



Seminar on the occasion of the EU-Africa Summit: AERAP fostering international understanding, friendship and solidarity between Africa and Europe

Brussels: On the occasion of the 4th Africa-EU Summit and the 5th EU-Africa Business Forum, AERAP held a roundtable seminar titled "AERAP's contribution: Investing in People, Prosperity and Peace," which took place on 2 April 2014 in Brussels.

AERAP is a stakeholder platform of industry, academia, the public sector and civil society established to define and implement radio astronomy cooperation initiatives between Africa and Europe. The roundtable seminar explored the future contributions of AERAP to the theme of Africa-EU cooperation set for the Summit, "Investing in People, Prosperity and Peace."

The Heads of State and Government of the EU and Africa met in Brussels on 2-3 April 2014, on the theme of "Investing in People, Prosperity and Peace", committed to enhance Africa-EU cooperation for the years to come.

The summit confirmed that the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES), adopted at the Lisbon summit in 2007, setting out the vision, values and principles to which they are committed, remains the strategic political reference for EU-Africa relations.

The 4th EU-Africa summit agreed that the implementation of the Joint Strategy should be further improved in the light of experience and developments in Africa and Europe as well as globally.

The summit also decided on actions in priority areas where cooperation between the two continents is essential, has high potential in the framework of the Joint Strategy, and where substantial added-value can be expected. And that these actions will complement other initiatives undertaken as part of the cooperation between the EU and Africa at country and regional levels.

The summit agreed to pursue and deepen political dialogue and cooperation. This EU-Africa dialogue will be complemented by regular high level contacts between European and African leaders on common challenges and crisis situations. A 'road map' for 2014-2017 can be found [here](#).

By exploring and reflecting on the themes of the Summit, AERAP was able to contribute to the broader discussion on the future of Africa-EU cooperation, bringing the role of international science and technology collaboration for mutual African-European social-economic benefit to the forefront.

In collaboration with its international partners, AERAP contributes in a number of ways to investing in People, Prosperity and Peace. Human capital development is one of AERAP's

core priorities, supported primarily by facilitating the training of the next generation of African and European scientists and engineers.

Prosperity is also a key objective for AERAP, reflected in its quest for leveraging the investment in radio astronomy related technology domains such as ICT, renewable energy or advanced manufacturing for economic growth and industrial competitiveness, for the mutual benefit of Africa and Europe.

Above all, AERAP also supports peace by promoting international scientific cooperation, by bringing people together, fostering international understanding, friendship and solidarity between Africa and Europe.

The meeting was enriched by the presence of numerous professionals, ranging from scientists, radio astronomers, industry and academia representatives, as well as officials from the EU institutions. Given the remarkable variety of the participants' backgrounds, the seminar theme was approached from a number of different angles, which provided a unique, comprehensive insight into the area of science and innovation.

All speakers explicitly reiterated the fact that innovation and scientific discovery in the area of radio astronomy are not only important for improving the quality of our everyday lives, but they also have a vast applicability in other sectors, which may not always immediately be associated with radio astronomy.

One of the key messages put forward during the seminar is the fact that there is a need for a more effective dialogue between the scientists and the civil society, in order to make a better use of the already existing mechanisms and discoveries in ways that best benefit the wider public.

AERAP will prepare a communication addressed to the EU policy makers to inform them about the messages conveyed during the seminar and will highlight the areas where their support would be most beneficial.

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Editor's Note

The African-European Radio Astronomy Platform (AERAP)

AERAP is a response to the calls of the European Parliament, through the adoption of the Written Declaration 45/2011, and of the Heads of State of the African Union, through their decision "Assembly/AU/Dec.407 CXVIII", for radio astronomy to be a priority focus area for Africa-EU cooperation. AERAP is a stakeholder forum of industry, academia and the public sector established to define and implement priorities for radio astronomy cooperation between Africa and Europe.

The overall goals of the platform are to leverage radio astronomy, advance scientific discovery, improve knowledge transfer and stimulate competitiveness across both continents. The platform will also enable effective dialogue to build a shared vision for international cooperation in radio astronomy.

Further information on AERAP: www.aerap.org