



Indian Council of World Affairs
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Press Release

“Highlights of the Pre-IAFS-III Conference on India-Africa in the 21st Century: Scale and Scope of Comprehensive Partnership

(15-16 October, 2015)

The Indian Council of World Affairs organised the Pre Third India- Africa Forum Summit Conference on **India – Africa Partnership: Scale and Scope of Comprehensive Partnership** with the support of Ministry of External Affairs, on 15 and 16 October 2015 at Sapru house, New Delhi.

Scholars and experts from Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Mauritius, Ghana and Nigeria participated in the conference. The Conference was also attended by a cross section of academics, experts from various think tanks, analysts, business, media, and policy makers from India.

The presentations and discussions during the two- day conference was structured along six sub-themes namely political cooperation, enhancing economic relations, peace and security challenges, development cooperation, people to people linkages and multilateral engagement.

- I. In his opening remarks at the Inaugural Session, Shri Nalin Surie, Director General, ICWA said that:-
1. The India–Africa partnership is based on a strong legacy and has a deep foundation.
 2. It is a true friendship and India’s effort since its independence and in recent years as our ability to assist has grown, has been to consistently strengthen this friendship by broadening the pillars of the relationship.
 3. India’s cooperation with Africa has essentially been based on needs projected by its friends in Africa there. It is not a mercantile relationship but a relationship of equals. India is proud that since its independence it has played some role in helping maintain peace and security in several parts of Africa, develop human resource capacity and undertaken projects to mutual benefit.
 4. ‘Africa’s Agenda 2063’ rededicates itself to “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena”. He expressed his concurrence with the sentiment and said that India will work with Africa to help convert it into reality.
 5. India shares the aspirations for Africa enunciated in Agenda 2063 and is committed to working with its African partners to fulfil them. Agenda 2063 outlines” critical enablers” for Africa’s transformation and the conference will help in identifying ways and means by which India can help in Africa’s transformation while respecting its aspirations.

II. In his Keynote Address at the inauguration, Shri Navtej Singh Sarna, Secretary (West), MEA said, *inter alia*, that:-

1. The importance of the conference is that it brings together thinking people.
2. Africa is very diverse in terms of economy, ethnicity, polity and geography. Consequently, India's engagement with this continent needs to be flexible. India's approach towards Africa is neither prescriptive nor exploitative; rather its relationship with Africa is based on dialogue.
3. India's engagement with Africa goes back to millennia. It did not start with the Summit process. Currently, India has a 2.7 million strong Diaspora in different parts of Africa.
4. So far India has contributed in all major peacekeeping operations in Africa and currently 4.5 thousand Indian peacekeepers are engaged in 4 peacekeeping operations in Africa.
5. India has been engaged in creation of appropriate infrastructure in Africa. This has been done through approved concessional credit amounting to \$7.5 billion to Africa. India is undertaking 137 projects in 41 African countries.
6. Bilateral trade has touched 70 billion and Indian investment is about \$ 30 billion.
7. India is extremely attentive to the needs of Africa. It responds to Africa's needs with India's strengths. In this context, it is significant to note that the forthcoming India-Africa Forum Summit to be held in New Delhi this year would be the first after the declaration of Africa's Agenda 2063 and SDG 2030 goals. Therefore this Summit will define India's engagement with Africa in keeping with these goals.
8. Focus Areas for India in its engagement with Africa in the years ahead will include : i) Backstopping Agenda 2063 ii) Sustainable Development Partnership; iii) support to peace and security operations, Counter-Terrorism and Maritime Security; and iv) Development of the Blue Economy.

III. In her Special Address at the inaugural meeting, H.E. Mrs. Gennet Zewide, Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps & Ambassador of Ethiopia, New Delhi said :-

1. India's policy towards Africa is based on i) Mutual Benefit; ii) Equality; and iii) Complementarities.
2. Last two Summits have created a platform for i) Peace and Security; ii) Trade and Investment; iii) Lines of Credit; and iv) Human Resource Development. Amongst these, the most important is the Human Resource Development, which symbolises the uniqueness of India's contribution to Africa. Since the last Summit, many of the projects have been implemented and some are in the process. However, many projects are still facing problems at the implementation level. The next Summit should try to eliminate such hurdles.
3. It is a challenge for Africa to accomplish visions enshrined in the Agenda 2063 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 of the United Nations. Specifically, Africa wishes to focus on i) Eradication of Poverty; ii) Progress and Growth; iii) Democracy; iv) Rule of Law and Good Governance; v) Health and Education; vi) Quality of Life.
4. Africa wishes India to help in following areas: i) Capacity Building; ii) Technology Transfer; iii) Human Resource Development; iv) Expanded Trade and Economic Ties. Expanding the trade and economic ties is particularly important as it will create employment of the young population. Investment will help skill development and job creation.

IV. At the Valedictory Session on October 16, 2015, DG, ICWA recalled that the discussion over the last two days has been frank and productive .He drew attention to ten outcomes which he felt the summit could reflect upon. These are:-

1. Why and how has democracy been successful and embedded itself in India and how can African countries learn from the Indian experience? How can India help in this process which Africa considers vital to its success including that of Agenda 2063?
2. India should play an ever greater role in peace and security issues in Africa including in matters of mediation in conflicts and maritime security and enhancing supremacy of civil control over the armed forces.
3. On development cooperation, need to better match India's capabilities and better implementation of projects and programmes.
4. There is a need for greater research in the South on South-South cooperation including on issues of project assessment and evaluation.
5. There is need for greater focus on cooperation in agriculture and greater Indian investment in SMEs in African partner countries to create employment, develop rural areas, enhance skills and technological capacities.
6. Both sides should look at resource based financing based on joint venture/Public Partnership model.
7. India is not part of the issue of 'land grab' in African countries.
8. The successes achieved by Mozambique in the use of India's development cooperation offers needs to be replicated.
9. The Indian community in Africa should assimilate and integrate better. This will help better sell the naturalness of the partnership between India and Africa.
10. There is a need to fill the media and knowledge deficits between Indian and African partners. Further, how can India help enhance capabilities of African media institutions. Should the forum of Indian-African editors be institutionalised?

V. In his Conference outcome report, Shri Ajaneesh Kumar DDG, ICWA drew attention to the following:-

Session I- India Africa Political Cooperation: Issues and Perspectives

- Africa can learn from India how to establish an exemplary constitutional framework having diverse ethnic-cultural and religious diversity where a union of democracy and development will be possible.
- India should play the role of capacity building, in the evolution of political parties in the African Continent.
- Associations like the Commonwealth Parliamentary Associations can be formed between India and African nations to have a better understanding about each other's political structure, culture and development.

Session II- Enhancing India-Africa Economic Relations

- There is huge trade potential between India and Africa, its optimum potential yet to be realized. Indirect trade between India and Africa is generally not taken in consideration, and it inadequately figures in official trade statistics.

- India and Africa should increase cooperation in areas of security. Terrorism is a common threat to both. Other threats such as civil strife, cyber security, frauds in banking sector should also be tackled through India-Africa cooperation.
- Institutional mechanism is facilitating the economic inter-linkages. The DFTP scheme has not worked well so far, and only Tanzania has reaped the benefits from the DFTP scheme.

Session III-Peace and Security Challenges: Exploring Common Ground

- After the discovery of oil and other minerals, conflicts have significantly increased and intensified.
- Between India and Africa there is a need to enhance
 - Passage of a comprehensive counter terror legal cooperation framework.
 - Bilateral mechanism and multilateral treaties as well.
 - Extradition treaties and information exchange.
 - Tackle poverty, unemployment and illiteracy through sustained engagement.

Session IV: Development Cooperation and Expectations

- Western idea of developmental activities is based on monetary theory while South-South cooperation has to be based on conditionality free economic equilibrium.
- ITEC seats and ICCR scholarship provided to African students are not being utilized fully. There seems to be a gap between what India offers and what Africa demands. It needs to be assessed.
- The world is not waiting for India and Africa to increase their engagements. The West is creating new institutions to further strengthen their dominant position in international system. For example the TPP and tightening of patent regimes. It is a matter of concern for both India and Africa as the global institutions will be more hostile to us in future.

Session V-Reinvigorating People to People Linkages

- The connection between culture and Diaspora should be deepened to institutionalise relationship between India and Africa.
- India should help Africa in capacity building particularly media capacity as there is knowledge and information deficit in Africa.

Session VI-Multilateral Engagement: India-Africa Interface

- There is a need to elevate SAARC to become more robust economic organization such that it can connect East and West Africa to ASEAN.
- India and Africa can work together in existing multilateral organizations on four issues. i) Reforms towards UN peace keeping. ii) UNSC reforms. iii) Build capacity for maritime security and iv) Reforms in International Financial institutions.
- There is a need to establish norms and institutions by India and Africa at multilateral levels, focusing on six areas which are food, climate, energy, water, cyber security and outer space.

VI. In her Valedictory Address Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary, (M & ER), MEA highlighted the following:-

1. The India- Africa relationship is based on 3Cs: Connectivity, Complementarity and Cooperation.
2. Connectivity is basic to people-to-people contacts. Availability of connectivity is a platform for increased cooperation.
3. Growth pattern of countries of Africa and India are similar and therefore closer cooperation is feasible. Being complementary, both stand to gain through their cooperation.
4. India and Africa together constitute a market consisting of 2.2 billion people and their combined GDP is \$3 trillion.
5. IAFS seeks to lay foundation for deepening relations between India and Africa at continental, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels.
6. Indian approach to Africa is based on partnership in development and the state, private sector and media all have to play a role in this.
7. The Indian development programme is channelled through i) Lines of Credit; ii) Grants; iii) Capacity Building; and iv) Technical Cooperation. Among these, capacity building has been very successful and LOCs moderately successful.
8. Since the last Summit, 25000 scholarships provided by India have been utilised in Africa.
9. India has tried to respond to the needs and requirement of partner countries in Africa. For example, it has developed special programmes for civil society and media.
10. Concessional credit offered by India to Africa stands at \$ 7.4 billion and India is currently engaged in 142 projects in 41 African countries.
11. There has been successful experience in building community infrastructure especially roads, water, hospitals and power projects.
12. India's trade with Africa was less than \$ 1 billion in 1991 and today it is \$ 70 billion. Also, India's export to Africa is 10 per cent of its total export.
13. Development partnership is focus of India and it would like to work on priorities identified by its African partners. This is a relationship that goes beyond merchandise trade and focuses on development cooperation.
14. Development of sound manufacturing growth is vital in Africa. Investment in joint ventures will be the next step of India-Africa partnership. India is sensitising its private sector and encouraging it to also focus on CSR activities in Africa.
15. Indian Diaspora in Africa could play a vital role in deepening the relationship.
16. India wishes to take the relationship forward and in the long run India has better future in forging relationships with Africa, unlike others with a state based model.
17. India-Africa partnership is underpinned by shared values and strong political understanding.
