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India-Africa Major events

India-Africa Summit

The first India-Africa summit (8th and 9th April 2008) has concluded with a pledge to work as partners to address economic and development challenges. The Summit wrapped up with the adoption of the Delhi Declaration and the Africa-India Framework for Cooperation with an aim to enhance the "true partnership" to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Delhi Declaration is a political document that covers issues of bilateral, regional and international interest to India and Africa, including their common positions on UN reforms, climate change, WTO, anti-terrorism, etc. The biggest news to come out of the summit, which included delegations from 14 African countries, was the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's announcement of tariff-free market access for products comprising 92.5% of Least Developed Countries' exports (34 of 50 LCD's are in Africa). Among other things, it includes a Post Conflict Reconstruction component, as well as a Civil Society and Good Government angle. PM Manmohan Singh described Africa as the "land of awakening" and added that the two billion people of India and Africa could set an example of "fruitful partnership." In some ways, it's fair to wonder how capable India is of delivering the goods, given the challenges it faces in developing its own civil society, infrastructure and economy. The summit wasn't without its bumps. The Congo President, Joseph Kabila, has said "Africa needs to meet fundamental needs of its population by building schools, providing housing and generating employment. Words, speeches and promises have remained mere words, we need immediate visible projects." The African Union (A.U) Chairman, Alpha Oumar Konare, said that the Indian know-how is needed in the areas such as infrastructure, health, education, science and food security. He also urged Africa to shed its image of being a "mere market for raw materials, purchased at low prices." This is yet another reflection of the fierce competition for resources and influence taking place globally and especially in Africa. America's efforts to establish AFRICOM is an attempt to keep pace with a very determined strategic push by India and China there. This summit reflects the ways in which, despite the advantages we have, the outcome of that competition is in no way pre-ordained in our favor. India, an aspirant for the permanent membership of UN Security Council, is seeking the crucial support of African countries in bringing about reforms in the world body. India and African countries agreed to "further strengthen cooperation towards early realization of a

genuine reform of the United Nations and its working methods, particularly revitalizing and enhancing the role of the General Assembly and reform and expansion of the Security Council." Though India and Africa's trade has grown to \$30 billion but still India can enhance its ties by focusing on capacity building and developing skills in agriculture, including water management, and crop diversity. India has reasonably attracted the AU attention through its experiences in development and communication. India's ONGC, BHEL, Bajaj auto rickshaws and others have already made its presence in the continent. Minister of State for External Affairs of India, Anand Sharma, while responding to the same said, "India's engagement with Africa is time-tested; it is distinct, it is different. It cannot be compared with any other country."

Strengthening Indian arms towards Africa

Ahead of the India-Africa summit in April, a three-day conclave on trade with the objective of crystallising projects by Indian companies in Africa. The largest-ever India-Africa conclave, held from March 19 to 21, discussed 131 projects worth over \$10 billion. A news conference ahead of the "The India Africa Project Partnership 2008" noted that although relegated to the margins in mainstream discourses on merchandise trade, several African countries are India's important trade partners and the summit aimed at further intensifying and diversifying that relationship. The conference focused on four main areas: technology, agriculture, human resources and energy. Many countries with long-standing ties including Nigeria, India's second largest source of imported crude petroleum; South Africa, the fourth-largest source for India's gold imports; and Morocco and Senegal, leading sources of India's global imports of inorganic chemicals, attended the meet. High Commissioner of Ghana, John Bentum Williams, felt the involvement of Indian entrepreneurs in Africa was well timed, "as Africa has a lot of potential now." Ugandan Ambassador, Nimisha Madhwani, said that Africa was a safe investment destination. Tarun Das, the Chief mentor of CII, emphasized that the conference would not only increase economic cooperation and joint partnerships, but also 'build a human bridge between India and Africa.' Africa, he said, "is the Continent of Light—that's where the sun will shine tomorrow."

India Investing Diplomatic Ties with South Africa and Brazil (IBSA)

On February 16-18, 2008, the Indian External Affairs Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, visited Brazil at the invitation of Brazilian Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim. During the visit, Mr. Mukherjee stated that India and Brazil, as two large democracies, should activate their Parliamentary Friendship Group and encourage frequent interaction between parliamentarians and democratic institutions. President of the Chamber of Deputies, Arlindo Chinaglia, informed Mr. Mukherjee that the India-Mercosur PTA was ready to be voted by a Plenary Session of the Chamber of Deputies. He reassured that the PTA, which would send a strong signal to the business communities of the two sides, would be taken up for voting in the near future. In a special gesture, Chinaglia invited the External Affairs Minister to briefly attend a Plenary Session of the Chamber of Deputies. The talks focused on ways and means of reinforcing the bilateral strategic partnership by encouraging greater interaction in diverse areas including trade and investment, science and technology, education and culture. The Indian External Affairs Minister also referred to the exciting partnership in the trilateral framework of IBSA, which brought together three large democracies from three continents with similar developmental aspirations. He added that India attached great importance to the unique group, which was engaged in unprecedented transformational diplomacy. IBSA Forum countries together hold immense assurance- a market of 1.2 billion people, a US \$ 1.2 trillion domestic market, and foreign trade of US \$ 300 billion. The Ministerial Conference reaffirmed the Rio Declaration, particularly Agenda 21, and would continue its efforts to mobilize new and additional financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies within an agreed time-frame in order to implement the outcomes of these conferences. It will strengthen co-operation and coordination, with an emphasis on multilateral negotiations and in fostering activities related to South-South Cooperation.

India and Africa in the Field of Science

This conference was held in New Delhi in November 6-7, 2007. India, as we all know is experiencing accelerated economic growth and thus is concerned about existing and potential sources of supply for meeting its requirement on a sustained basis. There is a need to expand the current primary energy supply levels by 3-4 times and electricity generation by 5-6 times in the next 25 years in order to sustain the high growth levels. Owing to the limited availability of oil and gas within our country, 70% of the energy requirements are fulfilled on hydrocarbon imports.

Therefore, the task of investing in overseas energy assets for India has become an important aspect of its economic diplomacy. The newly created Energy Security Unit in the Ministry of External Affairs bears testimony to the government's resolve to treat this as matter of urgent importance. India is increasingly looking at taking its partnership with Africa, which would be mutually beneficial to both sides. India has a natural market for Africa's rich hydrocarbon resources. Prospects for cooperation with African nations in the hydrocarbon sector have also received a boost with a surge in investments made by Indian companies in countries such as Libya, Sudan, Nigeria, Egypt and Gabon over the past few years. In this conference, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs stated that India is more than willing to share its experience and its technologies in the hydrocarbon sector with African countries in order to forge meaningful partnerships, which can respond to the challenges of development facing Indians. Closer cooperation between India and the African countries in the hydrocarbon sector would further cement and consolidate those relations and contribute significantly to forging strategic partnerships for mutual development.

Tshwane IBSA Summit Declaration

The Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh, the President of Brazil, Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and the President of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki met in Tshwane, South Africa, on 17 October 2007, for the 2nd Summit of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. The IBSA Dialogue Forum provided a strong framework for trilateral cooperation in several key sectoral areas amongst IBSA partners. They noted that IBSA also provides them an important instrument for cooperation on regional and international issues and promoting the interest. The leaders adopted the outcome of the 4th Ministerial Commission held in New Delhi on 17 July 2007. They highlighted the importance of implementing the principles adopted in the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and emphasized that capacity and institution building is a key to global sustainable development. The leaders called for an intra-IBSA trade target of US\$ 15 billion by 2010 and urged business and industry to be even more ambitious and exceed this target

The leaders welcomed and fully supported the launch of the Women's Forum, which strengthens participation of women in IBSA and recognised the fundamental contribution of women in the social, cultural and economic development of India, Brazil and South Africa.

The leaders emphasized that the reform of the Security Council is central to this process to ensure that the UN system reflects contemporary realities. They expressed their full support for a genuine reform and expansion of the Security Council, in permanent and non permanent categories of membership, with greater representation for developing countries in both. The leaders urged an agreement on innovative modalities for the development, transfer and commercialization of technologies, including clean coal technologies, at affordable costs to developing countries noting that rewards for innovators need to be balanced with common good for humankind. They also urged the international community to work in a collaborative manner for the development and deployment of renewables, biofuels and biomass, and advanced clean technologies. The leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose.

The leaders reaffirmed the need to reach a solution for the problem raised by the granting of intellectual property rights on biological resources and/or associated traditional knowledge, without due compliance with relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, such as the granting of erroneous patents or the registration of undue trademarks. They recalled the presentation in the WTO of the proposal co-sponsored, among others, by the three IBSA countries to amend the TRIPS Agreement.

Abuja Declaration on Strategic Partnership between: India and Nigeria

Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, paid an official visit to Nigeria from 14-16 October 2007 at the invitation of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The leaders of both sides reiterated the importance of ensuring socially inclusive economic growth in their countries.

Nigeria is India's largest trading partner in Africa and the potential and opportunities for substantially enhancing trade and investment between the two countries are largely untapped. Both sides agreed to significantly enhance mutually beneficial trade and investment exchanges with each other's countries in sectors such as infrastructure (including railways), agriculture, food processing, small and medium enterprises, power generation, fertilizers, ICT, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, auto-components and other sectors. In this context, the two leaders desired that the fifth meeting of the Joint Commission be held within the next few months and should draw up a detailed roadmap for this purpose.

India and Nigeria have had longstanding cooperation in defence matters. In this context, India agreed to establish two IT laboratories in the defence academies of Nigeria. Both sides also

agreed to enhance cooperation in respect of UN peacekeeping operations in which their countries have traditionally played and continue to play an important role. The Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, conveyed to President Yar'Adua that India attaches particular importance to exchanging views with the government of Nigeria not only on matters pertaining to Africa and West Africa but also on critical matters on the global agenda. During the visit the following agreements were signed such as, MoU between Foreign Service Institute and the Nigerian Foreign Service Academy, MoU between Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) and Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Protocol for Foreign Office Consultations, MoU on Defence Cooperation.

Africa Major Highlights

Bush Safari for Africa

In February 15-21, 2008 President George W Bush had a five nation tour in Africa. He visited Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia to meet with each country's head of state and to visit schools and community projects. Bush, during his trip, focused on socio and economic issues such as administrative effort to fight HIV/Aids, malaria, education and to improve economic bilateral relations with Africa countries. Health initiatives have been the cornerstone of Bush's Africa policy. Over the past five years, the United States has given U.S. \$15 billion to fight HIV/Aids. According to government statistics, the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (Pepfar) has secured anti-retroviral drugs for 1.4 million people. The Bush administration's Africa Education Initiative is providing \$600 million over eight years for basic education. Bush said in his speech that by 2010, the initiative will have distributed 15 million textbooks, trained about one million teachers, and provided scholarships to more than 500,000 young women. Of the countries Bush visited, Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda and Ghana are participants in the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), an administration initiative that seeks to provide additional funding for countries which are performing strongly. It is, however, said that this is not a conflict resolution trip. Many observers are worried about the strength of the North/South agreement and also the recent upsurge in violence in Darfur. But, conflict resolution emerged on the agenda in Rwanda, where Bush was scheduled to review peacekeepers. The United States has played an increasingly important role in diplomacy in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which borders Rwanda. But many analysts contend the trip lacks any initiatives directed at conflict resolution, just when the continent really needs it. "At a time when we are seeing a spike in very dangerous conflicts in Africa, it is striking that none of those sites are on the itinerary," said Gayle Smith, a former adviser on Africa. Bush has also announced some new steps such as-(i) Adding five investment funds supported by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). These funds will mobilize \$875 million in capital for the continent. This is in addition to \$750 million in investment capital that will be mobilized by OPIC Funds announced by the Administration last November, bringing the total to more than \$1.6 billion. (ii) Signed the largest project in the Millennium Challenge Corporation's history – a \$698 million dollar compact with Tanzania.

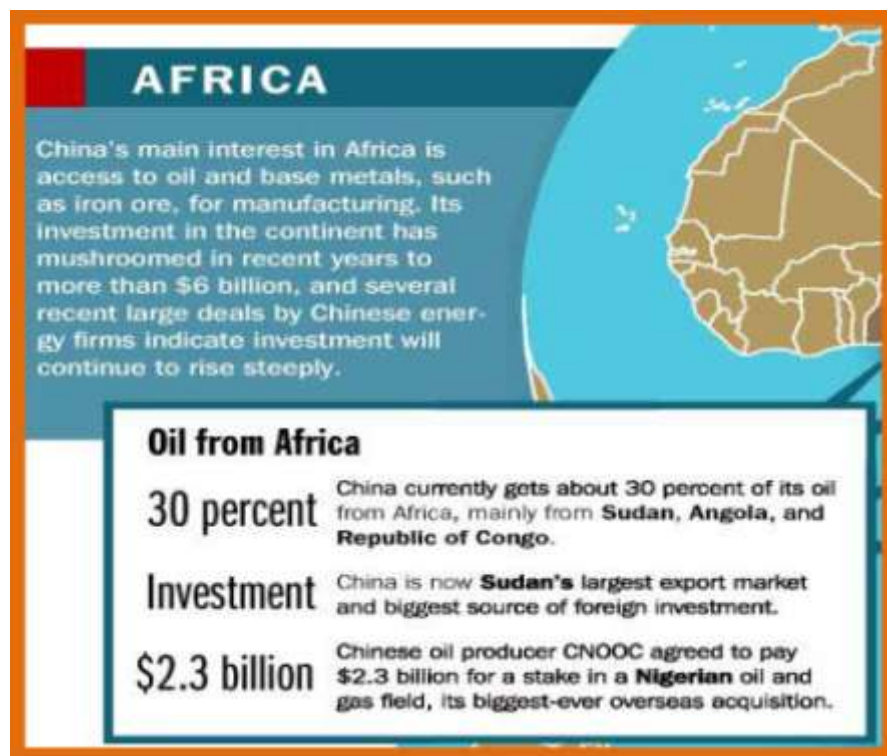
This Compact will benefit 4.8 million Tanzanians. (iii) Signed a bilateral investment treaty with Rwanda – our first such treaty in Sub-Saharan Africa in a decade. This treaty will promote investment by providing legal protections for U.S. and Rwandan investors that underscore the two countries' shared commitment to open investment and trade policies.

AFRICOM

On February 6, 2007, President Bush directed the creation of U.S. Africa Command. The decision was the culmination of a 10-year thought process within the Department of Defense (DOD) acknowledging the emerging strategic importance of Africa, and recognizing that peace and stability on the continent impacts not only Africans, but the interests of the U.S. and international community as well. Yet, the department's regional command structure did not account for Africa in a comprehensive way, with three different U.S. military headquarters maintaining relationships with African countries. The creation of U.S. Africa Command will enable DOD to better focus its resources to support and enhance existing U.S. initiatives that help African nations, the African Union, and the regional economic communities succeed. It also provides African nations and regional organizations an integrated DOD coordination point to help address security and related needs. Designers of U.S. Africa Command clearly understand the relationships between security, development and diplomacy in Africa. As a result, U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, reflects a much more integrated staff structure, one that includes significant management and staff representation by Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other U.S. government agencies involved in Africa. The command will also seek to incorporate partner nations and humanitarian organizations, from Africa and elsewhere, to work alongside the U.S. staff on common approaches to shared interest. AFRICOM will be headquartered at Kelley Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany, for the foreseeable future. The staff is examining opportunities to have a presence on the continent, in the form of administrative offices, but only if it adds value to the security assistance that the United States provides, and only in full diplomatic consultation and agreement with potential host nations. AFRICOM is still in its early planning stages. The command began initial operations in October 2007 and is still formulating mission, staffing and location options. AFRICOM is seen as a strategic move of US to strengthen its foothold in the continent and to secure its place in the new scramble for Africa. It can also be seen in relation with China's aggressive policy towards Africa.

China and Africa: A New Era of “South-South Cooperation”

Eight years after the turn of a new century, Africa finds itself courted with an intensity of interest unrivalled perhaps since the turn of the last century. China has huge oil investments in Sudan, and rights groups say its engagement there is frustrating international efforts to stop the civil war and atrocities in Darfur. Africa as a whole accounts for more than one-third of China's crude imports, with Angola its biggest source on the continent. Hu's eight-nation tour also included a visit to Sudan, where he offered an interest-free loan of ¥100 million, or \$12.9 million, for it to build a new presidential palace and wrote off up to \$70 million in Sudanese debt to China. The statistics on what China has accomplished in very little time in Africa speak eloquently of the vast scope of the world's incipient superpower's undertaking. China recorded \$40 billion in trade with Africa in 2005, a four-fold increase since 2001. In the process, it surpassed the United Kingdom to become the continent's third leading commercial partner, after the United States and France. On 3-5 November 2006, the Beijing Summit and the Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) were held in Beijing. China has taken new initiatives towards African countries recently such as-





China, South Africa to push bilateral ties to new high in 2008

China and South Africa will push their relations to a new high by holding a series of events in 2008 to mark the 10th anniversary of their diplomatic ties. Nearly 200 representatives of Chinese living in the African country met Saturday night in Johannesburg to celebrate the anniversary. They made retrospection over the opportunities brought to them by the forging of the links between the two countries. The Chinese Ambassador, Zhong Jianhua, said that they have given away money and other stuffs in donations to local people besides bringing them high-quality Chinese commodities with competitive prices.

Foreign Minister of China visited 4 African countries

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi pay formal visits to South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Ethiopia from January 7th to 11th, foreign ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu announced Wednesday. Yang's visit was arranged upon invitations by South African Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, DRC Foreign Minister Mbusa Nyamwisi, Burundian Minister of External Relations and Cooperation, Antoinette Batumubwira.

China, Malawi Establish Diplomatic Ties

China and Malawi established diplomatic relations from Dec. 28, 2007. A joint committee says the governments of China and Malawi, in conformity with the interests and desire of the two peoples, have decided to recognize each other and establish diplomatic relations between the two countries at ambassadorial level as from Dec. 28, 2007.

The Chinese government supports the Malawian government in its efforts to safeguard its state sovereignty and develop its economy, says the joint communiqué. Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and Malawian Minister for Presidential and Parliamentary Affairs Davis Katsonga exchanged views on the future development of China-Malawi relations after signing the joint communiqué in Beijing.

China - Africa Summit

More than 40 African head of state and ministers met in Beijing for a summit with China on trade and investment. China's drive to buy African oil and other commodities has led to a big increase in two way trade worth, \$ 42 billion in 2005. Africa has become a growing market for Chinese goods but it is also said that Beijing is stifling African manufacturing. Some analysts have said Africa is the only place left to go, as most of the world's other big oil reserves are already being developed by major Western energy companies. The three-day summit celebrates 50 years of diplomatic relations between China and Africa. It opened with talks between foreign ministers from at least 45 African nations and China. Discussions in the summit were primarily about the rapidly expanding economic ties between the two countries. Trade between China and Africa has increased tenfold since 1995. However, concern has also been voiced over how the Chinese companies are treating the African workers. Protests broke out in Zambia in July about the alleged ill-treatment of workers at a Chinese-owned mine, and there have been reports of pay disputes in Namibia. China's supporters point to the fact that it has invested billions of dollars in aid, cheap loans and helping to upgrade roads, ports, railways, telephone lines, power stations and other key infrastructure across Africa. Often, Chinese money is funding projects that Western investors had deemed too risky. Many economists argue that overall, China's growing economic ties to Africa are benefiting the region. Meanwhile, the international community has criticised China's attitude towards some African countries, mainly its refusal to criticise Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, and its reluctance to force the Sudanese government to accept UN peacekeepers in Darfur. But in an interview with the BBC, Liberia's President, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, said that accepting China's investment would not mean agreeing with its political standpoint. She also said that when it comes to certain continental political positions, Africa must look at its own positions, irrespective of what stance China takes, whether it's on Darfur, whatever else, and many of African leaders have in fact taken independent positions that may or may not be consistent with China's own policy stance.

Seminars and Symposium

International Conference on Africa-India Partnership in the 21st Century (2-3 April 2008).



The conference began with the remarks by Ambassador Ashok Kumar, Director General, ICWA, in which he underlined the relevance and importance of the seminar in the larger contemporary context. He also elaborated on the role that ICWA is performing since pre independence days in advancing relations between Africa and India. The H.E. Mr. Carlos Agostinho De Rosario, Dean of African Diplomatic Corps considered the conference timely and emphasised the need for a strategic partnership in combating poverty and promoting peace, stability and sustainable development. India has become a significant player in the global economy while Africa has natural resources but is in need of partnership industrialization. In his Inaugural Address H.E. Mr. Nalin Suri, Secretary (West Africa), Ministry of External Affairs, welcomed panellists from Africa and appreciated the African Studies Association of India, the Research and Information System for Developing Countries. Explaining India's approach from its inception has been based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit. The opportunities for India and Africa to span sectors such as agriculture, SMEs, health, education, infrastructure, information technology and communications, automobiles and other transportation systems, manufacturing and

development of railways. There is scope for joint ventures in foodgrains, pulses and oil seeds for domestic use and export to India and to other countries. Ambassador Dr. Nitin Desai, former Under Secretary General, UN, in his opening remarks said that in India the interest in Africa is reviving. Prof. Rajan Harshe, Vice Chancellor, Allahabad University and President of African Studies Association, in his presentation said that India underwent reforms in 1991 by integrating with the world economy. It has experienced very high growth in telecom and IT sectors but the pattern has been uneven. This has major implication as India has a vast population of youth (40% are below the age of 19 years). If their energies are not used productively, it will become destructive. Dr. H. Bohela, Executive Director, Economic and Social Research Foundation, Tanzania, in his presentation continued to set-up institutes of Higher learning and vocational training centres for local students in the region while continuing and expanding the ITEC programme. Kishan S. Rana, former Secretary, Government of India, in his opening remarks said though South-South cooperation is ideal but not easy to deliver. There are very few successful examples; hence the challenge for India is how it can make Africa partner in its endeavours. Prof. A. Parthasarathi, former secretary to the Government of India and Scientific Advisor to PM Indira Gandhi, in his opening remarks said that Africa is a giant continent and is very diverse. Ambassador Shashank, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, in his opening remarks said that Africa does not lack resources but the Human resource capacity to use it to the maximum benefit. Prof. Badru D. Kateregga, Vice Chancellor, Kampala University in his presentation said that university and training are very important priority area for this partnership. Human resource development must be done after taking into consideration the African and global trends. They must be appropriate to fill gaps and shortfalls by developing and defining suitable content that will achieve the goals and objectives. Prof. Nuhu Taqub, Vice Chancellor, University of Abuja, Nigeria, in his presentation said that India-Nigeria reflect the new emerging Africa-India partnership. Both India and Nigerian share many commonalities those act as the basis of their partnership. Ambassador Lalit Mansingh, former Foreign Secretary, Government of India, in his introductory remarks said that what is the guarantee India will not be different from others. Africa and India, together account for more than a third of humanity.

India in the last 60 years has achieved many milestones in its quest for development and the economic and social empowerment of its people. In the last 25 years India leapfrogged to a leadership position in the field of information technology. A few years ago our President offered to Africa a project with a

operational with 29 countries being linked. This is a revolutionary leap in tele-education and tele-medicine, linking leading universities of Africa with the leading universities of India, linking hospitals in Africa with super-specialty hospitals in India.

National Seminar on Africa: Issues of Governance and Development was held from 26th March, 2008 jointly organized by the Academy of Third World Studies & African Studies Association of India (ASA).



The seminar started with the view that the issue of governance directly relates to the development of the society and the state, which has to be understood from the period of colonialism itself, especially in the case of third world countries. It was also pointed out that the colonial experience needs to be examined in Africa with the comparison of Indian experience. Hence, the question was raised that how can democracy help to provide good governance? It was also understood that besides poverty and underdevelopment, external factors is the key to understand the governance issues in Africa. There were insightful discussions on democracy and governance in African states such as Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya and the relationship between oil and governance in Africa was also looked as a vexed relationship. The nature and causes of population movement and its relation with the governance and development crisis in Africa, political economy of trade and development, gender and human rights in Africa was also discussed in the seminar. Besides this, ethnic conflicts in African countries like Sudan and Rwanda were also among the discussions. The seminar concluded on the note that new initiatives need to be taken up by

the African leadership and by India also, which would bring about a new trend in the issues of governance and development.

International Conference on India-Sudan: Lessons from Nation Building and Development Cooperation was jointly organized by Centre for West Asian and African Studies, SIS, JNU & African Studies Association of India (ASA) from 29-30 November, 2007.



The seminar was expected to prove as a landmark in the relations between India and Sudan. With the help of this seminar attention was being drawn towards having a new and fresh look at Sudan. Importance was also given to the big partnerships taking place between the two countries in different areas of economic and global cooperation. Varied issues like population displacement, social ecological and political impacts of Darfur crisis, paradigm shift in development cooperation between both the countries and problems of nation building were discussed. The seminar concluded on the note that, despite the problems being faced by both the countries, there are several sectors in which India and Sudan have complementarities for development cooperation. Given India's experience in nation building and emergence as soft power based on knowledge economy and Sudan's strength in strategic resources and its will to command its resources in its own best interest, the potential for development cooperation is immense.

Research Scholar Column

The Hydrocarbon Geopolitics in Gulf Of Guinea: Implications for Development of The Francophone African Countries

(Pranav Kumar, Research Scholar, Centre for West Asian and African Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, NEW DELHI)

The Atlantic Ocean, which has the widest continental margin among all oceans possesses substantial amount of hydrocarbon energy making it an emerging geopolitical focal point. Out of twenty two francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, fifteen either share the Atlantic Ocean basin or are situated in the hinterland of the ocean. Cote D'Ivoire, Benin, Togo, Cameroon, and Gabon share the Gulf of Guinea, which is famous for its high quality "sweet petroleum". The Gulf of Guinea, off west and central Africa, is viewed by the oil industry as the world's premier 'hotspot', soon to become the leading offshore oil production centre. These countries along with some of the hinterland Francophone countries, on the basis of their hydrocarbon resources, have the potential to become part and parcel of the rejuvenated "oil game" in the region. Hence, overtly or covertly, the oil geopolitics of the Gulf has obvious implications for the Francophone Africa.

The Great Game in the Gulf

In the recent times, Energy Security has been recognized as a prime security concern by international community. Recently concluded Munich meeting of NATO on security has recognized energy security as one of the important aspects of new security paradigm. This concern is fuelled by the whooping rate at which global energy demand is growing. On the one hand, developed world's energy demand is increasing day by day making them to adopt aggressive oil diplomacy, on the other hand, emerging economic giants; like China, India, Brazil etc.; have given a new dimension to global oil hunt. The Gulf of Guinea has become hunting ground in this context exacerbated by the fact that after US intervention in Iraq, US has consolidated its control over all the countries of the Middle East, with the exception of Iran. Hence oil plays important role in guiding direction of economies of these countries. Moreover this region is exposed to the great oil game and the game has its implications for development of the region.

Developmental Status

According to Human Development Report, 2005, none of the country in the region is ranked among the top hundred. Moreover, in the 177 countries list all countries except Gabon, Congo and Togo are considered as countries having low level of human development. Niger is placed at the bottom of the table and Burkina Faso, Mali and Chad are among last five countries in the list. The oil producing Francophone countries of the region; i.e. Congo, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo; have experienced decline in their Human Development Indices (HDI) during last twenty years, while no such comparison is available regarding Gabon. On the contrary, during the same period most of countries that are not producing oil have experienced improvement in their performances. Gabon and Cameroon are among those countries whose economies have progressively become dependent on oil sector and, interestingly, these countries' per capita Gross Domestic Products (GDPs) are US \$ 6397 and 2118 respectively and are highest in the region. But, even the highest level of per capita GDP could not be translated into overall development of these countries. Life expectancies at the time of birth in these countries are 54.5 years and

45.8 year respectively. Francophone African countries in the region are not only sticking examples of low level of development, during last two decades the oil dominated economies' human development fared badly. This is the result of, what economists call a "vicious" development cycle based on rent seeking. In oil-exporting countries, all actors (whether public or private, domestic or foreign) have overwhelming incentives to seek links with the state in order to make money; governments, in turn, reward their supporters by funneling petrodollars, tariff protections, contracts, or subsidies their way. In the end, productive economic activity is actually penalized, growth is hindered, and economies become distorted. Political power can only be sustained only as long as oil revenues flow. The country's wealth continued to be concentrated in the hands of small elite who often used government positions for massive personal enrichment and corruption continued to be practiced at all levels. These evidences form strong ground for establishing links between oil great game in the region and their economic performances. Firstly, It is difficult to transform oil companies into development agencies even with the best intentions and monitoring mechanisms as they do not want to cater employment generating downstream facilities to the oil producing countries owing to fear of tying themselves into hostile, unprofitable and time intensive capacity building activities. Secondly, Emergence of oil sector is generally associated with neglect of the other sectors. Thirdly, Oil Geopolitics in the region, like other oil rich regions,

is closely associated with intervention and interference of external forces; countries, multinational companies, and multilateral international bodies. Fourthly, the difficulty of managing oil revenues in these countries is aggravated by several factors. Fifthly, the hostile external policy environment encourages and rewards over-dependence on petroleum and another problem is excessively centralized control over the resources. Finally, the oil dependent economies are prone to the “Boom-burst Syndrome”. With growing oil production and its export, development seems to work in the oil producing countries including Gabon and Cameroon.

Conclusion

The evidences of oil-exporting countries in the region provide a powerful lesson for assessing the prospects of development in countries dependent on oil revenues. If oil is exploited the way it has been in the past, then these countries’ developmental pattern seems too grim chiefly on account of lack of transparency and accountability in their management. Oil dependence and external intervention in the region creates incentives and structures that make most oil exporting countries uniquely ill governed, constrained, unstable, and conflict prone. Even though booming oil sector has helped them to improve their purchasing power capacity drastically, its sustainability is questionable and its positive effect on the other social sectors is yet to be realized in real sense. Furthermore the oil geopolitics in the region has equally hurt neighbouring Francophone countries, as these countries lost attention of other international powers due to lack of hydrocarbon resources.

The Continuing Scramble for Africa

(Santosh Kumar Singh, M.Phil, JNU)

The 19th century scramble for Africa saw the great powers’ rush to control land so they could exploit natural resources. Today, the scramble continues – the continent still a vital arena of strategic and geopolitical competition among the United States, France, Britain, China and India. African countries are experiencing scramble primarily to its oil, gas timber, diamond, gold, cotton and bauxite wealth, with the United States and the People’s Republic of China actively competing for access to Africa’s resources. Revenues from their extraction should provide funds for badly needed development but instead have fuelled state corruption, environmental degradation, poverty, and violence. Rather than being a blessing, African natural resources have largely been a curse.

Oil is perhaps the most important lure with competition between foreign states and companies to secure resources so it attracts more than 50 percent of all foreign direct investment. According to U.N. world investment report, FDI cash was concentrated in few industries, notably oil, gas and mining and six oil producing countries- Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria and Sudan- hogged around 48 percent of it. European firms represent roughly 2/3 of total FDI in Africa. More than half of European investment originates from the U.K. and France, going mainly to countries they have historic ties. The current pursuit of African oil riches extends to actors from other countries including emerging economies such as Malaysia, South Korea, Brazil and India.

Last year, annual direct foreign investment rose to a historic high of \$ 38.8 billion, exceeding record level of 2005 – a growth of 78 % from 2004. There is evidence of greater involvement of the United States and China in Africa. Foreign direct investment (FDI) to Africa from China reached US\$900 million in 2004. In April 2006, China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) announced that it had completed a US\$2.3 billion deal to buy a 45 percent interest in an offshore oil-mining concession in Nigeria. By 2004, 28.7 percent of Chinese crude oil imports already derived from African oil-producing countries. Indeed, according to the *Economic Observer*. Angola has overtaken Saudi Arabia in terms of the quantity of crude oil supplied to China in the first six months of 2006. More than 800 Chinese companies are reportedly operating in 49 African countries, and Chinese trade with Africa was said to surpass US\$50 billion in 2006 – a five-fold increase from five years ago.

The US government launched its National Energy Plan in May 2001. Authored by Vice-President Dick Cheney and also known as the ‘Cheney Report’, the plan set out US energy requirements over the next 25 years. To achieve it, the report encourages the White House to make oil imports ‘a priority of our [US] trade and foreign policy’; it calls on the president and other top officials to find ways to meet America’s growing oil requirements. According to the US Department of Commerce, US direct investment to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2004 amounted to US\$13.5 billion, 23.4 percent more than in 2003 -and oil-producing countries (Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Angola, Chad, and Nigeria) were the top five recipients. At the same time, oil imports (crude and non-crude) continued to dominate imports from Sub-Saharan Africa with US\$40.1 billion in oil imports in 2005, accounting for 79.8 percent of all US purchases in the continent. African oil imports to the United States have been steadily rising and already account for some 20 percent of total US imports; indeed, the United States already imports more oil from Africa than from the whole Persian Gulf.

Economically, China's rapid economic boom requires African raw materials (particularly oil) and a market for its goods. According to the US Energy Information Administration, China accounted for 40 percent of total growth in global demand for oil in the last four years. In 2003, China ranked second just after the United States and ahead of Japan in oil consumption and Beijing estimates its consumption will amount to 450 million tons in 2020, 60 percent of which would be imports. It seems that the United States and China are competing to secure access for the oil riches of Africa.

Energy hungry nations such as India, Brazil, South Korea, Malaysia, and China have proven more supportive and have provided loans, debt relief, scholarships, training, and provision of military hardware without political or economic conditional ties, in exchange for a foothold in the oil business. In turn, incumbent African leaders have identified Chinese unconditional financial resources, cheap products, and know-how as an important tool to fend off pressure for political and economic reform from international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

No one can deny that the increased importance of Africa, which can be attributed to the increasing demand for its natural resources and the interest from 'new' players such as China and India. On the basis of our analysis US–Chinese race should be treated with some caution and the use of terms such as 'scramble' and 'race' is perhaps misleading. Charities and NGOs working on the issue believe that even governments that are members of the organization for economic cooperation and development (OECD) are reluctant to investigate allegations against western companies of corruption or complicity in human right abuses.

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and more Foreign

TEAM- 9: Assessing the Francophone – India Cooperation

, and more Foreign

(Janardan, Ph.D., JNU)

In the last one decade, due to the change of domestic and international scenario, many new and stimulating developments in India-Africa relations have happened. The end of the cold war era and the emergence of liberalization, privatization and globalization scenario have created new ground in various areas for opening and promoting new co-operation between India and African countries. In this changed international scenario, both India and African countries are looking towards each other with different perspectives, according to changing the needs of the time and requirements of their fast emerging economies and for the establishment of new partnership. Whereas India during the cold war period was close with Anglophone African countries in leading various types of co-operation, on other side Francophone African countries were neglected due to various reasons such as- language barriers, lack of adequate information, fewer number of PIO in this region, French domination etc. Unlike the Anglophone African countries, they (Francophone African countries) did not find equal and rightful place in India's foreign policy.

But after the end of the cold era and from the last one decade, India is turning towards its non- traditional, neglected friends- Francophone African Countries. The Government of India is focusing on the development of its economic and political relationship with neglected West African countries, particularly with Francophone countries. In order to inject a new meaning to Indo-Francophone West African relations and to form a new South-South Cooperation with these countries in the era of globalization, liberalization and privatization, India and eight African countries have taken TEAM-9 initiative which is also known as 'Techno-Economic Approach for Africa India Movement'. This is a team of nine countries, which have embarked a journey for regional development in the era of liberalization, privatization and globalization. In this initiative, eight African countries - Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Chad, Burkina-Faso, Cote'd Ivory (Ivory Coast), Equatorial Guinea and Guinea-Bissau - are on one side and on the other side is India, which has to play a leading role. Five countries out of eight- Senegal, Mali, Chad, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast- are Francophone countries. Except Chad, all African member countries of TEAM- 9 initiative are located in the West African region.

India and West African countries' imperatives for taking up the TEAM- 9 initiative are India's need for market, energy security, natural resources and West African countries' strong appetite for sharing India's knowledge, experience in various sectors such aseconomic management, information technology, agriculture development etc. in order to catch up with the pace of liberalization and globalization. The emerging economies of the West African countries need more financial help on the concessional lines of credit, technological supports

More foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in order to improve their infrastructure level development. Francophone West African countries want to establish a new partnership with India beyond their ex-colonial masters. Through the TEAM-9 initiative, the Government of India is going to provide its financial help on the concessional lines of credit and to share scientific and technical developmental experience with West African countries, which have remained neglected in India's foreign policy under the Indian development assistance. It is a part of India's commitment to promote New South-South Co-operation in this era of liberalization and globalization. India wants to ensure its political presence in the West and Central African region by promoting co-operation at bilateral, regional and multi-lateral levels through this initiative.

Thus, we see that in the era of globalization and liberalization, Indian Government's aspirations to establish new partnerships for energy security and market needs for Indian goods on the one side, and the aspirations of the West African leaders to share the Indian experience of food security and scientific, technological and business expertise for the prosperity on the other, have given birth to the TEAM- 9 initiative. Leaders of both India and West African countries are interested to establish a new path in India-Francophone West Africa relations through TEAM-9 initiative. There is strong political will on the part of these countries to undertake discussion and co-operation in this initiative. India is willing to share its unique, varied and timely expertise with its partners of the developing world. Yet, time would determine the success or otherwise of the TEAM- 9 initiative.

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