

EVENT REPORT

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

MULTINATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT POLICY
DIALOGUE

JOHANNES HÜGEL
MARC PRATT-YULE

May 2017

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Green Urban Development Prospects in Africa

On 26th of April the Multinational Development Policy Dialogue organized the dinner-debate: "Green Urban Development Prospects in Africa". The event looked at potentials and challenges of Africa's fast urbanization and detected possibilities for future African-EU city partnerships. In addition, examples of sustainable models of urban development and growth were discussed with regards to climate adaptation, energy access and energy efficiency. With speakers from an African delegation of mayors, members of parliament and city planners, as well as representatives of the European Parliament and the European Investment Bank, the discussion became a vivid exchange of best practices, experiences, knowledge and ideas.

In her introducing remarks Mrs. **Sabina Wölkner**, Head of the Multinational Development Policy Dialogue Program, referred to the several challenges the African continent is currently facing. In this context, the most urgent challenges to be addressed are the lack of access to electricity and the necessity to develop certain structural programs for the rapidly expanding cities. In this regard, and keeping in mind the already existing demands for water, sanitation, and energy access there are a vast amount of possibilities in cooperation and development of green urban development.

Prof. Dr. Oliver Ruppel, Program Director of KAS Climate Policy and Energy Security Program for Sub-Saharan Africa, moderated the



debate and pointed out the relation between energy and security referring to the so called energy-climate-security nexus. This



concept combines the different aspects of energy, climate induced challenges (such as droughts and floods) which influence the regional stability and thus the overall security of the African continent. It is therefore of utmost urgency, that the developed cities of Europe, especially in regard to their experiences made in green urban development, share these experiences and their knowledge with the rapidly growing cities within Africa. In this context Mr. Ruppel emphasized the possibilities

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and advantages of city – partnerships which will promote synergies of future collaboration.

In light of the various challenges the African continent is facing, Mr. **Jens Gieseke** MEP and Member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, described the vast amount of possibilities for future cooperation. In this context, he depicted the experiences made in Germany during the energy transition regarding solar power. Although a catch-all approach would be appreciated by most actors, the efficiency of locally based development programs will most probably show faster results. Additionally, Mr. Gieseke outlined different strategies to reduce the CO₂ output in cities through car sharing, electric mobility and other concepts. One of these strategies, the lower emission mobility strategy for example, aims at a 25% share of electric cars in the total mix of cars in the EU market in the next 10 years. This is a good and ambitious goal, but nevertheless, such strategies are only liable, when the necessary energy is accessible. Therefore, Mr Gieseke emphasized, the importance that this energy should be from renewable sources, as any other source of energy would contradict the green urban development progress made within the cities. Regarding these challenges the mindset to tackle them, and the goals set are applicable for both Africa and Europe. Therefore, Mr. Gieseke argued, an in depth cooperation would be very desirable.

In succession of Mr. Gieseke's speech, Mrs. **Jacquiline Amongin**, Member of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, and Member of the African Union and Pan African

Parliament, Chairperson of the Committee of Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, referred to the vast amount of initiatives on sustainable



development in Europe. She described her impression, that many of these are also applicable for African countries. Following her arguments, the African Union needs a change of its framework to allow a better and faster implementation of policies. Instead of pursuing a sustainable development and tackling the consequences of climate change, which can be seen in various developments, among this can be found the aforementioned droughts, floods and other weather extremes, people in Africa would simply submit themselves to the "unavoidable change of weather". Through better education, and the creation of regional sustainable areas, additional jobs in the sector could be created which could help to reduce the migratory movement towards Europe. She urged all participants of the discussion to tackle these challenges as a unit and to foster a better Africa-EU sustainable partnership, providing technical and capacity support.

Mrs. Célestine Ketcha Courtès, Mayor of Bangangté in Cameroon and Vice-President of the Network of Local Elected Women of Africa – REFELA, in turn pointed out, that the existing poverty prevents effective sustainable development in many of the African countries.

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With the current outlook of the population tripling in Africa by 2050 Mrs. Ketcha questioned the current infrastructural projects and expressed her opinion that these will be insufficient regarding the housing and labor situation. Additionally, she argued, that the aforementioned problems can only be solved through initiatives, which involve the private sector and include the African women, as many of them are in positions of responsibility within the local authorities, and traditionally forming the backbone of Africa. Mrs. Ketcha especially focused on the importance of the African outer city territories, as many of the current problems result directly from unresolved issues in these areas. By resolving the African continent's problems regarding youth unemployment and missing opportunities for all levels of the society, the SDG's on youth, migration and peace could be achieved. As program to be implemented in all five areas of Africa she suggested an integrated model which shall involve local authorities, African women in politics, a coordinated Africa-EU development cooperation and a stronger engagement of the private sector.

Mr. Diederick Zambon, Head of Division, Country Relations and Public Sector Sub-Saharan Africa, European Investment Bank (EIB), described the work the EIB is currently undertaking to increase the development of the continent. Similar to Mrs. Ketcha, he underlined the importance of cities as they are estimated to triple by 2050. Thus, Mr. Zambon encouraged all participants to foster the cooperation between the

national policy making level and the local authorities as both actors have a shared interest in flourishing cities. He outlined the current approach of the EIB in Sub-Saharan Africa in four steps:

- The impossibility to tackle all problems at the same time has led the EIB to become a centralizing unit in which local as well as international actors can receive bundled competence, e.g. for well-tailored urban planning.
- The importance of access to financing, which the EIB provides through its role within the EU as well as with regard to outer – EU projects. A realistic project approach under the involvement of the public and private sector, which focusses on urgent infrastructural needs.
- Enhancing the cooperation between national and locally based initiatives in cooperation with national authorities, working especially in the improvement of communication.
- Expand the sharing of knowledge acquired in green urban development.

In his conclusion Dr. Ruppel pointed out that governance and "rule of law" remain main challenges for the African continent. A sound legal environment with regulatory frameworks would therefore be key for finding sustainable solutions to overcome the aforementioned challenges.