

## ELISABETH GUIGOU

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am going to give a European perspective on the present and future relations between Africa and Europe, which, I think, need to reset not only ideas, but above all means and instruments. As Nathalie Delapalme just said, I think we must now get to the heart of the matter. I think we already agreed the last time in Marrakech on a common diagnosis, i.e., that Africa and Europe face the same challenges.

Mr. Minister, you have just spoken about security, but there are many other issues. Covid makes the need to meet common challenges even more acute because our geographic, cultural and historic proximity compels us to.

After many others, I would like to emphasize youth. I am referring to what Prime Minister Aminata Touré said yesterday and what Ms. Tuakli said two years ago in Marrakech.

We all know that there will be twice as many young people entering Africa's labor market as there are jobs being created. I think that is the main problem. The question, it seems to me, is figuring out how to create more jobs and under what conditions, and how Europe can help Africa with the idea of sharing the benefits of this common development, of course, and not just making sure that only Europe reaps them.

I am thoroughly convinced that everything depends on Africa's industrialization. This is also what the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire said yesterday. Of course, international and public aid is needed for public services, but it is also vital for promoting and attracting private investment to develop industrialization.

I would like to talk about a new tool that, it seems to me, may attract private investment to Africa to create local jobs and ensure that the sharing of added value and the processing of Africa's bounteous raw materials benefits Africans and African youth.

Special and secure economic zones draw private investors, who find the logistics and services they need there. According to UNCTAD, there are slightly over 200 in Africa. Most were created by China based on the model of the highly successful Shenzhen special economic zone.

The success stories are those that include Africans. First, it is strictly delimited. These areas have a special customs and fiscal regime and infrastructure that facilitates production. Above all, they are woven into the local environment. Young Africans are being trained and

educated, and not just to import foreign labor that works and re-exports processed goods based on raw materials.

Moulay Hafid Elalamy, Morocco's Industry Minister, chaired a webinar about a very interesting study that has just come out. It had support from Meridiam, a company very active in Africa.

An extremely thorough study of special industrial zones across Africa reveals that the most successful ones use labor and favor structural transformations that benefit Africans. Those that fail are content with producing on site and reexporting without ever benefiting the local population.

I think we have an instrument here. There are certainly others. However, in the current talks to update cooperation instruments between Europeans and Africans, we need to move away from grand, overarching ideas and big meetings where we repeat the same things to each other, although they are useful because of the networking opportunities they offer. We need to come up with operational and practical proposals.

This is where I agree with the approach Nathalie just mentioned. Let us focus on very specific issues. Nathalie just gave us a very useful talk about health. I am speaking to you about youth employment and industrialization with this instrument, and perhaps others as well.

I will stop here because if you're interested in the study, you can find it on the website of the Institut de prospective euro méditerranéenne, which I talked to you about last time in Marrakech.

Mr. President, I think my six minutes are up. Thank you very much for your attention.

**Robert Dossou**

Thank you, Ms. Guigou.