

New Economic Partnership for Africa's development

[NEPAD]

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INDIA STATEMENT

First Secretary D.C. Manjunath
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Mr. President,

We are meeting at a time of hope for multilateralism. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is underway and the Paris Agreement on climate change will enter into force next month. Also Africa has separately commenced the first phase of implementation of its own Agenda 2063 that builds on the core priorities of NEPAD that came into being 15 years ago. International collaboration remains crucial in assisting Africa move towards an effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Africa has made rapid strides in recent years. Its overall economic output has grown. Poverty rates have fallen. Life expectancy has increased. Africa is today a 'young' continent. Rates of infant and maternal mortality have fallen. Primary school enrolment including for girls has increased. Malnutrition has been reduced and access to safe drinking water has increased. HIV infection and prevalence rates have been reversed. FDI in sectors such as mining has increased in recent years. Expanding mobile connectivity is leading to innovative money transfers.

We appreciate the organization of the ongoing Africa week from 13-17 October, providing a good opportunity to engage the UN System entities on ways to further strengthen the institutional partnership towards effective implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. We congratulate the office of USG and Special Adviser on Africa for successfully channelizing the attention of International Community.

The continuing challenges to development in Africa are well studied. Difficulties surrounding agriculture productivity, skill development, manufacturing capability, the current low commodity prices and slow economic growth, lack of diversification of economies, poor connectivity and infrastructure, limited regional integration and rapid unplanned urbanisation remain some of the critical constraints. Chronic armed conflicts for control over resources in certain regions of Africa also impede progress. The reliance on ODA continues to be high despite their declining levels from traditional donors, although collaboration with non traditional donors

is growing. There is wide economic disparity across the African continent. While Africa's combined GDP is US\$ 2.4 trillion, the top ten economies of Africa account for nearly US\$ 2 trillion. 34 Countries have GDP of less than US\$ 15 billion each and around 10 countries have GDP of less than US\$ 2 billion each. Africa's trade is only 3% of the global figure, and intra-Africa trade is a mere 12% of this.

Mr. President,

India and Africa represent one third of humanity. Our similar and shared experiences and struggles translate into similar scale of challenges and concerns both at the level of national priorities and collective interests in an increasingly globalised world.

India and Africa worked together to develop a common understanding of our core priorities for an inclusive economic growth to eradicate poverty and allocate adequate resources in the debate on SDGs, Financing for Development and the 2030 Agenda. There are great synergies between Africa's Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda and the focused priorities being pursued by the Government of India. The India-Africa Strategic Partnership seeks to address many of the challenges that the African Union and our African partners have identified. The core strengths of our development partnership are capacity building, mobilizing financial support and sharing of technical expertise. It complements our rapidly growing trade and investment links.

We focus on programmes for poverty eradication; provision of affordable quality healthcare and education, generating employment opportunities; building access to modern and renewable energy services, infrastructure and connectivity between resources and markets. Today Africa and India represent young and dynamic societies and economies that are intensifying their collaboration to achieve greater prosperity for their peoples.

Building on our bilateral engagements, India commenced closer interaction with Africa's regional communities over the past three decades. Since the First India-Africa Forum Summit of 2008, more than 40,000 Indian scholarships have been utilized by our African friends at more than 300 different training programmes at 40 specialised institutions in a number of areas including : IT, renewable energy, agriculture, marine & aeronautical engineering, marine hydrography, SME entrepreneurship, rural development, parliamentary affairs, logistics and management, climate change adaptation, disaster management, cyber security, forensic sciences, and defence and security.

In the last decade, almost US\$ 9 billion in concessional credit was approved for nearly 140 projects in more than 40 African countries by India, with special emphasis on LDCs and SIDS partners. The areas include power generation and distribution, water supply and irrigation, agriculture, light manufacturing, renewable energy, construction of infrastructure etc. At the Third India-Africa Forum Summit held last October, India offered an additional US\$ 10 billion in concessional credit at more attractive terms, a further 50,000 scholarships and grants-in-aid of US\$ 600 million over the next five years.

India was among the first emerging economies to offer a duty-free market access scheme for LDCs. In 2014 this unilateral scheme was further expanded and now extends to 34 African countries to increase their exports to India. The Africa-India trade multiplied 20 times in the last 15 years and doubled in the last five years to reach nearly US\$ 72 billion last year making India the 4th largest trading partner for Africa. Indian FDI in Africa has also surged, with major investments having taken place in the telecommunications, IT, energy, engineering, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and automobile sectors. Some Indian financial institutions and infrastructure companies have also collaborated with the African Development Bank to facilitate project development efforts.

India has actively worked with international partners and the UN in collectively addressing the challenges posed by pandemics including HIV/AIDS and Ebola in Africa, including through affordable quality generic medicines. Our flagship programmes of tele-medicine and tele-education have helped expand access to education and health to people in remote areas.

India's experience of using IT tools for wide-ranging e-governance aspects for greater reach, transparency, accountability and financial inclusion, including through a Unique ID for over 1 billion people can be of interest in the African context.

India has also offered to assist Africa in the use of space technology for multiple development uses including crop inventory, drought assessment & monitoring, water resources management, forest & environment, locust early warning, infrastructure development and disaster management. These specialised real-time IT and space technology solutions can greatly assist governments in planning and monitoring of the various development projects leading to the implementation of the SDGs.

Besides the wide-ranging development and humanitarian assistance efforts, India also partners Africa in promoting peace and security through its longstanding contribution to peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. Recent initiatives have also included trilateral cooperation along with the US to offer training for Africa in UN peacekeeping.

Mr. President,

The longstanding India-Africa partnership is based on solidarity and mutual respect and is neither prescriptive nor exploitative. It represents south-south cooperation in all its dimensions, one that continues to contribute to the implementation of 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Thank you.
