

AFRICA IN THE VIEW OF EUROPEAN STRATEGIC INTERESTS

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Abstract: *Despite the myth of marginality and irrelevance, Africa has always played an important role in international politics. The slave trade, the struggle for territorial acquisition and control and the subsequent colonial period, the proxy wars of the Cold War and the growing importance of the continent's natural resources demonstrate how important Africa was and is to the wider global political economy.*

States and international organizations have defined areas of strategic interest in their main strategies. Africa is seen as an area of strategic interest for a number of actors of the international scene, such as the UN, the EU, the World Bank, BRICS, and the USA, Russia, China, Japan or the Arab states of the Middle East.

This paper presents a realistic research of Africa's importance to the EU and means to mutually exploit one each over for a win-win output. The research is presented in an analysis built on three phases: better understanding of African profile as provider of resources and consumer of security, identified European strategic interests in Africa and the EU-AU cooperation framework as expressed in documents and political leaders' narratives.

Keywords: *European interest, strategy, EU-AU cooperation, resources, policies.*

Introduction

Africa plays a vital role in the geopolitical landscape in terms of its geography, being a vast landmass stretching from the temperate zones in both the northern and southern hemispheres. It has natural resources in the form of minerals, metals, and fossil fuels, and the potential to contribute to global food security¹, all of which usually represents the etalon for prosperity. Yet as a continent, it has failed to exploit these strengths for its people, because weaknesses prevail in terms of struggle for supremacy over the resources “that converted the continent into a hotspot of proxy wars, tribal distinctions, and the religious segregation fomented in the prolonged violence that swallowed millions of young population, exhausted resources

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¹ Pavocat Blog, *Africa: its Geopolitical importance, International Trade and the Scourge of Corruption*, 2023, available at: <https://pavocat.com/africa-geopolitical-importance-trade-corruption/>, accessed on 11.09.2024.