

# Fact sheet

## Strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African countries

In its government programme the Danish Government established that it would commence efforts to develop a comprehensive plan for the engagement with Africa that reflects on and strengthens the many current and future bilateral and European initiatives, and seeks to promote cooperation, security and greater opportunities.

In its work with the formulation of the strategy, the Government has emphasised the importance of involving and listening to African voices. Consultations with a wide range of international partners – in the UN and EU, as well as in Denmark and not the least Africa – has been a central part of the strategy process.

Since August 2023, Danish ministers have conducted 13 visits to African countries, where they sought inputs on the strategy. Incoming visits from 28 African countries in this same period also provided opportunities for consultations, such as during Denmark's hosting of the Nordic-African Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May 2024. Danish embassies in African countries have also played an important role in organising roundtable discussions with many relevant partners. Representatives of African governments, civil society, business and youth have all provided inputs on the strategy.

A wide range of partners in Denmark, representing the UN, civil society, business, youth and others, have similarly been engaged through roundtable discussions, workshops, etc. Stakeholders in Denmark have submitted more than 25 written inputs on the strategy.

The strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African countries analyses challenges and potentials in Africa at a time where Africa's geopolitical relevance has never been greater. The strategy also clearly establishes that it is in the interests of Denmark and the EU to increase their engagement in Africa. The strategy sets out how Denmark will promote more equal partnerships with African countries through a new and broader direction for Danish engagement – bilaterally, through the EU, and in multilateral forums – and where Africa's role in international politics is to be recognised.

The strategy contains thematic chapters on: Denmark and the EU in Africa; investments and strengthened trade cooperation; climate adaptation and green growth; technology and innovation; migration; African solutions to peace and conflict; an international architecture for the world of today; and active people-to-people engagement, exchange and cultural cooperation – all of which are areas with potential for stronger cooperation.

To facilitate immediate implementation of the strategy's new direction, the Government has decided on an initial series of initiatives in order to anchor the strategy in both Denmark and African countries.

Partners will be involved in the follow-up on the strategy on an ongoing basis. Additional initiatives are expected to follow in the coming years as part of further implementation of the strategy.

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## Figures and trends about Africa

### Demographic development

- Africa's population will grow significantly in the coming years. Between now and 2050, Africa is expected to see a 70% population growth, while Europe will experience a 5% decline.
- With its current population of approximately 1.5 billion people, Africa is the second most populous continent, and the African population is expected to grow to nearly 2.5 billion by 2050.
- In 2050, one in four people in the world will live in Africa, and one in three of the world's young people between the ages of 15 and 25 will be African.

### Investments and trade cooperation

- Africa is home to 11 of the world's 20 fastest growing economies, and it is estimated that in 2050 the continent will have 24% of the global working-age population.
- Up to 12 million young people are entering the labour market each year, while only around three million jobs are being created.
- The EU remains the largest trade partner for African countries, but over the past 20 years the EU has seen a 25% decline in its share of Africa's total trade.
- China is the country that individually trades the most with the African continent, and China's share of African trade has increased fourfold over the past 20 years.

### Climate adaptation and green growth

- In 2050, one in every two climate-displaced persons are expected to be from Africa, demonstrating the continent's high vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.
- Africa holds more than 39% of the world's renewable energy resources and is home to approximately 30% of the world's global mineral reserves, which are essential for the green transition.

### Technology and innovation

- The number of active social media users in Africa has increased greatly, from 69 million in 2011 to more than 420 million people in 2021.
- At least 39 African countries have been subject to disinformation campaigns, mainly from Russia.

### Migration

- In 2023, Europe registered 292,985 irregular arrivals from Africa via the primary migration routes from the African continent. Of this total, 182,759 were from African countries. More than 3,000 people were reported dead or missing while trying to cross the Mediterranean in 2023.

### Peace and conflict

- The security situation in many African countries is a challenge that threatens regional stability. Five of the World's 10 countries most affected by terrorism are in Africa, and the number of annual fatalities linked to militant Islamist groups in Africa has increased from 14,384 to 23,322 in less than a decade.
- Nine out of 10 coups registered globally since 2020 has taken place in Africa.

### Reform of the international architecture

- Africa has 54 out of 193 votes in the UN General Assembly. This corresponds to just over a quarter of the UN's votes.
- In the UN Security Council, no African countries are to be found among its permanent members. This is despite the fact that more than half of the decisions taken in the UN Security Council pertain to conflicts in Africa. The African group has one seat per 18 countries, while the Western group, of which Denmark is a part, has one seat per approximately every six countries.

### Exchange

- The number of young Africans is growing, and therefore more African students are seeking to study abroad. In Europe, there are many students from Africa in especially France, the UK and Germany. Outside of Europe, there are large numbers of African students in China, the US and Russia.
- Meanwhile, African students are increasingly seeking to study in countries such as China and Russia rather than Europe.

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## Concrete initiatives in the Africa strategy

### ➤ Strengthened diplomatic presence in Africa – in scope and in depth

- Danish embassies will be opened in Tunisia, Senegal and Rwanda in 2025.
- More diplomats will be posted to a number of existing embassies, and regional hubs will be established at the embassies in Egypt, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria. The embassy in Ghana will also be strengthened to support work on peace and security in West Africa. The embassy in Ethiopia will continue to serve as a continental lookout, among others due to the AU headquarters' location in Addis Ababa.
- In order to increase our presence in countries where Denmark does not have an embassy, a flexible model is being developed to enable a presence in selected side-accredited countries, e.g. at the EU's delegations in Africa.
- The embassies in Mali and Burkina Faso will be closed, as the conditions for constructive bilateral cooperation are no longer present. After closure, these countries will be covered from Copenhagen and by a new Special Representative for the Sahel and the African Great Lakes region. Support for the populations in these countries will be maintained through humanitarian aid and a continued development engagement..

### ➤ Strengthened political dialogue with Africa

- In addition to Danish engagement, Denmark will also fight for an increased European engagement. The EU must become better at building equal partnerships and be the preferred partner of the African countries. Therefore, Denmark will work to strengthen dialogue between the EU and Africa ahead of the next expected EU-AU summit under the Danish presidency of the Council of the European Union.
- Efforts will be made for entering new green strategic partnerships with leading African countries across the continent. Dialogue will be initiated with Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya to determine and explore interest.

### ➤ The EU as a stronger and more effective actor in Africa

- The EU must be able to deliver where it is needed. This requires stronger coordination between the member states and increased cooperation between EU instruments, so that the EU's strengths translate to influence on a scale commensurate with the EU's total weight in the global community. Denmark will therefore contribute to concrete EU initiatives in African countries where Denmark is present. Funding of DKK 295 million is planned for 2025 to support Danish engagement in EU initiatives in Africa through Global Gateway and Team Europe. Focus areas will include regional free trade, green infrastructure and digitalisation. An example of a concrete project is an effort to create more jobs for young people in Nigeria.

### ➤ Improvement of opportunities for trade and Danish investments

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark's export advisory services relating to African markets will be cheaper. For African countries, these services are expected to be approximately 40% cheaper than current rates. The new hourly prices have been provisionally set as follows: Low-income countries = DKK 700, middle-income countries = DKK 900, high-income countries = DKK 1,400. The current hourly rate is DKK 1,120 for all countries. All 54 African countries will be charged in the low-income category.
- To create more opportunities for Danish companies in African markets, a new DKK 150 million Africa facility will be established under the auspices of the Export and Investment Fund of Denmark (EIFO) in 2025. These funds will serve as a loss coverage to cover the risk of export credit financing of approximately DKK 500 million. To strengthen Danish exports, the facility will focus on export credit financing in high-risk countries in Africa, where it is otherwise difficult for EIFO to provide financing today.
- Under the auspices of the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU), a new funding window for Africa of DKK 100 million will supplement last year's reform of IFU. These funds will be used to enable IFU to lend money to companies for smaller projects, or by IFU investing directly in smaller projects. In other words, IFU is reducing the minimum size of projects it will engage in. This expands the opportunities of Danish business to secure financing for collaborations between Danish and African companies.
- A regional innovation centre will be established in Kenya in 2026 to facilitate collaborations in innovation and entrepreneurship. The innovation centre will support emerging initiatives and start-ups.

### ➤ Increased efforts for climate adaptation and support for a just, green transition in Africa

- More than DKK 1 billion is planned to be allocated to new water initiatives in Africa over the coming years, including DKK 425 million in 2025. These efforts will increase resilience to climate change. Water is a good example of a Danish position of strength, where Danish authorities and companies have a lot to offer. The funds will for example be targeted for projects focused on improving drinking water supply and climate adaptation in South Africa, as well as increasing access to clean drinking water in low-income areas in Ghana.
- African countries have a great need for well-functioning cold chains to increase food safety, and this is an area where Denmark and Danish businesses have significant expertise. As part of an increased focus on climate adaptation, in 2025 the Danish Government will explore how Denmark can contribute to strengthen the establishment of cold chains for agricultural products in Africa.

### ➤ Reduction of irregular migration and prevention of refugee flows

- To reduce irregular migration, Denmark will contribute to strengthening the EU's migration partnerships with countries of origin and transit. Three new multi-year migration programmes with total funding in excess of DKK 1 billion will be launched, with the majority of activities implemented in Africa. Focus of the programmes will include capacity building of immigration and border authorities in Africa, as well as the management of irregular migrants and refugees along the three Mediterranean routes.

### ➤ Strengthening exchanges

- Exchanges must be a higher priority in order to strengthen ties between Denmark and African countries. A pilot programme from 2023 will be continued via Danida Fellowship Centre, while a new DKK 30 million cooperation programme for knowledge and innovation is planned to be initiated in 2025. The new programme will focus on increased exchanges and partnerships between Danish and African universities.
- Efforts will be made to explore how Denmark can do more so that further African students can study in Denmark and Europe, e.g. through the use of EU funds allocated for educational collaboration with African countries, shorter-term visits in the form of summer school or individual courses, and/or more PhD residencies.

### ➤ Support for African leadership and capacity to handle security challenges

- As part of a strengthened engagement through the EU, beginning in 2025 the Danish Government plans to contribute to the EU's military training mission in Somalia. The deployment of two staff officers will contribute to planning, advising, or training of the Somali security forces. This will be the first-ever Danish contribution to a military EU training mission.
- In support of national and regional solutions that anchor ownership in Africa, the next phase of the Danish Africa Programme for Peace and Sustainability (2024-2028) is planned to be doubled from DKK 200 million to DKK 400 million. The programme will support African solutions in peace and sustainable development and, among other things, strengthen Denmark's engagement in and support for ongoing capacity building in the African Union and ECOWAS.
- To counter disinformation in Africa, the frame for the Peace and Stability Fund will be increased by DKK 25 million in 2025 from the previous level of DKK 425 million.

### ➤ Increased mutual understanding of cultures

- To strengthen efforts in the area of culture, the Danish Government plans to allocate DKK 50 million annually from 2025 onwards for initiatives in Africa. The cultural effort will contribute to supporting mutual understanding of cultures and values between Denmark and African countries.
- Furthermore, concrete initiatives to preserve the shared Danish-African history and promote intercultural dialogue will be prioritised on an ongoing basis. As an example, and based on dialogue with Kenya, a project to renovate the Karen Blixen house in Nairobi will be initiated.