

• Programme

Brussels Symposium 2017

A different angle.

“Global South” perspectives on
the European crises

7 March 2017

North Rhine-Westphalia Representative Office to the European Union
Montoyerstraat 47 / Rue Montoyer, Brussels

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#BruSy17

BACKGROUND

For decades, the European integration process has been regarded as a role model for regional integration. It served as a symbol for peace and freedom, stability, economic recovery and the implementation of democracy and human rights. But in recent years, it seems as if the European Union (EU) is unable to stop the crisis mode. The EU had to face unknown challenges with the impact of the global financial crisis in 2007, the weak financial and economic status in several countries in Southern Europe, along with growing poverty and unemployment. Those developments were flanked by a rising number of refugees trying to enter the EU, an overall disagreement on the joint European refugee and migration policy as well as other geopolitical challenges like the Eastern Ukraine conflict. The close fight for solutions comes hand in hand with a growing identity crisis, with its peak after the historical vote of Great Britain to leave the EU. Right wing populists are gaining popularity in nearly all countries of the EU while the nationalist intentions of single member states are emerging, too. Facing these challenges, the EU seems to be essentially occupied with itself. Especially the Brexit negotiations will probably make way for an EU mainly struggling with its own problems for a longer period of time.

Apparently, the impact of European policies on other world regions and global cooperation seems to get lost out of sight. But the EU remains an important player in the international arena, whether in trade relations, in international development cooperation, in security related issues or the negotiation of international agreements, for example within the field of climate change.

What are the consequences of a weakened EU for those international processes? Will seeking solutions to global challenges, for example implementing the Agenda 2030 or the Paris Climate Agreement, be put in the waiting line beyond current crises? What are the impacts of the European crises for other countries and regions, especially in countries of the “Global South”? What is their reaction? Specifically asked, what are the ramifications of an upcoming Brexit and the European refugee and migration policy for countries of the “Global South”?

Those and other questions will be discussed with European and international panelists from politics, civil society and academia.

: Tuesday, 7 March 2017

9:30 hrs

Registration

Conference chaired by

Patrick Leusch

CEO, Deutsche Welle Media Services GmbH, Bonn

Member of the Board of Trustees of the Development and Peace Foundation (sef:)

WELCOME

9:45 hrs

Welcome

Dr Marc Jan Eumann

State Secretary

Ministry for Federal Affairs, Europe and the Media of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Duesseldorf

SESSION I

PERSPECTIVES FROM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF EUROPE.

A CONTINENT IN CRISIS MODE?

10:00 hrs

Keynotes

Professor Ummu Salma Bava

Professor of European Studies

School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Dr Dr hc Klaus Hänsch

Former President of the European Parliament, Erkrath

SESSION II

THE EU AS A GLOBAL ACTOR - WITH LIMITED CAPACITY TO ACT?

The European Union plays a pivotal role in a number of international processes. If speaking with one voice, it can weigh in at international negotiations. The EU can also send important signals by implementing international agreements. A comprehensive and consistent implementation of the Agenda 2030, for example, would improve the EU's credibility especially from the developing and emerging economies' point of view. While first steps have been made, a number of additional priorities causing friction between member states may have contributed to a delay in developing a comprehensive strategy. Therefore, the internal crises of the EU are also being monitored outside the EU.

- What are the impacts of the European crises on international processes?
- What are the implications for countries of the “Global South”? Is there also the possibility to profit from Europe's crises?
- How can the EU manage to balance immediate crisis management and long-term policy planning?

11:15 hrs

Roundtable Talk

Ziad Abdel Samad

Executive Director

Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Beirut

Elmar Brok MEP

Member of the Group of the European People's Party
(EPP, Christian Democrats),

Chair of the UK Advisory Group EPP

European Parliament, Brussels

Dr Evi Fitriani

Senior Lecturer

Department of International Relations

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta

Shada Islam

Director Europe & Geopolitics

Friends of Europe, Brussels

12:30-13:45 hrs Lunch

SESSION III

BREXIT – DISADVANTAGE OR ADVANTAGE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH?

Following the Brexit vote, stock markets fell immediately. However, the long term impact on the world economy still remains unclear. The volatility of the financial markets and possible drops of several currencies would not only impact the import and export trade. The drop of the pound and other currencies would also influence the amount of money provided for development cooperation or remittances by migrants sent home to their families. In addition to these consequences, international trade relations might change as well. The focus and volume of European development cooperation might also change when Great Britain leaves the EU.

- What are the possible impacts of Brexit on the economic development of countries of the “Global South”?
- In what way could European development cooperation change following Brexit?
- What are the reactions on the Brexit vote in the “Global South”? Are there possibly opportunities as well?

13:45 hrs

Roundtable Talk

H.E. Dr Patrick Ignatius Gomes

Secretary General

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), Brussels

Seamus Jeffreson

Director

European NGO confederation for Relief and Development (Concord), Brussels

David Luke

Coordinator of the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC)

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Addis Ababa

15:00-15:30 hrs Coffee and tea break

SESSION IV

RISKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT?

EUROPE'S WALLING OFF STRATEGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Today's migrants and refugees are mainly seeking refuge in neighboring developing countries, only a handful of them are making it to Europe's shores. However, the EU continues its migration and refugee policy in the line of the idea to build walls and fences around Europe. Using financial aid and support for border control in some African countries, Europe seeks to prevent refugees and migrants from coming to Europe. At the same time, there's a lack of coherence within European policies in general. The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) for example are criticised for worsening the economic situation for people in a number of countries and increasing migration numbers. Since legal ways to migrate are lacking, people again and again seek illegal routes to come to Europe to earn enough money for themselves and their families at home to survive.

- What is the perspective from the “Global South” on a coherent European refugee and migration policy?
- What are the implications of a more restrictive migration policy for the chances on development in the countries of origin?
- In what way is the credibility of the EU challenged by its current refugee and migration policy?

15:30 hrs

Roundtable Talk

Ablam Benjamin Akoutou

Political Scientist and Project Coordinator, Bonn

Ralph Genetzke

Head of Mission

International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), Brussels

Dr Ramy Lakkis

Director

Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training (LOST), Baalbeck

CLOSING SESSION

WHAT ARE THE PERSPECTIVES FOR THE EUROPEAN PROJECT?

16:45 hrs Thoughts from the audience

17:00 hrs Closing remarks

Dr Michèle Roth

Executive Director

Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn