

## Living a New Reality

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Everyone knows that the world we live in continues to change at an amazing pace. Change has become the norm with practically all aspects of life unrecognizable from just a decade ago.

Two recent international reports that seek to identify demographic and climate trends point towards an even more radical new reality by the year 2050.

The first study published by the United Nations Population Division highlights the fact that Sub-Saharan Africa's population is set to double in the next three decades to two billion people. As a result Africa will become more populous than Central and South Asia. Such a rapid increase will place tremendous pressure on all the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa to cope with the demand for job opportunities and medical and educational services.

This new reality presents all of us with numerous urgent questions. Will Africa be able to implement a development agenda that meets the expectations of this incredible increase in population? What job creation initiatives are necessary to cope with such a high number of workers in the decades ahead? How can the international community support Africa in this herculean task?

Failure to implement a successful development agenda that is able to cater to an additional one billion people is certain to result in an increased exodus of people from Africa to Europe and beyond. Such a perspective demands that the international community introduce mechanisms that can address such an outcome.

Otherwise the network of human trafficking that takes place today across the Mediterranean will keep multiplying in the decades ahead with catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

The second study published by the PlusOne scientific journal highlights the fact that climate change is irreversible and higher temperatures are here to stay. The study forecasts that by 2050 European summers will be 3.5° Celsius warmer and



winters will become on average warmer by 4.7° Celsius.

Such a change in climate is equivalent to moving a country on the map one thousand kilometres south from where it is today. Thus London's weather will resemble that of Barcelona and Southern European countries including Malta will be drier and similar to Central African states.

If such weather patterns become a reality it is essential that everyone starts to adapt to this new reality by changing their lifestyle and living environment. Exposure to a stronger sun and higher temperatures will wreck havoc on anyone who has not taken measures to protect themselves.

The significantly changing demographic and climate trends in the decades ahead will put immense pressure on the Mediterranean region. Unless Euro-Mediterranean countries are able to launch and implement a strategy that addresses these serious challenges, our quality of life will not be sustainable. The time to act is now.