



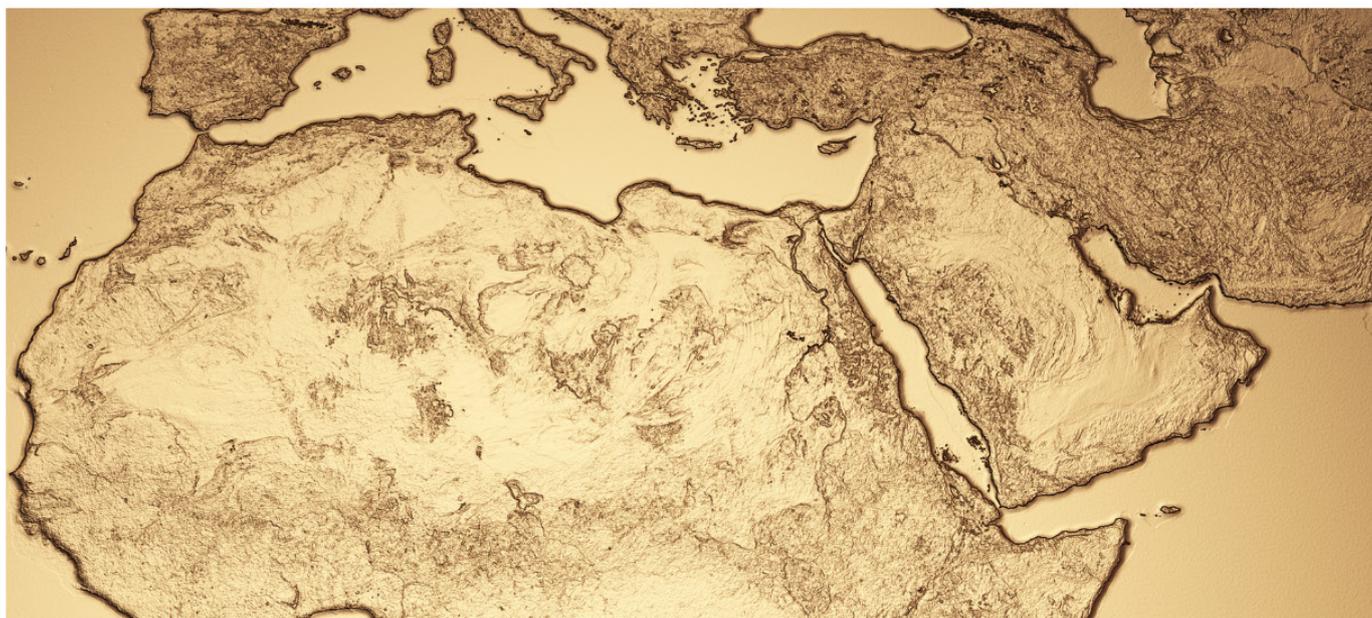
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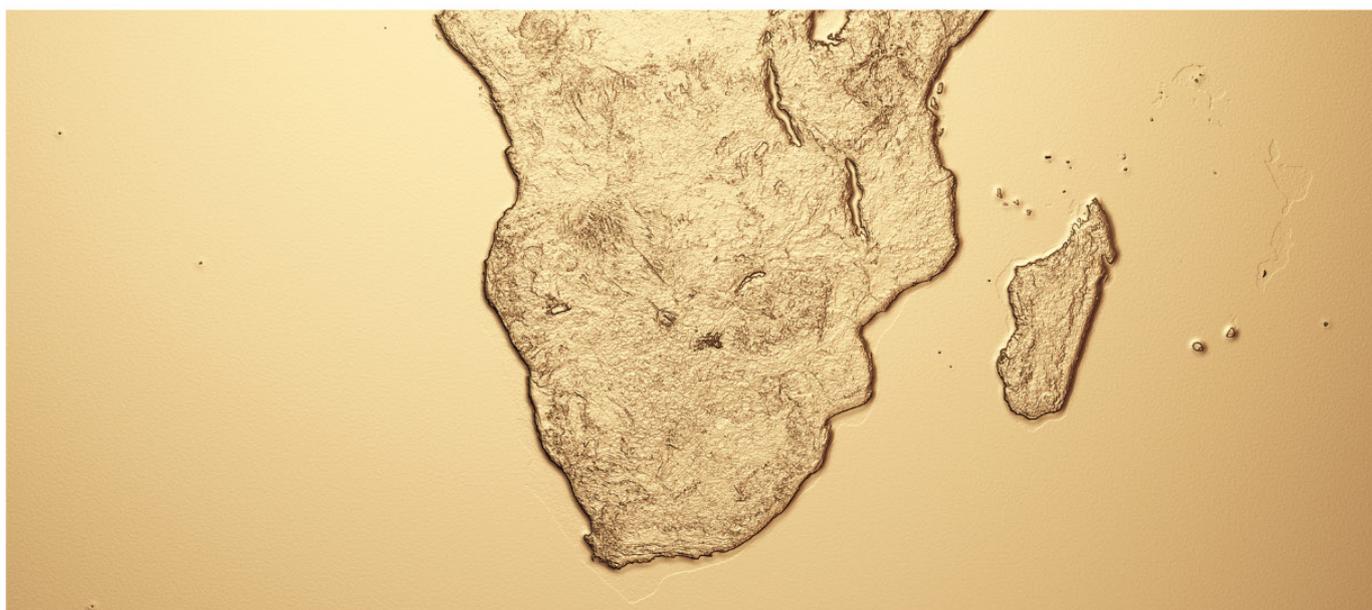
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SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS

CYPRUS BUSINESS ANALYTICS MAGAZINE



THE PROSPECTS OF CO-OPERATING WITH AFRICA



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ODYSSEAS MELIKIDES: “COOPERATION WITH AFRICA IS VERY PROMISING.”

Recently, more and more official statements have been made about the need to implement EU policy on the African continent. The CEO and founder of M. Target Group, Odysseas Melikides, discussed this topic with European and African colleagues and with representatives of the EU governments at the international event Crans Montana Forum. In an interview with Successful Business, he shared his impressions and plans.

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CYPRUS COULD PARTICIPATE MORE ACTIVELY IN THE EUROPE-AFRICA RELATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Odysseas, first of all, tell us about the concept of the Crans Montana Forum. What is its mission?

Today it is an authoritative global forum that brings together world and business leaders to discuss current political and economic topics. The Crans Montana Forum has been in existence for over 35 years. It was established in 1986 to strengthen international cooperation by promoting best practices and ensuring ongoing dialogue between those in the public and private sectors. Its executive

president and founder is Jean-Paul Carteron, a well-known lawyer and global activist. Every year, within the forum framework, there are several events where influential people meet in a private and informal setting. The geography of participants is constantly expanding. Today, it includes representatives from more than a hundred countries. The topic list is also quite extensive: political, economic, social problems, and international security issues. In other words, everything that directly affects the global and regional business climate.



Odysseas was born in Tbilisi, moved to Greece under the repatriation program, then to Cyprus, where he has been living for more than 20 years. In 2014 he founded the consulting company M. Target Business Consultants Ltd, which was later consolidated into the M. Target Group, specializing in serving international businesses and high-net-worth individuals in Cyprus, the UK, and the UAE. The status of Leader For Tomorrow, which was awarded to Odysseas by the Crans Montana Forum, will allow him to take part in events at this prestigious global platform and communicate productively with business leaders and public and political figures from more than a hundred countries.



And the topic of the latest forum was related to the prospects of Africa?

Yes, the event I participated in was called The World At a Time of African Economic Sovereignty. More than 300 people attended, including current and former heads of state, ambassadors, and European commissioners. We analyzed the problems and prospects of the African continent. The main topic of discussion was the sustainable development of Africa in many aspects: energy supply, electrification, access to drinking water and medical care, growth in agricultural and food production, environmental problems, urbanization, and economic and social inequality.

We heard many different points of view, but all forum delegates agreed that Africa has immense potential. Due to its geographical proximity, Cyprus could participate more actively in the Europe-Africa relations development. Therefore, I paid close attention to the discussions at the forum. I also examined possible opportunities with people who have been working in this direction for a long time. Being at the event was not only a thought-provoking experience but also a big responsibility. I was the only participant from Cyprus invited by the organizers.

Why do you think the EU is turning to Africa?

The development of relations with the African continent has been a priority of the EU for several years now. In 2018, the European Commission launched the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs. In 2022, it announced the ambitious Global Gateway Africa-Europe Investment Package of at least €150 billion.

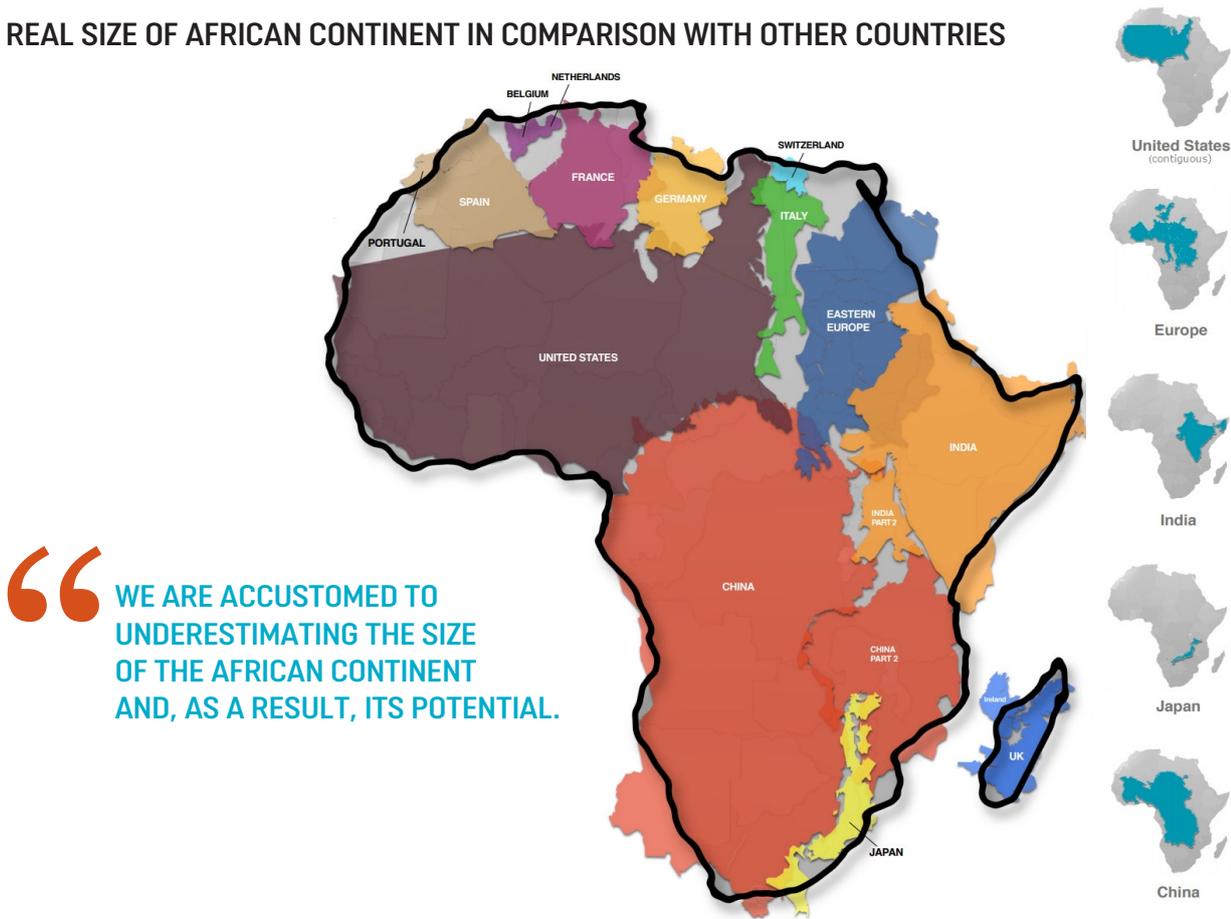
Today, cooperation with Africa is becoming a higher priority for the EU, as it allows it to partially solve the energy crisis and increase the import of natural resources. In addition, African countries in many other areas are becoming promising partners for Europe. The EU, in return, should help Africa strengthen its economic sovereignty, overcome the status of a dependent region, and rely on colossal domestic sources of growth.

Just look at the map of the actual sizes of continents and countries! For many, it comes as a shock. After all, we usually look at maps of Africa drawn by Euro-



IN 2022, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ANNOUNCED THE AMBITIOUS GLOBAL GATEWAY AFRICA-EUROPE INVESTMENT PACKAGE OF AT LEAST €150 BILLION.

REAL SIZE OF AFRICAN CONTINENT IN COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTRIES



“ WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO UNDERESTIMATING THE SIZE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT AND, AS A RESULT, ITS POTENTIAL.

peans during the Age of Discovery and improved in the 19th century. So, we are accustomed to underestimating the size of the African continent and, as a result, its potential.

At the forum, you received the status of Leader for Tomorrow. How are candidates selected, and what does this award provide?

Every year, the Fondation du Forum Universale officially appoints the New

Leaders for Tomorrow from different countries. Applicants must be younger than 42, attest to professional success, have leadership experience, and enjoy a good reputation in the community. Cyprus was included on the list for the first time. I am thrilled that such an authoritative organization noticed my work. However, this status also comes with its responsibilities. In the next three years, I will actively help shape the agenda of the forums, speak at various venues, and develop personal and business ties with colleagues from other countries. Since I took seriously what I heard during the forum, I will prioritize topics related to the development of Cyprus-Africa cooperation in my work. Cyprus is a unique economic bridge between Europe and Africa, and work in this direction is of the utmost importance.

