

## High-Level Forum Africa-Europe 2018: EUROCHAMBRES underlines importance of investing in job creation for youth

**EUROCHAMBRES** is the only business organisation that participated in the High-Level Forum Africa – Europe 2018, that took place yesterday and today in Vienna to secure prosperity and competitiveness on both continents as well as to deepen the EU-Africa cooperation in the digital age.

As part of his intervention, EUROCHAMBRES President **Christoph Leitl** asked for a more ambitious European-African alliance. *“The private sector is ready to support the ‘Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs’, to boost productivity and competitiveness and promote prosperity, investment, growth and to create jobs. However, this alliance should include not only public institutions, media and large multinationals, but also SMEs as creators of employment, social cohesion and innovation across the continent”*, he said.

*“Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) should be at the heart of a development policy focused on African Youth and the digital sector. In this sense, EUROCHAMBRES is supporting the European efforts to improve employability and facilitate jobs in the whole African continent, as we already do for example in the Sahel and Lake Chad region with the recently-launched ARCHIPELAGO programme”*, remarked **President Leitl**.

Funded by the European Commission Trust Fund for Africa, ARCHIPELAGO improves the employability and integration in the Sahelian market of youth, through targeted technical and vocational training measures. *“This innovative programme brings us the opportunity to recall the strength of teaching. We need to find a balance between support for productivity and inclusion on the one hand, and to invest in the skills of tomorrow on the other”*, stressed **Leitl**.

**President Leitl** also highlighted the positive experiences in EU-Africa cooperation on vocational and entrepreneurial activities implemented by the private sector, such as the efforts of ‘Andritz’ in Sudan, ‘Hope for Future’ in Kenya and some others.

Finally, **EUROCHAMBRES’** President underlined the leading role of the current Austrian Presidency of the Council of the European Union of this semester for organising this High-Level Forum. *“Only enhanced collaboration between the public and the private sector will upraise the development opportunities that digital economy gives to Africa. Therefore, events like this offer a comprehensive and integrated approach about the role of the private sector to contribute in this dialogue between both continents in a most efficient and constructive manner”*, concluded **President Leitl**.

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Additional information:

- Press release: Kick-off of ARCHIPELAGO programme in the Sahel and Lake Chad region (10/12/2018): <http://bit.ly/2RNP20n>
- High-Level Forum Africa-Europe Vienna 2018 (at EU2018.at): <http://bit.ly/2zXq1Jb>
- Pictures of President Leitl’s participation at the event at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/eurochambres/albums/72157704770163134>

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