

## **Remarks by President Charles Michel after his meeting with the President of Senegal, Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar Faye**

Thank you very much, Mr President (Bassirou Diomaye Faye). Thank you for your warm words, thank you for your hospitality, and of course I would like to start by congratulating you on your election, congratulating the government on taking office and the Prime Minister and wishing you every success in meeting your objectives for your country, for your people.

I would also like to stress the robustness of Senegal's democratic institutions, which have demonstrated their strength, and to praise the people of Senegal. We have indeed had the opportunity for a good conversation, an extremely fruitful exchange, which showed that we share a common ambition to work towards a quality bilateral partnership based on two key principles: respect and trust. Two things that naturally go hand in hand with each other. And this first exercise, our initial meeting, I think, reflects this concept of respect and of trust.

We have discussed bilaterally the various pillars where we believe there is more work to be done: supporting the productive economy, infrastructure, vocational training and technical training. We also discussed a number of issues that we should not be afraid of: in the fisheries and fish resources sector, for example, looking at the facts and seeing how we can, if necessary, make improvements on both sides to address a number of legitimate concerns.

Indeed, we believe that the European Union's responsibility is to be a loyal, reliable partner, with no hidden agenda, because we have a very objective interest in Senegal's being able to meet the challenges you face: the challenge of development, economic emergence and improved living conditions for the people. And there is a clear link with migration-related issues, including illegal or illicit migration, which in reality reflect this hope of crossing an ocean or sea in search of a better future. We believe that we need to support efforts to remedy the root causes of this and to address these issues of illegal and irregular migration.

We also discussed another topic, that of stability, security, and the regional framework, which was the subject of a fruitful conversation. We wish to support all efforts to ensure that regional institutions and organisations are able to cooperate and make progress, so that they can also provide greater stability and security.

And then one last point I would like to mention, and thank you for having also discussed it, is the European Union's struggle to conduct this inclusive dialogue with our partners around the world and, in particular, with the African continent. The world order is the result of political choices made during the last century, at a time when the world was completely different. And today's world no longer reflects the world when the Bretton Woods institutions were established, when the United Nations was founded, and this is why the European Union is supporting more justice and inclusion in multilateral forums, starting with the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, and we hope to be a very engaged partner with our African friends through the African Union and the countries willing to act on this issue, so that the Summit of the Future convened by Antonio Guterres, which will take place in New York after the summer, is a success. And it is an opportunity, not simply through speeches, but rather through action, to show that we are making progress towards greater justice in international finance and in inclusiveness in terms of governance. It is also a topic, I am sure, on which we can continue to work together and with other partners in the weeks and months ahead.

In any case, thank you for your welcome once again. And I have had the pleasure of inviting you to Brussels, at the heart of the European Union, so that, when you are available for that visit, we can look at the steps forward which, I hope, will have been taken in the time between this meeting here in Dakar and our next meeting, and which I hope will take place soon.

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