in terms of cooperation and partnership between the EU and Africa, as well as support for peacekeeping missions in Africa, the promotion of democracy and human rights.

The JAES must be further viewed in regards to one of its fundamental goals: to be people-centric. With consciousness of the absence of vote based system and good governance in numerous African nations, the dynamic representatives in the JAES have differing level of authenticity and a lot of people are prone to represent the enthusiasm of few rather for the enthusiasm of the more extensive masses. An important aspect is identifying alternative methods and qualities of improving the difficulties that confronts the African continent today, which has made it difficult for Africa to talk with one voice, (this is genuine likewise for EU with immense assorted qualities and diversities as well as interior difficulties.) On the other hand, with enhanced intercontinental responsibility, Africa can turn into a stronger voice that can begin to put requests on its accomplices in the worldwide stadium. This would be an accomplishment that could prompt more equivalent partnerships and associations.

The relationship between both continents has also become more complicated in the light of emerging key players that have continually expanded their ties with the African continent, and with individual African states. Apart from the increasing presence of China in Africa, there has also been growing influence of new global actors like Brazil, India, South Korea and other emerging global economies into Africa, as they have successfully initiated strategic partnerships with African states. These new players have brought in investments, trade and technical assistance, economic co-operation among others into Africa, as they aim to increase the development on the African continent, by increasing and focusing their efforts on growth and achieving substantial productivity, and an increased South-South co-operation. This basically contrasts with the traditional donor-recipient relationship based on aid, that takes place in the traditional North-South relationship.

In addition, these new partners also adopted a different style of partnership with their African counterparts. They abstain from interfering with the internal politics of these African governments, and have also openly built alliances with controversial African states like the Mugabe government of Zimbabwe that have faced series of sanctions from the EU and Western governments.

With the development and adoption of the JAES, most African states still remain skeptical on the relative context of the terms of mutual equality and partnership that will characterize the JAES, and relations between Africa and the EU. The JAES launched in 2007

with the framework of pitching a new strategic partnership between Africa and the EU was built on common values and goals, with futuristic innovative objectives which are supposed to be implemented through sequential action plans and partnership. The change in terms of relation to one of mutual and equal partnership has mixed assessment.

Over the years, this change in the terms of relations has shown dividends in Africa as evident in the boom of Africa's economy with a recorded growth of about 5.1% since 2007, and has helped lay the roadmap for the creation of a common market by 2017. There has therefore been a shift in Africa from the period of depending on donations from Europe to one that has renewed developmental priorities ranging from socio-economic progression, industrialization, youth employment and empowerment, developmental and governance and the capacity to react to threats caused by security challenges. However, on the other hand, many of the European states that constitute the EU have been facing severe economic and financial crisis since 2009 and this have had negative effect on keeping with the tenets that characterize the joint partnership agreement between Africa and the EU. Therefore, the challenge for Europe now is how to reconcile its objectives and manage its commitments towards Africa especially in the face of emerging global actors like China, Brazil, and South Korea offering Africa new opportunities for development and also proposing incentives that will pave the way for partnership with Africa on trade, investment and political cooperation.

It is also important to note the institutional constraints that will tend to influence the dynamics of the relations between Africa and the EU. Basically, with the financial crisis having more impact on EU states, the focus of the EU member-states is deriving ways of rebalancing the commitments of the EU with Africa. Thus, it is imperative to consider the next European parliamentary elections and to acknowledge that its results and outcomes will most likely alter the EU's priorities and its relations with Africa. However despite these foreseen challenges, consultations between both parties have concluded that it is beneficial to both Africa and the EU for the continuation of its partnership, and have also considered prospective areas to extend relations and also renewed partnership.

Despite the high expectations associated with the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), both the EU and Africa have still not benefit from this mutual partnership. Although, there is no contesting the underlying principles that brought about the agreement such as partnership,

mutual respect and equality, there has however been a lot of skepticism, especially on the part of the Africans who regard the partnership as 'unequal' and an agreement that is mainly driven and determined by the terms of the Europeans. Basically, instead of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) living up to the expectations of a dynamic political scheme between the EU and Africa, the JAES has remained a 'paper strategy' that has failed to materialize due to a lack of political will to drive the themes and agendas of the partnership. It has also been managed in a bureaucratic way that shows the hallmark of a lack of back up to the ambitions and goals to the partnership.

It is therefore important to revitalize the moribund EU-Africa relations, as the JAES has been characterized by mutual distrust and a growing sense of apathy over the partnership between the EU and Africa. In order to achieve this, it is imperative for both parties to strengthen the political discourse of the JAES. A more open dialogue is needed to provide an effective political partnership, as essential and delicate issues that have most time resulted to controversies would be properly addressed.

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