



ATLANTIC
DIALOGUES

ATLANTIC
DIALOGUES

THE ATLANTIC DIALOGUES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIALOGUES REPORT 2024

December 12-14, 2024
Rabat, Morocco



13th
THE ATLANTIC
DIALOGUES

UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI

ATLANTIC DIALOGUES REPORT 2024



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About the Atlantic Dialogues Conference

The Atlantic Dialogues conference, launched in 2012, is the **Policy Center for the New South's** flagship annual and high-level international conference that convenes influential media, civil society, NGO and public and private sector leaders from around the Atlantic Basin for open, candid and informal discussions on cross-regional and cross-sectoral issues to reimagine Atlantic cooperation.

The Atlantic Dialogues conference has been established as a cornerstone for debate and cross-cutting dialogue, addressing topics of regional and global interest and rebalancing the South-North debate. Over the years, the conference has become a meeting point between the four continents of the Atlantic and has sought to suggest a new understanding of Atlantic dynamics – **the Wider Atlantic**- underscoring the importance of the South Atlantic in the global geopolitical debate, and building bridges between Africa and South America, in dialogue with Europe and North America.

A unique characteristic of The Atlantic Dialogues is **intergenerational dialogue**, an important value and philosophy at the Policy Center for the New South that also extends to the conference. Through **the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program**, 40 change-makers from the Atlantic Basin take part in a tailor-made policy, leadership, and networking program three days prior to joining the Atlantic Dialogues conference, bringing in fresh and diverse perspectives needed to tackle today's challenges.

Format

The Atlantic Dialogues is designed to create an environment that is conducive to facilitating concrete discussions that lead to actionable outcomes. Sessions are designed to promote frank, interactive, and informal discussion through a mix of plenary panels, smaller breakout sessions, night owl discussions, and keynote addresses. The conference brings together a network of individuals instilled with a new "mental map" of Atlantic issues, partnerships, and potential. This is achieved through skillfully moderated discussions between the audience and expert discussants.

Atlantic Dialogues 2024

Strategic and Core Team



Curator:

Karim El Aynaoui

Executive President, Policy Center
for the New South



Head Coordinator:

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Chargée de Mission to the Executive
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International Relations



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Events & General Support



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Development



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Monsef Taiba

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Program Officer – Youth Leadership Initiatives

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Program Officer – Events

Hajar El Haradi

Junior Professionals Programs – Events

Zineb El Korchi

Program Officer – Events

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Program Officer – Events

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International Relations Specialist

Khadija Mamouni

Junior Professional Program -International Relations Department

Badr Mandri

Economist

Atlantic Dialogues 2024 in Numbers

132

Speakers,
moderators &
chairs

66

Nationalities

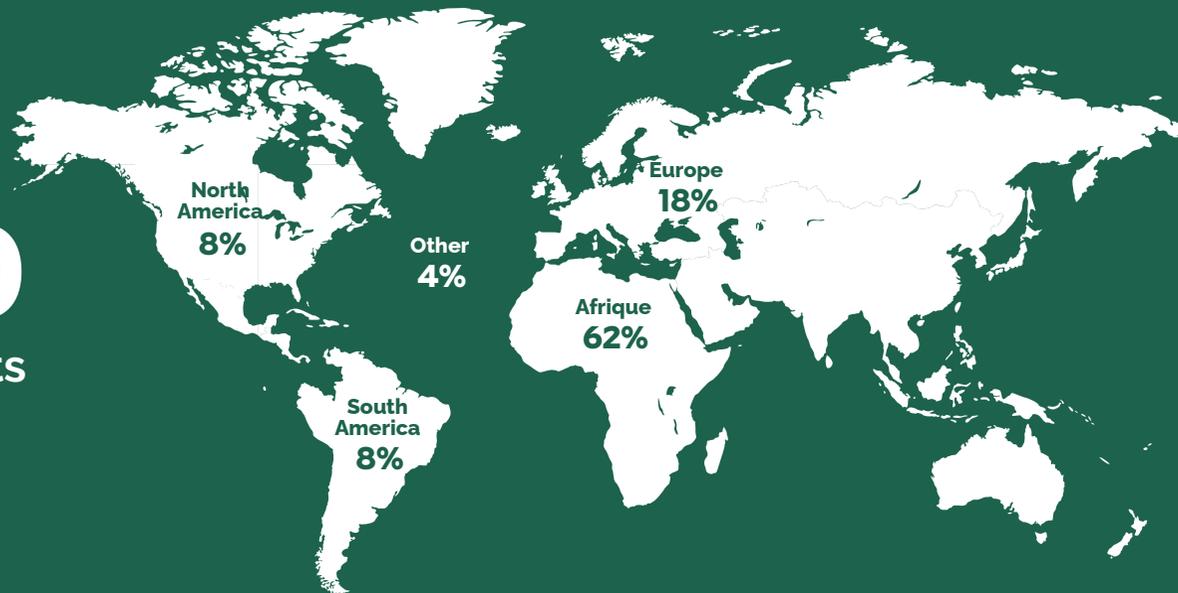
79%

Atlantic
Participants

41

Emerging Leaders

450
Participants



+300 000

Web Impressions

Plenaries

Launch of the 11th Edition of the Atlantic Currents: An Annual Report on Wider Atlantic Perspectives and Patterns

Plenary I Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative: Walking the Talk from Africa on Atlantic Cooperation

Plenary II Cultural Diplomacy: Reconnecting Atlantic Communities Through Arts and Heritage

Plenary III Southfullness and the Future of Multilateralism

Plenary IV Who Bears the Cost of the Energy Transition?

Plenary V Democracy on the Edge: Election Year in the Wider Atlantic

Plenary VI Smart Infrastructure: Investing in Africa's Connected Future

Plenary VII Beyond Fragmentation: Constructing Atlantic Communities of Interest

Plenary VIII Funding Development: Short on Bold Ideas or Implementation?

Plenary IX The Regional Security Paradigm: From the Red Sea to the Atlantic

Plenary X North-South Think Tank Cooperation and Partnership in a Fragmented World

Closing Plenary XI Wider Atlantic Challenges Viewed by Emerging Leaders

Agenda

December 12th

11:00 – 12:30 | **Launch of the 11th Edition of the Atlantic Currents: An Annual Report on Wider Atlantic Perspectives and Patterns**

Moderator:

Mohammed Loulichki, Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)

Speakers:

Fabio Albergaria Queiroz, Researcher, Brazilian Defense College (Brazil)
Alan Hirsch, Research Fellow, New South Institute (South Africa)
Chadia Mathurin, Founder and Director, Wakonté (Saint Lucia)
Santiago Theoduloz, Strategy Director, Bloomsbury Policy Group (Uruguay)

12:30 – 14:00 | Lunch

14:15 – 14:30 | AD Application Presentation

Rim Berahab, Senior Economist, Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)

14:30 – 14:45 | **Welcoming Remarks**

Karim El Aynaoui, Executive President, Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)

14:45 – 15:30 | **Townhall**

Nik Gowing, Founder & Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable (United Kingdom)

15:30 – 16:45 | **Plenary I: Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative: Walking the Talk from Africa on Atlantic Cooperation**

Moderator:

John Yearwood, Editorial Director, Diversity & Culture, Politico (USA)

Speakers :

Youssef Amrani, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United States (Morocco)
Amina Benkhadra, General Director, National Office of Hydrocarbons & Mines (Morocco)
Nuno António de Noronha Bragança, Coordinator, Atlantic Centre (Portugal)

16:45 – 17:15 | Coffee Break

17:15 – 17:45 | **Conversation: From Globalization to Fragmentation: The South Atlantic at a Crossroad**

Moderator:

Andres Schipani, East and Central Africa Bureau Chief, Financial Times (Argentina)

Speakers:

Jamil Mahuad, Former President of Ecuador (Ecuador)

17:45 – 19:00 | **Plenary II: Cultural Diplomacy: Reconnecting Atlantic Communities Through Arts and Heritage**

Moderator:

Richard Lui, Anchor & Journalist, NBC News/MSNBC (USA)

Speakers:

Mohammed Mehdi Bensaid, Minister of Youth, Culture and Communication (Morocco)
Jessica De Alba-Ulloa, Professor, SPIA University of Maine (Mexico)
Migdalia Machin, Regional Minister for Universities, Science, and Culture, Canary Islands (Spain)
Rama Yade, Senior Director, Africa Center, Atlantic Council (France)

19:30 – 21:00 | Moroccan Dinner

December 13th

09:30 – 10:45 | **Plenary III: Southfulness and the Future of Multilateralism**

Moderator:

Kimberly Dozier, Global Affairs Analyst, CNN (USA)

Speakers:

Jacques Attali, Writer and Futurologist, President, Attali Associates (France)
Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations (Morocco)
Erika Mouynes, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Panama)
Ana Palacio, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Spain)

10:45 – 11:15 | Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:30 | **Plenary IV: Who Bears the Cost of the Energy Transition?**

Moderator:

Uduak Amimo, Founder, Uduak Amimo Coaching & Consulting (Kenya)

Speakers:

Laura Albornoz Pollmann, Director, National Oil Company of Chile (Chile)
R. Andreas Kraemer, Founder, Ecologic Institute (Germany)
Carlos Lopes, Honorary Professor, Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town (Guinea Bissau)
Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Managing Partner, Parnasse International (France)

12:30 – 14:00 | Lunch

14:00 – 15:15 | **Plenary V: Democracy on the Edge: Election Year in the Wider Atlantic**

Moderator:

Gallagher Fenwick, Reporter and Former Manager Editor, France 24 (France)

Speakers:

Mohamed Beavogui, Former Prime Minister (Guinea)
Kassie Freeman, President & CEO, African Diaspora Consortium (USA)

Paulo Portas, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Portugal)
Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, President, France Terre d'Asile (France)
15:45 – 17:00 | **Plenary VI: Smart Infrastructure: Investing in Africa's Connected Future**

Moderator:

Sarah Glover, Vice President of News and Civic Dialogue, WHYY News (USA)

Speakers:

Jorge Arbache, International Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, University of Brasilia (Brazil)
Arkebe Oqubay Metiku, British Academy Global Professor, SOAS University of London (Ethiopia)
Nicolas Massot, Member of National Congress (Argentina)

17:00 – 17:30 | Coffee Break

17:30 – 18:45 | **Plenary VII: Beyond Fragmentation: Constructing Atlantic Communities of Interest**

Moderator:

Uduak Amimo, Founder, Uduak Amimo Coaching & Consulting (Kenya)

Speakers:

Sergio Alcocer, President, Mexican Council on Foreign Relation (Mexico)
Stephanie Miley, Senior Advisor - Partnership for Atlantic Cooperation, U.S. Department of State (USA)
Mamphela Ramphele, Member, The Planetary Guardians (South Africa)

20:00 – 22:00 | Breakout Dinners

December 14th

10:00 – 11:15 | **Plenary VIII: Funding Development: Short on Bold Ideas or Implementation?**

Moderator:

Anne-Marie Dias Borges, International Media Specialist (Cape Verde)

Speakers:

Masood Ahmed, President Emeritus, Center for Global Development (United Kingdom)
Nizar Baraka, Minister of Equipment and Water (Morocco)
Joaquim Levy, Director for Economic Strategy and Market Relation, Banco Safra (Brazil)
Matata Ponyo Mapon, Chairman of the Board, Congo Challenge (DRC)

11:15 – 11:45 | Coffee Break

11:45 – 13:00 | **Plenary IX: The Regional Security Paradigm: From the Red Sea to the Atlantic**

Moderator:

Gallagher Fenwick, Reporter and Former Manager Editor, France 24 (France)

Speakers:

Pascal Boniface, Director, The French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs (France)
Birame Diop, Minister of Defence (Senegal)
Daniel Vajdich, President, Yorktown Solutions (USA)

13:00 – 14:30 | Lunch

14:30 – 15:45 | **Plenary X: North-South Think Tank Cooperation and Partnership in a Fragmented World**

Moderator:

Kimberly Dozier, Global Affairs Analyst, CNN (USA)

Speakers:

Karim El Aynaoui, Executive President, Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)
Renato Flôres, Director, Fundação Getulio Vargas International Intelligence Unit (Brazil)
Ian Lesser, Vice President, German Marshall Fund (USA)
Paolo Magri, Executive Vice President, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (Italy)

15:45 – 16:15 | Coffee break

16:15 – 17:30 | **Closing Plenary XI: Wider Atlantic Challenges Viewed by Emerging Leaders**

Moderator:

Nik Gowing, Founder & Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable (United Kingdom)

Speakers:

Danielle Alakija, Founder & CEO, The SOLI Group (Nigeria)
Asma Bachikh, Investment Associate, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (Morocco)
Swapneel Mehta, Co-founder, SimPPL (India)
Rafael Schmuziger Goldwzeig, Global Response Manager, Meta (Brazil)
Siphokazi Sibahle Sinalo Magadla, Consultant, International Finance Corporation (South Africa)

17:30 – 18:00 | **Townhall II**

Nik Gowing, Founder & Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable (United Kingdom)

18:00 – 18:15 | **Closing Remarks**

Karim El Aynaoui, Executive President, Policy Center for the New South (Morocco)

19:30 – 22:00 | Closing Cocktail Dinner

Foreword

The Atlantic Dialogues conference continues to serve as a premier platform for dialogue, cooperation, and bridge-building, fostering meaningful exchanges that transcend geographical and ideological divides. Since its inception in 2012, it has evolved into a dynamic space where ideas converge, diverse perspectives are shared, and innovative strategies are developed to navigate the complexities of an ever-changing world.

Anchored in the foundational values of openness, inclusivity, and diversity—both in backgrounds and disciplines—the Atlantic Dialogues has created a community of over 2,000 thought leaders and practitioners. These individuals embrace its mission to challenge conventional mental maps and contribute to solutions for pressing global challenges, including climate change, rising nationalism, and the erosion of multilateralism.

The Atlantic Dialogues is not an isolated initiative but rather a flagship component of the Policy Center for the New South's (PCNS) broader efforts to reimagine the Atlantic space. It is part of the Center's Wider Atlantic Research Program, which encompasses a wide range of publications, partnerships, and events developed in collaboration with key institutions committed to redefining transatlantic relations. To date, PCNS has produced 25 books and reports, 45 policy briefs, policy papers, and research papers, as well as 17 op-eds focused on Atlantic issues. It has also organized over 90 events and major convenings centered on the Atlantic, with The Atlantic Dialogues serving as a cornerstone of this work. A notable initiative within this ecosystem is the Atlantic Strategy Group, an annual meeting launched in 2015 that explores critical developments shaping Atlantic geopolitics, geo-economics, and transatlantic relations more broadly. The 13th edition of The Atlantic Dialogues, held under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, was a milestone event, marked by significant transformations. For the first time in over a decade, the conference was hosted in Morocco's capital, Rabat, establishing a permanent home at

the PCNS's headquarters. This edition gathered more than 450 distinguished participants—including high-ranking officials, decision-makers, and experts from over 65 countries—to engage in critical discussions on shared policy challenges and opportunities across the four continents of the Atlantic Basin. At the heart of these discussions was the concept of the Wider Atlantic, the conference's cornerstone and a vision pioneered and championed by PCNS for over a decade. This framework highlights the growing importance of the South Atlantic in both the Atlantic dialogue and the broader geopolitical landscape.

To enhance engagement, the 13th edition introduced an innovative circular stage, fostering a closer and more interactive setting between speakers and the audience. This design encouraged deeper, more dynamic exchanges, expertly facilitated by skilled moderators.

The commitment to inclusivity and balance was also reflected in the conference's participant demographics: 79% of attendees hailed from Atlantic-bordering nations, and 51% represented countries from the Global South. These figures reaffirm the PCNS's dedication to a truly representative and equitable Atlantic dialogue, where voices from both the Global South and North contribute equally to shaping rigorous, thoughtful analyses of the region's most pressing issues.

By continuously expanding the scope of Atlantic cooperation, the Atlantic Dialogues conference plays a pivotal role in redefining global conversations, ensuring that perspectives from the South are not only included but also drive the agenda for a more balanced and forward-thinking Atlantic future.

This edition underscored the importance of innovative policymaking, multilateral cooperation, and inclusive leadership in driving meaningful global change. In an era defined by geopolitical shifts, economic uncertainty, and the urgent need for sustainable development, the Global South is increasingly asserting its agency in shaping its own future.

A key theme that emerged was the need to move beyond dependency models and toward initiatives that empower the South to lead, define, and implement solutions tailored to its own realities.

Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative exemplifies this transformative approach. As an African-led project championed under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, this initiative reimagines Atlantic cooperation by prioritizing African ownership and regional integration. Its focus on economic connectivity, security, energy, and global partnerships demonstrates how the South can not only participate in but also shape global discourse. The initiative aligns with broader frameworks like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), while fostering South-South cooperation, demonstrating that Africa's stability and prosperity are global priorities.

Discussions also highlighted the critical role of knowledge-sharing and technological collaboration. The Royal Atlantic Initiative extends beyond Africa, uniting Atlantic nations through technology, cybersecurity, and economic cooperation to tackle shared challenges. This approach supports the broader call for think tanks and research institutions to play a more proactive role in policy innovation. Breaking institutional silos, fostering cross-sectoral partnerships, and investing in the next generation of leaders will be critical to ensuring the long-term success of such initiatives.

Another key takeaway from the conference was the growing recognition of cultural diplomacy as a fundamental pillar of international relations. Unlike traditional diplomacy, cultural diplomacy fosters lasting collaboration through arts, heritage, and creative industries. Panelists emphasized how

heritage diplomacy strengthens global unity, while creative industries and sports serve as economic drivers that shape global perceptions. The South's cultural power, particularly in music, storytelling, and cuisine, was highlighted as a powerful tool for strengthening international cooperation and fostering mutual understanding. These elements serve as bridges between communities, reinforcing the role of soft power in shaping a more inclusive world order.

At the heart of this transformation is youth leadership, whose resilience and innovation are shaping the trajectory of the South and beyond. Discussions highlighted the younger generation's adaptability in navigating an uncertain job market, their emphasis on cross-cultural collaboration, and their commitment to actionable change. Young leaders are leveraging technology, championing intergenerational dialogue, and driving meaningful progress.

This vision aligns with initiatives such as PCNS's ADEL program, which empowers 40 emerging leaders each year to actively participate in policy discussions and join an interconnected community of young change-makers.

Ultimately, this edition reinforced a crucial message: the Global South is not a passive actor but an active architect of its future. Through strategic initiatives like the Royal Atlantic Initiative, sustained investment in education and innovation, and the harnessing of cultural and economic power, the South is demonstrating its ability to shape global governance and development on its own terms. The path forward requires continued collaboration, bold policymaking, and a commitment to ensuring that today's solutions lay the groundwork for a more inclusive and resilient tomorrow.

Karim El Aynaoui

Executive President, Policy Center for the New South



Launch of the 11th Edition of the Atlantic Currents Report

CHARTING A COLLABORATIVE ATLANTIC FUTURE

Mohammed Loulichki

Senior Fellow, Policy
Center for the New
South, Morocco

**Fabio Albergaria
Queiroz**

Researcher, Brazilian
Defense College, Brazil

Alan Hirsch

Research Fellow, New
South Institute, South
Africa

Chadia Mathurin

Founder and Director,
Wakonté, Saint Lucia

Santiago Theoduloz

Strategy Director,
Bloomsbury Policy
Group, Uruguay

The panel discussion, moderated by **Mohammed Loulichki**, Senior Fellow at the Policy Center for the New South, and with the interventions of four out of the 30 authors of the 2024 edition of this report, underscored the growing importance of the Atlantic Dialogues and the Atlantic Currents report. Now in their 13th and 11th editions respectively, these platforms provide to the room to explore the multifaceted dimensions of the Atlantic. This year's theme of the Atlantic Currents advocates for innovative paradigms of cooperation, addressing the pressing challenges of the Global South while exploring the untapped opportunities offered by the Atlantic region.



In his introduction, **Mohammed Loulichki** highlighted the importance of reimagining the Atlantic's potential and projected on screen a selection of maps produced for this edition of the report. The first map highlighted mega cities and key ports while also showcasing the intensity of economic activities across the three oceans. The second map demonstrated Africa's infrastructure and natural resource potential. The third map focused on Morocco's strategic position within Atlantic Africa,

underscoring its vital connectivity to the Atlantic. These insights complement Morocco's Royal initiative, which seeks to enhance vertical cooperation across the Atlantic, particularly in the realm of human development. The Royal initiative was also one of the main foci of the Atlantic Dialogues.



Fabio Albergaria de Queiroz from the Brazilian Defense College emphasized the importance of framing regional challenges within the context of global imbalances, particularly in the post-Cold War world order. He stressed the value of fostering a shared Atlantic identity as a foundation for cooperation, arguing that such an identity could transcend regional diversity and provide a platform for addressing issues like climate change and migration. He underscored the importance of fostering a sense of belonging to the Atlantic as a foundation for peace and cooperation. By embracing their Atlantic identity, countries can work together to build a unified, peaceful region that addresses mutual challenges.

Alan Hirsch, Research Fellow at the New South Institute, focused on the economic and structural difficulties faced by African countries. High levels of debt, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, have deepened fiscal instability and heightened poverty. These challenges are further compounded by the costly transition from oil-dependent economies to sustainable, post-carbon systems, which requires substantial resources and long-term planning. Hirsch also pointed to the weakening of regional security institutions, which has limited their ability to address conflicts and maintain stability. He emphasized the importance of multilateral frameworks to support African countries, particularly smaller states, and called for a more equitable global approach to addressing shared challenges.



Chadia Mathurin, Founder and Director of Wakonté, brought attention to the region's governance and resource management challenges. Drawing on Ghana's experiences, she highlighted the impact of climate change and the economic deficits arising from natural disasters. She also underscored the significance of Africa's youth population as a critical asset for addressing governance and development issues. Mathurin stressed the potential of regional collaboration to drive sustainable solutions and emphasized the need for improved infrastructure and governance. Her observations extended to the controversial issue of "galamsey" (illegal small-scale mining) in Ghana, where legal frameworks allow certain mining activities in sensitive areas, raising concerns about environmental harm and the effectiveness of current policies.

Santiago Theoduloz, Strategy Director at the Bloomsbury Policy Group, argued that security and economic development are intrinsically linked in the Atlantic context. He pointed to the importance of infrastructure and logistics in managing the region's resources, particularly in sectors like fisheries. Theoduloz also highlighted the need to cultivate a collective Atlantic identity, which he sees as crucial for fostering regional alignment and shared goals. He criticized South America's focus on Europe and North America, arguing that this perspective overlooks the immense opportunities within the Atlantic. Direct links between South America and Africa, bypassing traditional routes, could unlock significant collaboration and growth.



The discussion revealed a shared consensus on several key points. Building a collective Atlantic identity emerged as a fundamental step toward addressing regional asymmetries and fostering deeper cooperation. Economic challenges, including debt, austerity, and resource management, require innovative and inclusive solutions. The youthful demographics of Africa and other Atlantic regions were identified as a transformative asset, capable of driving innovation and long-term progress. Furthermore, the strengthening of regional institutions and inter-regional links is essential to realizing the Atlantic's potential,

particularly in addressing environmental and socio-economic vulnerabilities.

Loulitchki concluded by reaffirming the critical role of multilateralism and regional alliances. By addressing shared challenges through collective action, the Atlantic region can position itself as a cornerstone for global progress and a model of sustainable and inclusive development.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- Foster a sense of **"Atlanticity"** as a unifying concept to strengthen collaboration across the region. This shared identity can help address regional imbalances and build a **foundation for cooperation**.
- Invest in **improving governance and rebuilding regional institutions** like economic communities and security mechanisms. This will reduce reliance on external actors and ensure that solutions to regional conflicts and socio-economic challenges are sustainable and locally driven.
- Establish **direct and robust connections** between **Atlantic countries**, particularly South-South routes that bypass Europe. Improved connectivity, such as transport links between South America and Africa, can unlock untapped economic potential and create opportunities for mutual growth.
- Capitalize on the region's **youth population** by promoting innovation and technology-driven solutions to governance, economic, and environmental challenges.
- Atlantic nations must work together to address climate challenges by implementing **localized adaptation** measures, promoting **sustainable resource use**, and accelerating the transition to green energy.



Welcoming Remarks

Setting the Stage for Transformative Dialogue

Karim El Aynaoui
Executive President,
Policy Center for the
New South, Morocco

Karim El Aynaoui, Executive President, Policy Center for the New South, opened the session by outlining the pivotal role of the Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) and its broader ecosystem within the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P). He emphasized the institution's commitment to developing an intellectual infrastructure capable of addressing the intricate challenges of public policy in an increasingly volatile and interconnected world. Under his leadership, the center has evolved organically alongside the Atlantic Dialogues, fostering an intellectual ecosystem that supports public policy innovation and adaptability.



El Aynaoui also emphasized that the challenges of effective policymaking have grown more intricate in today's interconnected yet chaotic world. The PCNS, in collaboration with UM6P, strives to equip future policymakers with the skills and insights needed to navigate this complexity. "Our mission is to create a generation of leaders capable of steering their nations through transformative change," he stated.

A key tenet of Morocco's vision, El Aynaoui explained, is its emphasis on multilateralism and collective mechanisms as opposed to isolated strategies of self-insurance among nations. This collaborative approach, he argued, is more effective in addressing shared global challenges and fostering international cooperation.

El Aynaoui also addressed the unique developmental challenges faced by Morocco and the African continent, particularly the risk of remaining trapped in middle-income status. He underscored the need for innovative strategies to transcend this threshold and achieve sustainable development, drawing parallels with success stories like Chile. **"Our real challenge,"** he noted, **"is not only to rise above middle-income status but to establish ourselves as a model for resilience and progress in the Global South."**

El Aynaoui concluded by reaffirming Morocco's commitment to fostering intellectual dialogue and practical solutions through platforms like the Atlantic Dialogues, ensuring that regional and global challenges are met with collaboration and foresight.

Key Messages:

- 1. Capacity Building for Policymakers:** The PCNS and UM6P ecosystem focuses on training future leaders to address complex policy challenges with innovative and strategic thinking.
- 2. Commitment to Multilateralism:** Morocco's approach prioritizes collective mechanisms over self-insurance, advocating for shared solutions to global challenges.
- 3. Avoiding the Middle-Income Trap:** Morocco and the rest of the African continent must implement forward-thinking policies to overcome developmental stagnation and emulate successful examples from around the world.



Townhall I

Strategic Themes for the Atlantic Dialogues

Nik Gowing

Founder & Co-Director,
Thinking the Unthinkable,
United Kingdom

Since the 2023 edition of the Atlantic Dialogues, the conference begins with a townhall session which serves as a welcoming and foundational discussion that sets the tone for the event. During this engaging and interactive discussion, facilitated by **Nik Gowing**, Founder and Co-director of Thinking the Unthinkable, participants highlighted critical issues for discussion at the Atlantic Dialogues, emphasizing the need for collective action and innovative solutions to address pressing global challenges. These include:

Climate Change and Environmental Equity: Climate change emerged as a key concern, with participants emphasizing the urgency of financing energy transitions in developing countries. The discussion underscored the inequalities in the financial burden of green initiatives, particularly for nations in the Global South. To bridge this gap, the audience emphasized the importance of enhanced international collaboration and equitable resource distribution to ensure a just transition.

Wealth Redistribution and Social Justice: Growing inequalities, particularly in resource distribution among wealthy nations, were a recurring theme. The audience stressed that equitable wealth redistribution and inclusive power-sharing arrangements are fundamental to addressing these disparities. This approach, participants agreed, is essential to fostering long-term social justice.

Artificial Intelligence and Data Governance: The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into global frameworks is both an opportunity and a challenge. The audience highlighted the necessity of establishing robust data governance structures to ensure the ethical and equitable use of AI technologies. The discussion also focused on digital sovereignty as a means to empower nations and protect their technological autonomy.

Globalization Challenges and Regional Fragmentation: The fragmentation of globalization and the inefficacy of regional organizations hinder collective progress. Participants called for stronger inter-regional cooperation, particularly within the Atlantic Basin. The audience noted that fostering partnerships between regions could unlock shared economic and social benefits, bolstering resilience in an increasingly interconnected world.

South-South Cooperation: The Global South faces shared challenges, from economic inequality to climate adaptation. Unity and collective problem-solving were emphasized as crucial for maximizing the region's potential. The audience underscored that South-South cooperation must transcend political rhetoric to deliver tangible outcomes for communities.

Education and Building an Atlantic Identity: Education was identified as a cornerstone for building a cohesive Atlantic identity. Participants highlighted the value of educational exchange programs and research initiatives in strengthening ties across the Atlantic. The audience advocated for fostering collaboration through shared knowledge and cultural exchange, which can enhance regional unity and innovation.

Nationalism and Threats to Global Cooperation: The rise of nationalism and its detrimental impact on multilateral cooperation were key points of concern. Participants reflected on past successes in globalization as evidence of the need for renewed global solidarity. The audience noted that overcoming nationalistic tendencies requires robust multilateral frameworks and shared commitments to collective progress.

Leadership and Political Engagement: Low voter turnout and political disengagement were linked to unmet socioeconomic needs, such as employment and food security. The audience emphasized the importance of addressing these priorities to reinvigorate political engagement and foster active citizenship.

The townhall session underscored that addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a renewed commitment to cooperation, equity, and leadership that transcends borders and prioritizes shared human and environmental well-being. It also highlighted the interconnected nature of global challenges and the imperative for innovative, inclusive, and collaborative solutions. As the audience concluded, the Atlantic Dialogues offer a unique platform to align strategies, harness opportunities, and forge a shared vision for addressing critical issues across the Atlantic Basin and beyond.



Plenary I

Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative: Walking the Talk from Africa on Atlantic Cooperation

John Yearwood
Editorial Director,
Diversity & Culture,
Politico, USA

Youssef Amrani
Ambassador of the
Kingdom of Morocco
to the United States,
Morocco

Amina Benkhadra
General Director,
National Office of
Hydrocarbons & Mines,
Morocco

**Nuno António de
Noronha Bragança**
Coordinator, Atlantic
Centre, Portugal

The Royal Atlantic Initiative, pioneered by Morocco under the leadership of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, marks a transformative step in fostering regional integration, stability, and prosperity across the Atlantic Basin. This ambitious project underscores Morocco's commitment to Africa, emphasizing African ownership and prioritizing the continent's unique needs. By leveraging existing frameworks and fostering partnerships, the initiative addresses pressing challenges such as energy access, economic disparity, and security threats while promoting mutual growth and cooperation.



In a panel discussion moderated by **John Yearwood**, Editorial Director of Diversity and Culture at Politico, the panelists discussed the initiative's transformative potential, highlighting its role in addressing structural issues in Africa, creating jobs, and enhancing regional security. This session provided valuable insights into the initiative's strategic pillars, its alignment with Africa's development goals, and its significance for global partnerships.



Youssef Amrani, Morocco's Ambassador to the United States, opened the discussion by reflecting on the progress made since the initiative's inception. **"One year ago, we were at the starting point of Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative. Today, it is a tangible reality, a commitment to fostering stability, creating wealth, and generating jobs for the Atlantic region,"** he stated. The initiative aims to create **"corridors of peace and stability"** that interconnect Africa with its northern neighbors while granting landlocked countries access to the Atlantic. This focus on strategic connectivity encompasses energy, transport, and agricultural projects, including the development of critical infrastructure such as the Dakhla Atlantic Port. Amrani emphasized the initiative's distinction from other frameworks, such as the Global Gateway, as it prioritizes African ownership and leverages Africa's existing tools like the AfCFTA and Regional Economic Communities. **"The initiative is designed by Africa for Africa,"** he affirmed, underscoring its transformative vision to link regions from the Strait of Gibraltar to Cape Town through infrastructure projects, including gas pipelines and transport corridors. Amrani concluded by calling on global partners to support Africa's efforts, emphasizing that the continent's stability and prosperity are shared global priorities.

Amina Benkhadra, General Director of the National Office of Hydrocarbons and Mines of Morocco, elaborated on the initiative's ambitious infrastructure projects, particularly the Morocco-Nigeria gas pipeline. **"This \$25 billion project will connect 13 countries along the Atlantic coast and three landlocked nations, providing access to energy, fostering industrial development, and supporting the mining sector, critical to energy transitions,"** she explained. Benkhadra highlighted Morocco's commitment to South-South cooperation, noting that the initiative extends beyond bilateral relations to create a comprehensive framework for regional integration. By addressing challenges like migration and youth unemployment, the initiative contributes to social stability and long-term growth. It also prioritizes the blue economy, highlighting fisheries, maritime trade, and sustainability as key growth areas. Furthermore, digital connectivity was identified as another essential component, encouraging economic diversification and enabling modern development. Finally, Benkhadra mentioned Morocco's strategic location and agreements with global markets further enhance the initiative's impact, positioning the country as a gateway to a market of over one billion people. **"Africa must be a priority for global partners. Stability and development here are not just African issues, they are global imperatives,"** Benkhadra asserted.



Nuno António de Noronha Bragança, Coordinator of the Atlantic Center in Portugal, focused on the shared challenges faced by countries across the Atlantic Basin, including climate change, economic instability, and security threats. **"Countries around the Atlantic face the same challenges: climate change, security threats, and economic instability. This initiative unites us to address these issues collectively and build a stronger, integrated Atlantic community,"** he stated. He stressed the importance of knowledge exchange and technological cooperation, noting that **"If we do not exchange knowledge, we risk stagnation. Cooperation in technology and cybersecurity is essential for addressing shared challenges and fostering resilience across the Atlantic."** Bragança also emphasized the initiative's potential to expand beyond Africa, incorporating Atlantic nations such as Brazil, Uruguay, and Colombia. This broader scope reflects the initiative's mission to foster resilience and address common challenges through a unified approach. By aligning with global frameworks like Europe's Global Gateway and emphasizing complementarity, the initiative bridges gaps between African and global strategies.

The panel concluded by emphasizing that Morocco's Royal Atlantic Initiative serves as a transformative framework for fostering regional stability, economic growth, and integration in the Atlantic Basin. To achieve its ambitious goals, the initiative must prioritize strengthening partnerships among African nations and global stakeholders, addressing critical energy access gaps, and leveraging knowledge exchange to tackle shared challenges like climate change and security threats. Speakers stressed the importance of phased, inclusive implementation to ensure sustainability and impact while integrating economic development with security to address the root causes of instability. This African-led initiative sets a precedent for collaboration, complementing global frameworks and offering a pathway to shared prosperity and sustainable development.

Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **The Royal Atlantic Initiative is a transformative African-led project** – Spearheaded by Morocco under King Mohammed VI's leadership, the initiative prioritizes African ownership and regional integration, addressing economic, security, and energy challenges.
- **Infrastructure and energy projects are central to regional connectivity** – Key developments, such as the Morocco-Nigeria gas pipeline and the Dakhla Atlantic Port, aim to enhance economic opportunities, energy access, and transport corridors across Africa.
- **The initiative fosters global partnerships and South-South cooperation** – It complements existing African frameworks like the AfCFTA while calling for stronger global collaboration, recognizing Africa's stability as a shared global priority.
- **Knowledge exchange and technological cooperation are essential for resilience** – Expanding beyond Africa, the initiative seeks to unite Atlantic nations through technology, cybersecurity, and economic cooperation to tackle shared challenges.
- **Sustainable and inclusive implementation is key to success** – Ensuring long-term impact requires phased, inclusive execution that integrates economic growth with security to address instability's root causes.





Conversation

From Globalization to Fragmentation: The South Atlantic at a Crossroad

Andres Schipani

East and Central Africa
Bureau Chief, Financial
Times, Argentina

Jamil Mahuad

Former President of
Ecuador, Ecuador

The 21st century presents unprecedented opportunities for continents and regions like Latin America and Africa to assert their place in the global economic order. These opportunities stem from abundant natural resources, demographic shifts, and the urgent need for renewable energy and sustainable development. However, the realization of this potential requires strategic foresight, tailored policies, and regional cooperation.

In this high-level conversation with **Jamil Mahuad**, Former President of the Republic of Ecuador, moderated by **Andres Schipani**, the New Delhi Correspondent at the Financial Times, Mahuad emphasized Africa's rapidly growing population, with a median age of 15-19 years, as a factor in positioning the continent as a future global economic driver. According to Mahuad, this demographic advantage holds the potential to fuel economic transformation through strategic planning and investment.



Similarly, Latin America's vast natural resources, such as the lithium triangle spanning Bolivia, Paraguay, and Chile, offer significant potential to establish value-added industries and strategic supply chains. **Mahuad** urged Latin American nations to adopt forward-looking approaches to capitalize on their resource wealth while promoting sustainable development.

According to the former President, effective policymaking in both regions must balance three critical pillars:

- 1. Technical Accuracy:** Policies must address specific challenges and leverage opportunities unique to each country.
- 2. Cultural Compatibility:** Strategies must align with local values and social contexts to ensure societal acceptance.
- 3. Political Viability:** Building coalitions and securing stakeholder support are essential for successful implementation.

Jamil Mahuad highlighted the importance of these pillars, particularly in addressing Africa's youth unemployment and Latin America's challenges with inflation and energy crises, such as those currently affecting Argentina.

Global Integration and Strategic Partnerships

Renewed global interest in Africa is evident through significant investments by major powers, including China and the United States. Infrastructure projects, such as the corridor linking the Congo to Angola's Lobito port, underscore Africa's increasing significance in global strategic plans. In this conversation, **Mahuad** addressed the importance of fostering deeper ties between Latin America and Africa, as it presents a unique opportunity to address shared challenges and drive mutual growth. Brazil, with its historical ties and influence in Latin America, is well-positioned to lead this engagement. The conversation emphasized the need for collaborative frameworks that transcend bilateral relations, creating synergies between Africa's demographic dividend and Latin America's resource wealth.

Sustainability and Innovation

Latin America's stability and abundant resources position it as a reliable partner in global supply chains. Mahuad emphasized the need to transform resource wealth, like the lithium reserves in the region, into long-term industrial and economic advantages.

For Africa, demographic youthfulness can drive economic growth, provided it is supported by investments in education, infrastructure, and technological innovation. Failure to act, as highlighted by Schipani, risks destabilization, increased migration pressures, and missed opportunities for the continent to assert itself as a global economic force.

Geopolitical Dynamics and the Role of Cooperation

The shifting geopolitical landscape, from Cold War bipolarity to potential multipolarity, highlights the importance of regional alliances. Mahuad reflected on the lessons of history, emphasizing how Latin America and Africa must proactively shape their futures within a fragmented global order. Collaborative efforts,



such as Africa's Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and resource-sharing agreements in Latin America, can bolster their global standing.

The Power of Choice and Reflection

Mahuad invoked the metaphor of the "train of progress" to underscore the urgency of collective action. Schipani articulated the need for regions to make decisive choices: to either adapt proactively to global changes or risk being left behind. Unlike instinct-driven animals, humans have the unique ability to reflect, plan, and choose a capacity that must be harnessed to navigate complex challenges.

As Mahuad and Schipani concluded, Latin America and Africa stand at a pivotal juncture. Their ability to leverage resources, align policies with cultural and economic realities, and forge strong partnerships will determine their trajectory in the 21st century. This is not merely a regional challenge but a global imperative, with implications for stability, growth, and shared prosperity worldwide. Sustainable, inclusive, and forward-thinking strategies, as advocated by the panelists, are the cornerstones of progress for Latin America and Africa in an increasingly interconnected yet fragmented global order.

Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Demographic and Resource Potential as Catalysts for Growth** - Africa's young population and Latin America's vast natural resources, such as lithium reserves, present significant opportunities for economic transformation. However, unlocking this potential requires strategic planning, investment, and sustainable development.

- **The Three Pillars of Effective Policymaking** - Successful policies must be built on technical accuracy, cultural compatibility, and political viability. These elements ensure that strategies are practical, socially accepted, and politically feasible, particularly in addressing Africa's youth unemployment and Latin America's economic challenges.

- **Global Integration and Strategic Partnerships** - Africa and Latin America must strengthen their ties and foster deeper cooperation to capitalize on their respective advantages. Increased investments and infrastructure projects highlight Africa's growing role in global strategic plans, while Brazil is well-positioned to lead Latin America's engagement with Africa.

- **Sustainability, Innovation, and Industrialization** - Latin America's resource wealth and Africa's demographic dividend must be transformed into long-term economic advantages through education, infrastructure development, and technological innovation. Without proactive action, both regions risk economic stagnation, increased migration pressures, and missed opportunities.

- **The Power of Choice in a Changing Geopolitical Landscape** - In an era of shifting geopolitical dynamics, Africa and Latin America must actively shape their futures rather than remain passive observers. Regional initiatives like AfCFTA and resource-sharing agreements can enhance global standing, while decisive leadership and forward-thinking strategies will determine their success in the 21st century.





Plenary II

Cultural Diplomacy: Reconnecting Atlantic Communities Through Arts and Heritage

Richard Lui

Anchor & Journalist, NBC News/MSNBC, USA

Mohammed Mehdi Bensaïd

Minister of Youth, Culture and Communication, Morocco

Jessica De Alba-Ulloa

Professor, SPIA University of Maine, Mexico

Migdalia Machin

Regional Minister for Universities, Science, and Culture, Canary, Islands, Spain

Rama Yade

Senior Director, Africa Center, Atlantic Council, France

Cultural diplomacy has emerged as a sustainable and inclusive tool for building bridges between nations. The panel, moderated by **Richard Lui**, Anchor and Journalist at NBC News and MSNBC, explored how arts, heritage, and creative industries can foster understanding and cooperation across the Atlantic space. Speakers emphasized the importance of leveraging culture as a long-term diplomatic asset, showcasing examples like Morocco's Gnawa Festival and Nigeria's creative industry leadership. Discussions also highlighted the economic potential of creative industries, the power of shared heritage, and the need to elevate cultural diplomacy as a strategic priority globally.



Opening the discussion, **Mohammed Mehdi Bensaid**, Morocco's Minister of Youth, Culture, and Communication, highlighted the role of culture in diplomacy as a cornerstone of Morocco's international strategy. He emphasized the long-term impact of cultural diplomacy compared to the fleeting effects of hard diplomacy, stating, "**The hard diplomacy is for short term,**



while the cultural diplomacy is for long term and sustainable effects on peoples and societies." Using the Gnawa Festival as an example, he demonstrated how cultural events rooted in heritage, blending African and Mediterranean influences, showcase Morocco's identity and promote international collaboration.

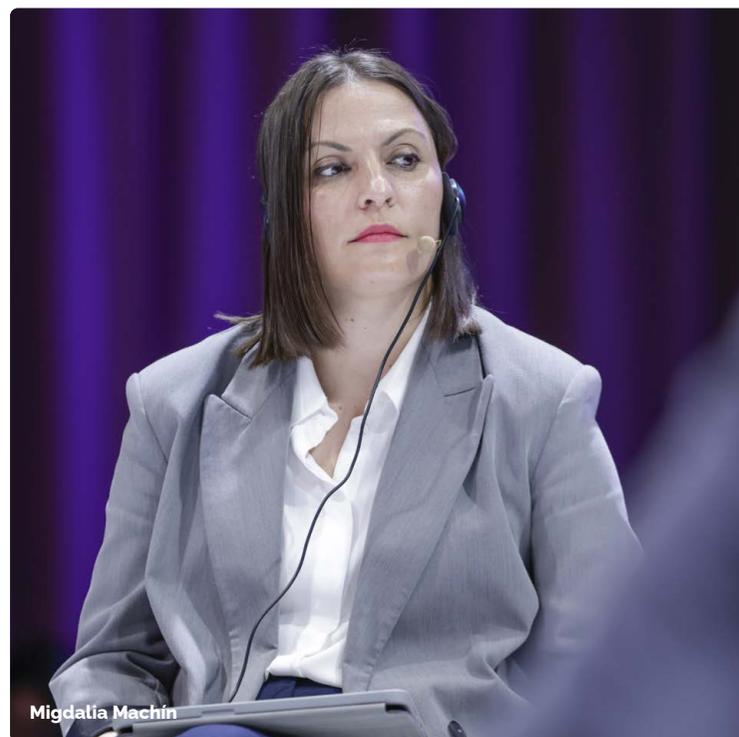
Continuing the conversation, **Jessica De Alba-Ulloa**, Professor, SPIA University of Maine, highlighted the concept of heritage diplomacy as an integral component of cultural diplomacy, advocating for its greater recognition on the global stage. "**We need to elevate heritage diplomacy internationally and make it a tool of cultural diplomacy,**" she asserted, emphasizing its potential to foster both diversity and unity within nations. She pointed out that heritage diplomacy serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, and think tanks, enabling them to employ soft power strategies effectively. However, she also addressed the significant challenges faced by cultural initiatives, particularly in low-income nations where

budgets for such projects are often minimal. De Alba-Ulloa proposed cultural entrepreneurship as a solution, advocating for innovative approaches that reduce reliance on government funding while encouraging creativity and sustainability.



To illustrate the potential of cultural diplomacy, she posed a thought-provoking question: How can a Moroccan connect with the cultural richness of Mexico? This example highlighted the importance of fostering global connections through heritage diplomacy to bridge gaps and create meaningful international partnerships.

Migdalia Machín, Regional Minister for Universities, Science, and Culture of the Canary Islands emphasized that cultural diplomacy is not only a tool for promoting national values but also a unifying force for NGOs and other societal actors. **"In a globalized world, we need more than ever our own identity,"** she stated, highlighting the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage in an increasingly interconnected world. Machín drew attention to the close geographic and cultural ties between the Canary Islands and Morocco,



emphasizing their shared challenges, such as climate change, and the need for collaborative approaches. She argued that cultural diplomacy plays a crucial role in fostering cooperation and mutual understanding between nations, offering a platform for addressing shared challenges effectively.

Furthermore, she stressed that the success of cultural diplomacy lies in its sustainability. Effective cultural policies, she argued, must endure over time to create lasting impacts. By investing in cultural preservation and fostering mutual respect, nations can build stronger, more resilient relationships and address pressing global challenges together.

Concluding the session, **Rama Yade**, Senior Director of the Africa Center at the Atlantic Council, and Former French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights, and Secretary of State for Sports, brought a sharp focus to the economic and diplomatic potential of creative industries and sports, emphasizing their role as essential elements of cultural diplomacy. **"Through creative industries and sports, not only do you promote your vision of the world, but it is**



also a very important growing market that can attract a lot of investments," she noted. Reflecting on the symbolic power of cultural diplomacy, Yade cited events like the reopening of Notre-Dame in Paris, which brought together global leaders and demonstrated culture's ability to unite people in moments of shared significance. Concluding her remarks, she underscored the transformative power of cultural diplomacy in today's geopolitical landscape, asserting, "Cultural diplomacy is the new hard power."



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Cultural diplomacy is a long-term and sustainable diplomatic tool** – Unlike hard diplomacy, cultural diplomacy fosters lasting international collaboration through arts, heritage, and creative industries, as highlighted by Morocco's Minister of Youth, Culture, and Communication.
- **Heritage diplomacy strengthens cultural connections and global unity** – Jessica De Alba-Ulloa emphasized the need to elevate heritage diplomacy as a strategic tool to promote diversity, unity, and effective soft power strategies, particularly in policymaking and research.
- **Cultural diplomacy fosters cooperation to address shared global challenges** – Migdalia Machin underscored how cultural diplomacy not only preserves national identity but also promotes collaboration on issues like climate change, strengthening international partnerships.
- **Creative industries and sports enhance cultural diplomacy's economic impact** – Rama Yade highlighted their role in shaping global perceptions, attracting investment, and demonstrating culture's unifying power, as seen in symbolic events like the reopening of Notre-Dame.
- **Cultural diplomacy should be a strategic global priority** – Panelists stressed that governments must recognize and invest in cultural diplomacy as a key diplomatic and economic tool, ensuring its sustainability and long-term influence.



Plenary III

Southfullness and the Future of Multilateralism

Kimberly Dozier

Global Affairs Analyst,
CNN, USA

Jacques Attali

Writer and Futurologist,
President, Attali
Associates, France

Omar Hilale

Permanent
Representative of
Morocco to the United
Nations, Morocco

Erika Mouynes

Former Minister of
Foreign Affairs, Panama

Ana Palacio

Former Minister of
Foreign Affairs, Spain

This third panel of the conference, moderated by **Kim Dozier**, Global Affairs Analyst at CNN, discussed the evolving complexities of the Global South, emphasizing that it is not a single, unified entity but a collection of diverse regions with different political and economic systems: a plural South. There was a strong call for more inclusivity within global institutions, particularly the UN Security Council, and for reforming global governance to address long-standing inequities. Youth engagement was also a key theme, with a focus on fostering cooperation between Africa and South America. The need for a new leadership model, one that reflects the diverse realities of the South, was underscored as essential for shaping a fairer global future.



Jacques Attali, Writer and Futurologist, and President at Attali Associates, addressed several key global power dynamics, and the classification of countries based on geopolitical criteria. He argued that the term **"Southfulness"** is now outdated, as it implies a uniformity in geography and politics, whereas, according to him, there are multiple "Souths." He contended that the true distinction today is between democratic and totalitarian regimes, a divide that transcends geographic borders. On this topic, he proposed that totalitarian regimes have been growing in influence worldwide, with attempts to control global resources. Still in the same vein, he maintained that democracy remains the lesser evil of systems, although its effectiveness is increasingly questioned. Furthermore, Attali suggested that despite the decline of the American empire, the world is still undergoing Westernization. He addressed the rise of China and Russia in Africa, but insisted these countries do not fully embrace the concept of the "South." Attali critiqued the current global order, marked by a growing divide between those who can pay and those who cannot, mentioning China's contradictory position as a developing country covering significant global debt.

Omar Hilale, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, discussed the diverse and complex nature of the Global South, emphasizing that it is not a monolithic entity but rather a collection of regions with varying challenges. He highlighted that the South represents 85% of the global population and 50% of the GDP but continues to face persistent inequalities and conflicts. Hilal called for a more inclusive and fair global governance system, advocating for quicker reforms in institutions like the UN Security Council. While the South does not seek to replace the North, it demands greater participation. He also addressed the challenges in reforming global financial systems and the diminishing respect for international rules, citing the Russia-Ukraine war as an example. Lastly, Hilal acknowledged internal divisions within the South, noting tensions even within groups like BRICS regarding representation and reform goals.



Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama **Erika Mouynes**, also addressed the concept of “**Southfulness**” and how the underlying idea behind it is both interesting and positive even though it may not resonate with young people today. She emphasized that many young people view the global system as unfair, citing the delayed distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Africa as an example. She also pointed out that international events like the COP have become of little efficiency for world leaders, showcasing cooperation without real enforcement mechanisms to drive action. For a truly equitable system, Mouynes believes it’s crucial to involve youth in global discussions, pointing to initiatives like the Atlantic Dialogues Emerging Leaders program organized by the Policy Center for the New South as a step in the right direction. She called for more cooperation and a human-centered approach to bridge the gap between young populations in regions like Africa and South America.

Finally, **Ana Palacio**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain, tackled the concept of "Southfulness" by highlighting a critical challenge: the need for agency. She argued that to address this challenge, it is essential to rethink traditional forms of training, especially as technology-driven, informal education becomes increasingly effective. Palacio also delved into the complex relationship between democracy and autocracy, noting the difference between liberal democracies that value the individual and other regimes that value the collective like China. Emphasizing the plural nature of the South, Palacio also rejected the idea of a singular, unified South, instead describing it as a patchwork of regions with differing priorities and realities. The South, she argued, often unites just in opposition to the North, exemplified by China and Russia. Today's geopolitical landscape offers more choices for cooperation and lending, notably through China and India, in contrast to the post-Cold War era when Bretton Woods institutions were the dominant sources of development support. Palacio concluded by asserting that the rules governing global institutions need significant reform.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- The use of the term "Southfulness" is outdated and oversimplifies complex geopolitical realities. It is recommended to abandon this terminology and recognize that there is no single "South," but rather multiple regions and diverse political systems. This includes acknowledging that countries within the South can have differing political regimes, such as democracies, hybrids, and totalitarian states.
- The Global South has significant political power when united, but ideological divisions often hinder collective action. Fostering greater solidarity among Southern countries and facilitating discussions that allow for shared goals would enable more effective advocacy for reforms, particularly within international governance systems like the UN Security Council.
- There is a clear need for increased cooperation between young populations from different regions, particularly Africa and South America. Encouraging exchanges, joint initiatives, and collaborative efforts between youth in these regions can help foster greater understanding, solidarity, and innovative solutions to global challenges.
- Rethink classical training models and shift towards more informal, technology-based training approaches. These can be more accessible and adaptable to the needs of diverse populations, especially in the Global South, enabling them to better navigate and influence global systems.



Plenary IV

Who Bears the Cost of the Energy Transition

Uduak Amimo

Founder, Uduak Amimo
Coaching & Consulting,
Kenya

Laura Albornoz Pollmann

Director, National Oil
Company of Chile, Chile

R. Andreas Kraemer

Founder, Ecologic
Institute, Germany

Carlos Lopes

Honorary Professor,
Mandela School of
Public Governance,
University of Cape Town,
Guinea Bissau

Dominique Strauss-Kahn

Managing Partner,
Parnasse International,
France



The panel, moderated by **Uduak Amimo**, Founder, Uduak Amimo Coaching & Consulting, explored the pressing global challenges of climate change, emphasizing the disproportionate responsibility borne by industrialized nations versus developing countries. Industrialized nations carry a "carbon debt," reflecting their historical emissions, while developing nations hold "carbon credits," having contributed minimally to climate change. The discussion highlights the inadequacies of international financial mechanisms, the misalignment of public and private sector interests, and the urgent need to redirect fossil fuel subsidies toward renewable energy. It underscores the intersection of equity, development, and gender in addressing climate impacts, particularly in vulnerable regions.

Laura Albornoz, Director of the National Oil Company of Chile, emphasized the persistent inequalities in Latin America and the unique challenges faced by the region in the context of

global climate responsibilities. She highlighted the compounded challenges of poverty, rural underdevelopment, displacement, and gender-based discrimination, all exacerbated by weak governance and a lack of political will. Albornoz stressed the critical role of rural women in agriculture and sustainable practices, yet noted their vulnerability due to limited resources and systemic inequities.

She advocated for tailored public policies that empower grassroots organizations and amplify rural voices often overlooked in climate debates dominated by corporate interests. She also pointed out the global imbalance in priorities, with military spending far exceeding investments in climate solutions, and called for fair financial systems and proportional responsibilities in international climate commitments. She argued that by fostering women's leadership and integrating local realities into policy frameworks, the region can turn climate challenges into opportunities for inclusive and sustainable development.



Andreas Kraemer, Founder of the Ecologic Institute, highlighted the critical economic and environmental inefficiencies perpetuated by the global reliance on fossil fuel subsidies, amounting to \$7 trillion annually. He emphasized how these subsidies not only shield fossil fuel companies from accountability but also pass the burden of environmental damage to future generations. Kraemer pointed out that transitioning to renewable energy is significantly cheaper, requiring only a fraction of the current fossil fuel subsidy expenditure, while offering sustainable and economically viable alternatives like wind, solar, and energy storage. He criticized legislative frameworks that favor the fossil fuel industry despite its unsustainability and highlighted the inefficiency of compensation mechanisms, such as Germany's costly coal industry payouts. Kraemer called for an urgent reprioritization of investments toward renewable energy and decarbonization across key sectors, advocating for an end to fossil fuel funding to unlock financial resources and accelerate the global energy transition.



Carlos Lopes, Honorary Professor at the Mandela School of Public Governance, emphasized the systemic failures in addressing climate change, particularly the inadequacies of the Paris Agreement's reliance on voluntary commitments, which have proven insufficient to tackle the urgency of the crisis. He highlighted the historical responsibility of industrialized nations, whose emissions have caused irreversible climate damage, creating a "carbon debt." In contrast, developing countries, with minimal emissions, hold "carbon credits," underscoring the need for mechanisms that hold wealthy nations accountable and provide fair compensation. Lopes criticized the current practice of relabeling development funds as "climate finance" without adding fresh resources, arguing this undermines trust and equity. He called out the significant gap between commitments, delivery, and accountability, with much of the declared progress falling short of promised actions. Lopes also dismissed "political will" as a superficial excuse, urging precise identification of systemic issues that hinder progress. He concluded by stressing the need for a fundamental rethinking of financial instruments and the equitable distribution of responsibility and compensation among nations. Only through addressing these inequities and ensuring accountability can meaningful and inclusive climate action be achieved.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, Managing Partner at Parnasse International, addressed the pressing issue of climate injustice, emphasizing that developing countries disproportionately bear the burdens of climate change despite contributing minimally to the problem. He criticized the naïve reliance on endless financial tools and technologies while questioning whether the global community truly grasps the existential threat posed by climate change. Strauss-Kahn highlighted the repeated pledges made at COP conferences, amounting to billions of dollars, yet noted that these promises rarely translate into actionable funding. He argued that the challenge lies not in inventing new mechanisms but in effectively leveraging existing ones with genuine political will. The lack of alignment between public and private sector interests, coupled with weakened multilateralism, hampers progress, with meaningful actions often occurring only after catastrophic events force cooperation. Strauss-Kahn pointed out that fear and crises, such as COVID-19, tend to align interests, whereas complacency leads to selfishness and stagnation. Focusing on the role of oil- and gas-producing nations like Libya, Algeria, and Egypt, he criticized the continued subsidization of fossil fuel industries, which exacerbates environmental damage. Strauss-Kahn concluded by calling on nations with historical



emissions to recognize their moral and financial responsibility to compensate vulnerable communities and invest in resilient infrastructure. Without stronger cooperation and a commitment to action, he warned, the energy transition remains at risk of failure.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Establish equitable climate finance mechanisms** to ensure industrialized nations contribute fairly to funding climate adaptation and mitigation in developing countries.
- **Gradually phase out fossil fuel subsidies** and redirect the savings to support renewable energy projects, sustainable development, and just transitions for affected workers.
- **Ensure climate policies prioritize vulnerable groups** by integrating equity into decision-making, empowering rural women, and addressing social and economic disparities.
- **Strengthen global coordination and political commitment** to overcome misaligned interests and foster cooperation between public and private sectors for effective climate action.
- **Invest in renewable energy and infrastructure as a cost-effective and sustainable alternative**, ensuring legislative reforms to support clean energy transitions globally.



Plenary V

Democracy on the Edge: Election Year in the Wider Atlantic

Gallagher Fenwick
Reporter and Former
Manager Editor, France
24, France

Mohamed Beavogui
Former Prime Minister,
Guinea

Kassie Freeman
President & CEO, African
Diaspora Consortium,
USA

Paulo Portas
Former Minister of
Foreign Affairs, Portugal

**Najat Vallaud-
Belkacem**
President, France Terre
d'Asile, France



This panel delves deeply into the complex and ever-evolving political landscape surrounding democracy across several Atlantic nations, focusing on the unique challenges and potential opportunities that democratic institutions face in these regions. It takes a close look at key issues, such as the spread of disinformation and increasing voter apathy, all of which pose significant threats to democracy. It also explores the success stories of democratically resilient countries across the Atlantic region. The panel encourages a proactive approach by advocating for critical education that can reinforce democratic resilience. By addressing these issues, the panel highlights the importance of safeguarding the future of democracy across the Atlantic.

Kassie Freeman, President & CEO of the African Diaspora Consortium, affirms that democracy is always on the edge. She states that we are in a “cultural revolution,” cautioning against the rise of divisive movements promoting an “anti-everything and anti-everybody” agenda, particularly targeting race and

minority rights in political discourse. She warns that race and identity have become defining issues in elections, especially in Europe and the USA. Freeman attributes this cultural revolution to the events surrounding the George Floyd incident in the United States, which sparked large protests and movements in the country. However, she noted that this movement has also triggered a significant backlash. Central to this reaction is President-elect Trump, whose approach to racial issues has been polarizing, according to her. She emphasized the controversy surrounding his interactions with Vice President Harris, including questions raised about her identity and blackness during their initial discussions. Freeman emphasizes the role of education and awareness in strengthening democracy. She highlights how education has been weaponized to sanitize African American history and argues that students must develop the skills to identify factual and credible information in this environment. She remarked, “Democracy dies in darkness, and race relations die in denial.”



Mohamed Beavogui, Former Prime Minister of Guinea, emphasizes that fragility and resilience are central concepts for evaluating the performance of democracy. Beavogui cites the recent elections in Ghana as an example of democratic resilience. He added that Ghana demonstrates the future of democracy in the region, having consistently held fair elections over the past cycles. One key reason for Ghana's success, according to Beavogui, is the education of its people and the groundwork laid by Rawlings. Traditional cultural ruling systems also persist in Ghana, reinforcing the values that underpin democracy. Ghana has also resorted to indigenous internal mechanisms to resolve conflicts, with a tradition of dialogue among elders and intellectuals, in addition to a network of think tanks that support the country's democratic process. However, Beavogui warns that democracy remains fragile due to governments' lack of response to populations' needs. He highlights the growing role of influencers in shaping public opinion and calls upon political parties to pay attention to this trend, as many people struggle to connect and identify with traditional parties. He argues that the essence of democracy lies in centering the needs of people. "Democracies might not be good but what else do we have?" he remarked. "The core of politics and democracy is doing what's in the interest of the people."



Paulo Portas, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal, reiterated the importance of distinguishing between democracy as a system and the benefits that come with democracy, namely the freedoms and civil rights it grants. In his view, the most important thing is to recognize that, while democracy as a system is imperfect, with inherent shortcomings and limitations, the most important thing is the rights and freedoms it offers, which must be protected. For Portas, what has changed concretely in recent years is not just the nature of the threats to democracy, but the pace and intensity of these threats given the proliferation of social media networks. According to Portas, we are witnessing an important shift in the nature of politics due to what he calls "digital democracy". Indeed, he sees social media networks primarily as a machine that massively distributes false information and ultimately misinforms the public. For Portas, the societies in which we live are not equipped to distinguish between what is true and what is false, and digital propaganda and targeted advertising are becoming means mobilized in politics, influencing citizens' choices, polarizing societies and putting democracy in real difficulty.

Najat Vallaud-Belkacem, President of France Terre d'Asile and Former Minister of Education of France, highlighted the growing threats to democracy, noting that a quarter of French citizens no longer see democracy as the ideal system, a trend not unique to France. She identified social polarization as a key factor weakening democracy with the existence of different parallel realities in which different groups are enclosed. According to her, education is essential in addressing this divide by fostering civic values from an early age. However, she added that the education system, as it presents itself today, which prioritizes competition, rankings, and evaluations over teaching civic engagement and democratic values, cannot fill this vocation. The lack of social diversity in schools is another factor that threatens communal life and democracy. She noted also the existence of external and internal pressures that reduce schools' roles in public affairs and undermine the role of school as a civic educator. In addition to the polarization of society and the absence of concrete actions to combat it, Vallaud-Belkacem pointed to the rise of identity issues as another threat to democracy. She noted that Western societies, which are increasingly confronted with identity-based demands, should pay close attention and try to respond to citizens' expectations as of now, thus avoiding making the same mistakes as those made in managing social demands. She asserted that if state institutions fail to respond adequately to



the legitimate demands of citizens, they run the risk of giving an opportunity to extremists, that offer attractive rhetoric but no substantive solutions, to rise to power and take an ever-greater place in political life.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Democracy is fragile and constantly at risk** – Kassie Freeman warns that divisive movements, particularly those targeting race and minority rights, threaten democratic stability, with race and identity becoming central issues in political discourse.
- **Education is crucial in protecting democracy** – Freeman and Vallaud-Belkacem highlight the role of education in fostering civic values, countering misinformation, and preventing the manipulation of history, but caution that current education systems are failing in this mission.
- **Social polarization weakens democracy** – Vallaud-Belkacem stresses that democracy is threatened by parallel realities, lack of social diversity in schools, and identity-based demands, which, if ignored, can fuel extremism.
- **The digital age has intensified threats to democracy** – Paulo Portas warns that social media accelerates misinformation, influences political choices, and exacerbates polarization, making it harder for societies to distinguish truth from falsehood.
- **Democracy must prioritize people's needs to remain strong** – Mohamed Beavogui emphasizes that democratic resilience depends on governments addressing citizens' needs, as disengagement from traditional political systems weakens democratic foundations.



Plenary VI

Smart Infrastructure: Investing in Africa's Connected Future

Sarah Glover

Vice President of News and Civic Dialogue, WHYY News, USA

Jorge Arbache

International Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, University of Brasilia, Brazil

Arkebe Oqubay Metiku

British Academy Global Professor, SOAS University of London, Ethiopia

Nicolas Massot

Member of National Congress, Argentina



Africa's future growth depends on its ability to build resilient infrastructure that addresses the continent's unique challenges in a rapidly changing global landscape. With increasing demands for energy, food security, and sustainable development, smart infrastructure presents a strategic opportunity for African countries to enhance connectivity, optimize resource management, and promote inclusive economic development. The panel Smart Infrastructure: Investing in Africa's Connected Future, moderated by **Sarah Glover**, Vice President of News and Civic Dialogue, WHY News, examined how smart technologies, and innovative partnerships can drive Africa's transformation and unlock new opportunities for development.

Jorge Arbache, International Secretary at the Ministry of Planning at the University of Brasilia, stressed the necessity of deploying smart technologies to tackle Africa's infrastructure and capacity limitations and improve essential services, particularly for vulnerable populations. He argued that Africa must adopt these technologies not merely for their benefit but

as a necessity to optimize its resources. **"Geography is becoming more important due to climate change and geopolitics. Africa is ready to explore its natural resources, but for that, smart technologies are essential,"** he stated, highlighting their role in improving resource management, attracting investment, and fostering innovative business models that capitalize on Africa's geographic advantages. Moreover, Arbache identified the green economy as a key opportunity, particularly in renewable energy and sustainable industries. **"Africa can become a key player in decarbonization, providing clean energy and attracting energy-intensive industries like steel, fertilizers, and chemicals,"** he remarked. However, achieving this requires building the right financial and regulatory frameworks to encourage investment, particularly through partnerships with multilateral development banks and private investors. Citing Brazil's agricultural success through public-private collaboration, Arbache concluded that Africa's vast natural resources, paired with smart infrastructure, can position the continent as a leader in biofuels and global energy transitions.





Arkebe Oqubay Metiku, British Academy Global Professor at SOAS University of London and Former Senior Minister and Special Adviser to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, highlighted the dual challenge of bridging Africa's digital and green divides. While the continent has made progress in areas like mobile technology, he warned that advancements in digital and green technologies are accelerating faster in developed countries, widening the gap. **"We are observing a digital divide and a green divide, which should concern us because what matters is not just the pace of progress but how it contrasts with global advancements,"** Oqubay said. Furthermore, he stressed that Africa's economic future depends on closing its vast infrastructure gap, which requires \$200 billion annually to meet critical needs in energy, transportation, and telecommunications. **"Africa requires \$200 billion annually for infrastructure, yet most countries can only mobilize a fraction of that. Domestic resources, concessional loans, and alternative financing must be leveraged to close this gap,"** he emphasized. Oqubay pointed to successful models in Africa, notably Morocco's Tanger Med Port and OCP Group, which have leveraged public-private partnerships to achieve global competitiveness. He also highlighted Ethiopia's investment in renewable energy and electric railways as examples of how local financing can drive sustainable infrastructure development. To reduce dependence on costly commercial loans, he called for more concessional financing and foreign direct investment, stressing the need for innovative funding models to drive Africa's industrial and green transformation.

Nicolas Massot, Member of the National Congress of Argentina, identified agriculture as a key sector for economic integration between Atlantic Africa and South America, particularly through private sector collaboration. He pointed out that despite holding over 60% of the world's unused fertile land, Africa imports \$80 billion worth of food annually, revealing a critical disconnect in the continent's agricultural potential. **"If there is one field where Atlantic South America and Atlantic Africa can not only cooperate but also integrate economically, beyond public sector collaboration and specifically through the private sector, it is agriculture,"** Massot stated. He emphasized that South American agricultural expertise could help Africa transition from artisanal to industrial-scale farming while maintaining family ownership models. Massot also stressed the need for institutional innovation, as many African farmers lack formal land titles, limiting access to financing. **"African countries must develop their own land ownership schemes, investment protection agreements, and special tax regimes, respecting their culture and specificities while creating an enabling environment for investments,"** he noted. He concluded that public-private partnerships are essential to drive agricultural innovation, with companies uniquely positioned to provide technologies, expertise, and business models to unlock Africa's agricultural potential.



The panel concluded by emphasizing that Africa's future hinges on its ability to leverage smart infrastructure and technologies to bridge the digital and green divides, enhance resource management, and foster regional connectivity. Key recommendations included developing tailored financial and regulatory frameworks to attract investments, promoting public-private partnerships to accelerate smart infrastructure projects, and facilitating knowledge transfer between regions like South America and Africa. By adopting innovative approaches to land ownership, energy production, and agricultural development, Africa can position itself as a global leader in decarbonization, food security, and sustainable industrial growth.

Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Smart infrastructure is key to Africa's future** – Investing in smart technologies and resilient infrastructure will optimize resource management, enhance connectivity, and drive inclusive economic development.
- **Bridging the digital and green divides is critical** – Africa must accelerate digitalization and green energy adoption to remain competitive globally, requiring tailored financial and regulatory frameworks to attract investment.
- **Agriculture and regional partnerships can unlock economic potential** – Strengthening cooperation between Africa and regions like South America, alongside innovative land ownership and investment policies, will boost agricultural productivity and food security.
- **Public-private partnerships and innovative financing are essential** – Closing Africa's \$200 billion infrastructure gap requires concessional loans, foreign direct investment, and strategic public-private partnerships to fund key projects.
- **Africa can lead in sustainable industries and decarbonization** – By leveraging renewable energy, industrial innovation, and smart policies, Africa can position itself as a leader in global energy transitions and sustainable development.





Plenary VII

Beyond Fragmentation: Constructing Atlantic Communities of Interest

Uduak Amimo
Founder, Uduak Amimo
Coaching & Consulting,
Kenya

Sergio Alcocer
President, Mexican
Council on Foreign
Relation, Mexico

Stephanie Miley
Senior Advisor -
Partnership for Atlantic
Cooperation, U.S.
Department of State,
USA

Mamphela Ramphela
Member, The Planetary
Guardians, South Africa

As the world grapples with complex and interconnected challenges, fostering collaboration across diverse regions has become more critical than ever. Climate change, economic disparities, and institutional divides demand innovative solutions rooted in mutual understanding and shared goals. The Atlantic Basin, with its rich diversity and common interests, offers a unique opportunity to construct cohesive communities of interest through inclusive dialogue, sustainable development, and intergenerational partnerships. The panel, moderated by **Uduak Amimo**, Founder, Uduak Amimo Coaching & Consulting, underscored innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration as key to a resilient Atlantic future.



Sergio Alcocer, President of the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations, opened the discussion underscoring the pivotal role of think tanks in fostering innovation and collaboration to address fragmentation in the Atlantic Basin. **"Think tanks play a crucial role in bringing diverse ideas together to foster innovative solutions,"** he remarked. Alcocer underscored the importance



of scientific and technological cooperation in tackling shared challenges such as renewable energy, disaster resilience, and digital infrastructure. Fostering a culture of innovation requires investment in education, research, and capacity-building initiatives. Alcocer highlighted the value of mutual learning between regions, suggesting that Latin America could draw on Africa's expertise in sustainable development while sharing their own innovations. Climate change, he noted, demands stronger global cooperation and a focus on sustainable infrastructure development, including disaster-resilient construction. Drawing from lessons learned in Morocco, he emphasized the importance of eco-friendly practices and resilient designs.

Practical recommendations included promoting partnerships, incentivizing green technologies, and training the next generation to leverage AI's potential. Alcocer concluded by advocating for a dedicated panel at future Atlantic Dialogues on implementing technological advancements, shifting the focus to actionable solutions rather than abstract debates.

Stephanie Miley, Senior Advisor, Partnership for Atlantic Cooperation at the U.S. Department of State, explored the challenges of fragmentation in the Atlantic community, focusing on institutional barriers that impede unified action. She pointed to inefficiencies, competing priorities, and exclusionary practices within organizations, which often operate in silos and amplify divisions. These dynamics, she observed, complicate efforts to address shared global concerns.

Bridging these divides, Miley argued, requires collaboration across academia, NGOs, and the private sector. Cross-sectoral partnerships can foster knowledge sharing, reduce polarization, and generate innovative solutions. Structured dialogues and inclusive platforms for joint problem-solving were highlighted as essential to tackling transatlantic challenges like climate change, migration, and security threats.

Public awareness campaigns, she noted, play a critical role in countering misinformation and bridging understanding gaps. Miley also emphasized the transformative potential of younger generations, whose collaborative mindset prioritizes connection over competition.



She concluded by describing this moment as an opportunity for the Atlantic community to foster dialogue, inclusivity, and trust. By leveraging diverse strengths and prioritizing cooperative action, stakeholders can develop innovative, unified responses to persistent challenges and create a stronger, more cohesive Atlantic partnership.



Mamphela Ramphela, Member of The Planetary Guardians, called for transcending predefined frameworks by celebrating the richness of shared heritage, emphasizing the importance of constructing inclusive communities rooted in mutual understanding. Highlighting the shared human legacy, she stated, "**There is only one race—the human race**," underscoring the need to foster connections that bridge divisions. While the barriers to unifying Atlantic communities are relatively low, Ramphela noted that achieving cohesion demands intentional effort and vision. Shared interests and interconnected challenges provide opportunities for collaboration, but uneven economic development and fragmented dialogue remain significant hurdles. On climate change, she urged a fundamental rethinking

of the political and economic systems that prioritize profit over nature. Addressing this crisis, Ramphela argued, requires a fresh, systemic approach. She also critiqued earlier generations for failing to establish sustainable African wealth but expressed optimism about the region's future.

Ramphela highlighted the vibrant youth energy in the region as a transformative asset, calling for investment in education and values-based leadership, to drive inclusive growth and systemic change.

Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Think tanks and knowledge-sharing drive innovation** – Scientific and technological cooperation, investment in education, and fostering a culture of innovation can create solutions for renewable energy, disaster resilience, and digital infrastructure.
- **Breaking institutional silos strengthens unity** – Overcoming inefficiencies, competing priorities, and exclusionary practices through cross-sectoral partnerships fosters knowledge exchange and enhances collective problem-solving.
- **Youth leadership and inclusive dialogue are transformative** – The younger generation's collaborative mindset and investment in education and values-based leadership can create systemic change and bridge divisions.
- **A systemic shift is needed for sustainable development** – Rethinking economic and political frameworks to prioritize sustainability over profit is crucial for addressing climate change and fostering long-term resilience.





Plenary VIII

Funding Development: Short on Bold Ideas or Implementation?

Anne-Marie Dias Borges
International Media Specialist, Cape Verde

Masood Ahmed
President Emeritus, Center for Global Development, United Kingdom

Nizar Baraka
Minister of Equipment and Water, Morocco

Joaquim Levy
Director for Economic Strategy and Market Relation, Banco Safra, Brazil

Matata Ponyo Mapon
Chairman of the Board, Congo Challenge, DRC



Anne-Marie Dias Borges

Moderated by **Anne-Marie Dias Borges**, an international media specialist, the debate highlighted the persistent challenges in financing development and climate change, particularly in developing countries. According to the World Bank, it would take over a century to eradicate extreme poverty, defined as living on less than \$6.85 per day. In Africa, many people survive on just \$3 per day. This situation underscores the urgency for a radical shift to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, which require an additional estimated investment of \$4 trillion.

Masood Ahmed, President of the Center for Global Development, emphasized the significant gap between the financial needs for addressing climate challenges (\$1.3 trillion) and current international commitments (\$300 billion). He argued that this disparity reflects a lack of shared priorities and a common sense of urgency among nations. Ahmed criticized the inconsistency between aspirations expressed at international conferences, such as COPs, and their implementation, where concrete plans are often lacking. He recommended that future summits begin by assessing progress on past commitments rather than announcing new, ambitious goals without mechanisms for follow-up. This transparency, he suggested, would build trust and reduce frustration caused by the gap between promises and actions.



Masood Ahmed

Nizar Baraka, Morocco's Minister of Equipment and Water, presented the country's efforts to integrate sustainability into its public policies. Backed by a royal vision and a strong constitutional framework, Morocco's strategy focuses on the equitable management of water resources, including desalination plants powered by renewable energy. This approach addresses the dual challenges of climate change and food security. Baraka also pointed out that the majority of global climate funds are allocated to mitigation rather than adaptation, which limits the ability of developing countries to respond effectively to immediate climate impacts.



Joaquim Levy, Chief Economic Strategist at Banco Safra, stressed the importance of clarifying priorities in climate financing, particularly between adaptation strategies and emission reduction efforts. He highlighted the private sector's potential to invest in renewable energy projects, such as solar power, without relying on institutional funding. Levy also introduced Brazil's innovative idea of creating a fund for tropical forests, combining environmental conservation with sovereign debt management. This mechanism could provide debt relief to the poorest nations while generating financial returns for investors.

Matata Ponyo Mapon, president of Congo Challenge, warned that prioritizing climate financing could divert attention from other critical sectors such as infrastructure and education in developing countries. He advocated for Southern nations to take ownership of climate change discussions, asserting that these issues cannot be exclusively initiated by Northern countries.



The debate revealed areas of convergence: the importance of an inclusive approach, well-defined priorities, and greater accountability in tracking international commitments. However, divergences persist between the needs of developing countries and the commitments of major nations, highlighting the necessity for an overhaul of financing mechanisms to ensure a fair and sustainable transition.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Urgent Financial Reform is Needed to Achieve Global Development Goals** – With an estimated \$4 trillion required to meet the SDGs by 2030 and a massive funding gap in climate financing, a radical shift in financial priorities is necessary.
- **Bridging the Gap Between Promises and Implementation** – There is a significant disconnect between international climate commitments and their execution. Future summits should focus on accountability and tracking past pledges to build trust and ensure progress.
- **Balancing Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Efforts** – Most global climate funds are directed toward mitigation rather than adaptation, limiting developing nations' ability to address immediate climate challenges. A fairer distribution of resources is crucial.
- **Private Sector and Innovative Financial Mechanisms Can Drive Change** – Encouraging private investment in renewable energy and innovative solutions, such as Brazil's forest conservation fund linked to sovereign debt, can provide sustainable financing alternatives.
- **Developing Nations Must Lead Their Own Climate Strategies** – African and Southern nations must assert ownership over climate discussions to ensure that financing priorities align with their broader development needs, including infrastructure and education.



Plenary IX

The Regional Security Paradigm from the Red Sea to the Atlantic

Gallagher Fenwick
Reporter and Former
Manager Editor, France
24, France

Pascal Boniface
Director, The French
Institute for International
and Strategic Affairs,
France

Birame Diop
Minister of Defence,
Senegal

Daniel Vajdich
President, Yorktown
Solutions, USA

This panel, moderated by **Gallagher Fenwick**, Reporter and Former Managing Editor at France 24, gathered prominent speakers, each offering unique perspectives on the current global challenges, including geopolitical fragmentation, the tensions between multilateralism and unilateralism, and the impact of climate change and migration on global security.



Pascal Boniface, Director of the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs, highlighted a paradoxical dual movement the world is currently experiencing. On one hand, there is increasing fragmentation between nations, fueled by nationalism, regional conflicts, and competition for resources. On the other hand, globalization persists, emphasizing the urgent need for international collaboration despite rising tensions.

Boniface stressed the importance of regulating resources to ensure fair competition and criticized the lack of coherent mechanisms to resolve conflicts, particularly in Sudan, where disagreements among external powers hinder the peace process. He emphasized the challenge of ignoring non-state actors, like the Houthis in the Red Sea, due to their considerable impact on international stability. Dialogue, he argued, does not equate to approval but is essential for addressing impactful actors on the global stage. Boniface also warned of the escalating global arms race, highlighting its severe implications for international security. He called for reinforced treaties and agreements to promote disarmament and control the proliferation of advanced weaponry, advocating for collective efforts to safeguard global stability.



Birame Diop, Senegal's Minister of Defense, offered a more structured view of security, dividing it into three complementary levels. The first, international security, highlights modern threats such as terrorism and cyber-attacks, which transcend borders and require enhanced multilateral cooperation. The second level, national security, stresses the importance of strengthening local institutions and resilience to both internal and external threats. The third level, citizen security, sees the population as a key player in ensuring safety, advocating for investments in education and awareness to prevent radicalization. Diop also argued that Africa should not be viewed as a monolithic entity but as a continent with diverse challenges. He called for tailored approaches to each region, particularly in areas like the Sahel, where terrorism is a significant threat, or the Gulf of Guinea, where maritime piracy remains a major issue.



Daniel Vajdich, President of Yorktown Solutions, analyzed NATO's challenges, pointing out its internal fragmentation, which hampers its ability to act effectively even within its traditional sphere of operation in Europe. He argued that threat perceptions have evolved to the point that even within NATO, priorities are no longer shared. He stressed the importance of understanding that economic development plays a crucial role in conflict prevention. Countries, particularly in the South Atlantic, seek development to meet their populations' needs and reduce the risks of extremist recruitment. Vajdich also addressed migration, which, he noted, has become a domestic political issue in many democracies in the North, complicating multilateral efforts to address it effectively. He highlighted initiatives like **African Lion**, a collaboration between the U.S., NATO, and African nations, which demonstrates how international cooperation can respond concretely to regional security threats.

The discussions also underscored several key recommendations. There is an urgent need to strengthen multilateral frameworks to promote robust multilateralism, which is essential for global peace and security. At the same time, dialogue with non-state actors, while still a delicate subject, is crucial. Their inclusion in peace processes can play a decisive role in resolving complex crises. Additionally, the focus must be on sustainable and inclusive development, as reducing poverty and inequality is fundamental to preventing conflicts and limiting forced migration. In this context, governments must adopt more inclusive governance and strengthen local capacities to better address climate and economic challenges. Africa, in particular, requires tailored solutions suited to the diversity of its regions, whether to tackle terrorism in the Sahel or maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

Finally, it was emphasized that leadership, both at the national and international levels, plays a central role in crisis management. Leaders must not only respect the sovereignty of nations but also adopt more human-centered and collaborative approaches to solving global problems. The current challenges require leadership that prioritizes cooperation over confrontation, solidarity over self-interest.

In conclusion, these perspectives call for strengthening multilateral institutions and fostering more active cooperation among nations to address the security, climate, and economic issues shaping the contemporary world.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Balancing Globalization and Rising Fragmentation** – While globalization continues to connect nations, geopolitical tensions, nationalism, and competition for resources are driving fragmentation. Strengthening multilateral frameworks is crucial to maintaining global stability.
- **The Evolving Nature of Security Requires a Multi-Level Approach** – Security must be addressed at international, national, and citizen levels. Modern threats like terrorism, cyber-attacks, and piracy require tailored, region-specific solutions, particularly in Africa.
- **Multilateralism vs. Unilateralism: The Need for Stronger Institutions** – NATO and other global organizations face internal fragmentation, limiting their effectiveness. Strengthening cooperative security frameworks and engaging both state and non-state actors is essential for conflict resolution.
- **Sustainable Development as a Key to Preventing Conflict and Migration** – Economic development, poverty reduction, and inclusive governance are critical to preventing extremism and forced migration. Investments in education and local capacity-building are necessary for long-term stability.
- **Leadership Must Prioritize Cooperation Over Confrontation** – Global challenges require leaders to adopt collaborative, human-centered approaches. Inclusive governance, respect for sovereignty, and proactive crisis management are essential for fostering peace and security.



Plenary X

North – South Think Tank Cooperation and Partnership in a Fragmented World

Kimberly Dozier
Global Affairs Analyst,
CNN, USA

Karim El Aynaoui
Executive President,
Policy Center for the
New South, Morocco

Renato Flôres
Director, Fundação
Getulio Vargas
International Intelligence
Unit, Brazil

Ian Lesser
Vice President, German
Marshall Fund, USA

Paolo Magri
Executive Vice President,
Italian Institute for
International Political
Studies, Italy



The session, moderated by **Kim Dozier**, Global Affairs Analyst at CNN, provided an exploration of the roles and challenges of think tanks in an increasingly polarized and interconnected world. Speakers underscored the value of think tanks as intermediaries between academic research, public policy, and civil society, highlighting their ability to influence policymaking by providing in-depth analysis and fostering collaboration. Key themes included the need for inclusivity of diverse perspectives, the importance of transparency and accountability, and the evolving mission of think tanks in addressing complex global challenges. The discussion also stressed the significance of building connections across regions and sectors, promoting innovation, and shaping the next generation of leaders and think-tankers.

Karim El Aynaoui, Executive President at the Policy Center for the New South, underscored the essential role of think tanks as knowledge catalysts and bridges between academia, public policy, and civil society. He described think tanks as public goods, uniquely positioned to provide long-term, evidence-based solutions that governments often cannot pursue due to their focus on immediate priorities such as ministerial agendas

and parliamentary questions. Think-tanks, he argued, fill this gap by investing the necessary time and intellectual resources to produce actionable ideas that support governance and societal progress.

El Aynaoui highlighted the cumulative value think-tanks bring by synthesizing diverse knowledge streams to influence policymaking and foster meaningful change. He emphasized that their role goes beyond merely producing research; they actively contribute to shaping and implementing policies, particularly in contexts like Morocco, where they are part to the country's transformation process.



Positioned at the intersection of multiple disciplines, think tanks combine academic rigor with practical application, creating a unique platform for innovation and collaboration. He also noted that think tanks must function as tools for public utility, aligning their work with societal needs. By doing so, they ensure the delivery of insights and strategies that not only serve policymakers but also contribute to the public good, reinforcing their relevance in an increasingly complex world.

Renato Flores, Director at the Fundação Getulio Vargas International Intelligence Unit, emphasized the importance of fostering open dialogue and integrating diverse perspectives within think-tank activities. In a world increasingly divided by polarization and echo chambers, he argued that think-tanks have a responsibility to include opposing viewpoints in their discussions to enrich debates and promote critical thinking. This openness to contradiction, he suggested, not only enhances the quality of intellectual output but also ensures that think-tanks remain relevant in addressing contemporary global challenges.



Flores highlighted the growing problem of misinformation and emphasized the need for transparency and trust-building. He called for improved disclaimers and clear communication of think-tanks' perspectives to audiences, arguing that honesty about intentions and methodologies strengthens credibility. Addressing these challenges requires think-tanks to redefine their roles as reliable sources of information and analysis in a time of widespread fake news.

Furthermore, Flores advocated for increased collaboration among think-tanks globally. He proposed selecting specific issues of mutual interest where institutions could pool resources and expertise, leading to more effective and impactful outcomes. By working together on focused initiatives, think tanks could leverage their collective strength to tackle complex problems, fostering innovative and actionable solutions in a fragmented world.



Ian Lesser, Vice President at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, point out the evolving role of think-tanks in navigating the complex interplay between international relations and domestic politics. He highlighted the unique position of think tanks as platforms for fostering understanding and dialogue across these domains, ensuring that their work remains relevant to both global and local contexts. Lesser argued that think tanks must adapt to the challenges of today's polarized world by innovating their approaches and creating spaces where adversarial perspectives can come together for constructive discussions. This ability to bridge divides, he noted, is a crucial function of think-tanks in a fragmented global landscape.

Lesser also reflected on the need for think-tanks to redefine their purpose and methodologies in response to the changing demands of the 21st century. What think-tanks were doing fifty years ago, he suggested, can no longer suffice in addressing the challenges of today's polarized and interconnected world. Instead, they must evolve to remain impactful, focusing on generating actionable insights and fostering collaboration. Citing the partnership between the Policy Center for the New South and the German Marshall Fund, Lesser highlighted how collaboration across institutions with different models and resources can generate valuable synergies. Such partnerships, he argued, exemplify the potential of think-tanks to achieve greater impact through cooperative efforts, innovation, and shared goals.

Paolo Magri, Executive Vice President at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies, highlighted the central role of think-tanks in raising awareness, fostering dialogue, and building consensus to address complex global challenges. He described their mission as one of incremental progress, bringing together diverse stakeholders to explore solutions brick by brick. Think-tanks, he argued, are uniquely positioned to push people out of their comfort zones and challenge conventional perspectives, particularly on topics often overlooked in Western and European discussions. This ability to provoke and inspire new approaches is central to their relevance in today's world.



Magri also underscored the importance of global connectivity among think-tanks. In a world characterized by interdependence and complexity, he advocated for deeper collaboration between institutions from different regions, highlighting the value of knowledge exchange and joint initiatives. By merging efforts, think-tanks can pool their expertise and resources to tackle shared challenges more effectively, from climate change to economic disparities. He further stressed the need to nurture a new generation of think-tankers equipped to address the evolving demands of a multidisciplinary, interconnected world. He suggested that these think-tankers must embrace diverse perspectives and innovative methodologies to ensure that think-tanks remain dynamic, inclusive, and impactful in shaping global policies and solutions.



Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Think Tanks as Catalysts for Policy and Public Good** – Think tanks serve as intermediaries between academia, public policy, and civil society, providing long-term, evidence-based solutions that governments often cannot pursue due to short-term priorities. Their role extends beyond research to actively shaping and implementing policies.
- **Inclusivity and Open Dialogue Are Essential** – To remain relevant in a polarized world, think tanks must integrate diverse perspectives, encourage debate, and challenge echo chambers. Fostering open discussions enhances intellectual rigor and helps counter misinformation.
- **Collaboration Strengthens Impact** – Think tanks should increase cooperation across institutions and regions to tackle shared global challenges. Partnerships allow them to pool expertise, generate synergies, and produce more effective, actionable solutions.
- **Adaptation and Innovation Are Key to Relevance** – The role of think tanks is evolving; they must innovate their methodologies, embrace new approaches, and respond to the changing demands of international and domestic politics to maintain their influence.
- **Investing in the Next Generation of Think-Tankers** – To sustain their impact, think tanks must nurture future leaders who are equipped with multidisciplinary skills, global awareness, and a commitment to inclusivity and innovation.



Closing Plenary XI

Wider Atlantic Challenges Viewed by Emerging Leaders

Nik Gowing
Founder & Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable, United Kingdom

Danielle Alakija
Founder & CEO, The SOLI Group, Nigeria

Asma Bachikh
Investment Associate, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Morocco

Swapneel Mehta
Co-founder, SimPPL, India

Rafael Schmuziger Goldwzeig
Global Response Manager, Meta, Brazil

Siphokazi Sibahle Sinalo Magadla
Consultant, International Finance Corporation, South Africa



The panel, moderated by **Nik Gowing**, Founder and Co-director of Thinking the Unthinkable, was centered on the evolving role of youth in leadership and the changing dynamics in today's world.



Danielle Alkaija, Founder & CEO at the SOLI Group, emphasized the need for intergenerational dialogue in any gathering, especially as the youth grow older and gain more influence. She spoke about the growing sense of determination among young people, particularly post-COVID-19, as they increasingly identify as part of multiple communities rather than being limited by one national or cultural identity. As a Nigerian-British-Fijian photographer, filmmaker, and storyteller, Alkaija stressed the significance of creative economies, with identity being one of the most important returns on investment (ROI) in these fields. She argued that fostering an environment of creativity can help shape a more inclusive future.



Rafael Schmuziger Goldwzeig, Global Response Manager at Meta, shared his experience of navigating a world where the job he holds today did not even exist when he started studying. This uncertainty about the future, he argued, underscores the challenges young leaders face in times of volatility. As a Brazilian, Schmuziger Goldwzeig recounted how he was often the only one from Brazil and with a different background in his early career, but he was grateful for the mentorship that gave him the opportunity to contribute to global discussions. He described his role as that of a translator, bridging different types of people and navigating environments where full knowledge of the situation is often lacking.

Asma Bachikh, Investment Associate at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, reflected on her journey, explaining that she no longer sees herself as just a young leader but as an “emerging leader,” constantly evolving. As a Moroccan, she grew up understanding her identity in relation to the North, but she believes the South often misses out on meaningful exchanges, especially with the North, which does not take enough time to learn about Africa. Bachikh called for a shift beyond mere conversation to concrete action, advocating for initiatives like enhancing the attractiveness of educational institutions in the South and even establishing memorandums of understanding (MoUs) at conferences to solidify commitments.



Siphokazi Sibahle Sinalo Magadla, Consultant at IFC, shared her experience of being mentored by individuals who were not from her background, pointing out that while the past is often shaped by those ahead, the present is shaped by the current generation, which needs the right tools and resources to succeed. Reflecting on her South African identity, Magadla spoke about how her country, 30 years into democracy, thinks of itself as South African first and African second. She also emphasized the importance of learning languages and, more crucially, listening to people, regardless of their language or background. She believes that soft power in creative economies, such as music and food, can serve as bridges between communities while empowering individuals to be confident in their identities.



Swapneel Mehta, Co-founder, SimPPL, concluded by underscoring the importance of small actions that lead to great changes. He highlighted the power of setting an example by starting small and collaborating with others, especially young leaders from universities. He pointed out that many in the Global South have grown facing challenges and diversities, and one of the most valuable qualities they have developed is resilience. Mehta believes that when adversity strikes, communities in the Global South often lean on each other, providing the support necessary to weather difficult times.



Overall, the panelists called for a more collaborative, inclusive approach to leadership, where youth are empowered and given the tools to tackle the challenges of an uncertain world. They highlighted the need for intergenerational dialogue, cross-cultural exchange, and investment in education and mentorship to create a more equitable and resilient future.

Key Messages and Recommendations:

- **Intergenerational Dialogue and Cross-Cultural Exchange Are Essential** – Youth leadership must be shaped by meaningful engagement with older generations while embracing diverse cultural identities. This exchange fosters inclusivity and innovation.
- **Adapting to Uncertainty Is a Core Skill for Young Leaders** – The rapidly changing job landscape requires young leaders to be adaptable, resilient, and open to new opportunities, even in roles that did not exist when they started their careers.
- **From Conversations to Action: The Global South's Role in Leadership** – There is a need to move beyond discussions and take concrete steps, such as strengthening educational institutions in the Global South and formalizing commitments through agreements and policies.
- **Soft Power and Creativity as Bridges Between Communities** – Cultural elements like storytelling, music, language, and food serve as powerful tools for connection and empowerment, helping shape a more inclusive global society.
- **Small Actions Lead to Big Changes** – Leadership begins with small, impactful actions. Young leaders should focus on collaboration, mentorship, and community support, particularly in the Global South, where resilience is a key strength.





Townhall II

A Dialogue on the Atlantic's Past, Present, and Future

Nik Gowing

Founder & Co-Director,
Thinking the Unthinkable,
United Kingdom

Moderated by **Nik Gowing**, Founder and Co-Director of Thinking the Unthinkable, the final session and Townhall of the conference delved into the critical lessons that the Atlantic can draw from its historical memories to confront current global challenges. Gowing emphasized that the Atlantic, with its shared history and experiences, holds valuable lessons in dialogue, cooperation, and flexible borders—elements that can address the growing fragmentation both in the world and within the Atlantic region itself.

The conversation with the audience touched on the ongoing challenges of identity and memory, recognizing that understanding these complexities is vital for addressing the fragmented postmodern condition. Acknowledging and reconciling the multiplicity of experiences within individuals and communities, especially through hyphenated identities, was identified as a key step toward fostering meaningful dialogue. Gowing pointed out the importance of listening and trust in these discussions, particularly when addressing sensitive issues and working toward unity amid fragmentation.

Gowing also highlighted the need for a positive outlook on global issues, noting that while some regions are struggling, others are thriving. The recognition of success stories and lessons from these regions can inspire hope and resilience. Acknowledging the role of youth in leadership, Gowing stressed the importance of involving younger generations in solving global challenges. He emphasized that youth today, with their confidence and sense of responsibility, are prepared to tackle these issues and must be encouraged to believe in their ability to create a better future.

A key theme in the discussion was the importance of multilateral cooperation. Institutions must engage youth through research projects and publications, fostering collaboration for better outcomes. Emerging leaders expressed optimism despite global challenges, underlining the potential for solutions through open discussions and diverse perspectives.

The significance of place was also emphasized, with the conference held in Rabat—symbolizing strength and unity, or “the stronghold of victory.” Gowing underscored that meaningful



public policy requires introspection, commitment, and conducive conditions for dialogue, which are essential to address global issues effectively.

Finally, the conversation addressed the evolving dynamics of the South, urging a shift from opposition to active engagement and responsible proposals. The creation of thriving communities requires a synergy between people, their personalities, and a culture that evolves organically. Growth, it was noted, is often exponential, requiring significant initial investments to experience substantial returns.

In terms of governance in the Atlantic region, a proposed financial mechanism combining public and private investments was discussed as a necessary structure to promote development, reduce risks, and enhance collaboration.

The Atlantic dialogues conference aims to strengthen regional cooperation by addressing critical transatlantic issues through inclusive dialogue among diverse sectors and remains a solid platform to bridge perception gaps and create opportunities for collaboration.



Closing Remarks

Reflecting on the Future and Engineering a New South: Insights from Karim El Aynaoui

Karim El Aynaoui
Executive President,
Policy Center for the
New South, Morocco

In his closing remarks, **Karim El Aynaoui**, Executive President of the Policy Center for the New South, delved into the reflective nature of discussions that shape the center's mission and vision. He described The Atlantic Dialogues as a critical process of introspection, where participants actively question their beliefs and challenge the assumptions that often govern our thinking. This reflection, he argued, helps foster a deeper understanding of issues and encourages individuals to push the boundaries of conventional thought, ultimately leading to richer, more insightful perspectives.



El Aynaoui highlighted the core tools and vision that guide the PCNS and the Atlantic Dialogues' work in shaping the future of the South. Central to this mission are methods rooted in collective action, trust, and belief—principles that form the foundation of their approach. The Policy Center's mission is to amplify the voice of the South, urging a critical examination of its needs and advocating for innovative solutions that will shape

its future. **El Aynaoui** shared his vision for a New South, a region that simplifies its inherent complexities without disregarding its history. This New South, he emphasized, is not only about fostering collaboration with the world but also about remaining deeply connected to its cultural roots while navigating toward a forward-thinking, inclusive future.

Finally, **El Aynaoui** addressed the pressing issue of climate inequities, calling for innovative approaches to funding sustainable development. He argued that traditional public solutions are insufficient on their own and that new, creative financing structures, such as public-private partnerships (PPPs), must be explored to drive meaningful change. By embracing these alternative financial instruments, the South can better address its climate challenges while ensuring sustainable development that benefits all.



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