



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Global Ireland

Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025

‘Africa has the potential to be the continent of promise and opportunity in our twenty-first century. It will carry the hopes, the dreams and the ambitions of our shared planet.’

PRESIDENT MICHAEL D. HIGGINS, 2018

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Global Ireland: Ireland's Strategy for Africa to 2025



President Michael D. Higgins addressing the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. November 2014.
© Chris Bellew / Fennell Photography

VISION 2025

To deepen and strengthen Ireland's political, economic and cultural relationships with Africa, contributing to peace, prosperity and sustainable development.

INTERESTS

- » Promotion of values
- » A peaceful and prosperous Africa
- » Growing African economies and mutual trade and investment with Ireland
- » Implement 'A Better World: Ireland's Policy for International Development'
- » Growing awareness of Ireland

CONTEXT

For Africa, this will be a century of opportunity; Africa will help shape our world in the decades approaching the centenaries of its countries' independence.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 sets the continent the target of an '*integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena*'. Dynamic population growth, a middle class that is expanding, infrastructure that is reaching critical mass, increasing ambition to develop regional and continental markets, are all reasons for ambition and optimism.

If that opportunity, that ambition is to be realised, there are also challenges for Africa to overcome, challenges which its countries are addressing with imagination, strength and generosity.

These challenges include harnessing the dividend inherent in population growth, maximising the potential of greater economic integration, and improving infrastructure. Weak states need to be supported in building the institutions and systems necessary to deliver for their citizens – including in education, skills and job creation. Addressing these challenges is complicated by major issues such as conflict, fragility and climate change.

A successful Africa, a dynamic Africa, an increasingly prosperous Africa is in Ireland's interest and in Europe's interest. This *Strategy for Africa* sets out a vision for how Ireland will work bilaterally, as a committed Member State of the European Union, and internationally, particularly in the United Nations, to deepen mutually beneficial relations, and in response to shared and global challenges, building on longstanding and deep relations.

Our shared and overlapping histories were the basis for Ireland's first diplomatic presence on the continent sixty years ago, which has now grown to 12 Embassies from Cairo to Pretoria. These ever-deepening ties continue to inform Irish solidarity with African people, in particular as expressed in Ireland's international development policy, *A Better World*. This Strategy sets out the Government's ambition to deepen all aspects of these relationships as part of the *Global Ireland* initiative.

Our people-to-people connections go back centuries, including missionaries, educators, health and development workers, humanitarian responders and latterly Irish peacekeepers, from the Congo in 1960 to Mali today, making a lasting contribution to peace and security. These human ties are further enriched by the presence of African communities in Ireland.

Ireland's business links with Africa are increasing in both directions and, as Africa's economic growth continues, these links – whether trade in goods and services, or investments – will deepen and mature.

The European Union has an increasingly ambitious approach to partnership with Africa. As neighbouring continents, the mutual prosperity and security of Europe and Africa are deeply intertwined. The EU is Africa's largest trading partner, its largest source of investment and its biggest partner in development cooperation.

Ireland supports strongly a much more ambitious EU approach to Africa. This requires Ireland to be well informed, in particular through an enhanced engagement with African countries so that Ireland can advocate within the EU on issues of interest to them – including as the largest English-speaking country remaining in the EU.



An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., meeting with President of Mali, H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, in Bamako, Mali, January 2019.
© Merrionstreet

An effective, rules-based international order is at the heart of Ireland's vision for a peaceful, prosperous planet. Ireland shares a conviction with the African Union that we work best to solve global problems when we work together, through the United Nations, international humanitarian organisations, the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organisation at its core, and multilateral and regional development

finance institutions. African countries, over one-quarter of the UN's member states, are essential to its success. Ireland will work with African partners to strengthen multilateralism and work to improve the inclusive and democratic nature of multilateral institutions and processes. In doing so, we will amplify Ireland's voice in support of a fairer, more equal and just world in line with our values and interests.



Freetown's Cotton Tree, Victoria Falls, the Great Pyramid of Giza and Cape Town's Table Mountain are some of the African landmarks that have turned green to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. © DFAT / © Tourism Ireland

Strategic Objectives

In stepping up our engagement with Africa to deliver on the ambitions of 'Global Ireland: Ireland's Global Footprint to 2025', and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Ireland will pursue six strategic objectives:



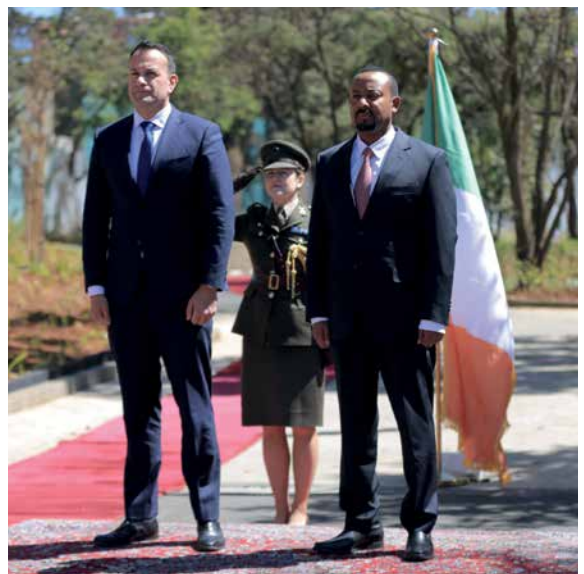
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Ireland will build stronger political partnerships with African countries to address national, regional and global challenges.

We will deepen and broaden partnerships with African countries as a foundation for more comprehensive and coherent engagement bilaterally, regionally and globally. This work will build on the strong and vibrant people-to-people ties that underpin Ireland's relationships with African countries.

To deliver this, we will:

- » **Enhance** our political relationships through increased Ministerial engagements, more joint actions on regional and global issues, and the expansion of our Embassy network and secondary accreditations, with a focus on growing our understanding of and presence in West and North Africa.
- » **Share** Ireland's experience of supporting and strengthening connections with our global diaspora; **enhance** our engagement with the Irish diaspora in Africa, including through the Emigrant Support Programme; and **build** networks of affinity and reverse diaspora in Africa to underpin bilateral relationships.
- » **Open** new conversations with African partners through the development of innovative ways of sharing Irish culture and of building cultural collaboration between Ireland and Africa, including through more effective use of St. Patrick's Day and St. Brigid's Day across Africa.
- » **Engage** with African communities in Ireland through events such as Africa Day to support and grow the people-to-people, trade and cultural connections between Ireland and Africa.



An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar T.D., with Prime Minister of Ethiopia and 2019 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, H.E. Abiy Ahmed, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. January 2019. © Eyoel Kahssay

As a global actor, we will:

- » **Work** closely with African partners at the United Nations to advance shared values and support efforts for UN reform to give a stronger voice to Africa, in particular on the UN Security Council, and African engagement in key international processes, such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and initiatives to ensure that African countries have improved access to international development funds, including climate finance.
- » **If elected** to the UN Security Council, work with the A3 African members on the Council and other African countries to ensure priority for African issues, including the root causes of conflict, conflict prevention, and reconciliation.
- » **Deepen** engagement with the African Union and support its work to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Africa through Agenda 2063.
- » **Support** regional economic integration, including by increasing engagement with African Regional Economic Communities and the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and by building on our engagement with the League of Arab States and the Union for the Mediterranean, regional organisations with many African members.
- » **Intensify** engagement with African Small Island Developing States (SIDS), especially in support of their efforts to influence global processes through *Ireland's Strategy for Partnership with Small Island Developing States*.
- » **Expand** our institutional linkages with Africa by applying for Associate Observer status at the *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (Community of Portuguese Language Countries), of which the majority of member states is African.



Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, Sameh Shoukry, in Cairo. January 2018. © DFAT



Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon T.D., with Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed. February 2018. © UN Photos

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Ireland will promote peace, security, and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

As a small island with a recent experience of conflict, Ireland is firmly committed to a just and peaceful rules-based international order.

Working in partnership with African countries, we will:

- » **Expand** our support for peace and security on the continent through use of long-standing, and more recent, bilateral, EU and regional relationships in Africa, especially through our Embassy network, and through peacekeeping training at Ireland's UN Training School and in the field.
- » **Exchange** experiences of peacebuilding and reconciliation, drawing on our experience on the island of Ireland, which informs our efforts towards conflict prevention, mediation and resolution.
- » **Champion** a leadership role for women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding processes, and ensure a focus on the empowerment of young people, while advancing UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in collaboration with African partners, including through facilitating dialogue on the implementation of National Action Plans and through support for the African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security.



Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., Captain Deirdre Carbery and Lt. Col. Mary Carroll with participants at the launch of Ireland's Third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security at University College Cork. June 2019. © Julian Behal / DFAT



Lt. Col. Mark Browne with officers from Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon at the Francophone Peacekeeping Seminar in Djibouti, which was supported by Ireland. June 2019. © Óglaigh na hÉireann

- » **Support** implementation of UN Resolution 2457 on silencing the guns and other African peace and security initiatives, building on Ireland's role as Champion of three actions under the UN Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament.
- » **Strengthen** relationships with research organisations to deepen understanding of, and contribute thinking on, peace and security issues in Africa.

As a global actor, we will:

- » **Support** UN peacebuilding and peacekeeping in Africa through the continued deployment of UN Peacekeepers, active engagement to advance the UN Secretary General's Sustaining Peace and Action for Peacekeeping agendas, and Ireland's membership of the UN Peace Building Commission.
- » **Support** the African Union and Regional Economic Communities, often the first responders in crisis situations, in their conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding work.
- » **Uphold and sustain** the work of civil society organisations and human rights defenders on the ground, particularly those working for the most vulnerable, recognising the vital role played by civil society in building peaceful, inclusive and prosperous societies and the importance of a human rights-based approach.

- » **Work** with our African partners for the promotion and protection of human rights and the rule of law through bilateral and regional engagement, EU dialogue and engagement at UN level.
- » **Strengthen** our work building effective institutions and our engagements with fragile and conflict-affected situations, including through Ireland's membership of international financial institutions.



MONUSCO in Democratic Republic of Congo is one of many UN peacekeeping missions where Irish and African peacekeepers have worked together for peace and stability. © Óglaigh na hÉireann

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Ireland will support inclusive economic growth and deeper trade and investment relations.

Supporting inclusive economic growth and boosting trade and investment between Ireland and Africa is of benefit to both sides.



Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., with President of the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Danny Faure, and Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, at SeaFest - Ireland's National Maritime Festival, Cork. June 2019. © Julian Behal / DFAT



Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon T.D., with 2018-19 Irish Aid Fellows in Limerick. April 2019. © Phil Behan / DFAT.

To increase the value of two-way trade between Ireland and Africa to at least €5 billion by 2025 and to promote investment, we will:

- » **Build** on the strategic Local Market Team approach to grow exports and investment, include a trade focus to the increased number of Ministerial visits to Africa, and further develop business networks with viable propositions to boost trade and investment.
- » **Increase** support for innovation by funding Irish-African private sector collaboration, including through expansion of the Africa Agri-Food Development Programme, the piloting of a new Ireland Africa Tech Development Fund, and exploring investment in areas such as female entrepreneurship and climate innovation.
- » **Work** with African partners to support improvements to business and investment environments and to strengthen institutions for transparent, accountable and effective governance systems, rule of law, and equitable and inclusive economic growth, including through Ireland's whole-of-Government Domestic Resource Mobilisation initiative and through a new funding initiative to progress women's leadership in business in Africa.
- » **Complement** the triennial high-level Africa Ireland Economic Forum with an annual programme of focussed seminars and engagements with private sector and non-governmental actors.



Minister for Business, Enterprise, and Innovation, Heather Humphreys T.D., visiting a science, technology, engineering and mathematics school supported by an Irish organisation, International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL), during a trade mission to South Africa. November 2019. © Enterprise Ireland/BWC

- » **Support** partnerships between Irish and African third-level institutions, promote Ireland as a place to study and research, and double the number of Fellowships available to students from Africa to 150 each year by 2025.
- » **Bolster** Irish-African partnerships and exchanges to learn from each other on harnessing the potential of the **blue economy** in a sustainable and inclusive way.
- » **Expand** and enhance Ireland's network of Double Taxation Agreements in Africa, consistent with international standards and serving mutual interests.
- » **Support** inclusive and sustainable economic growth.
- » **Step up** our support for the rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its core, to ensure that African countries can participate in and benefit fully from free and open trade, including the WTO's Aid for Trade initiative.

As a global actor, we will:

- » **Support** regional economic integration and the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, including by sharing Ireland's experience of regional integration.
- » **Become** a member of the African Development Bank and actively engage with the Bank, and other international financial institutions present in Africa, to

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Ireland will work with African countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, with a particular focus on reaching those furthest behind first.

Building on our role as co-chair, with Kenya, of the negotiations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Ireland is committed to advancing the vision of the SDGs of a safer, more equal and sustainable world.

Working in close partnership with African countries, we will:

- » **Step up** our support for African countries' efforts to achieve the SDGs through delivering on the ambition of Ireland's international development policy, 'A Better World' with its focus on climate action, gender equality, strengthened governance and reducing humanitarian need; with interventions concentrating on protection, food and people; and an emphasis on reaching the furthest behind first.
- » **Build** effective institutions for inclusive outcomes towards universal access to health, education and social protection, in support of partners' own national development plans and the African Union's Agenda 2063, and with a particular focus on women and girls, minorities and persons with disabilities.
- » **Scale up** our integrated approach to food and food systems, including through launching a Task Team to contribute to the work of the European Commission's Task Force on Rural Africa.
- » **Support** improved health and rights for women, with a strong focus on preventing and responding to gender-based violence.



Ireland's then Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador David Donoghue, co-facilitating the intergovernmental negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals with Kenya's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Macharia Kamau, 2015. © IISD/ENB (enb.iisd.org/post2015/in1/21jan.html)



President Michael D. Higgins and Ms Sabina Higgins visiting a classroom in Damayno, Tigray, Ethiopia. November 2014. © Chris Bellew / Fennell Photography

- » **Increase** our support for education, especially for girls and children in emergencies.
- » **Increase** our response to humanitarian and development challenges in Africa, while providing high quality humanitarian assistance on the basis of need.
- » **Ensure** that interventions have a focus on reducing fragility, including through improved governance, investing in disaster risk reduction and social protection, and promoting conflict resolution.
- » **Support** multilateral efforts to protect refugees and people on the move in Africa, including following through on the Global Compacts on migration and refugees.
- » **Increase** our capacity to develop regional approaches, in areas such as the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, to cross-border issues such as conflict and fragility, climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and migration management, including through working closely with EU partners.

As a global actor, we will:

- » **Work** closely with African partners, as part of our commitment to implement the 2015 Paris Agreement, to ensure that resources to tackle climate change are made available where they are most needed; scale up our funding on climate action; future-proof all of our development interventions; ensure that climate action is central to all new Country Strategies in Africa; and explore innovative approaches to climate finance and risk insurance.
- » **Collaborate** with leading international financial institutions in the region, such as the African Development Bank; explore new partnerships to support their policy development and programme implementation; and deepen our engagement in blended finance mechanisms for job creation.

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Ireland will promote and contribute to a more ambitious and effective EU partnership with Africa.

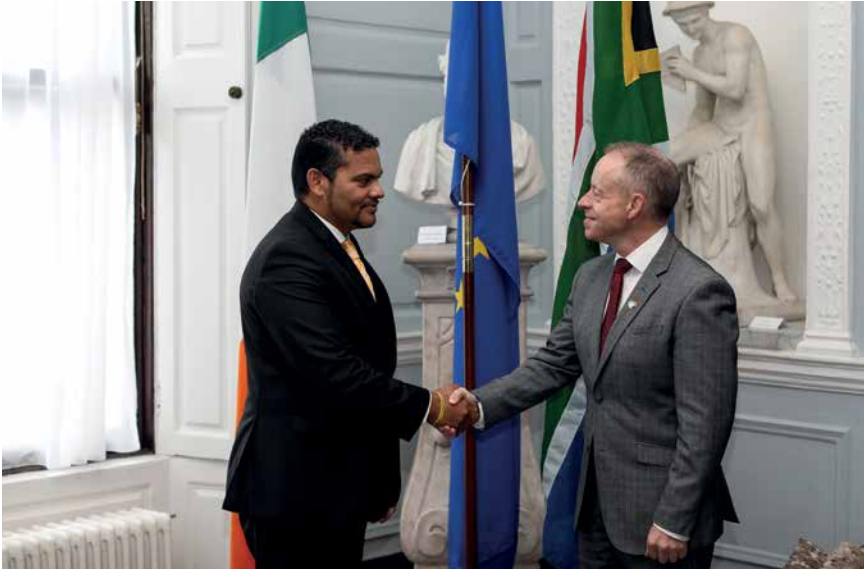
As a reflection of Ireland's steadfast commitment to our membership of the European Union, the EU will be central to our enhanced engagement with the African continent.

With a view to delivering on a much more ambitious EU approach to Africa, we will:

- » **Work closely** with EU and African partners to build a more ambitious political infrastructure to underpin a strengthened EU-Africa partnership to the mutual benefit of our two continents.
- » **Engage** proactively in EU efforts to strengthen political partnerships, including through the process of negotiating successors to the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and European neighbourhood funding mechanisms, and work closely with other EU Member States to ensure coordinated and coherent approaches across all areas of cooperation with Africa.
- » **Engage** proactively in EU peace and security activities in Africa, including EU support for African Union peace operations and through contributions of civilian and Defence Forces personnel to EU Common Security and Defence Policy missions in Africa.
- » **Advocate** for a strengthened EU-UN partnership on peace operations and crisis management, in the context of Ireland being the EU's largest per capita contributor of UN peacekeepers.



Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney T.D., meeting with the EU Special Representative for the Sahel, Ángel Losada Fernández, in Dublin. October 2019. © Phil Behan / DFAT



Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciarán Cannon T.D., meeting Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Alvin Botes, in Dublin, November 2019. © Phil Behan / DFAT

- » **Maximise** opportunities for Irish-African trade and investment through the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs and European investment instruments such as the European Investment Bank.
- » **Ensure** Ireland is recognised as a highly attractive entry point to the EU's Single Market as an English-speaking, Eurozone country committed to EU membership.
- » **Ensure** that Ireland's values and priorities are reflected in the new European development framework and budget, and work in a more coordinated way with EU development institutions and other member states, including engagement in joint programming, where relevant.
- » **Foster** innovation in collaboration with African partners, in particular in areas of mutual interest under the EU Framework Programmes on Research and Innovation, and by building on the Science Foundation Ireland and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade partnership supporting research to address global challenges.

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Ireland will pursue a collaborative 'Team Ireland' approach across all our work in Africa.

A strong Team Ireland approach will increase our impact and ensure the success of this Strategy.

We will:

- » **Expand** our Embassy network on the continent by 25%, by opening three new Embassies during the lifetime of this Strategy: in Morocco, in the second half of 2020, and in two other countries in West Africa by 2025, in particular to serve our interests in the Sahel and francophone West Africa, with the necessary associated investments to support the establishment and operation of these new Missions.
- » **Deliver** an upgraded flagship Chancery in Nigeria, linked to a broader strengthening of our presence in West Africa.
- » **Capitalise** on our Embassy network and other connections to build a more regional approach in West Africa, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa, including to contribute to a more comprehensive cross-Government response to peace and security challenges, identifying synergies and maximizing the impact of our work.



Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone T.D., with South African and Irish musicians, visiting Sibikwa Community Arts in Johannesburg to celebrate St. Patrick's Day through South African/Irish musical fusion. March 2019. © Jerry O'Connor / DCYA

- » **Strengthen** our capacity to engage on African issues within the EU, including through an augmented presence in Brussels and through the strategic placement of Irish nationals in EU offices.
- » **Expand** our partnership with UN Volunteers to support placements for UN volunteers in offices in Africa.
- » **Provide** high quality consular services to Irish citizens in Africa and strengthen our Honorary Consul network in Africa to better deliver on the Government's strategic objectives.
- » **Build** on Enterprise Ireland's footprint in South Africa, Nigeria and Kenya, and its coverage of North Africa, to support Irish companies in identifying entry points to the African market from which they can scale up their business.
- » **Raise awareness** of Ireland as an investment destination by appointing an IDA pathfinder in Africa.
- » **Support** Irish food and beverage exports through an expanded Bord Bia presence in Africa.
- » **Support** efforts to increase direct air and sea links between Ireland and Africa.
- » **Build** institutional linkages with African partners to promote mutually beneficial policy exchange and increased people-to-people ties.
- » **Place** a renewed emphasis on effective communication and public engagement to advance the vision set out in this Strategy.
- » **Report** annually to Government on progress.



Ireland's Footprint in Africa

- Embassies
- Embassies by 2025
- Honorary Consuls
- Bord Bia / Enterprise Ireland / IDA presence
- Current Irish participation in UN Peacekeeping missions
- Current Irish participation in EU CSDP missions



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