



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Intervention of Philippe Kridelka,
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the UN
at
the Security Council Open Debate on
Strengthening the Role of the African State in addressing
Global Security and Development challenges.
New York, 23/05/2024, 10h00 (3 min)

Mr. President,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in today's open debate.

Belgium aligns itself with the statement from the European Union.

Allow me in my national capacity to pay tribute to the strong multilateral commitment of African Countries, not only in matters relating to their own continent but also globally. The African Union and other regional organizations are strengthening their role in peacemaking and peacebuilding, and we owe a special tribute to the numerous African Blue Helmets who are contributing to maintaining peace and security worldwide. Security Council Resolution 2719 offers a whole new potential for cooperation between the UN and regional organizations in this regard.

In the framework of its strong partnership with many African countries, Belgium supports capacity building in different fields. Let me mention some examples:

1.- **Civil servants** from 20 African countries participate in trainings organized by the Belgian **Egmont Institute** for International relations. **Officers** from various African defense forces attend classes at our **Military Academy**, a programme that is reciprocal as Belgian officers also receive training at the Moroccan and Congolese defense forces.

2. More generally, our partnership focuses on **young people**. African student visas represent one third of student visas to Belgium. Here at the UN, **10% of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO)** posts funded by Belgium are offered to candidates from the partner countries of the Belgian development cooperation. We also look forward to discussing the establishment of a **Fellowship for Young Africans**.

3.- Mr. President, Belgium also supports African States' **policies** aimed at strengthening their own capacities, claiming back fiscal space or embarking on a Green Transition. Let me mention a few examples:

- Namibian civil servants are currently participating in a capacity building exercise in Belgium in relation to the first green hydrogen fuel station on the African continent, recently inaugurated by our Heads of State.
- Belgium and Mozambique have entered an innovative 2.6 million USD **debt-for-climate swap** to relieve Mozambique's debt burden while investing in its climate resilience.
- In the framework of our EU Presidency, Belgium has prioritized Africa's health sovereignty by **strengthening health systems and sustainable local manufacturing capacity for health products**, including in mRNA vaccine technology transfer hubs in South Africa and Rwanda.

In line with our commitment for a successful 2025 World Summit for Social Development, Belgium was also one of the early donors for the SG's Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. We fund programs that **extend social protection** to people in the informal economy in *Burkina Faso* and *Burundi*.

4.- Monsieur le Président, je voudrais enfin aborder le sujet de la sécurité, où – il est important de le souligner - nous n'intervenons qu'à la demande de coopération de pays partenaires. Cette année, la Belgique et le Bénin célèbrent 25 ans de partenariat militaire. En République Démocratique du Congo, notre collaboration à Kindu avec les Forces Armées de la RDC contribue à l'objectif final d'une paix durable dans l'Est du pays, y compris à travers des formations, des échanges mutuellement bénéfiques et des dons d'équipements – soit au niveau bilatéral, soit à travers la Facilité européenne pour la paix. Ces initiatives ont bien évidemment lieu en étroite coordination avec les autorités locales .

Mr. President,

May today's debate inspire all the members of the International Community to build stronger, sustainable and mutually respectful partnerships.