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## **The Ten Guiding Principles for India-Africa Engagement: Finding Coherence in India's Africa Policy**

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# The Ten Guiding Principles for India-Africa Engagement: Finding Coherence in India's Africa Policy

## ABSTRACT

India and Africa share a rich history of cultural, economic, and political interactions, rooted in the spirit of developing together as equals. Indeed, India-Africa ties may yet redefine the contours of the international order along more egalitarian lines. However, despite robust engagement for over 70 years, the Indian government has not had a clear, long-term strategy for its relations with the continent. This paper examines whether the government's recent document, called the 'Ten Guiding Principles for India-Africa engagement', fills this gap. While the guiding principles only continue existing policies, they also reflect a change in nuances and a different stress on priorities. The paper seeks to understand the guiding principles by analysing what is new in them; the current situation in each of the subjects; how realistic the goals are; and what are the challenges.

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## INTRODUCTION

Africa is a continent on the move, characterised by rapid economic growth, rising educational and health standards, increasing gender parity, and expanding infrastructure and connectivity. The region has witnessed growing trade, investments, and a surge in innovation. African governments and leaders are playing an active role in shaping the continent's future and they no longer remain passive bystanders. Various non-western powers like China, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia are also expanding their presence in the continent.

India has an intrinsic interest in helping Africa achieve progress. The spirit of “developing together as equals” defines this bilateral partnership. A resurging Africa and a rising India can give a strong impetus to South-South Cooperation, especially when it comes to addressing challenges in areas like clean technology, climate-resilient agriculture, maritime security, connectivity, and Blue economy. However, the India-Africa partnership is yet to achieve its full potential. What is needed is an infusion of energy, of something new and concrete, and with a specific focus and direction.

In July 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Ugandan Parliament during his state visit and outlined a vision for not just a bilateral partnership with Africa, but also a partnership in multilateral forums by espousing the ‘10 guiding principles for India-Africa engagement’.<sup>1</sup> To be sure, many aspects of the Ten Guiding Principles are not entirely new. They represent a continuity in policies that have historically defined India-Africa partnership. At the same time, the Guiding Principles also reflect a change in the nuances and priorities in India's engagement, and most importantly, the principles are clearly articulated. After all, the Indian government has long been criticised for not having a clear vision or strategy for Africa, even after 70 years of

robust engagement with the continent. India does not normally have 'white paper' documents detailing bilateral engagement with nations for various reasons. Therefore, enunciating the Guiding Principles for India-Africa engagement has helped address the primary concern of not having a coherent Africa policy. The guiding principles can thus be seen as a vision document for India-Africa partnership.

The following are the 10 Guiding Principles for India-Africa engagement, as articulated by PM Modi during his Uganda visit, and addressed to the African nations:<sup>2</sup>

- Africa will be at the top of our priorities. We will continue to intensify and deepen our engagement with Africa. As we have shown, it will be sustained and regular.
- Our development partnership will be guided by your priorities. We will build as much local capacity and create local opportunities as possible. It will be on terms that are comfortable to you, that will liberate your potential and not constrain your future.
- We will keep our markets open and make it easier and more attractive to trade with India. We will support our industry to invest in Africa.
- We will harness India's experience with the digital revolution to support Africa's development; improve delivery of public services; extend education and health; spread digital literacy; expand financial inclusion; and mainstream the marginalized.
- Africa has 60 percent of the world's arable land, but produces just 10 percent of the global output. We will work with you to improve Africa's agriculture.
- Our partnership will address the challenges of climate change.
- We will strengthen our cooperation and mutual capabilities in combatting terrorism and extremism; keeping our cyberspace safe

and secure; and, supporting the UN in advancing and keeping peace.

- We will work with African nations to keep the oceans open and free for the benefit of all nations. The world needs cooperation and competition in the eastern shores of Africa and the eastern Indian Ocean.
- As global engagement in Africa increases, we must all work together to ensure that Africa does not once again turn into a theatre of rival ambitions, but becomes a nursery for the aspirations of Africa's youth.
- Just as India and Africa fought colonialism together, we will work together for a just, representative and democratic global order that has a voice for one-third of humanity that lives in Africa and India.

Since the prime minister's declaration of these principles in July 2018, there have been important developments in some of the areas identified as priority. These form the basis for a long-term, forward-looking Africa policy.

## DISCUSSION

### According 'top' priority

Africa's importance to India as a development partner first became visible with the decision to enter into a structured engagement with African countries under the framework of India Africa Forum Summit (IAFS). Three editions have been held so far—in 2008, 2011, 2015—and with the next edition (IAFS-IV) slated to be held in 2020. In recent years, the African continent has been accorded top priority in Indian foreign and economic policy; there has been an unprecedented

intensification of political engagement. From 2014 onwards, a total of 29 visits to African countries at the level of president, vice president, and prime minister have taken place. In terms of ministerial-level visits, all 54 African countries have been covered from the Indian side. From the African side, more than 32 heads of state or government have visited India in the last four years.

The Government of India in March 2018 approved the opening of 18 new Indian Missions in Africa to implement the commitments under IAFS-III over a period of four years from 2018-2021.<sup>3</sup> This will increase the number of Resident Indian Missions in Africa from 29 to 47. The first of these resident missions opened in Rwanda in July 2018. However, shortage of staff in the Ministry of External Affairs poses a serious challenge. With only around 1,000 Foreign Service officers deployed across the world, India has one of the most understaffed diplomatic corps of any major country. While opening the promised 18 new Indian Missions in Africa is indeed achievable, sticking to the timeline (2018-2021) may be a difficult task.

### **Guided by African priorities**

Four main pillars embody India's development partnership approach with Africa: capacity building and training under Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC); Lines Of Credit (LOC) or concessional loans and grant assistance; trade; and investments. In 2012, the Government of India set up the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) housed under the MEA, to govern India's outgoing development assistance. However, the DPA is yet to assume any authoritative role in defining and steering India's development partnerships. While the institutional architecture is in place, the DPA as an administrative agency has the potential to play a more definitive role.

From being the fourth-largest investor in the continent, to being the largest employer, to capacity-building initiatives for local youth, India is continuously working on developing its multi-dimensional relationship with Africa. While providing LOCs through EXIM Bank to African countries, the selection of projects and method of implementation are arrived at through a consultative process, keeping in mind local requirements and sentiments. Based on their own needs and priorities, African governments select projects that will receive the LOCs. This entire process is non-conditional and aims to enhance the developmental process in the host country. It draws on Indian experiences while enhancing Indian presence in Africa as a partner in development. Indeed, the LOCs extended by the Indian government to Africa have been instrumental in deepening bilateral partnerships. Overall, India has provided 181 LOCs to 41 African countries for a total of US\$11 billion, which represents 42 percent of the total amount of LOCs offered by India through EXIM Bank.<sup>4</sup>

It is also useful to note that many small countries, especially in Francophone West Africa, lack the necessary capacity to complete the heavy paperwork required for identifying projects and sectors in which assistance is needed. There are also very few economists in these small countries who can do these types of work. Therefore, the Indian government is looking to work with African countries by building and developing their capacities for identifying projects that will receive EXIM Bank-backed LOCs. This includes conducting feasibility studies, and estimating the cost of projects.

The biggest challenge for Indian LOC-funded initiatives in Africa is ensuring effective and timely implementation of projects, and ensuring that there is no pilferage of funds. The Joint Monitoring Mechanism with African Union, as promised by PM Modi in 2015, is crucial for improving India's delivery mechanism. If Indian project

implementation is not seriously monitored, Indian LOCs will remain on paper even when the fourth edition of IAFS is held in 2020.

### **Open markets and supporting industries to invest**

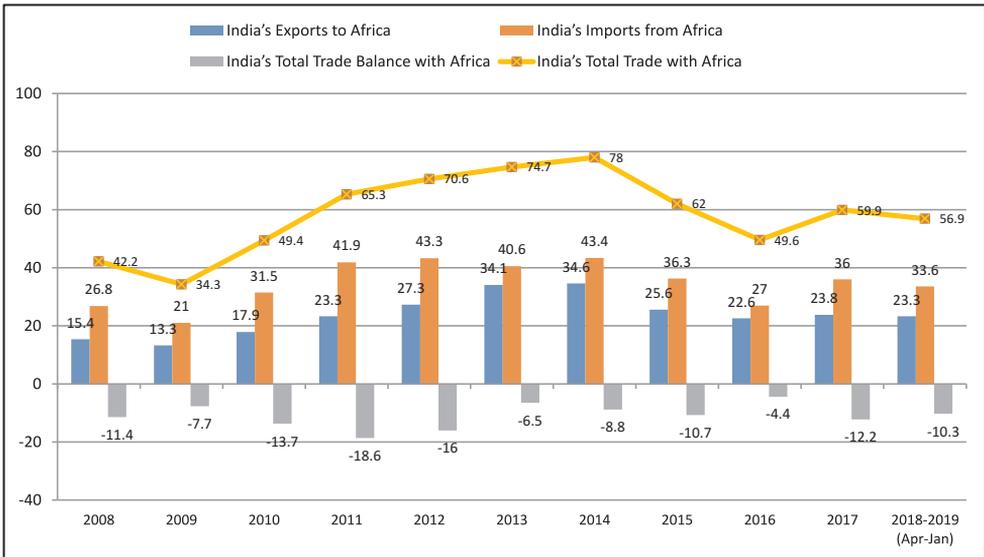
India's trade with Africa in 2017-2018 was pegged at US\$62.66 billion, reflecting an increase of nearly 22 percent over the previous year, and cumulative investments in Africa amount to US\$54 billion, thus making India the fourth-largest investor in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

While both are becoming key trade and investment partners, undoubtedly there remains great uncharted potential. The goal is to scale up bilateral trade volume to US\$150 billion and double Indian investments in Africa to US\$100 billion in the next few years.<sup>6</sup> While it is possible to achieve these stated projections, assessments must remain objective. A more realistic target would be to increase the bilateral trade volume to US\$100 billion and Indian investments in Africa to US\$75 billion in the years to come.

Indian initiatives like Focus Africa (2002), Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme (DFTP) for Least Developing Countries (2008), and the institution IAFS and private-led conclaves like Confederation of Indian Industries-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership have succeeded in lifting bilateral trade and investments to new heights. Graph 1 shows that bilateral trade has grown from a mere US\$7.2 billion in 2001 to peak at US\$78 billion 2014, before falling to US\$59.9 billion in 2017. The decline in trade after 2014 was mainly “due to the effect of plummeting commodity prices and slowdown in global economic activity.”<sup>7</sup>

Various African countries have also benefitted from India's DFTP scheme. Only 26 out of 33 African Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are eligible to participate in this scheme. Under the scheme, “duty-free

**Graph 1: Trends in India-Africa Trade (US\$ bn)**



Source: Authors' calculations based on Department of Commerce, Import Export Data Bank

access is granted to LDCs on their exports to India for 96 percent of the tariff lines, with an extra 2.2 percent subject to preferential duties, leaving 1.8 percent of product lines i.e. ninety seven products, without any duty concession.”<sup>8</sup> But among these items on the exclusion list, products such as fruits and vegetables, cashew nuts, coffee, tea, spices, wine and spirits, and tobacco are strategic for Africa. Therefore, in order to stimulate more exports from African countries, India should look to implement a 100-percent duty free tariff preference, which will include products that African countries usually export. There are three primary constraints to Africa-India trade:

- *Limited access to trade finance* – Lack of proper financing mechanisms and limited access to trade-related project finance has been exacerbated by a stringent regulatory environment, resulting in the withdrawal of many international banks from Africa’s trade finance space. This has contributed to limited trade expansion with the rest of the world, including India.

- *Transport and logistics costs* – High shipping costs and high cost of insurance in exports to African countries have led many Indian exporters to sell on a ‘free on-board’ basis rather than ‘on-delivery’ basis. Given the high transaction costs and risk perceptions attached, Indian exporters sometimes show tendencies to become risk averse. Therefore, lowering transaction costs is crucial for increasing India-Africa trade.
- *Limited market information and knowledge* – The knowledge asymmetry created due to the lack of proper dissemination of information, and the incomplete understanding that India and Africa have about each other’s markets creates major hurdles. It is necessary to create straightforward regulations, develop basic infrastructure, generate greater political will, and address domestic leakages, to create the correct environment for reducing investment risks.

In terms of commodity patterns, India has traditionally exported manufactured products to and imported raw materials from Africa. India has a negative trade balance with Africa due to its high demand for oil (petroleum and crude) and natural resources. Therefore, India must expand and diversify its import basket to include both primary and manufactured goods. The biggest question is whether there is a demand for African manufactured products in India.

In terms of Africa’s export potential to Indian markets, according to an Afreximbank and EXIM India (2018) report, nuts (cashew nuts) have the greatest export potential, followed by ferrous metals, wood and vegetable materials, and pulses.<sup>9</sup> Other items include industrial products and manufactured goods such as fertilisers, chemicals, plastics, and leather products.

Also, during his address at the 14<sup>th</sup> CII Exim India Africa Conclave, India’s Minister for Commerce and Industry and Aviation, Suresh

Prabhu made a pitch for India and Africa to work together towards entering into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) or a Preferential Trade Agreement to strengthen their economic relationship. The proposed FTA aims to help increase Africa's share in the global market.

On the investments front, the Indian government supports the increasing investment in Africa, and extends support to all African nations to process natural resources in Africa itself. With a steady annual growth rate of over seven percent and transformative taxation reforms in place like the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST), India has emerged as a transparent and integrated market with greater ease of doing business. Such domestic reforms at home have been complemented with initiatives to boost Indian investments in African countries. It is crucial for India to enter into Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (BIPA) with major African countries to encourage investments.

### **Improving Africa's agriculture**

There is great potential for stepping up India-Africa collaboration in the agriculture sector, given the complementary sectoral priorities and similarity of roles in evolving global food markets. Although they are at different stages of development, maturity, and transformation levels, there are ample opportunities for mutual learning. The rich and valuable experience that India has acquired over the last 40 years (after the Green Revolution), and its Triple 'A' (appropriate, adaptable, and affordable) technology can indeed be a game changer in assisting African smallholder farmers who depend heavily on income from agriculture.

Promoting agribusiness by launching incubation centres has been a critical component of India's agricultural partnership with Africa. In all the three editions of IAFS, agricultural development and food security

have been recurring themes. Four main types of institutions/components have been proposed:

1. Vocational Training Institutes/Incubation Centres – Under IAFS-I, 10 institutes were proposed, out of which only five are operational till date: In Nyarutarama, Gasabo district in Rwanda, January 2015; the Small Medium Enterprise and Development Institute (Smedi) Development Centre at Mponela, Malawi in 2016; In Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in February 2016; SME Incubation Center, Djibouti in 2016; and the recently launched centre in Waterfalls, Harare in Zimbabwe, in February 2019.
2. The Agri-Business Incubation (ABI) programme — This is a project under the Government of India's Ministry of Food Processing Industries. Under the ABI initiative, five Food Processing Business Incubation Centres (FPBICs) are proposed in Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Uganda, and Mali.
3. Food-testing laboratories — These are proposed to be set up in Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Gambia, Benin, and Chad.
4. Soil testing and Soil Health Card – The Indian model of soil testing provides soil quality reports and is useful for maintaining soil health and for periodically assessing soil fertility. In February 2015, PM Modi launched the Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme that provides soil health cards to farmers carrying crop-wise recommendation of fertilisers or nutrients required for farms of different soil types. If successfully replicated, the Indian soil-testing model can be a boon for African farmers and African agriculture. Already, countries like Kenya and South Africa have begun setting up soil testing laboratories.

These India-funded incubation centres in Africa have been critical for producing successful MSMEs, creating jobs, and strengthening local

and national economies. There are over 294 startups in Africa that have been helped by these incubators and this has resulted in the creation of some 4,665 jobs through startup clients in Africa.<sup>10</sup>

Pulses, of which India faces a shortage, are a major import item for India from Mozambique and Tanzania. During PM Modi's July 2016 visit, agreements were signed with Mozambique and Tanzania to incentivise local farmers to grow pulses in order to cover the growing Indian demand with a guaranteed minimum procurement price and quantity. However, surprisingly, the Indian government imposed quantitative restrictions on the import of *tur/arhar* (pigeon pea), *urad* (black matpe), *moong* (greengram), and subsequent customs duties (on chickpea, yellow pea, lentils) in August 2017. This led to widespread discontent with African smallholder farmers being denied access to the world's largest pulse market. The quantitative restrictions on pulses were removed on 31 March 2018.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, on 16 May 2018, India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) issued a trade notice regarding implementation of the India-Mozambique Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), according to which "India will import around 150,000 metric tons of Mozambique grown pigeon peas."<sup>12</sup> In the future, such issues must be avoided if India wants to forge strong, long-term agricultural partnerships with African countries.

India is also looking to take its cooperative/contract-farming model to African countries, especially in Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, and Malawi. The practice of subsistence agriculture — characterised by extremely limited capital resources and low productivity of land and labour — is a large and complex challenge for both India and Africa. It is vital that African small-scale farmers derive maximum benefit from their produce, get integrated into modern agricultural value chains, and are provided technical assistance, inputs, and assured markets.

Therefore, under the contract-farming model, India will look to identify a network of farmers with the help of local agents, and help them with seeds and technological advancements. These farmers that are encouraged to grow products like pulses should be assured of New Delhi buying their product at a rate not less than minimum support price of the same produce in India. Such an approach also helps a country stay away from the politically sensitive issue of leasing land for farming, which often leads to charges of land-grabbing.

The last few years have also witnessed a rapid surge in investments by Indian private companies in African agriculture (See Table 1 in Annexure). Business enterprises such as Jain Irrigations Systems, Ruchi Soya Industries, Vedanta Harvests Plc, Solvent Extractors' Association, Adani Group, and Mcleod Russel have emerged as big investors in various African countries. Indian industry associations, such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, are also playing an important role in bringing together sectoral experts and business leaders from Africa and India.

Karuturi Global, one of the largest investors in Ethiopia's commercial farming industry, entered into an agreement with the Ethiopian government in 2010 for leasing 100,000 hectares in Gamela region and 11,000 hectares in Oromia region. However, the Ethiopian government cancelled the lease agreement in December 2015, citing failure of adequate progress for growing and exporting sugarcane, palm oil, and rice, on Karuturi's part. The company was accused of land-grabbing and was criticised for displacing indigenous people and small farmers with little consultation and compensation. In the future, Indian investors in African countries need to ensure that human rights and livelihoods of local populations are respected.

## Peacekeeping, Defence and Security Cooperation

Peace and security entails not just traditional or hard notions of security connected to military strength and protection from external threats, but also non-traditional threats such as food security, energy security, and immigration. For India and African countries, peace and security are intrinsically linked to development.

Historically, India has participated in nearly all peacekeeping operations in Africa (See Table 2 and 3 in Annexure). Today, “over 6,000 Indians currently serve in five peacekeeping operations in Africa wearing blue helmets working to ensure a future of peace for Africans.”<sup>13</sup> The deployment of the all-Female Police Unit of the United Nations (UN) in Liberia in February 2016 was a remarkable first.

While military and defence ties are neither well-entrenched nor definitive, they are in progress. Capacity building and training of African military officers in Indian institutes has long remained a cornerstone of defence ties. In practical terms, the inaugural Africa-India Field Training Exercise-2019, called AFINDEX-19, a ten-day exercise conducted from 18 March onwards at Aundh military station in Pune has been a significant development. Contingents from 17 African nations — with ten personnel from each nation — participated in the exercise aimed at planning and conduct of Humanitarian Mine Assistance and Peace Keeping Operations under chapter VII of the UN Charter.<sup>14</sup> The exercise focused on sharing best practices, team building, and tactical level operations in the conduct of UN mandated tasks — including establishment of a new mission, nuances of standing combat deployment, convoy protection, and patrolling aspects.

There has also been an increased presence of African delegations at Indian defence exhibitions such as Defence Expo and Aero India in

recent years, which indicates African countries' growing desire to diversify and find alternative partners for their arms imports. Countries with sufficient capacity to manufacture arms and ammunitions, like South Africa, Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, and Morocco, can be important partners under the 'Make in India' initiative. Following the recent lifting of the ban on 'Denel' — a South African local manufacturer of defence products and solutions — opportunities for various joint ventures can now be explored.

### **Open and Free Oceans**

India aims to enhance cooperation with African countries in order to keep the oceans open and free for the benefit of all nations. Indeed, the world needs cooperation, rather than competition in the eastern shores of Africa and the Eastern Indian Ocean. To this end, complementarities can be drawn between Indian Navy's 2015 Maritime Strategy document and the African Union's 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy (AIMS 2050). Complemented by PM Modi's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and SAGARMALA (port development) initiatives, the AAGC (Asia Africa Growth Corridor), with Africa being an equal partner, can potentially be a game-changer in the Indian Ocean Region.

Naval cooperation continues to grow strong with regular port visits, transfer of hardware and logistical support, naval intelligence, and patrolling of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) being undertaken. In December 2018, an Information Fusion Center, based in Gurugram in India's National Capital Region, was launched. It will help to track and monitor shipping traffic in the Indian Ocean, coordinate incident responses, and share submarine safety information.

The decision to 'jointly develop' naval facilities in Assumption and Agalega Island, off the coast of Seychelles and Mauritius respectively,

has helped to increase the Indian Navy's presence in the Indian Ocean, particularly in the Western Indian Ocean region. The Assumption Island deal became embroiled in Seychelles' domestic politics where a combined opposition, environmentalists and local population raised concerns. Despite this, there is no doubt that India's credentials as an established democracy and its non-interference in Seychelles domestic affairs was well appreciated by Seychelles. If President Faure's coalition is able to secure majority in National Assembly, the Assumption Island agreement will be ratified and implemented.

Addressing non-traditional threats in the Indian Ocean Region is one of the Indian Navy's most prominent roles. Higher incidences of natural disasters and regional instabilities in the past decade have necessitated increased deployment of Indian Navy for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) operations. While African countries have been significant beneficiaries of Indian Navy's HA/DR missions, the latest example came in the aftermath of 'Cyclone Idai', a category 4 tropical storm which made landfall in the port city of Beira, Mozambique, in early hours of 15 March 2019, causing havoc, destruction, and resulting in hundreds of deaths and displacements. Fortunately, three Indian Navy vessels — INS Sujatha, INS Shardul, and INS Sarathi — operating in the region, were immediately diverted to render assistance. The Indian Navy was the 'first responder' to the disaster.<sup>15</sup> Upon reaching, Indian naval crew deployed their boats and helicopters, and rescued many stranded people, many of them in Buzi Island, which is cut off from the mainland. A makeshift kitchen was set up to provide meals for rescue workers, while doctors attended to casualties in medical camps. A fourth ship — INS Magar — was also sent in order to sustain the rescue efforts. The swiftness with which Indian Navy responded is a testament to its operational readiness in ocean waters.

## **Terrorism**

India and Africa both recognise that terrorism poses the single biggest threat to humanity and development. Both have been victims of and are susceptible to radical terrorism and religious extremism from outfits such as Boko Haram, Al Shabaab, Jaamat al Dawa, and al-Qaeda, among others. To tackle the scourge of terrorism and maintain peace and harmony India has, in the past, and continues to deploy troops and equipment in various African countries. Over the years, India has provided training of African military personnel at various Indian institutes such as the Indian Military Academy, Defence Staff College, and the National Defence College. India has also conducted training courses at the Centre for UN Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in New Delhi, and at other Peacekeeping Training Centres in Africa dedicated for the training of trainers from upcoming Troop Contributing Countries (TCC) in Africa.

Although India supports the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF), the ASF has not been deployed since its establishment in 2003. Lack of political assistance from African states has been the biggest hurdle.<sup>16</sup> However, some progress has been made in getting the ASF operational with the inauguration of the first ASF continental logistics base in Douala, Cameroon, on 5 January 2018. India and Africa also want the international community to urgently work towards finalising and adopting the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism by the UN General Assembly.

## **Cyber Security and Digital Revolution**

India, Africa, and the rest of the world is facing new challenges due to development of new technologies. Cyber security is thus a vital component of digital infrastructure. So far, no universal principles have

evolved. Instead of waiting for the developed West to present solutions, India and Africa should take the initiative to come forward with practical solutions which are contextual to the two geographies. As a beginning, India has already signed MoUs/joint statements with six African countries on the subject — i.e., Morocco, Egypt, Seychelles, South Africa, Kenya, and Mauritius.

The best example of India's digital cooperation with Africa is the Pan African e-Network (PAeN) project on tele-education and tele-medicine, launched in 2004. Under this initiative, Indian universities and specialist hospitals are connected to educational and hospital centres in African countries through seamless and integrated satellite, fibre optics and wireless networks. The network is operational in 48 African countries with its hub located in Dakar, Senegal. In September 2018, India's Ministry of External Affairs launched a new network project – e-VidyaBharati and e-Arogya Bharati (e-VBAB). The e-VBAB project is different from the earlier PAeN project. While the PAeN project operated on satellite-based technology, the e-VBAB will establish two separate web-based portals – one each for tele-education and tele-medicine.

Although Africa remains geographically divided, there is immense potential to unify the continent through digital technology. In recent years, African countries in general, and sub-Saharan African countries in particular, have witnessed a boom in mobile phone usage.<sup>17</sup> This has helped facilitate increased financial inclusion, which in turn has resulted in spread of e-commerce in Africa. Digitisation has revolutionised the retail payments system and the payments infrastructure in Africa.

Out of the many African success stories, one is the 'M-Pesa', launched in Kenya in 2007. The service is now available to more than 30 million people spread across ten African countries.<sup>18</sup> Another initiative

is the Nigeria-based 'Jumia' group, founded in 2012, which employs over 3,000 people and is considered to be Africa's best-funded e-Commerce startup. Another initiative is Ghana's national identity card, the 'Ghana Card'. Although parallels can be drawn between Ghana Card and India's Aadhaar card, one fundamental point of departure is that unlike India's Aadhaar card, the Ghana card is used as a national identity and confers citizenship on its holders.

In the last few years, India has also successfully launched unique digital initiatives aimed at digital transformation, including Digital India, BharatNet, Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana, RuPay, and IndiaStack. Together with a targeted approach towards skills development, if these Indian initiatives are implemented properly in African countries, their economies could benefit greatly. This could also help young Africans become more employable.

### **Addressing the challenge of Climate Change**

The adverse effects of climate change threaten to derail the gains made by decades of economic growth in India and Africa. Both have large numbers of people without access to electricity, LPG, and modern cooking energy. According to a recent report, around 600 million people lack access to electricity in Africa.<sup>19</sup> In sub-Saharan Africa, the household electrification rate was 42 percent in 2016 — the lowest in the world.<sup>20</sup> Such low levels are also prevalent in certain Indian states like Bihar, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh. Also, the widespread practice of subsistence agriculture makes farmers in India susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities acknowledges the differing responsibilities

and different capabilities of individual countries in addressing climate change. While the common responsibilities are reflected in the Nationally Determined Contributions of all parties, both India and African countries believe that differentiation in responsibilities should also be reflected. One point of contention between developed and developing countries is finance. Developed nations are required to provide financial resources to assist developing countries for mitigation and adaptation. Both India and African countries fall under the category of 'pre-2020' as both signed the Paris agreement on 22 April 2016. In order to achieve the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Paris Agreement, they must fight together.

One core dimension of India and Africa's climate change agenda is promoting green technology. Both commitments to climate action are reflected in India's SDG commitments and Africa's Agenda 2063. The most prominent example of the India-Africa sustainable development partnership is reflected through the India and France-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) under which India has pledged a concessional credit line of \$2 billion to Africa over five years for the implementation of off-grid solar energy projects.<sup>21</sup> One striking feature has been the sheer magnitude of African participation in the ISA. Out of the 48 countries that have signed and ratified the ISA Framework Agreement, 25 countries are from the African continent.<sup>22</sup> While providing credit for solar projects is a good start, simply handing out solar panels, lanterns, and investing in solar projects is not a sustainable idea. India needs to place greater focus on adaptation, sharing of knowledge, training, and institution building. However, one fundamental problem with African countries is that state/government capacity to intervene, transform, and effect change is often very low, as compared to India. African countries should try to demonstrate India's capability in this regard.

Also, the issue of transfer of technology for climate change must be taken into account. In terms of purchasing power parity, India has an annual Research and Development (R&D) budget of US\$ 15 billion.<sup>23</sup> A good portion of this budget is used in the India-Africa Science and Technology initiative under which the Indian Department of Science and Technology provides technical assistance to African institutions engaged in R&D by sharing technological know-how. On the African end, the African Climate Technology Centre, co-created by the African Development Bank is spearheading climate change research projects across the continent. However, there are various barriers to technology transfer such as inadequate knowledge regarding technological alternatives, inability to identify the best-suited technology, and limited access to finance. Both India and Africa needs to address these barriers and develop a specific strategy to utilise this opportunity to effectively collaborate on technology transfer to address the problems of climate change.

Despite these barriers to transfer of technology, it is important to note that private companies tend to hold critical technologies. Funds are required to better implement existing projects in a timely manner. Funds are neither aid nor grants. Solar projects under the ISA and India's Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Park based in Madhya Pradesh, which operate under the Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP) fund, have been successful due to low tariffs as a result of low capital due to the financial assistance provided by such funds. Developing countries need to partner with developed countries by better utilising the funds provided by the latter. India already has sufficient knowledge about designing contracts and setting up projects. Instead of direct transfer of technology, India can best assist African countries by providing technical assistance and administrative and managerial skills.

## Just, Representative, Democratic Global Order

India and Africa have a long history of working together by coordinating their views and efforts in institutions of global governance and multilateral forums, in order to achieve greater autonomy and ensure that the agenda of the 'global South' is prioritised. While the institutions of global governance that were created after the Second World War, like the UN, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organisation, have served well, they have adapted to the changing global scenario and failed to adequately represent the voice of the developing world. India — the world's largest democracy representing one-sixth of humanity, and Africa — with more than a quarter of UN members, cannot be kept out of the decision-making table. Developing countries must be adequately represented and should have a genuine voice in institutions of global governance.

Democratic reforms in global institutions are essential. This is why India and Africa have voiced their support for expanding both permanent and non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. African countries insist on having two permanent seats in the reformed Security Council. There are, however, many contenders.

India believes that while a rules-based multilateral international order is essential, it must be reformed at the same time. PM Modi has advocated a 'Reformed Multilateralism' that calls for constructive reforms of the multilateral fora.

Also, as the largest practicing democracy in the world, India has played a crucial role in strengthening electoral mechanisms and the process of elected government at national level in African countries. With over 60 years' experience of holding credible, effective and transparent elections, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has continuously engaged and partnered with African countries in

generating innovative ideas and practices to respond to the emerging challenges in election management. It has signed MoUs with Election Management Bodies of four African countries: South Africa, Libya, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mauritius. The Election Commission of India also sends study/observation missions to various African countries like Tanzania, Egypt, and Lesotho. A number of exchange visits are conducted regularly. Under the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) established in 2011, the ECI provides training courses for national stakeholders, capacity building workshops, seminars, and round-tables for international participants. ECI also provides technical assistance to countries such as Egypt and Namibia. In 2014, Namibia became the first African country to use Electronic Voting Machines made in India. An Indian company – Mysore Paints & Varnish Ltd. – has been exporting 'voter's ink' (also known as 'indelible ink') to several African countries including South Africa, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, and Sierra Leone.<sup>24</sup> These countries use this ink for conducting their own elections.

## CONCLUSION

The declaration of the Ten Guiding Principles for India-Africa engagement is a welcome step in creating a concrete framework for India's relations with Africa. The first imperative is for the Indian government to publicise these principles. They should be reiterated in major speeches and articulations on India's engagement with Africa.

The work, however, should not stop in merely articulating the principles. India should set out to develop an Action Plan for each of the principles. In a bid to explore new markets, India is constantly engaging with Africa where there is a huge potential to boost exports. A comprehensive Action Plan detailing the strategy for each of the ten principles will go a long way in boosting two-way trade and investments,

which have yet to reach their full potential. The Action Plan could be announced next year at the IAFS-IV, preferably after consultations with the Africans. An Action Plan based on each of the ten principles will help to reflect the changes in nuances of the engagement, and will help to bridge the gap between Indian commitments and implementation — be it providing LOCs for implementing projects, offering scholarships to African students, or providing opportunities to African entrepreneurs and students under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme.

India and Africa must also look to sign more legal frameworks to improve economic engagements like BIPA and FTAs. To generate and incubate more ideas, both India and Africa should look to engage with one another in more programmes and platforms at the Track I and Track II levels.

There should also be greater connectivity and people-to-people contact, which is vital for growth of relations. For example, random attacks on African nationals in India have been a cause for concern; India should have a zero-tolerance policy for such incidents. Indeed, as India continues to promote itself as a multicultural, progressive, and democratic country, it is necessary to establish effective institutional mechanisms for the quick redressal of grievances of foreign nationals.

Another avenue for engagement is the academe. At present, there are very few scholarly seminars on Africa and India-Africa engagement being organised on both sides. This gap must be addressed, given that greater contacts between universities and think tanks will go a long way in increasing mutual awareness. 

## ANNEXURE

**Table 1: Select Indian Companies having invested in African Agriculture**

Country	Indian Company	Details
Ethiopia	Karuturi Agro Products Plc	Acquired 100,000 ha in the Jakao and Itang districts of Gambela region for growing palm, with conditional option to acquire another 200,000 ha
Rwanda	Mcleod Russel	Owens five tea estates in Uganda and two estates in Rwanda
Ethiopia	Ruchi Soya Industries	Acquired 25 year lease for soybean and processing unit on 152,649 ha in Gambela and Benishangul Gumaz States
Ethiopia	Chadha Agro Plc	Acquired up to 100,000 ha in Guji zone in Oromia Regional State for a sugar development project
Gabon	Olam International	Acquired 30,000 ha in Gabon for palm oil
Rwanda and Uganda	Jay Shree Tea & Industries	Acquired two tea plantations in Rwanda and one in Uganda
DRC and Ethiopia	ACIL Cotton Industries	Plans to invest nearly \$15 million (Rs. 68 crore) for land leases to start contract farming pulses and coffee
Ethiopia	Neha International	Leased land in Oromia region – in Holetta for floriculture and near Bako for rice, maize, oilseeds, and pulses
Mozambique	Nirmal Seeds Mozambique	Leased or purchased 2,000 ha of land in 2013
Madagascar	Varun International	Varun Agriculture Sari leased or purchased 232,000 ha to grow rice, corn, and pulses

Ethiopia	Sannati Agro Farm Enterprise Pv. Ltd.	Acquired 25 years lease on 10,000 ha in Dimi District, Gambela region, for cultivation of rice, pulses, and cereals
Ethiopia	Vedanta Harvests Plc	Acquired a 50 year lease for 5,000 ha in the Gambela region for a tea and spice plantation

Source: "Feed Africa: Achieving Progress through Partnership," Export-Import Bank of India, Working Paper 63<sup>25</sup>

**Table 2: Past Indian Peacekeeping Missions in African countries**

Country/s'	Years	Details
Democratic Republic of Congo (ONUC)	1960 - 1964	Two infantry brigades comprising of 467 officers, 401 JCOs, and 11354 participated and conducted operations.
Mozambique (ONUMOZ)	1992 - 1994	Two Engineer Companies HQ company, logistics company, staff officers, and military observers were provided. In all 1083 all ranks participated.
Somalia (UNITAF and UNOSOM II)	1993 - 1994	Indian Army deployed a Brigade Group comprising of 5000 all ranks, and the Indian Navy deployed 4 battleships.

Rwanda (UNAMIR)	1994 - 1996	An Infantry Battalion group, a signal company, and engineer company, staff officers and military observers were provided. Total of 956 all ranks took part.
Angola (UNAVEM)	1989 - 1999	Provided a Deputy Force Commander, an Infantry Battalion group and a total of 1014 all ranks took part. India contributed 10 MILOBS for UNAVEM-I, 25 for UNAVEM-II, and 20 MILOBS, and 30 senior NCOs for UNAVEM-III.
Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)	1999 - 2001	Two Infantry Battalion groups, two engineer companies, Quick reaction company, Attack helicopter unit, medical unit, and logistic support.
Ethiopia-Eritrea (UNMEE)	2006 - 2008	One Infantry Battalion group, one construction engineer company, and one force reserve company, apart from staffing at various HQs and MILOBS.

Source: "India and United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding" [www.pminewyork.gov.in](http://www.pminewyork.gov.in)<sup>26</sup>

**Table 3: Current Indian Peacekeeping Missions in Africa**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Details</b>
Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC/MONUSCO)	Since January 2005	India deployed an augmented Infantry Brigade Group (4 Infantry Battalions) with level-III hospital, a large number of MILOBs & SOs and two Formed Police Unit (FPU). MONUSCO's new mandate Resolution 2093 (2013), has been implemented with an Intervention Brigade provided by AU, under UN command.
Sudan and South Sudan (UNMIS/UNMISS)	Since April 2005	Two Infantry Battalion Groups, sector HQ, engineer company, signal company, level-II hospital, and large number of MILOBs and SOs.
Cote D'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Since February 2017	The mission is supported by Indian SOs and MILOBs since its inception.
Liberia (UNMIL)	Since April 2007	India has been contributing both male and female FPUs ex CRPF/RAF in Liberia.

Source: "India and United Nations Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding" [www.pminewyork.gov.in](http://www.pminewyork.gov.in)<sup>27</sup>

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