



2ND TURKEY - AFRICA NGOs AND THINKING FORUM ISTANBUL DECLARATION

The 2nd Turkey - Africa NGOs and Thinking Forum, with the main theme of “Energy, Food, Water Security and Humanitarian Development in Africa” was successfully organized in a quite positive atmosphere by TASAM’s (Turkish Asian Centre for Strategic Studies) African Institute at the Pullman Istanbul Hotel in Istanbul, as part of the GLOBAL CIVIL SUMMIT 2016, from the 20-22 April 2016.

A great number of guests attended and participated to the Forum from different kind of organizations and institutions both from Turkey and 45 African countries as well as all over the world, such as representatives of public, private and civil societies; a large number of non-governmental organizations, some international institutions and representatives of business world, diplomatic mission representatives, and besides academicians, scholars, experts and particularly strategic Think-Tanks, and representatives of national and international media organizations.

Ongoing convergence and co-operation tendency in the relation between Turkey and African countries have eventually reached a new level, which may be described as a higher level of strategic partnership. It Depends on such co-operation to accomplish series of sustainable actions and mutual institutionalizations either between civil society organizations themselves - specifically in Turkey or in Africa - or mutually between those in Turkey and Africa. In the frame of the 2nd Turkey - Africa NGOs And Thinking Forum the following topics of “Global Challenges and Food, Energy and Water Security in Africa; Turkey’s Water Security Vision , and Institutional Models”, “Security Conflicts, Challenges, Opportunities and International Cooperation over Water and Energy; The Role of Water on Energy Policies and African Water Politics”, “Food and Energy Security Turkish-African Vision”, “Human Development: Education, Health and Other Social Policies” and “Economy Politics of Human Development and Turkey Vision: Health for All” were being discussed. An International Civil Society Organizations Development and Co-operation Platform USTKIP meeting, under the chairmanship of Mr. Süleyman ŞENSOY, Chairman of TASAM, and with the participation of representatives of NGOs from around 45 African countries with the African civil society, represented by its apex entity, the African Union Economic Social and Cultural Council – ECOSOCC, was also successfully held at the same period of time; a meeting crowned by various important resolutions.

It was pointed out that the Turkey interests and studies concerning the continent has gained momentum, as of Turkey declared 2005 the “African Year”, in line with increase in Turkey-Africa trade volume and related investment activities. Diplomatic representatives of Turkey have increased in number and lift effectiveness in the continent. It’s also agreed that the initiatives by certain institutions such as Turkish Airlines (THY), Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) has also increased. However, it’s ascertain that although some departments and institutes has been opened in some universities, the scientific researches, geo-political studies and the works based on geo-strategic and philosophical thinking about the African continent still fall short of the expectations. In this regard, the highlighted topics in the forum are as follows:

1- There is an urgent need for tangible outputs of scientific researches and studies, both quantitative and qualitative, enabling the partners to have the chance to meet each other with a better understanding, particularly in terms of human resources, and to develop or build stronger trade and investment relations in pursuit of long-lasting strategic partnerships. Thus, African continent and with dynamics of Turkey-Africa relations should be given more primacy on the agenda of scientific researches or academic studies. Being able to include the students both from Turkey and African countries, at different levels, in such multi-dimensional and multi-lateral activities and studies in question, as part of student exchange or scholarship programs such as the Turkish Government Scholarships programme, is of great importance when considering the various mutual advantages.



2- On the other hand, pertinent issues regarding energy security in Africa were raised. In effect, as part of global energy problems and ensuring security for Africa's energy resources and facilities, the Agenda 2063, a strategic policy planning of African Union should be boosted as to favor the socio-economic transformation of the continent which has been put into the agenda of the G20, titled 'Energy for All', in the frame of Africa Energy Vision, and with some organizations taking the lead initiatives such as PIDA (Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa) and other institutions.

3- It was affirmed in this forum, which has received an important sympathy based contribution to the solutions for energy problems in the continent under the guidance of African Union, that Turkey should maintain its policies with the awareness of the continent's economic, social and political potentials especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, especially from the idea that commercial activities play important roles in the consolidation of people and communities; trade and social relations should be developed and strengthened through a public diplomacy perspective (the policies such as guided by the Akhi culture for example), which considers trade activities as communication and social cohesion or consolidation opportunities between communities, as well as the way strengthening diplomatic relations.

4- In effect, a rapid development can be observed easily by updated data especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, it should be remembered that about 621 million people, according to the data from World Economic Forum (2015), are unacceptably deprived of electricity facilities. Furthermore, considering its rich potential concerning either raw materials or human resources that become the spotlight of the world, a way should be found so that Africa can reap the benefit of its current growing situation, particularly as the continent should face the next global phase of industrialization.

5- One of the main obstacles in terms of Africa's industrialization is the energy production. Furthermore, lack of energy infrastructure and related facilities as well as challenges concerning the establishment and development of energy production mechanisms are still some part of the obstacles which need to be overcome. Thus, the continent's raw materials and energy resources should be operated and managed by African people as well as the exportation of these materials to foreign markets, in parallel with the slogan "African Solution to African Problems" .

6- Africa's infrastructure development vision was presented through the examples of institutionalized works inspired by New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) model, as a common initiative of African Union Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and African Development Bank (AfDB). As part of Africa's Energy Vision, Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) calls upon the related countries and organizations to set up continent-wide large-scale hydroelectric turbines. In addition, it was mentioned briefly that there are certain future plans of the organization for continental or regional development, aiming at infrastructure building, including Nigeria-Algeria pipeline, related to transport, energy, communication technologies and conterminous water resources as part of Africa's development vision policies and strategies.

7- It is important to improve alternative strategic co-operations inter-continental and inter-regional levels as well as in between continent-countries, such as African Union and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Turkey-Africa.

8- As a reminder in this frame, the Turkish Opening to Africa Action Plan (1998), Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit (Istanbul, 2008) and 2. Turkey-Africa Cooperation Summit (Malabo, 2014), are considered as milestones of Africa-Turkey partnership process; it was thus emphasized that, the implementation of the decisions aiming at ameliorating the infrastructure facilities for production and consumption of energy in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way, as well as promotion of collaborative networks between the African continent and Turkey is of great importance. In fact, as part of Turkey-Africa Strategic Partnership process, successful implementations and experiences related to renewable and sustainable energy, as well as other alternative resources such as non-farm bio-fuels and even thermal energy should be exchanged. Possible alternative co-operations should be encouraged throughout this process.



9- Considering the fact that the status of Africa within G20 is extremely poorly represented and currently only one of the 54 African countries (South Africa) is a member of G20, the importance of Turkey's initiatives based on the G20 year of 2015 presidency, which are giving priority to assistance in the development and resolution of institutional problems of the continent which faces global economic challenges, was also emphasized.

10- Also considering the point that at this moment in Africa, where almost all countries have a strong urbanization tendency and initiatives to develop comprehensive policies for green public spaces, parks and landscape gardening, it is strongly emphasized that being deprived of green spaces harmonized with urbanization and regular maintenance services is unacceptable especially in countries where ecological facilities are exceptionally favorable; certain arrangements, which should directly be dedicated to the public benefit, in potential forest areas held in control and aiming to ensure a more peaceful and healthier living environment, need to be done; and strengthening the protection of forest areas should be considered as being of same type of issues as the overall activities related to the infrastructure, including transportation, energy, water, discharge of urban waste and particularly health.

11- On the other hand, the policies and plans of Guinea's government towards development of the "Botanical Gardens", which are closely related to either agriculture and bio-energy or farming and food issues of the continent and particularly important in terms of scientific researches, were mentioned; the need for international cooperation in such initiatives was expressed.

12- It was emphasized that sustainability of sanitation, hygiene, an especially access to water; energy, water and food, which are perceived as if they are different problems, are actually mostly interconnected problems. It's pointed out that the importance of water for food and energy security arises from its position as a part of management process, which benefited from natural resources in a most effective way of water resources; and that this process can be sustained only by promotion and competitiveness. It was highlighted that, although there are certain small differences observed between the regions, the continent is still the most threatened area, in terms of food security, in the world and increasing food demand can be met only by the development of effective agricultural methods.

13- It was equally emphasized that, the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development goals, many rural dwellers in African countries are not even aware of points such as ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition as well as promoting sustainable agriculture; making management of water and sanitation sustainable and available for all as well as ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Further, it's also highlighted that the NGOs, one of the cardinal roles of which is monitoring and evaluation, should be better placed to sensitize the people, particularly women and youth, to the 2030 Agenda and better met the need to hold the government accountable for the implementation of related policies.

14- Considering the fact that the very nature of urbanization phenomenon negatively reinforces water and sanitation issues, it was emphasized that water security is threatened in Africa, particularly in urban areas. Lack of well-managed efforts against rapid population growth, poor planning, pollution, unplanned urbanization and competitiveness based on the demand caused by restricted availability of resources were sorted as major factors that are threatening water security in Africa.

15- Over the example of Nigeria and in the context of water, energy and food in particular, the forum drew attention to the security issues on the continent and the importance of strategic cooperation in discouraging of terror events, which have been emphasized as one of the most important factors that leads to social instability and consequently hindering the social and economic development.

16- It was mentioned that sustainable policies should be developed in order to build resistant cities in terms of infrastructures. Thus, the current electrical system, which is common in Africa and consists of



production, transmission, distribution and supply phases, should be renewed because particularly its supply phase is extremely unprotected against bad weather conditions.

17- From the fact that in sub-Saharan Africa where informal economic activities are prevalent, followed by agriculture as an income source of the female population, mounting as high as 85-90 percent, while they carried out their households, the forum drew attention to the training needs of African women who are working in such undeclared small enterprises, as uneducated and inexperienced employees, particularly in the tourism sector. Thus, the need for improving and implementing related sustainable policies.

18- The Turkey-Africa Strategic Partnership was recalled in the context of the report released after the Head of States Summit held in Africa (2008) and emphasized that there are certain important roles which need to be undertaken by NGOs in this partnership process. This is significant, particularly these days in terms of Turkey-Africa relationships. It was confirmed that such events similar to the 2nd Turkey-African NGOs and Thinking Forum (2016) provide intellectual contribution to the formation of a continental awareness and Turkey-Africa long-term relations should be promoted within the scope of the win-win partnership process, which focused on stability and equality and consideration.

19- In order to have impact on decision-makers and policy making processes concerning Turkey-Africa relations, it is required to establish a "task force" as a joint initiative of Turkish and African NGOs in collaboration with AU-ECOSOCC.

20- Considering that there are some differences between the local NGOs and International NGOs (INGO) in terms of finance providers, especially that African NGOs are not preferred by Western sponsors on the grounds of accountability issues of local NGOs, it was stated that, large part of supports have often been received by international NGOs, and the how local NGOs can be reliable in order to make them favorable in terms of financial support was being questioned. However, it was pointed out that, it is highly unlikely that local community based organizations, which are supported by INGOs or institutions, can act independently particularly in Africa.

21- It was considered that the NGOs could lose their leadership roles in the securisation of social and economic justice as they gradually become a type of economic enterprise. Over the roles of INGOs and local NGOs in influencing the capacity of local powers, in terms of development processes, the forum questioned whether the NGOs serve the public, as it should be, or sponsor organizations.

22- From the facts that, based on a case-study for African students in Ankara, it was emphasized that more civil and public initiatives, aiming at the elimination of mutual misperceptions need to be developed. Also it was pointed out that the performance towards socio-cultural cooperation would be decisive in the course of in both medium and long-term bilateral relations. Particularly, Turkish NGOs should be in constant contact with African students in Turkey. The relationships between these students and NGOs should be strengthened through specific initiatives and events such as projects and programs, but beside that, African students in Turkey should be considered as significant contributors to the development of bilateral relations, not as a source of income.

23- Knowing that many African communities are going through a development and industrialization process, it was emphasized that certain elements need to be considered related to the training and modernization of technical labor force, which is conceived as the most efficient human resources based development strategy. To develop projects, including some factors such as strengthening economic and social development, increasing policies and strategies, as well as employment facilities and opportunities, improving working conditions, acting according to a predetermined plan are some prerequisites for enhancing social and economic development.

24- Given that the most valuable capital is human resources, and economic growth is much more influenced by age profile of a population than its size (and considering a rate of 60 percent, 20 percent of which consists of young people between the ages of 15-25, and an overall demographic structure, with



three out of four of which is projected to be 20 years old by 2020 and a continent where about 10 million young people join the labor market each year), to develop appropriate policies for education, health and employment as well as good management of the process on demographic advantage - based upon a given generation, education, and therefore highly timing - is of great importance.

25- It is clear that a young population offers much more potentials for social and economic development of a country, but only if they can find more opportunities for good education and professional skills. In fact, an uneducated and professionally nonskilled young population will have more negative effects on stability, economy and consequently on the overall development of societies. Thus, a qualified young segment of population motivated to provide strong contribution to Africa's unity, peace and development agenda should be in harness in a way of participation platforms and with a vision showing regard to the process, in which the continent or even the world in general is working on a new global contract on developmental issues, and realizing that a properly-developed and integrated Africa can only be possible by making the best of its demographic advantages.

26- One of the main factors hindering social and economic development of sub-Saharan Africa arises from energy challenges which include distribution and supply processes. The forum noted that these types of multi-dimensional problems should not be considered independently from inter-governmental relations and market failures because of by their very nature. Therefore, project implementers, academicians and policy-makers should act jointly in developing innovative perspectives and policies, at a regional level, against these negative factors.

27- Innovative initiatives require innovative institutions and organizational structures. This can be seen for instance, in the current institutional structures where energy security is not even a subject matter and these types of organizational structures are inadequate as part of partnerships between local and national, regional or international as well as public and private NGOs. For this reason, institutional innovations directed towards collaborative works are essential for improving energy security (including specific titles related to energy and energy security such as geographical innovation, inter-sectoral initiative innovation based on public-private partnerships, inter-regional innovation).

28- The United Nations, in spite of their major operations and efforts for social development, have failed to produce permanent solutions for the African problems. Certain think-tanks, with western way of thinking about the continent, are willing to produce some policies giving priority to the continuation of colonial conditions. Certain international media organizations also serve to mask western-oriented colonial order and justify any kind of military interventions. Thus, based on these facts and thoughts, it was pointed out that, the states and governments have implicitly been re-designed in Africa (in guise of democracy), depending on the energy policies, in addition to the unfavorable factors such as epidemics, famine and drought.

29- Case studies of social development-oriented NGOs and thought-based civil society institutions should be re-organized in a more systematic way by taking advantage of the data of the United Nations Development Programme as well. Necessary development models that vary from region to region and relevant new methods should be developed and task-sharing platforms among institutions on the sub-themes of social development should be encouraged. Consequently, the states which are aware of the importance of research activities led by civil society should increasingly continue to benefit from think-tanks in terms of policy-making processes, and from NGOs in terms of case studies, in the perspective of successful implementation of strategies concerning foreign policy.

2nd Turkey-Africa NGOs and Thinking Forum, held under the **Global Civil Summit 2016** ended with the **USTKİP International Non-Governmental Organizations Cooperation Platform** meeting. The minute of proceedings of this meeting will also be shared with related persons, institutions and organizations.

22 April 2016, Istanbul