Deutsche Afrika Stiftung e.V.
Fondation Allemande pour l'Afrique
German Africa Foundation

Summary

The Africa policy of Germany's new government – a clear strategy in geopolitical competition?

Wednesday, 3 December 2025, 6.30–8.00 pm
German Bundestag, Paul-Löbe-Haus, Room E.800

Background

Even before the United States began to reduce its engagement in international development policy, global geopolitical shifts had become increasingly evident. In an emerging multipolar world, African countries are diversifying their international partnerships. Simultaneously, their voices are gaining importance in multilateral forums, as demonstrated by the admission of the African Union to the G20.

Against this backdrop, many international players are stepping up their involvement on the African continent, including not only China and Russia, but also, for example, Turkey and the Gulf states.

The new German government has also explicitly committed itself in its coalition agreement to an Africa policy that reflects the continent's strategic importance, with a particular focus on promoting the private sector. To this end, it plans to align development cooperation more closely with foreign, security and economic policy in order to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of German external action. At the same time, the draft federal budget for 2026 contains further cuts to the development cooperation budget, which in practice could make it more difficult to form stable, strategic partnerships with Africa.

How can an integrated, interest-driven approach to Africa policy be implemented through improved cooperation between the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy? How will the planned cuts in development cooperation affect the work of German actors in Africa? How can successful collaboration between the private sector and development cooperation contribute to a strategic Africa policy? What expectations do African partners have regarding the German government's new Africa policy?

Welcome Remarks

Markus Koob MP (CDU),
Head of the Africa Working Group of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group

Dr Peter Fischer-Bollin,
Head of the Department of Analysis and Consulting, Konrad Adenauer Foundation

Discussion

Serap Güler,
Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office

H.E. Stella Mokaya Orina, Ambassador of the Republic of Kenya

Dr Volker Treier,
Head of Foreign Trade and Member of the Executive Board, DIHK

Dr Petra Warnecke,
Head of Africa Division, GIZ

Moderation

Ingo Badoreck
Konrad Adenauer Foundation

Conclusion

Sabine Odhiambo
German Africa Foundation

These and other questions were at the heart of the discussion organised by the German Africa Foundation in collaboration with Markus Koob MP and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

Highlights

- **Strengthening economic engagement** by integrating African businesses into European value chains
- **Deepening strategic partnerships** through closer alignment of development cooperation, foreign trade, and security policy
- **Enhancing political capacity to act** by prioritising reliability, sustained engagement, and clear strategic priorities
- **Building future-oriented cooperation** by expanding skills development and economic collaboration in line with African priorities and needs

Discussion

Economic opportunities and deeper partnerships

From an economic perspective, the initiatives set out in the coalition agreement are viewed largely positively. To date, Germany has accounted for only a comparatively small share of African trade volume and is therefore only partially realising the existing economic potential. Greater integration of African companies into European value and supply chains could help to boost investment and intensify economic cooperation. The necessary structures for this are already in place in many African countries and could be further developed in a targeted manner through German technology, expertise and investment.

On the corporate side, too, cooperation with African partners is increasingly seen as an opportunity. Many companies that are already active on the continent or maintain business relationships with African markets are optimistic about future developments and plan to expand their involvement. A visible sign of this growing economic partnership was the first German-African Business Summit in 2024 in Nairobi, which was attended by around 1,000 participants from the worlds of business and politics. Plans are already in place to continue the event: the next summit is due to take place in Ghana in 2026 and is set to further strengthen economic ties between Germany and African nations.

Impact of budget cuts on policy towards Africa

Against the backdrop of the 2026 budget, which provides for significant cuts to development cooperation funding, the Federal Foreign Office assesses that Germany will in future need to target its economic and foreign policy activities more precisely and coordinate more closely with its African partner states. In this context, there is a need for a more interest-driven Africa policy that operates on a cross-departmental basis and takes greater account of German interests. Foreign trade, humanitarian and security policy aspects should be more closely interlinked in order to create stable framework conditions for joint economic development. This also includes closer integration of development cooperation and German economic policy. This year's government talks with Ghana were cited as an example. In the run-up to the talks, the economic interests of 50 German companies were identified and subsequently incorporated into the negotiations.

At the same time, it was pointed out that cuts to development cooperation funding could have a significant impact on German implementing organisations such as GIZ. Both internal structures and ongoing projects in African countries would be affected. In many countries, this could lead to funding gaps, which would increasingly be filled by non-traditional donors such as China or the Gulf states. However, their involvement often does not meet the established standards of German development cooperation and could be accompanied by rising levels of debt in partner countries. Germany therefore runs the risk of losing political influence and access to economic markets.

A policy towards Africa guided by Germany's interests must be based on reliability, a strong presence on the ground and a clear political direction in order to safeguard Germany's political influence and capacity to shape events in the long term.

A sustainable partnership from an African perspective

The Kenyan Ambassador emphasised the great importance of the partnership with Germany. However, against the backdrop of changing global and economic conditions, she said, cooperation must be shaped more strongly from an African perspective. Traditional partnership models and existing agreements should therefore be further developed and adapted to current challenges in order to enable sustainable and long-term cooperation across various economic sectors.

Taking Kenya as an example, this is already evident from the skilled workers agreement between the two countries, which is intended to strengthen cooperation in the areas of labour migration and the recruitment of skilled workers. At the same time, its practical implementation shows that there is still room for improvement. In particular, additional provision and targeted support measures are needed to help Kenyan skilled workers prepare linguistically. This would improve their chances of successfully integrating into the German labour market and create fair opportunities for access.