

STATEMENT BY HON'BLE MS. PRENEET KAUR, MINISTER OF STATE FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, AT THE JOINT DEBATE IN UNGA UNDER AGENDA
ITEM 63 (a) AND (b) AND 13 ON NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S
DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT; CAUSES OF CONFLICT
AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA; REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL
(A/68/222 AND A/68/220-S/2013/475); AND 2001 - 2010 DECADE TO ROLL
BACK MALARIA IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
ON OCTOBER 25, 2013

**Your Excellency, President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me first of all congratulate H.E. Mr. John Ashe, on his election to the presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish him every success and assure him of our fullest co-operation.



I am honoured to address today's Joint Debate on the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the promotion of peace and development in Africa, including in its efforts to fight malaria.

Allow me to also convey our sincerest appreciation to the Secretary General for his timely and extremely informative report on the agenda items under discussion today.

Epitomising the spirit of *Pan Africanism*, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), with its strong emphasis on infrastructure, agriculture and governance, is indeed firmly on course in realising the vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful African continent.

Madam President,

India applauds the progress achieved by Africa in the implementation of NEPAD priorities over the last ten years through multi sectoral initiatives in agriculture, infrastructure, health, education, science, information technology and environment.

However, despite these positive strides, serious challenges remain to be addressed before the African continent can achieve all round development and prosperity. Extreme poverty, hunger, lack of adequate nutrition, conflicts and other malaises continue to shackle the tremendous potential of the African people.

It is therefore important to acknowledge that addressing Africa's development needs and challenges requires an unwavering commitment backed by resolute action, not only from within Africa, but equally important, from outside the continent.

As has been pointed in Secretary General's report, total ODA to Africa has further declined from \$ 133.7 billion in 2011 to \$ 125.9 billion in 2012.

The report also points out that despite a strong average growth of 6.6% in 2012, it has not been inclusive or sustainable. Persistently high unemployment threatens to undermine the recent gains made towards social development and derail the progress towards achievement of the MDGs.

It is therefore imperative that the international community remains resolute in its support for Africa through sustained cooperation including transfer of technology, resources and an enabling international environment and immediately address this gaping gap between promise and delivery on pledged commitments.

In these times of political uncertainty and economic meltdown, it is more incumbent than ever for the continent's development partners to stay the course and help African countries achieve their developmental goals.

Madam President,

The India-Africa partnership is based on firm historical foundations, which over the decades, has grown into one of the most productive and durable partnerships.

For the people of India, Africa is the land of awakening of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi and our ties continue to be rooted in our history of solidarity against colonialism and apartheid.

Our engagement with Africa has come a long way since then and today we have built a new template for partnership in the form of the India-Africa Forum Summit. This partnership is based on mutual respect, guided by the vision and priorities of our African brothers and sisters.

India and Africa are committed to pursue the ideals of democratic governance in multicultural linguistic societies and inclusive development for the benefit of their peoples.

India and African Union launched a Plan of Action of Enhanced Framework of Cooperation on 6th September 2013 in New Delhi.

India is committed to assist Africa including in human resources and institutional capacity building, education, science & technology, agricultural productivity and food security, industrial growth, including small & medium enterprises, health sector, infrastructure and ICT.

These activities are being implemented directly with Member States in close consultation with Regional Economic Communities, African Union Commission and NEPAD Agency. India is also extending concession finance to develop social and economic infrastructure. Over the last decade, 170 Lines of Credit for an amount of US\$ 9.7 billion have been allocated, of which US\$ 5.8 billion was allocated for African countries.

There has been a spectacular increase in India-Africa trade over the last two decades. India-Africa trade has grown from a small US \$ 967 million in 1991 to over US \$ 70 billion in 2012. The target of US \$ 90 billion has been set for 2015. There is significant scope in enhancing and diversifying it with coordinated and sustained efforts.

India also actively supports African initiatives for peace and security in the continent. In the pursuit of this commitment, more than 6,500 Indian soldiers support UN Peacekeeping Operations in various parts of Africa.

There is a lot that we can learn from each other's development experiences. We have redirected our age-old bonds of friendship to respond to the contemporary aspirations of our peoples and build a partnership which is increasingly being cited as the '*beacon of South South cooperation*'.

The IBSA Fund, which recently celebrated a Special Event on the occasion of International Day of South South Cooperation here at the UN in New York on 12 September, has already completed several successful projects in Burundi, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau and Sierra Leone for strengthening of infrastructure and capacity building.

Madam President,

Our partnership with Africa has the potential to strengthen global governance systems and democratise multilateral institutions. It is indeed an irony and a continuing question on the credibility of the Security Council's representativeness to not have the whole continent of Africa represented in the permanent category of membership, inspite of nearly 75 percent of its work being focussed on Africa alone!

We along with our African friends, continue to impress upon the need for urgent reforms of the Security Council and addressing historical injustices by making it reflective of contemporary realities.

The year 2015, which marks the 70th anniversary for the United Nations and 10 years following the 2005 World Summit mandate by our Heads of States and Governments to achieve early reforms, would be a befitting occasion to deliver concrete outcomes on our pledged commitment to reforming institutions of global governance.

I thank you Madam President.

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