



Indian Council of World Affairs

Sapru House, Barakhamba Road

New Delhi

Report

on

ICWA- Jindal School of International Affairs Symposium

**'India-Africa in the 21st Century- A
Comprehensive Partnership'**

at

Sapru House, New Delhi

5 December, 2014

As part of the Track II dialogue process of the Second India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) –II, a symposium on “India-Africa in the 21st Century: A Comprehensive Partnership” was organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) and Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA) on 5 December 2014 at Sapru House. The Symposium aimed at bringing together Indian and African academics, policy makers, analysts and consultants to share their perspectives on issues relating to India-Africa engagement. It focused on three important themes (a) Enhancing Economic Relations and Development Cooperation, (b) Political and Security Concerns and (c) Regional Issues in Africa and India’s Interface.

About 15 experts from India and the African region, drawn from areas such as academics, strategic affairs, finance, business, and policy presented papers on issues pertaining to the three thematic areas of the Symposium. Besides the experts, a large number of academics, policy makers, media, students and civil society members contributed to the debate and discussions in the Symposium.

Inaugural Session

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, Director General, ICWA, highlighted ICWA’s contributions to debate and discussion on India-Africa relations. He noted that ICWA had already organized eight conferences on India-Africa partnership, which involved a wide range of people from academics and policy making. He argued that the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) provided an institutional framework as well as instilled a momentum to their partnership. He said that the symposium would focus on three broad themes including political and security concerns, economic and development cooperation and regional issues. He mentioned that the IAFS-III, which was supposed to be held in December, has been postponed to next year due to the Ebola crisis in Africa. But the next summit would be a major event to discuss India-Africa relations. He also argued that India’s political support has been catalyst in ushering its economic relationship with Africa. While discussing economic assistance, functional cooperation, capacity building, investment, etc., he emphasized on academic interactions between India and Africa.

Professor Sreeram Chaulia, Dean, JSIA, read the special remarks of Professor C. Rajkumar, Vice-Chancellor, O. P. Jindal Global University. In his remarks, Prof. Rajkumar underlined the importance of India-Africa relations and highlighted Jindal University's educational collaboration with various African universities. Professor Chaulia also spoke about the changes visible in the political and economic landscape of Africa. He noted that democracy has expanded in the region and Africa offers great economic opportunities given the positive trends of economic growth. He also underlined that South-South cooperation is important in enhancing the partnership between India and Africa.

Shri Vinay Kumar, Joint Secretary (E&SA), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, said that ICWA gives the critical assessment of government functions and policy towards Africa. He underlined the significance of perspectives on India-Africa relations provided by the ICWA. He pointed out that there is a need for wider dissemination of India's policy and work done in Africa. He argued that India's engagement with Africa is comprehensive in nature including trade, investment, defence, capacity building, etc. He said that India is supporting the democratic process in Africa. It has provided support to many African countries in their electoral process. He also highlighted the economic potential of the African continent. He said that the IMF has painted a positive picture of African economic outlook. Many countries have registered impressive economic growth. He mentioned that trade relations between India and Africa have grown exponentially. In addition to political and economic cooperation, he said that peace and security cooperation, particularly in areas of maritime security, antipiracy, antiterrorism, also has huge potential. Speaking about the Ebola crisis, which led to the postponement of the third India-Africa Forum Summit, he highlighted that India has donated US \$ 0.5 million to the World Health Organization (WHO) for fighting Ebola in Africa.

Session 1: Enhancing Economic Relations and Development Cooperation

This session explored the trends, opportunities and concerns relating to economic and development cooperation between India and Africa. Ambassador Soni initiated the discussion by providing a detailed account of the India-Africa economic and commercial engagement. He

said that Africa has remarkably changed in recent years, marked by unprecedented economic growth and positive trends. It is becoming increasingly attractive for investment opportunities, ranging from sectors such as energy, infrastructure, agriculture and food processing. He discussed at length the partnership approach in donor-recipient aid relations and India -Africa development partnership. India's line of credit (LOCs) to Africa, he said, has immense significance for Africa's development. However, he added that effective implementation of the projects remains a concern. For long term relations, he suggested that Indian businessmen should undertake corporate social responsibilities (CSR) in Africa, as CSR initiatives generate goodwill and create positive environment for business.

In her presentation on 'Growing India-Africa Economic Cooperation: Development Opportunities for Mozambique', Professor Hetalben Patel dwelt on India's policy approach towards Mozambique. She discussed about the historical relations between India and Mozambique starting from the immigration process in the colonial period, independence movement, NAM and south-south cooperation. She stated that India's recent policy has four pillars: economic cooperation, capacity building, transfer of technology and infrastructure development. India has considerable interest in energy and mining sectors, which account for a major share of Indian investments in Mozambique. She said that India and Mozambique have great potential to cooperate in the areas of agri-processing, SEZ and energy.

Mr. Rajrishi Singhal highlighted the importance of banking sectors in reenergizing India-Africa trade. He noted that Indian currencies were acceptable in Africa in the past. Despite strong political ties between India and Africa, he argued that in the past, India hardly invested in Africa. India shifted its approach in 1990s and since then India-Africa trade has witnessed huge growth. Despite the growth in trade, there are several challenges. First, trade targets set by India seems unachievable. Second, the Indian banking sector needs to expand its foot print in Africa, which at present is very less. EXIM bank, he said, is playing a key role in the disbursement of the LOCs. However, increasing trade would need building new arrangement. Thirdly, he also pointed out the differences between Indian and Chinese investments. He said that Chinese investment is primarily state-owned and Indian investment is private sector driven.

Professor Vusi Gumede analyzed the human development in Africa and India and post-2015 development agenda. He was of the view that African economies are developing below potential. There is a need to understand the relationship between state and capital and the relationship should be made beneficial to the people. He emphasized that African development policy should be home grown and pointed out that current African development model is not beneficial to people of Africa. It is evident from the development challenges that Africa faces, at present, particularly rising inequality.

Dr. Nivedita Ray discussed India's development cooperation with Africa. She focused on the approach, the objectives, the components and the modalities of Africa development cooperation. She highlighted that India's approach is different from that of traditional donors. It incorporates the idea of partnership, of working for mutual benefit, rather than promoting patron-client relationship. The objective was to create mutually beneficial interdependency. She emphasized how India has been encouraging local ownership and capacity building through its development projects. She argued that though India's grant is less in comparison to other emerging powers in Africa, yet it is an important contribution to the development of people. She was also of the view that India's focus is on LOC, but the challenge is its implementation. There is a need for maintaining transparency and constant monitoring and evaluation of the LOC projects, to ensure their effectiveness. She further added that the impact of India's various development projects is not known, which needs to be assessed. She concluded by saying that as India's development cooperation in African countries continues to increase, the nature of its engagement is likely to impact the global development assistance paradigm.

During the Q&A session, there were several issues that were raised, including slow implementation of development projects, impact of development projects, LOC and Indian investment in rural infrastructure.

Session II: Political and Security Concerns: Exploring a Common Ground

The second session was moderated by Cmde C. Uday Bhaskar, Director, Society for Policy Studies, New Delhi. In his initial remarks, the chair highlighted the significance of cooperation

and said that traditional and non-traditional security in India and Africa are inextricably linked.

Professor Robert Llyod, JSIA, in his presentation on 'Regional Security and Militant Islamism in North Africa' drew the existing security scenario in African countries that are affected by terror and violence. His paper made a distinction between political Islam and militant Islam and attributed the violence in Africa to militant Islam. He said that piracy has been a source of funding, and suggested that the responses to the violent incidents by the regional countries and international community have been diplomatic and military.

The second presentation was made by Professor Sanjukta Bhattacharya, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, on 'Security Challenges in India: What India can do?' She opined that awareness about maritime security in Africa needs to be enhanced, and besides piracy, illegal fishing, oil and drug trafficking and waste dumping in African waters need to be included. She opined that though the African states have formulated policies to deal with the threat, the enforcement has been weak, allowing the problem to persist. Prof. Sanjukta also talked about India's 'naval diplomacy' and mentioned that the Indian Navy is patrolling the EEZ of Mauritius and undertaking hydrographic studies. On the aspect of food security, she mentioned that besides availability, access to food is also important. She also highlighted the possibility of greater cooperation in the agricultural sectors between India and Africa, as there is a similarity in soil composition of southern India and Africa.

Dr. George Chaima (New Restoration Plan, Malawi) presented his views on 'The Role of Civil Society in Diplomacy'. He made his presentation via Skype. He discussed that the civil society helps in effective governance, rule of law, removing poverty and creating employment. Civil society promotes access of information to the people, such as during an election. He opined that civil societies are not an enemy or watchdog of a state, but its partners.

Ms Ruchita Beri, IDSA, India, presented her views on 'India's Africa Engagement: Drivers and Constraints'. She was of the view that the force behind India's engagement with

Africa is a mix of ideology and pragmatism. She mentioned that India's developmental partnership is a 'consultative process'. Ms. Beri suggested developing a framework of cooperation between the two sides that would help address the challenges.

Mr Mario Macaringue, JSIA, had his paper on 'Geopolitics of Energy in Africa: Contours and Security Implications'. Highlighting Africa's energy resource potentials, he suggested that access is easy, the continent is free from big power diplomacy and security implications, such as the Middle East, and these countries are not member of the OPEC. He argued that to avoid any political conflict, an inclusive approach should be adopted and the benefits of oil should be shared.

Session III: Regional Issues in Africa and India's Interface

Professor Stephen P Marks, Distinguished Visiting Professor, O.P Jindal University and Director of the Department of Global Health and Population at Harvard University, chaired the session.

Ambassador Mahesh Sachdev presented his views on 'India and ECOWAS'. After giving a background on ECOWAS, he talked about India's relations with the organization. He said that the trade between India and ECOWAS is more than US\$ 25 billion and suggested a 'Study Group' to study preferential trade agreement between the two sides. He also suggested cooperation on Ebola. The Ambassador expressed that New Delhi needs to increase the strength of Indian Missions in Africa and there should be more focus on Francophone African countries in the continent.

Dr. Patrick Maluki, University of Nairobi, presented his paper entitled 'India's Geopolitical Engagement with EAC and IGAD Countries in Africa'. He examined India's multilateral, regional and bilateral engagements with Africa and raised the question whether India, in its interactions with Africa, would follow the path of the West, which denied access to technology? Though he mentioned that people from Africa are now coming for medical treatment to India, he urged greater people to people contacts and social interactions

between the people of Africa and India. It was also highlighted that Indians in Africa should be sensitized about the local culture and customs.

Professor Solomon Gofie, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, made the presentation on 'Beyond Statism: India's Transnational Engagement in the Horn of Africa'. He said that growth in Africa is linked to its new partners, and India is a partner. Defining 'statism', he said that state to state relations dominate, and statism is about 'control' and 'official'. He proposed that 'transnationalism' is the antithesis of statism. He viewed India-Africa relations as an example of statism, and cited the case of ITEC programme that focuses on training government officials. He urged for greater role of people in relations between India and Africa.

Dr Sandipani Dash, ICWA, delivered his presentation on 'India and SADC'. Talking about the shared colonial past, he suggested that SADC has evolved as an effective platform for cooperation within the south-south cooperation framework. For greater engagement between India and Africa, Dr. Dash made three suggestions: an institution to build capacity in the field of democracy and election processes; increasing number of persons from Africa to be trained in Indian technology institutes, particularly Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad; and strengthening linkages between academic and media institutes.

Mr Jefferson Togba, JSIA, made a presentation on 'The Challenges of Regional Integration in Africa: The Case of ECOWAS and SADC'. He enumerated challenges for India in Africa, such as infrastructure bottlenecks, high transaction costs, weak regulatory mechanisms, political risks and work permit and visa issues. He called for improved road and air connectivity for greater trade and commerce.

Concluding Session

The session was concluded by Mr. Nagendra Saxena, Deputy Director General, ICWA, and Dr Sreeram Chaulia, Professor and Dean, JSIA. The DDG acknowledged delays on the part of India in implementing various developmental projects in Africa, however, he pointed out that the African countries also need to have better planning for a project. He also referred to the concerns regarding tribalism in Africa, but said that Tanzania has done well on this front.

Dr. Chaulia talked about the potential of Africa and said that with an average age of 19 years, the continent of Africa has a bright future. He suggested that a 'Peace Corp' may be formed, whereby Indian students can go to Africa and have teaching sessions for African students. He also urged for more Indian attention towards western Africa.

Report prepared by Dr. Nivedita Ray, Dr. Dinoj K. Upadhyay and Dr. Athar Zafar.