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NEWSLETTER FROM THE NORDIC AFRICA INSTITUTE

Comment by Fantu Cheru **Building the African Union Institutional Architecture**



Since 2002, the African Union (AU) has tried to unite the whole of Africa so as to better confront multiple global and continental challenges.

The agenda of the AU in the coming years looks impressive. Key areas include, amongst others, peace and security, trade liberalisation, food security, sustainable use of natural resources and energy, climate change and migration. In addition, the AU will also have to provide adequate African answers to the recent financial and economic crisis that may have disastrous effects on the poorest countries of Africa in particular.

It is a daunting task for the AU, as a young organisation, to effectively deal with this rapidly changing policy environment and the challenges of Pan-African integration. There is obviously a need for more powerful and effective AU institutions to meet these challenges, with the capacity to assume a strong leadership on continental and global matters.

In an attempt to accelerate the integration process, the February and July 2009 Summits of African Heads of States and Governments endorsed proposals to move towards an African Union Authority (AUA). The AUA would become the central Pan-African institution in charge of driving the African integration process. To date, it is still unclear what the precise mandate, powers and functions of this Authority will be. Clearly this will depend of the model of integration and continental governance the AU and its member states wants to adopt.

However, in its search to become a more influential institution, the AU is no longer putting all its eggs in one European basket. The change of leadership

European Development Days in Stockholm 22-24 October 2009



NAI participates in the European Development Days (EDD) conference in Stockholm.

As part of its presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2009 Sweden is hosting the yearly **European Development Days** on 22-24 October 2009. More than 4000 visitors are expected to the Stockholmsmässan trade fair, which is the venue of the EDD. NAI will have a stand in the Swedish pavilion at Stockholmsmässan.

On Thursday 22 October at 17.45 former NAI researcher Yenkong Ngangjoh Hodu will discuss **Trade, EPAs and Regional Integration** from the stage in the Swedish pavilion. The discussion will introduce a new book, **Trade Relations Between the EU and Africa**.

On Thursday 22 October at 14:45 **NAI Director Carin Norberg** will chair a two hour panel discussion titled "Beyond the MDG:s - European Development Cooperation after 2015". The event takes place in room A2 in Hall A. Read more about the event [here](#).

Go to the EDD [web site](#) for more information about the conference and events.

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in the USA and the rise of China and other emerging and re-emerging powers is having an impact on the traditionally privileged relationship with the EU. These traditional and new partners seem to be willing to support the AU institutions and capacities with a view to generate concrete benefits for the African people.

It is against this background of rapid changes that the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) and the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) as independent policy analysis institutes, will organise an informal high level multi-stakeholder seminar on 21 October in Uppsala.

The seminar aims to take stock of the record of the AU institutional architecture, its ongoing reforms and future challenges ahead and the roles that the EU could possibly play in support of the AU institutional architecture.

Fantu Cheru

NAI Research Director

High-level seminar on the African Union Institutions on 21 October

Read more about the seminar [here](#)

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