



REPORT

European Union (EU) - African Union (AU) Research & Innovation Ministerial meeting

16 July 2020

Special focus on COVID-19

SUMMARY

The first ever **EU - AU Research & Innovation Ministers' Meeting** took place on 16 July 2020, under the framework of the EU-AU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation. EU Commissioner Mariya Gabriel for Innovation, Research, Education, Culture and Youth and AU Commissioner Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor for Human Resources, Science and Technology, opened the meeting, which focused on the public health and socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 crisis and discussed short-, medium-, and long-term R&I interventions to alleviate the consequences of the crisis and economic recovery. The meeting was very well attended by 21 Ministers of the AU and 10 (deputy) Ministers of the EU, and delegations from 53 EU-AU Member States, and two African regional economic communities (CEEAC and UMA).

Although EU and AU Member States launched many individual activities addressing COVID-19, all countries underlined the importance of more international R&I cooperation between the EU and the AU, mainly for three reasons: firstly to accelerate information gathering and exchange; secondly, to initiate target-oriented research and innovation activities; and thirdly to reduce time to market of research and innovation activities.

Both Commissioners concluded on a common vision and objectives, fully in line with the African Agenda 2063 and the EU comprehensive strategy with Africa. Both valued the strong and clear messages from the attending Delegations, which should be brought to the attention of the EU-AU Summit in October 2020 through a strong deliverable.

OPENING SESSION

AU Commissioner Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor in her opening remarks highlighted the need for collective efforts to provide a response to the Coronavirus pandemic. She remarked the need to provide a set of interventions in different areas, such as digitalisation of education and skills development, as she considered science and access to science being a human right. She referred to a number of measures taken since COVID-19, among others supporting the African Scientific, Research and Innovation Council (ASRIC), tasked to perform studies on the impact of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases that will feed into an African centred response. Further measures taken involve the digitalisation of education, the involvement of the African Development Bank (AfDB), Regional Economic Communities and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and forging global partnerships.

Commissioner Agbor considered that Africa 'must go green', and explained that an economic recovery shall be based on principles of circular economy and green transition, as economic recovery on fossil-based activities, as it was the standard before COVID-19, would no longer be an option. She

further recommended unlocking the potential of local medicinal plants and traditional knowledge in order to provide a mix of responses to deal with pandemics, and in particular combatting the current COVID-19.

EU Commissioner Gabriel in her opening remarks highlighted this first R&I Ministerial as a historic moment, because the COVID-19 crisis has put R&I back at the top of the political agenda, and demonstrated the necessity for a stronger international cooperation in R&I. Therefore, she concluded that the R&I Ministerial should be turned into a regular event.

More specifically, Commissioner Gabriel emphasised that the 'Global EU Response to COVID-19' adopted in April put, on the one hand, strong emphasis on the need to develop vaccines, treatments and diagnostics, while ensuring equal access to these developments; and on the other hand, the need to share data and results through an open access policy at global level. She made specific reference to the successful launch of the COVID-19 data platform, which is accessible also by African institutions and partners, and to the Africa Connect network, linking R&I and education through digital infrastructure and technologies. For the sake of avoiding fragmentation, Commissioner Gabriel called on all participants to identify synergies and complementarities between existing instruments, rather than creating new ones.

Keynote speaker Dr John Nkengason, Director-General of the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recalled that already 644,000 Africans were found being infected by COVID-19, while the disease already killed 14,000. He explained the difficult situation, due in part to lack of human and financial resources, and expertise and praised the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership as a role model, which all African countries should take advantage of. He very much underlined the role of Science, Technology and Innovation for providing relevant solutions in the four key areas of diagnostics, vaccines, treatments and contact tracing.

POLICY DISCUSSION

Invited high-profile speakers launched the policy discussions. The aim of this part of the meeting was to discuss with the Ministers of both the African and European Union short-, medium-, and long-term R&I activities addressing the human health impacts and the more far reaching socio-economic effects of COVID-19. The effects, clustered along four groups by the HLPD Senior Officials Meeting of 18 June 2020, were as follows:

1. Public health
2. Green transition
3. Innovation & technology
4. Capacities for science

The policy discussions were each launched by an invited EU or AU Minister for Research and Innovation, or a high-level substitute, providing an introductory talk, followed by up to 8 EU and AU Ministers, replying to issues raised in background notes for each session, that were agreed before the Ministerial meeting, including relevant lead questions to structure the discussion.

PUBLIC HEALTH

For the public health cluster, Minister Dr Eliode Tumwesigye from Uganda and current AU chair of the Specialised Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology opened the session by pointing out that Uganda focuses on supporting the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 3b of the United Nations. He recalled the opportunity of cooperating across continents and considered the HLPD and its Partnerships as important instruments to this effect. He also pointed to the need of better translating R&I outputs into tangible results for the benefit of

societies and the economy, and the fact that in his country, demand of all necessary commodities against COVID-19 outstripped available resources by far.

The background note for this public health cluster outlined the two most important issues for discussion:

1. The emergency call for expressions of interest launched by the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) on 3 April to support COVID-19 research activities with a total budget of 10 MEUR (2.25 MEUR from H2020 and 7.75 MEUR from European Participating States) received 153 applications, of which 63 proposals (31.5 MEUR) have been considered very good. Of these 63 proposals, only 20 could be funded with the currently available resources.
2. In addition, many ongoing EDCTP projects have been severely affected by COVID-19, e.g. by interrupting ongoing clinical studies due to confinement; or being exposed to severe currency exchange rate fluctuations. Consequently, the current available budget for some EDCTP projects is insufficient to finalise them as planned, with serious ethical and medical implications for enrolled patients.

Therefore, the guiding question was phrased accordingly: *'How can we move forward, given the current funding needs of the EDCTP2 programme to combat Covid19?'* The Ministers (or their representatives) of Hungary, Egypt, Romania, Sudan, Austria, and Sweden took the floor, presenting among others:

- A large number of initiatives taken by and support provided to national research communities, resulting in the identification of potential treatments and diagnostics, medical instruments, and others.
- Lessons learned included the need for international cooperation (north-south and south-south), and better supporting the EDCTP and the successor, the planned Global Health Partnership (GHP). Some AU Ministers called for increasing the EDCTP membership by African countries currently not represented, giving the Partnership a whole of Africa approach.
- The need for additional financial resources for the EDCTP/GHP, for instance by individual additional contributions of current EDCTP members (Austria and Sweden), or by including private sector companies, and by having access to some of the financial resources of the Coronavirus Global pledging event of almost 16 BEUR.

GREEN TRANSITION

According to the background note for this session, research and innovation are key in driving the green transition, and in principle, were promoted since 2011 by the EU-AU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation. Two Research and Innovation Partnerships were adopted by the 2017 Summit - on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture and on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy and provide platforms for joint R&I activities, representing a joint investment of around 450 MEUR.

These Partnerships should benefit and contribute to the COVID-19 recovery efforts, and maximise the impacts of R&I results through an effective valorisation and further strengthening of scientific capacities in Africa by providing access and local adaptation to technologies. This will enable African countries to pursue a low-carbon, climate resilient and green growth trajectory that avoids inefficient technologies, like coal power generation, deploying instead new renewable energy sources and renewable hydrogen production.

For this session, Mr. Thomas Rachel, Parliamentary State Secretary to the German Federal Minister for Education and Research announced that in its capacity as the current Presidency of the EU Council, the green transition is one of the main focal areas, which would provide room for large-scale

initiatives between the EU and the AU. According to the Parliamentary State Secretary, Africa has an abundance of solar and wind energy, however solutions would need to be found to safely, and efficiently store the energy generated. An example of a new project was provided, aiming to map the potential of green hydrogen as storage solution in African locations, for both, local consumption and for export. An interactive regional map will form the basis for pioneering demonstration projects involving industrial and scientific partners in Africa.

The guiding question *‘How can we consolidate the R&I Partnerships on FNSSA and CCSE in terms of R&I focal areas and resources?’* then triggered the contributions of Ministers or their representatives from Morocco, Czech Republic, Guinea, Spain, Finland and France.

To summarise, the following main elements were discussed:

- All Ministers stressed the importance of EU-AU cooperation in Research and Innovation and of a green transition, being essential for sustainable jobs and green growth
- The first R&I Ministerial was considered as providing a new momentum to the EU-AU relations, and some countries suggested additional financing for initiatives like the large LEAP-RE project, starting in autumn of 2020 (96 partners)
- Green transition presents itself as an opportunity for many EU and African countries to satisfy local needs and for enhancing export of energy or agricultural goods and commodities
- In the context of green transition, France reminded about the importance to build on the current EU DeSIRA initiative (Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture) and to launch new ones, such as the African Research Initiative for Scientific Excellence (ARISE)
- The inclusion of some cross-cutting elements, such as digitalisation, water management, circular economy and forestry in the two R&I Partnerships was also considered
- Further pushing a green transition should be based on the adoption of national strategies by all countries

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

The background note of this session notes an enormous growth of the entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem in the EU and the AU. New players expand their role in their localities; however, they are generally poorly connected both within and between each continent. There is a policy challenge and opportunity in developing strong Africa-Europe partnerships aimed at magnifying the impact of innovation.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted some critical elements of the innovation sector, such as reliable electricity supply, affordable high-speed broadband connectivity and the importance of access to public and private funding at multipliers agents (e.g.tech hubs) and entrepreneurs. Notable above all is this sector’s great adaptability and capacity to produce novel solutions to the emerging challenges of everyday life, especially in the wake of the COVID crisis. Connecting and strengthening innovation ecosystems will benefit both parties by allowing mutual access to new networks, resources and innovative impulses.

The European Commission pilot programme ‘Africa-Europe Innovation Partnership’ (AEIP), launched in September 2019 with the support of the African Union Commission, paved the way for deeper cooperation in the innovation sector. The fifth meeting of the HLPD in Addis Ababa in November 2019 established the ‘Working Group on Innovation’ (WGI) as the third Partnership of the HLPD.

The honourable Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology of South Africa, Dr ‘Blade’ Nzimande, current chair of the AU, initiated the discussions with some introductory remarks. He

suggested to use the COVID-19 crisis to place economies on a higher trajectory for growth and development, and proposed some specific measures to achieve such higher trajectory:

- To broaden the concept of Innovation and include social innovation and promote participation of civil society
- To create as a response to COVID-19 a platform of industrialisation and support national production as ventilators and vaccines (when it is found)
- To strengthen cooperation between public and private sectors, including granting and providing incentives for enterprises and entrepreneurs, and using public-private partnerships, where appropriate. South Africa has created a Sovereign National Innovation Fund to strengthen and grow its national innovation ecosystem
- To address demographic imbalances and specifically to provide support dedicated to women in the innovation sector
- Support and frame public procurement to use it as a vehicle for innovation
- Apply the same innovation policies across different policy areas (such as development cooperation and R&I), and include aspects of training and mobility of researchers

Finally, he proposed to strengthen Africa-Europe cooperation by

- Continuing to share innovation policies ideas, experiences and identify constraints of the innovation ecosystem
- Designing new funding instruments for EU-Africa cooperation in innovation
- Supporting international mobility and training of students and enterprises.

The discussion on innovation and technology was guided by the question 'How can we ensure that innovation ecosystems emerge stronger from the COVID-19 crisis and play a critical role in the economic recovery?' Ministers or their representatives from Croatia, Uganda, Malta, Tunisia, Cyprus, and Madagascar concluded on the following main points:

- Overall impact of innovation needs to be strengthened, by fostering synergies between existing initiatives (e.g. Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) and the EU-Africa R&I Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) and relevant research infrastructures and financial instruments
- Cooperation with private sector to be improved, to better translate R&I outputs into tangible benefits for societies (e.g. through public-private partnerships, Africa-Europe Innovation Partnership and involving innovation communities of the European Institute of Technology)
- The need to combine international cooperation on R&I with relevant academia mobility programmes, e.g. EU Marie-Sklodowska Curie Actions or Erasmus+.
- Open access and open science were called upon by many countries as foundation for sustainable economic development and for building 'knowledge societies' Main subject areas for international cooperation were identified as food and nutrition security, health, green transition, circular economy, artificial intelligence, digital and big data

CAPACITIES FOR SCIENCE

This last session of the policy discussion included four areas of cooperation and addressing the COVID-19 Crisis:

- **Open Science**, including the ERAvsCORONA Action Plan of the European Commission, and the setting up of a research data sharing platform, under the umbrella of the European Open Science Cloud, to help improve the sharing, re-use, processing of and access to research data and metadata. Cooperation and data sharing with the African Open Science Platform (AOSP) should be considered.
- **Science advice for policy**, aiming to ensure that decisions are informed by scientific evidence, in both designing short-term responses, as well as robust and resilient economic, social and health policies and systems for the post-pandemic reality.

- **Gender in Covid-19 R&I**, for which the European Commission launched the publication of a case study on the impact of sex and gender in the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding gender-based differences in response to a disease and its treatment could benefit all citizens.
- **Human capital development** investment is a key factor to tackle current and future crises and contribute to the development of skills for more resilient societies. Therefore, consolidation and building on existing initiatives at African level, (e.g. the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA)), and leveraging on digital infrastructure programmes, such as AfricaConnect, could ensure continuity of education during pandemics. At the same time, coordination with other existing EU initiatives, such as the Erasmus+ programme and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, would reinforce EU-Africa cooperation.

Honourable Minister Manuel Heitor, Minister for Research and Higher Education of Portugal and forthcoming Presidency of the EU Council, opened the policy discussion, highlighting the importance of focussing on people, mainly the most vulnerable in the EU and in African countries, with limited or no access to social protection. The Minister reminded that science is based on the three I's: Infrastructures, Institutions and Incentives, and suggested to speed up digitalisation for the benefit of societies. The Minister suggested that cooperation between different subject areas of R&I will allow to creating synergies, like for example in the case of the Atlantic International Research Centre, where Space and Ocean scientists successfully joint forces.

The following discussion was framed by guiding questions for each of the areas:

- What role do you see for **Open Science** in enabling responses to COVID-19 and future similar crises and how can we enhance EU and the AU cooperation on Open Science?
- The current Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the crucial role of **scientific advice** in designing national and regional responses to crises. How can we ensure that adequate resources are devoted to capacity building for new skills and competences on evidence for policymaking?
- How can we best prevent the brain drain of students, academics and researchers involved in EU **human development programmes** (education and training)?
- How can we address **a gender perspective** in your R&I response to the crisis and what are the major impacts on gender equality?

Ministers or their representatives from Mauritius, Italy, Benin, Belgium, Senegal, The Netherlands, Rwanda and Lithuania elaborated as follows:

- Ministers called for enhanced support to research institutions and infrastructures in Africa, reacting to the current brain drain of African academics moving abroad, and emphasised the need to increase attractiveness of African research institutions and for return fellowships, e.g. under Horizon Europe, for African researchers working in the EU.
- To this effect, Italy recalled the importance of the PRIMA initiative, and announced the establishment of a foundation promoting cooperation between European and African Higher Education establishments. Training needs for the youths in Africa, in particular in relation to digitalisation, were highlighted.
- The importance of the EU data platform on COVID-19 was underlined, while Ministers suggested linking the EU platform with the African Open Science Platform in this regard. All Ministers considered enhanced international cooperation on open science and data sharing of utmost importance.
- Foresight and evidence for policy-making were also considered important elements in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, highlighting the crucial impact of R&I activities in this case, and underlining the need for enhanced EU-AU cooperation also in this area.

- A stronger focus on innovation in the collaboration through initiatives such as the Africa Europe Innovation Partnership, the EU-Africa Digital innovation hubs (eg. ICT 58 Call 'International partnership building between European and African Innovation Hubs'), and others, showcasing digital solutions with links to the Digital Education action plan. The recent initiatives will not only promote innovation but also build bridges between innovation, research and entrepreneurship in a synergetic way, to maximize benefit for Africa's economies and citizens.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

Both Commissioners concluded on a common vision and objectives, fully in line with the African Agenda 2063 and the EU comprehensive strategy with Africa. They both valued the strong and clear messages from the Delegations, which should be further elaborated and brought to the attention of the EU-AU Summit in October 2020.

AU Commissioner Agbor stressed the need for transforming Africa, based on sustainable economic development and tackling the current COVID-19 crisis. The activity focus should be on green and sustainable economies, and utilising the progress in R&I in this regard. The Commissioner reminded the Delegates about the collective responsibility to achieve the common goals, e.g. in health and education.

EU Commissioner Gabriel thanked all participants for their concrete ideas and was very optimistic that international cooperation in R&I will deliver specific benefits for both societies. She agreed with Commissioner Agbor that skills development, quality education, and research and innovation provide the foundation for sustainable development. She called for consolidating existing structures of EU-AU cooperation on R&I, with a focus on Horizon Europe and Erasmus+, and possible synergies from a stronger cooperation between the programmes. Commissioner Gabriel suggested a common EU-AU innovation agenda, which would take the elements discussed today into account to move the cooperation to the next level. Finally, she underlined that in terms of fighting COVID19, the EU remains fully committed to universal and equitable access to vaccines currently developed.

Annex – List of participants

AU MEMBER STATES					
	TITLE	NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION	COUNTRY
1	Prof	Nabil AOUFFEN	Thematic Agency of Research in Health Science _ Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research	Director General	Algeria
2	Prof.	Issaka YOUSAO ABDOU KARIM	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique	Conseiller Technique à la Recherche et à l'Innovation	Bénin
4	Prof.	Mahougnon KAKPO	Ministère des Enseignements Secondaire Technique et de la Formation Professionnelle	Ministre	Bénin
3	Prof.	Eléonore YAYI LADEKAN	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique	Ministre	Bénin
6	Mr.	Oabona Monngakgotla	Department of Research Science and Technology	Deputy Director	Botswana
5	Dr	Douglas LETSHOLATHEBE	MINISTRY OF TERTIARY EDUCATION, RESEARCH, SCIENCE AND TRECHNOLOGY	Minister	Botswana
7	Dr.	Idrissa Kabore	Ministre de l'Enseignement Superieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation	Directeur General de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation	Burkina Faso
8	Dr	Madeleine TCHUINTE	Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation	Minister	Cameroon
9	Dr	Pedro Lopes	Finance Ministry	Secretary for Innovation and Professional Training	Cape Verde
11	Dr.	Aquilino Manuel Varela	Ministry of Education	Director of the Higher Education, Science and Technology Cabinet	Capo Verde
10	H.E.	Amadeu Joao Cruz	Ministry of Education	Secretary of State for Education	Capo Verde

AU MEMBER STATES					
	TITLE	NAME	INSTITUTION	POSITION	COUNTRY
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13	Dr	Fahmi Mohamed	Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur et de la recherche	Conseiller principal du Ministre	Djibouti
14	H.E	Jose Mpanda	MINISTÈRE DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE ET DE L'INNOATION TECHNOLOGIQUE	MINISTRE	DRC
16	Prof	Islam Elgenidi	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research	Advisor to the Minister	Egypt
15	Prof	Khaled Abdelghaffar	Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific research	Minister	Egypt
17	Mr.	Badara A. Joof	Ministry of Science and Technology	Minister	Gambia
18	Prof	Mamby Keita	MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE	DIRECTEUR GENERAL ADJOINT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR	GUINEE
19	Prof	Alpha Amadou Bano Barry	Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de l'Alphabétisation	Minister	Guinée
20	Mr	Saku Dukuly	Science, Technology, TVET and Special Education, Ministry of Education	Assistant Minister	Liberia
21	Mr.	Adel Amori	Ministry of Education	Deputy Minister	Libya
22	Prof	HERINIAINA RAMANANKIERAN A	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de Recherche scientifique	Director General for the Scientific Research	Madagascar
23	Mrs.	Leela Devi Dookun- Luchoomun	Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and	Hon. Vice Prime Minister and Minister	Mauritius

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24	Mr	Abdelouahid Ezzarfi	Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Formation Professionnelle, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique	Chef de Division	Morocco
25	Prof.	Ahmed HAMMOUCH	Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Formation Professionnelle, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique	Directeur	Morocco
26	Mrs.	Salma Karim	Agency for Digital Development	Head of Human Capital & Innovation Department	Morocco
27	Mr	Yassine Ouardirhi	Ministry of Industry Trade Green & Digital Economy	Head of Innovation Division	Morocco
28	Prof	Driss OUAOUICHA	Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Formation Professionnelle, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique	Minister	Morocco
29	Dr.	Itah Kandjii-Murangi	Ministry of Higher Education, Technology and Innovation	Minister	Namibia
30	Dr.	Valentine Uwamarriya	Minister of Education	Minister	Rwanda
31	Ms.	Paula Ingabire	Ministry of ICT and Innovation	Minister	Rwanda
32	Mr	Lamine Baali	Embassy	Ambassador	Sahrawi Arab Republic
33	Mr	Omar Mansour	Ministre de l'Éducation	Minister	Sahrawi Arab Republic

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34	Prof	Amadou Thierno Gaye	MINISTERE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR	DIRECTEUR GENERAL	Senegal
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36	Dr.	Cheikh Oumar Anne	Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de L'innovation du Sénégal	Minister	Senegal
37	Mr.	Xavier Estico	National Institute for Science Technology and Innovation (NISTI)	Chief Executive Officer	Seychelles
38	Dr	Josephus Brimah	Ministry of Technical and Higher Education	Chief Technical and Higher Education Officer	Sierra Leone
39	Ms.	Tugela Matubatuba	Department of Science and Innovation	Deputy Director: Strategic Partnerships	South Africa
40	Mr	Daan Du Toit	Department of Science and Innovation	Deputy Director-General: International Cooperation and Resources	South Africa
41	Dr	Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande	Department of Science and Innovation	Minister	South Africa
42	Mrs.	Vineela Pillay	South African Department of Science and Innovation	Minister-Counsellor	South Africa
43	Prof.	Gyavira Wani	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology	For DG Directorate of STI	South Sudan
44	Mr.	Denay Jock Chagor	Ministry of Higher Education, Science & Technology	Minister	South Sudan
45	Prof.	Mohammed Hassan	Ministry of higher education and scientific research	Deputy director scientific research and innovation authority	Sudan
46	Prof.	Koffi Akpagana	Minister of Higher Education and Research	Minister of Higher Education and Research	Togo
47	Prof.	Slim Choura	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de	Ministre	Tunisia

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48	Ms.	Jennifer Muwuliza	Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation	Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Planning	Uganda
49	Dr	Elioda Tumwesigye	Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation	Cabinet Minister	Uganda
50	H.E. Prof.	Sarah Anyang Agbor	AUC/HRST	Commissioner for HRST	AUC
51	Dr	Mahama Ouedraogo	AUC/HRST	Director for HRST	AUC
52	Mr	Hambani Masheleni	AUC/HRST	Ag. Head of S&T Division	AUC
53	Dr	Monica Idinoba	AUC/HRST	Principal Scientific Officer	AUC
54	Dr	John Nkengasong	Africa CDC	Director	AUC
55	Dr	Rita BISSOONAUTH	CIEFFA	Coordinator	AU
56	Dr	David Blaise Ossene	Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale	Expert Education et Culture	Gabon/CEEAC
57		Andrés-Edu Mba-Mokuy	Département de l'Intégration Socioculturel	Secrétaire Générale Adjoint/CEEAC	CEEAC/Gabon
58	Mr	Mohamed Ikabrou Ould Mohamed	SG/UMA	Human Development Director	UMA/Morocco

EU Member State	Representative	Position
AT	Barbara Weitgruber	Director General
BE	David Clarinval	Minister
BG	Ms Milena Damyanova	Director of the Science Directorate of the Ministry of Education and Science of Bulgaria
BG	Mr. Kalin Mutavchiev	Chief expert at the Science Directorate.
BG	EVDENIEV Evgeni	Science attaché

EU	Representative	Position
CY	Kyriacos Kokkinos	deputy minister on Research, Innovation and Digital policy
CZ	Pavel Doleček	Deputy Minister of Education
DE	Thomas Rachel	Deputy Minister/Parliamentary State Secretary, German Federal Ministry of Education and Research
EL	Aliki Pappa	Research Attaché Perm Rep
ES	Prof Rafael Rodrigo	Secretary General of Research
FI	Mr. Petteri Kauppinen	Acting Director-General for the Department for Higher Education and Science Policy, at the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture
FI	Ms. Saara Viikko	Senior Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Education and Culture
FR	Mr Denis Despreaux	Head of the delegation for european and international affairs at the ministry for higher education research and innovation
HR	prof. Blaženka Divjak	Minister of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia
HU	József Bódis	Minister of State for Higher Education, Innovation and Vocational Training, Ministry of Innovation and Technology
IE	Eugene Lennon	Director of Research & Innovation
IT	Gaetano Manfredi	Minister
LT	Simonas Šatūnas	Deputy Permanent Representative
LV	Uldis Berkis	Observer, LINE EXPERT BIOMEDICINE, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
MT	Clayton Bartolo	Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services and Digital Economy
NL	Marcelis Boereboom	DG Higher Education, vocational education, science and emancipation
PT	Manuel Heitor	Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education
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SE	Mr. Johan Lycke	Director General and Head of the International Secretariat, Ministry of Higher Education and Research
SE	Mr. Per Erik Yngwe	deputy Director General of the Research Policy Division, Ministry of Higher Education and Research
SI	Natalia Al-Mansour	Head of Department for Africa and Middle East from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

EU	Representative	Position
SI	Peter Volasko	Senior Official from the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, National Co-ordinator for Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, Member of Senior Official Group for EU-AU
SK	Mr Marcel SLÁDOK	Chief State Counselor, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport

Representatives of the EC	Name	Position
European Commission	Ms Mariya Gabriel	Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth
European Commission	Prof Peter Piot	Special adviser COVID19 to EC President Ursula von der Leyen and Director of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
DG RTD	Ms Maria Cristina Russo	Director International Cooperation
DG RTD	Ms Nienke Buisman	Head of Unit International Cooperation – Asia, Africa, Middle East & External Relations
DG RTD	Ms Fadila Boughanemi	Deputy Head of Unit International Cooperation – Asia, Africa, Middle East & External Relations
DG RTD	Mr Jens Hoegel	Policy Officer – Desk Africa
DG RTD	Mr Piero Venturi	Science Counsellor – EU Delegation to the AUC
DG RTD	Ms Nina Commeau Yannoussis	Policy Officer Africa-Europe Innovation Partnership
DG RTD	Mr Michael Arentoft	Senior policy-officer Open Science
DG RTD	Mrs Evelyne Depoortere	Policy-officer health (EDCTP)
DG RTD	Mrs Stefanie Sowinski	Policy-officer health (EDCTP)
DG RTD	Mr Marc Holtkamp	Policy-officer interinstitutional relations
DG RTD	Mr Hans-Joerg Lutzeyer	Senior policy-officer agricultural R&I
DG RTD	Mr Gilles Ollier	Head of sector earth observation policy
DG RTD	Mr Philippe Schild	Senior policy-officer renewable energy R&I

Representatives	Name	Position
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DG RTD	Mrs Silvia Bojinova	Policy-officer Tunisia
DG AGRI	Ms Marta Iglesias	Policy-officer Agricultural Policy
DG CNCT	Mr Arnaud Senn	Policy-officer digital policy - Africa
DG DEVCO	Mr Rui Costa	Head of Sector R&I for development
DG DEVCO	Mr Cees Vis	Economic analyst – policy advice R&I for development
DG DEVCO	Mr Christophe Larose	Policy-officer agricultural R&I for development
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DG CLIMA	Mrs Alessandra Sgobbi	Policy-officer climate policy - Africa
DG ENV	Mr Gaetan Ducroux	Policy-officer Africa on environmental policy
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- Dr Leonardo Simao, High Representative Africa
- Professor Marcel Tanner, High Representative Europe