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for European Studies

Food for Thought: Free movement in Africa and migration to Europe

12 September 2019
12:00 – 14:30

Martens Centre
20 Rue du Commerce
1000 Brussels

In February 2019, member states of the African Union announced the intention to create an area of free movement across the African continent, accompanied by a single African passport. This intention goes hand in hand with efforts to liberalise trade among the African countries and allow the free circulation of goods and services. The European Union (EU) is supporting these efforts. At the same time, to reduce irregular migration headed to Europe, the EU and its member states have been assisting in developing migration and border management policies in Africa, and in North Africa in particular.

A number of questions arise: How realistic is the creation of an African free movement area, given the armed conflicts on the continent and given the relatively low administrative capacity in some countries? Can an African free movement area work in the face of the existing inter-state suspicions? Is the current emphasis on migration and border management in the EU's external policy detrimental to the African economies which often rely on informal cross-border traffic? Or is the EU's policy of migration deterrence simply ineffective and a waste of public money?

PROGRAMME

12:00	Registration and light lunch
12:30	Welcome remarks: Tomi Huhtanen , Executive Director, Martens Centre
12:40	Discussion
	Roderick Parkes , Senior Analyst, European Union Institute for Security Studies, Paris
	Mehari Maru , Expert on migration, Addis Ababa
Moderator:	Vít Novotný , Senior Research Officer, Martens Centre
14:00	Q&A
14:30	End of discussion

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