

Opening Remarks

by

Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia

Director General, ICWA

at

Panel Discussion

on

**“South Africa’s African Agenda:
Changing Perspectives on Africa’s Development”**

at

Sapru House, New Delhi

3rd November 2014

H.E. Ms. Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of Human Settlement of the Republic of South Africa, Ambassador Shiv Mukherjee, former Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, Prof. Rajen Harshe, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Allahabad and H.E. Mr. F.K. Morule, High Commissioner of Republic of South Africa, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of ICWA, I am delighted and honored to welcome H.E. Ms. Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu, Minister of Human Settlement of the Republic of South Africa. A member of parliament in the National Assembly since 1994, Ms Sisulu is the daughter of South Africa's freedom struggle icons Walter and Albertina Sisulu is an icon of the ant-apartheid campaign in her own right.



(L-R) H.E. Mr. F K Morule, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa, Ambassador Shiv S. Mukherjee, Former Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, H.E. Ms. Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of Human Settlement of the Republic of South Africa, Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, DG, ICWA, Prof. Rajen Harshe, Visiting Professor, South Asian University and Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, Research and Information System (RIS) for Developing Countries

2. This Panel Discussion is organized to reflect upon South Africa's African agenda and the changing perspectives on Africa's development. This is part of ICWA's on-going dialogue process with Africa. ICWA, as you all know has been very proactive in contributing to a dialogue and friendly debate on a wide spectrum of issues relating to India –Africa issues and African affairs.

3. This discussion acquires a special salience in the context of Africa's centrality in the post apartheid South Africa's foreign policy in the past two decades. It is aimed to analyze the developmental landscape of Africa and the role that South Africa and other emerging powers, including India are playing in Africa to augment mutual development and growth.



Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, DG, ICWA giving welcome remarks.

4. For India, Africa has always enjoyed an important position in its foreign policy engagement. Over the years, India has shared with Africa its developmental experiences and is committed to cooperating in areas of its strengths. Its attractiveness as a development partner in Africa has been widely acknowledged. The India–Africa Forum Summit process, in particular,

has instilled a new momentum to this development cooperation, which seeks mutual benefit through a consultative process.

5. Both India and South Africa are playing a positive developmental role in Africa. Historically, India and South Africa have had centuries old interactions. They nurture a special relationship; a relationship which was forged in the struggle against racialism and discrimination. Mahatma Gandhi, remains one of the most important and evocative links between the two nations, and continues to inspire both countries in the 21st century. This special connection will be celebrated in an extraordinary manner in January 2015. In the current scenario of partnering and delivering development in Africa and India, his ideas remain very much relevant.

6. South Africa is the second biggest economy on the continent and the largest investor in Africa with global aspirations in terms of a new world order, with genuine interests in seeing Africa become more stable, peaceful and competitive. South Africa has assumed leadership roles in various international platforms – the UN, African Union (AU), the G-20, BRICS and IBSA. It has used these avenues to advance Africa's voice and issues. Indeed, the 'African Agenda' remains the South African government's top priority. We are especially interested to reflect on South Africa's policy agenda for the African continent. What are the drivers of its Africa agenda? Whether South Africa has been successful in meeting the stated goals of the African Agenda over the past 20 years? What are the challenges it sees ahead? In particular, how does it seek to balance between upholding African solidarity and differentiating itself as a regional power and an emerging market?

7. We hope that today's deliberations will answer these and other related questions, and our dialogue will create new ideas for further research and academic interactions, which can be leveraged for mutual benefits.

Thank you for your attention.
