

# Remarks by President Charles Michel to the press after his visit of the Westerwelle Startup Haus in Kigali, Rwanda



I'm very pleased with the opportunity to visit this centre: it's a great project. And it's very important for the European Union to cooperate with Africa in general, and with Rwanda in particular, to develop this difficult ambition.

We think in Europe that climate change and digital ambition are the two top priorities. We would also like to develop our alliance between Africa and the European Union.

This is a very concrete project, a very interesting and useful space to make networks possible. We have decided to invest to develop the same kinds of projects in other cities, not only in Kigali, but in other cities in Rwanda.

We will cooperate closely with the Rwandan authorities to ensure that we can develop and strengthen this very strong digital ambition.

COVID-19 is a big challenge for the world. We won't be safe until everyone is safe. That's why it's a top priority for the European Union to work with our partners in Africa, and in Rwanda. And I was very pleased that, on behalf of the European Union, we support these Covax facilities and this Covax programme. Through this programme, which is now effective, we are able to deliver the doses, and we are working to make sure that we can administer the vaccines. And also effective support yesterday with the visit to a health centre in Rwanda, which was very impressive, because we could observe there is a strong commitment to make sure that we are able to implement the vaccination campaign, which is a key for the future.

The next weeks and the next months will be very important, and we intend at European level to continue all our efforts with all our partners, to make sure that with the vaccines we are able to defeat COVID-19. And it is important at economic level because this crisis also has economic and social consequences. That's why it is very important to make sure that we are able to return to a normal life as soon as possible, and a more normal economic activity, to provide goals, economic development, innovation, and to improve the social situation everywhere.