

"A Vision for World Peace: Regional Perspectives in the Europe – Africa Region"

Thank you, Mr. Chair; I will make good use of the time granted. This is a rare occasion to gather such eminent scholars; I will make use of this chance to share more on the subject. Why did I choose this occasion to focus on an area that is normally disconnected because of geography, history and culture? I decided to presentation a perspective for new geopolitical verticality in the interests of peace, stability and security.

The initials "Africa, Mediterranean, Europe" read in French as "âme", which translates in English as "soul." I will focus on new trends here, because we need to build bridges and deconstruct barriers and perceptions which may be untrue in reality. Let me start by quoting my colleague Marc Bloch a French historian and Resistance hero who lived about the same time as Albert Camus. Marc Bloch said, "The question is not whether we are at war or at peace; the question is that we are living in crisis." From that perspective we must find every way possible to build bridges and deconstruct false perceptions. This is what I want to do.

It is fortunate that the three terms of the motto chosen for our convention — interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values are at the core of the relation between the two continents, Europe and Africa and linked with the militancy, history, geography, and culture shared by civilization for 5,000 years. I will address why I say there is a Eur-African or Europe-Mediterranean civilization based on common prosperity. Of course we have to fight against everything which prevents or burdens this common prosperity.

The notion of asymmetry reappears when it comes to tackling what we see as problems, which may be future prospects from a positive perspective. There are beautiful mutual values we share, yet we also share certain "common unacceptables." It is unacceptable that people are dying to cross the Mediterranean. We have an emergency need to find a better future. 6,200 have died since 2015.

I suggest we concentrate on the fact that the relative weight of Africa on the international agenda is increasing. I will take this occasion, speaking from both a European and an African perspective. Our colleague might have mentioned the Africans' perspective on the new European leadership. The von der Leyen Commission has tackled this, announcing that in June 2020 there will be a European Council dedicated to the relation between Africa and Europe because a Eur-African Union summit is planned. The 6th EU-African summit is scheduled in 2021. This is a milestone on the agenda of the Commission.

The interests of Africa are framed in terms of opportunity. Let me elaborate on these and how these are opportunities for economic growth. The African trade infrastructure is expanding, and we will see expansion of the infrastructure in urban development, social dynamic, and transition toward democratic culture. Much progress has occurred since the Arab Spring of 2011, but many more factors are involved.

On the other hand, it is becoming an arena for rivalry between regional powers. We see local regional rivalry between Morocco and Algeria; moreover, there are global, geopolitical and geo-economic trends such as the push and pull between the European Union, China and America in this triangle. We should consider all this litigation between the European Union, China and the U.S., as well as the European Union and Turkey. The same goes for the standoff between the Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Some in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran regard Africa as a new theater of operation. This is not yet a new Cold War but a new era of crisis management. This must be considered when it comes to finding the right words and the right institutions to address that diplomatically.

Let me point out why Africa is important not only for Europe but for Africa and the rest of the world. First of all, keep in mind that 30 percent of the exports from Africa go to the European Union, while only 3

percent of the EU exports go to Africa. So there is this asymmetry against which we must struggle with very actively when it comes to energy: 55 percent of African fossil fuels are exported to Europe.

Some nations like Libya and Algeria depend solely on that, amounting to 80-90 percent of their GDP. We must be dedicated to seek stability both in Algeria and Libya with that perspective. We assess that 40 percent of the largest recent energy reserves of gas and oil have been found in Africa in the northeast of Mozambique. This is what is fueling a rebellion in Kabul, where they know about the large deposits off the shores of Senegal and Mauritania, not to mention the huge Levy Atone gas facility. We must consider the broader perspective including Egypt, Libya, and it's even more serious in Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. It is important to have in mind the broader perspective including other regions.

I will speak about the question of migration. There are 22.3 million immigrants living throughout Europe. 22.3 million people makes up 4.4 percent of the 513 million people living in the European Union. According to the latest figures of the new Commission, 50 percent of the non-EU immigrants who are non-EU citizens came from Africa. About 10 million inhabitants, roughly 50 percent of these migrants, come from Maghreb. These are the figures I wish to highlight as I open my presentation.

As Dr. von de Leyen stated in the European Commission Presidential guidelines for 2019-2020, we need a comprehensive strategy, for Africa is our close neighbor and most natural partner. It is a continent full of opportunity and potential for cooperation for business. It will become home to the youngest, fastest growing middle class in the world with private consumption expected to reach 2 trillion a year by 2025. We must make the most of the political, economic, and investment opportunities these changes will bring.

It is not only in the interests of Europeans; it involves others. Upcoming generations will be harvesting these wonderful opportunities. Another factor calling our attention is the security nexus between the Maghreb and Africa, with the Sahel being the most obvious. When you have countries spending 20 percent of their GDP for security, such as Nigeria, it burdens their capacity to tackle the economic issues.

80 percent of jobs being created in Africa are in agriculture. We must help Sahel because this is where stability is at stake in both North African and Europe. The growing importance of Africa on the EU agenda should be reinforced rather than replaced or overshadowed by existing policies toward the Mediterranean.

In the Maghreb we celebrate 25 years this year. The first migration process, a very difficult yet reliable strategy, was launched in 1995. This is important as this year in 2020 we mark the 17th anniversary of the African Union, created in 2002. But we must also remember the anniversary of the trade agreement between Europe and Africa. The roadmap to a new agreement must be completed in 2020.

Europe should strengthen its regional relations, especially in its neighborhood. This is particularly so at a time when the world celebrates the 75th anniversary of the founding of the UN. The danger of militarism for the EU is obvious, as the new president of the European Commission notes. Cooperating and working with others is what our Union is all about. This is why Europe will always lead the way when it comes to upholding and where necessary updating the rules-based global order. I think this starting point offers a possibility to discuss, which is increasingly important in a world moving away from militarism to regional relations. This is especially so in Eurasia, though I am focusing on the Middle East, North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The EU must not make the mistake of regarding itself as the sole player. On the contrary, order is becoming a Realpolitik-driven geopolitical player itself. Rather EU must stick to the approach identified in the new strategic agenda of the EU (2019-2020) as a supporting multilateral organization in implementing the 2030 sustainable development agenda and preserving an open global economy.

Furthermore, if the European Union really believes it has an international role to play, it is and should be a more relevant and robust internationalist value defender. If it holds to that agenda, the goal is for us

to be geo-sustainable but not to ignore politics. We must recognize that we do not need more organization, nor do we need new ways of finding paths toward better relations between the continents. Let me rephrase: the salient question is a brand new project and not a project of Union.

This was agreed in 2008 when we decided to relaunch the Mediterranean Union created under the authority of the French president in July 2008. There is presently multilateral fatigue. It is not about making new organizations but choosing new persons and personalities to assemble a poly-governance, summoning truly pure energy or bringing in an existing multicultural organization. Ours is certainly a candidate. A pastor raised the issue of whether a faith-based organization can serve in the international system.

How should we regard the role models, the new leadership emerging from the science culture? Where can leaders meet to discuss at lower cost? Where can scholars like us have a way not only to speak but to actually do things and concretely advise? Leadership must give this some thought. The EU must work on strengthening mutualism in the present vacuum of leadership. The past leadership merely worked on overcoming Chinese leadership.

Religious faiths say that cooperating and working with others is what our Union is all about. The drive system of our Union must change. As I mentioned, it needs to adapt to the growing ability in international relations, becoming less bureaucratic and more open to non-governmental players.

A new multiple system requires new rules or reforming old rules, contextualized in rule-based order preferences managing from long-standing liberal democratic norms which still have considerable purchase. Europe can and should remain a laboratory of mutualism and multi-level governance with that in mind.

Europe must also recognize that events across the Mediterranean have an adverse impact in the long run if sustainable governance and growth and development of strategy are not implemented to contain the pressure and put pressure above on economic and political migration. Let's talk less of Europe as a cultural superpower and more in terms of pragmatic partnership and business potential that embraces the potential. The narrative of the original colonial legacy will affect the atmospherics of the relations, not only because we have a 13-km barrier, but because we share a certain number of values.

Again I stress that we Africans partake in a civilization of cross-border community which does not know borders in the development of continent-to-continent relations between north and south. So we in Africa should be treated as a single entity and our continent should be treated as a single entity. Africans are working very precisely and rapidly on that.

The African continental free trade agreement will change everything. The market of 1.2 billion Africans translates into a trillion dollars of business opportunity. Surely if Africans are united, Europeans should be united as well. As we know, this is quite an issue. There will be 600 million Europeans by the end of the century, at the same time there will be 2.4-2.5 billion Africans. The population growth in Europe is no more than 4% per year, while the annual growth of Maghreb is 40%. Consider that the fertility rate in Europe is 1.7 while the average for the African continent is 4.3, and in some nations like Niger it is 7.7. Niger will have 100 million people by the end of the century. This represents an opportunity, but a challenge as well.

Focusing on the migration agenda, we should see migration as an opportunity, not as a problem. Duke professor Stefan Smith explained that the non-European population living in Europe will soon reach 25 percent. I deeply respect him, but tend to believe there is no such thing as a true European race. That does not mean people want to continue as they are, but they want to see European-based values applied everywhere as they ought to be. We must remind ourselves that migration is needed. To rephrase, it is a matter of strategic importance to call for migration. The population of Europe at the beginning of the 20th century was 25% of the world population; it is now only at 7% and will go as low as 2% by the end of this

century. We need to repopulate the continent: either we Europeans do that by ourselves or we let others do the job for us. Let us live in this new frame of mind — let go of the outdated script. I simply remind you: one in four inhabitants is a certainty by the end of the century.

This is a huge opportunity for them and for us as well, so we need to organize well. There are two dynamics we have to take into consideration: the Marrakesh Pact calling for secure, organized quotas and regular mid-ocean just reminding us that migration is a civil national factor, people wish to move from one place to another. By the way, 75% of the migration between certain continents crosses neither the Atlantic nor Indian Ocean nor the Mediterranean, but is continental-based, to keep things in perspective.

In view of the fact that I think the worst thing we could do in talking about the African continent or the best thing we should advocate is the necessity to have our policy more vertically integrated into the continents and long-term perspectives. It can also be horizontal in the sense of dealing with what Asian reality is about. We must not repeat the mistakes we made over the last 20 or 30 years, namely trying to confront, contain, or oppose our counterparts outside the battlefield arena. Let me simplify by stating that Africa itself has become the new platzdarm.

We don't want to face it directly when we start to address why do what we do, why are we what we are. I am speaking of the narrative of the president whom I do not care to name, who is opposing, saying that Russia is an illegal place or is an illegal passenger riding the globalization hosted by the U.S. Donald Trump spoke of world states "acting as a mercenary" in reference to Russia. Of course this is because it is on the other console, that this confrontational scenario is a reality. It is equally a reality whether we speak of Russia or Turkey; and nowadays we speak of restraining Libya and China.

Let's not make the same mistake. Let's not forget that the African continent is a continent of opportunity. It is not only our opportunity, though we have special personal stakes there; it is not only about 200 years of history; it is not only about geography (there are but 14 km separating Al Jazeera and Tangiers); it is because of the interconnection of all that we're facing, for example, migration terrorism. This interconnectedness offers opportunity for both sides when it comes to economic prospects. They are our partners and neighbors. This is why the new trend toward less American engagement is a wonderful opportunity for Europe to exist where it stands and of course I do believe that the southern border is the place where we can mobilize more dispro boats and implement more European Godfather policy.

This has been my perspective stated very briefly.