

### **Questions for working with the text:**

**Which consequences has European politics on migration movements and causes of fleeing at the African continent?**

**How do you assess the arguments and what can we use for the discussion around the causes of migration and fleeing?**

- Source 1: Part of the book: Dictators as doorkeepers - Christian Jakob und Simone Schlindwein - May 2017 - p. 251 - 261

### **Conclusion Europe's Dreams, Africa's Dreams**

It is the oldest migration route of human kind: Its leading through the desert of Africa, following the Nile north, then over the peninsula Sinai towards Middle East, then Turkey and over the Balkans to Middle Europe. Some thousands of African people have been travelling to Europe over that route in the summer 2015. Among the Syrian and Afghans, that were also travelling the Balkans, they were only a minority.

Two years after this for Europe so important summer of migration this historical route is closed. Israel built up a wall towards Egypt. Turkey closed the border south after an agreement with the EU. Even before Spain has shut down all ways towards their enclaves in northern Africa. The neighbouring continents - Africa and Europe - are separated artificially nowadays.

The EU spent billions, to buy African governments, some dictators or presumed war criminals, to be doorkeepers for the Union. European border security forces are training African colleagues: They should stop migrants and refugees. Therefore many important transit countries issued laws to fight against people smuggler, according to what EU asks of them. Even if most of these smugglers are part of a state-mafia-like complex from criminals and corrupt public officials.

Migrants and refugees have been criminalized, the irregular border crossing has been put under sanction. They are hunted and detained from well-equipped border patrols in the desert, to be put into detention centres and prisons to be deported to their home country or any other country, voluntary or not. And that is just the one side of the medal.

The other is deadly: Thousands of people from Africa are dying in this new world of fences and mobile border patrols; dehydrated in the desert, drowning in the Mediterranean sea, forced to join up Islamist militia, tortured, beheaded or hanged in the fences. The numbers are climbing.

So many deaths have not been seen in some of the African civil wars. That the EU lets people die in front of her borders, also African governments are criticising as inhuman. The president of Mali Keita addressed Merkel in June 2017 at the G20-Africa-Partnership-summit with the words:

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“Every time, when a young African is dying in the Mediterranean Sea, it makes us ill – honestly, Madam Chancellor.”

[...]

The EU has spared no efforts since the escalation on the Balkans in 2015, to stop migrants and refugees from Africa. EU-Commissioner and European head of states, especially chancellor Merkel, are negotiating with African governments. They try, to buy the willingness to follow European interests. They threaten with cutting human aid benefits and with that have been successfully putting African governments under pressure – even against the will of their African people.

Many has been negotiated behind closed doors, to keep out the civil societies, like in December 2016, as the president of Mali was signing a communiqué about deportations, which he later denied, as people started protesting in Bamako. In many countries all over Africa the citizen don't know to what their governments are agreeing in service of the EU.

Cooperating are first of all the regimes, that are authoritarian or, in the case of Eritrea, totalitarian in ruling the people. They profit from the EU migration politics, because the Europeans are starting to negotiate with long-isolated dictatorships. They play, like the presumed war criminal General Hametti in Sudan, the European assistant, and then put forward demands to Berlin and Brussels, blackmail the EU, or just make empty promises like the Eritrean dictator Afewerki. The consequence is that these regimes can stabilize their power with European help. Because it is based on a security apparatus which is professionalized right now with European programmes.

Some countries like Niger, are so poor, that they can't say no to the money. Some island states like Cap Verde, which has been signing the agreements early, are so small, that they can't resist the EU. Others are, like the country with the largest population in Africa, Nigeria, so big, that the EU has to offer them a lot. But by focusing on some well-chosen transit countries north the equator European diplomats have been successful in dividing the African countries, that have been trying to find common ground through African Union or other regional organisations like ECOWAS.

Really problematic for the EU are states like Libya, dysfunctional, without one government to negotiate with. It's ironic, that the country which has been under the dictator Gaddafi one of the first doorkeeper of Europe, nowadays becomes one of the last holes in the European migration repulse system.

Migration is something deeply human, it is a primary instinct, which made the first humans walk besides the Nile, to leave the continent over

the Sinai. Reasons, to go elsewhere are various: nature catastrophes, hunger, searching for better soil, work or luck, sometimes even curiosity or wanderlust. People, that have been travelling the world, are regarded wise in African societies. When they come back to their home town, they are treated like demigods, neighbours and families are coming to hear their stories about the world.

This has been the same in Europe some time ago, before holiday flights and package holiday have been emerging. Travelling or Emigration was expensive and it was a big risk. Cheap flying companies and mass tourism made it possible during the last decades that Europeans make summer holidays at the Mediterranean Sea - millions lying half naked at the beaches - where since the last years also corpses are washed up.

The picture of a drowned Syrian child at a Turkish beach has caused horror all over the European press during autumn 2015 during the main phase of the route through the Balkans. The Spanish newspaper El Periodico wrote „The decline of Europe“. The picture caused empathy and the willingness to help. The words of Merkel “We can handle it!“ have been followed all over Germany, and people were supporting voluntarily refugees in their arrival, this was also influenced by the picture. Which basically produced solidarity which has been scarce all over Europe nowadays. The chancellor has ended this politic of welcoming, also by using Africa politics. The efforts to negotiate deportation contracts with African governments, shows that Germany wants to get rid of the Africans. Frontex should handle that, with mass deportations from all over Europe. And there is the will to handle that without public attention.

Pictures from the African tragedies in the desert of Nigeria are rarely existing. The people are dying there without being watched. Only Frontex can observe the deaths at their monitors. They are collecting information over satellites and drones to fight against human smugglers and human traffickers. But the more Europe is isolating itself, the more the slave traders are earning with the commodity human. Would there be more legal ways towards EU, the smuggler would not make any profits and for that would not finance terrorism.

The colonial time of Europe in Africa is not long over. African grandparents can remember the struggle for independence, which has been bloody often. Often they remember better, then the European older generations can remember the Second World War and the resulting refugee tracks. Just some centuries ago the Europeans put African slaves to boats to transport them over the Atlantic Ocean towards working on the fields of a continent the Europeans had conquered in their will to migration. Millions of people have been stolen from the African continent, Europe has caused the development backlog that it tries so expensively to balance.

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Just some centuries later the Europeans want the Africans to stay at home. They should not get on boats, they should not visit new worlds and they should not work. They are frightened by the growing of population of the continent. So says the development minister of Denmark, Ulla Tornaes in July 2017 when she offers to spend 14 million dollars for birth control in Africa. "To lower the pressure of migration in Africa, it is part of the solution to lower the birth rates of many African countries.

Migration is the easiest way in a globalized world to balance the inequality of wealth. Especially the high rates of transfers from working migrants to their families at home show that. In Niger they are higher than the income from taxes in the provinces, in Mali they are a big part of the gross national product, in Eritrea they are financing the state apparatus, in Nigeria they are higher than the development aid which is paid for every citizen.

In Africa migration is a motor for development. States are cooperating like the role model EU for economical partnerships, they abolish customs duties, visa and working permits, to have regional free flow of products, services and working forces.

The growing population is seen positively, because it strengthens the demand and increases the number of consumers, what supports the economy. Also the immigration of outsiders is seen positive. In 2018 African Union wants freedom of visa all over the continent, also by introducing an African passport - of course biometrical. If this is realistic, will be judged later; also how EU will deal with this.

In the question of migration EU has not succeeded, the European travel documents, Laissez-Passers, no African state recognizes until now, nobody wants to sign deportation contracts, even if billions have been promised. Africans want easier visa for their citizens for the EU. But working migrants from Africa - this is not wanted by the EU neither by the German government.

Who visits in an African capital the visa counter of a German embassy is confronted with confusing messages: there are posters from the colourful landscapes Mosel or Rhein, advertisement for studying medicine in Heidelberg or machine construction in Munich. Right next to that alarming warnings of human trafficker, that promise work in the EU to get money from people. Just in the middle a bulletproof glass, with a thin gap for inserting documents, a small entry towards the remote chance to get a working permit for EU. African applicants for Visa or Asylum have to be ready to open up everything about their life to European authorities, their wealth and family connections. With the help of high technology data base and identification systems European authorities are getting better in surveillance of migration. Until now not every border in Africa is equipped with computers and internet, not all borders are

marked, and not all passports are biometrical. But EU is doing a lot to get access to the fingerprints from Cairo to Cape Town, and from Dakar to Darussalam, thanks to the security technology "Made in Europe".

The profits of these intelligent borders are European Security and armaments companies, which have not been interested in the African market until now, because it is risky to invest there. German companies are now getting easier access to Africa. The German government is giving support to invest under the use of exterior economic development, which is labelled under fighting against the causes of fleeing. The concepts are sold as "working place initiative" for young "continent of chances". Chancellor Merkel puts it into words at the Berlin Partnership Conference: If less migrants come from Africa, then this also means "more security for us."

Many of the things, that have been tried by EU to control migration during the last years is not new, but new in scale. Billions have been invested by Brussel to prevent migration, most of the money comes from development aid. The reason can be found in interior politics. 2017 there are elections in many European member states, not only Germany, but also France, Austria, Denmark, Netherlands, Italy or Great Britain. Everywhere the question of migration has been the centre of the struggle for votes. One could think, Europe is getting closer together in the fight against migration. But the opposite is happening in July 2017 at the Brenner. The small Austria, that has made efforts since 2015 to welcome no more refugees, has for the first time since 1991, as war in Yugoslavia was starting, send soldiers to the borders. 2017 light wheeled tanks are send to the Brenner by the austrian minister for defence Hans Peter Doskozil, ist the most important connection from south to northern Europe - it is an absurd symbolic gesture. The closure is possible via "pushing a button" says Günther Platter (ÖVP), and warns for the climbing number of criminal African migrants, arriving in the southern neighbouring country Italy. Even before that he has pointed out a "criminal north African scene". He says: "It's not about tanks. It's about the question how to handle illegal migration." The situation at the Brenner is chaotic. "It is about being prepared." as "emergency measure". Migration drives would make the people unsecure, and "be the final straw". Just some weeks later the military is used officially to support the border police.

EU is in a deep crisis. It is not a refugee crisis, but a crisis of solidarity in the interior. Austria does not use soldiers against migrants but against the European decision, to redistribute them around Europe. And it is happening in Tirol, where one can still see the bunkers from the first two world wars, some time ago a battlefield, now an idyllic, secure and wealthy region in the mountains that lives from tourism - thanks to EU.

Africa is in Europe an interior topic not an exterior. The continent, which has been seen from European eyes as threatening and dangerous, is used as projection surface of all fears, just like in colonial ages. Development minister Müller was talking in June 2017 about “100 billion Africans” that will come to Europe. That’s how Europeans play the game “Who is afraid of the black man?” with themselves.

On the „continent of chances“ and the rising economical development even more africans will search for works outside their countries. At the same time population will grow, but not as fast as frightened. The growing African middle class has a tendency towards less children, mostly one or two, which fit into one car – just similar how industrialisation and urbanisation in Europe lowered the birth rate. In many African countries, where education is expensive, the middles classes are thinking how to afford the money for schooling, to finance all the children an education. For many local economies the growth of population had positive aspects. It is strengthening the demand and the local production. It only becomes a problem, if African peasants are put under pressure by free trade agreements, which endanger their basis of existence or if the agricultural land of millions is destroyed by global warming. For this processes EU has part of the responsibility.

With a shared, rational and long-term security and exterior politics the EU should engage globally to deescalate the conflicts. This means to stop buying dictatorships as door keepers, to prevent the “spill-over”, how it is describe in the EU-defence-strategy. The terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussel, London and Berlin prove: There are always holes through the secured fortress walls of Europe. That people are radicalizing or flee has causes. They are rooted also in Sudan, in Nigeria, in Mali, in Central African Republic, in DR Kongo, in Burundi, or in Ethopia. But the authoritarian regimes which are supported partly by the EU are also part of why people are leaving their countries. Many are also fleeing Germany weapons.

In the world of today, it is not only wealth but security that is distributed unfairly as never before. Migration in contrast to redistribution of development aid is a process that can balance global inequality relatively easy. A country like Niger, where people are starving, children suffer from malnutrition and can´t go to school, the gift of a high-tech-fence is the same as giving a naked freezing child a head. This is the way an officer of an African border patrol that has been trained by GIZ expresses his opinion. Even if he is profiting, he thinks the investments are wrong. With the migration repulse the EU uses a violent and expensive strategy to keep up the global inequality and defend the wealth of Europe. The danger, that young Africans are supporting Dschihad, is rising through that.

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There have been planned Marshall Plans for Africa, credits are granted, that will bring profits to European savers and pension funds, and will attract German companies: They should provide job and keep the youth searching for work in the countries. The EU invites African states and regional organisations to take part in global free trade - but only by accepting the rule of the game. With the trade agreements, African states are forced to open up their markets for European products, which destroys working places that are creating elsewhere by using development aid. This happens if you declare migration a crisis.

EU is dreaming of secured borders and an opening of markets. Africa is dreaming of open borders and secured markets. As long as there is no solution for this conflict in interests, there won't be any real partnership.