

Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses

India-Africa Strategic Dialogue

Report

November 24-25, 2011

The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) organised a two-day international conference on the theme *India-Africa Strategic Dialogue* on November 24-25, 2011. The conference brought together prominent researchers and eminent persons from Africa and India to discuss and debate issues of strategic relevance. The second summit meeting of the *Africa India Forum*, held in Addis Ababa in May 2011, had emphasised upon the renewed focus of India on strengthening and enhancing its partnership with countries in the African continent in diverse areas - political, economic, social and strategic. The objective of the *India-Africa Strategic Dialogue* was to build on existing partnerships between African countries and India and to explore new areas of convergence for mutual engagement.

Inaugural Session

Dr. Arvind Gupta, Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair, IDSA, welcomed the delegates and highlighted the common ideas that India and Africa shared against colonialism and apartheid. Gupta elaborated upon the importance of Africa for India and the importance of forging strong economic, political, strategic and cultural ties between the two. He stated that there are a number of common issues of concern for both India and Africa to act together, such as, piracy, terrorism, crime, and climate change. He also emphasized that both India and Africa should look beyond state-to-state contacts and establish people-to-people contacts between themselves. Gupta also reiterated IDSA's commitment to continue to hold many such bilateral dialogues to further strengthen the India-Africa relations.

The inaugural address was made by Mr. M. Ganapathi, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Ganapathi was of the opinion that *India - Africa Strategic Dialogue* was particularly important as the coming decades of the 21st century belong to the Indian Ocean Region and Africa. He highlighted India's effort to engage with the African nations on issues relating global security, especially piracy and terrorism on the Somalian coast. Ganapathi also highlighted the historical ties between India and Africa. India's support for the African countries against colonialism and apartheid is well-acknowledged by the African



countries. The role of Mahatma Gandhi against racial discrimination would continue to strengthen India-Africa relations for years to come. The very foundation of India-Africa ties is based on mutual equality, mutual trust and mutual benefit. Ganapathi further stated that India continues to strengthen its relations with Africa by boosting trade and commerce, building infrastructure and offering scholarships to African students. India has recently extended a line of credit for the Ethiopia-Djibouti rail link.

Session I: Global Strategic Issues

The first session was chaired by Mr. Shashank, Former Foreign Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. Speakers of the session were Prof. A.E. Ekoko, Department of History and International Studies, Delta State University, Nigeria and Dr. Arvind Gupta, Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair, IDSIA.



Ekoko spoke on “Emerging Global Challenges: The African Perspective”. He stated that the economic meltdown and European financial crisis have emerged as challenges of globalised world. Those who were initially of the opinion that the economic meltdown would have few spillover effects on the African economy have been proved wrong. The economic crisis has definitely impacted on various sectors of African economies. In Nigeria, reserves declined from US\$ 61.9 billion in September 2008 to US\$ 50 billion in January 2009 due to fall in oil prices. Similarly, unemployment rose by 10 per cent in Africa in 2009 and an estimated 7-10 million youth were added each year to an already long line of 200 million jobless people in Africa.

Secondly, Ekoko discussed the challenges of climate change. He stated that climate change and the environmental problem it generates are transnational, demonstrating global interdependence. Though Africa is regarded as least responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions, it is almost universally seen as the continent most at risk of climate-induced challenges. There is inter-connectivity between environmental degradation and conflict. Almost every conflict is either a struggle for control over resources or a scramble to access them, whether it is in Chad, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia or Kenya.

Thirdly, Ekoko highlighted the challenges relating to water security. He observed that reduced water supply in environmentally fragile regions could lead to increased competition which has the potential to turn violent. It has been projected that one-third of all people in Africa live in drought-prone regions and that by the middle of the century between 350 and 600 million Africans will be at the risk of increased water stress. The United Nations (UN) has identified nine river basins in Africa where conflicts could arise.

One of the most important impacts of climate change on human civilization will be an acute and permanent crisis of food supply. The root cause of food insecurity in Africa is the inability of people to gain access to food due to poverty; hence, the continent continues to lag behind in the progress towards poverty alleviation. The challenges of food security in Africa include an underdeveloped agricultural sector, barriers to market access, effects of globalisation which comes with the liberalisation of market.

The next issue Ekoko emphasised was the challenge of energy security, migration and national hazards. He stressed that though Africa is the lowest consumer of energy, the lowest emitter of greenhouse gases, one of the largest exporters of sub-soil natural resources, yet it faces the greatest security risk and under-development.

Changes in sea levels, increased natural disasters and reduced availability of agricultural land may cause large-scale and destabilising population movements. At present, a third of the world's refugee and internally displaced population are found in African countries. The UN Security Council has recognised such large-scale population displacements as a threat to international peace and security. Discussing natural hazards, he stated that three of the five regions across the globe that are at risk of flooding in coastal and deltaic areas of the world are located in Africa: North Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa.

The second part of Ekoko's paper dwelt upon India, Africa and the challenge of non-traditional warfare. He stressed that terrorism has been the gravest of non-traditional threats. India and Africa have been victims of terrorist attacks and have therefore been drawn into the global war on terror. He believed that following "Five D Proposal" given by the UN Secretary General, both India and Africa will be able to curb terrorism. They are: Dissuading the dissatisfied sections of the society from resorting to terror, denying them the means to act, deterring state supporters, developing the capacity of states to deal with terrorism, and defending human rights.

In his concluding remarks, he said that India is beckoning on Africa for a true partnership in development strategy, in exploitation of Africa's vast natural resources and in Africa's human capital development for mutual benefit. The challenge of the economic meltdown and euro zone financial crisis is the challenge that should make Africa dramatically turn to Asia in general and India in particular, leading to a strategic reorientation in Africa's policy approaches.

Gupta, the second speaker of the session, spoke on "India-Africa Relations in the Changing Geo-political Environment". According to him, India-Africa relations have been historical and dates back to the colonial period when India supported the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle in Africa. Regular exchange of people, ideas, trade and commerce, and the presence of Indian diaspora, has further strengthened India-Africa ties. Mutual complementarities exist for further deepening of relations between the two sides.

Gupta stressed that the new phase of relationship is not based on mere sentiments; rather the convergence of national interest on the both sides propels the new relationship. Indian projects in Africa are designed to build capacities and help African people build societies in

the way they like it. Bilateral trade has grown rapidly in the last few years and has crossed \$50 billion. Africa, in return, is helping India fulfill some of its energy demands. Indian companies have made large investments in Africa in recent years helping create more jobs.

He further emphasised that both India and Africa are affected by global security issues. The Indian Ocean has emerged as a major route for trade and at the same time it has also become a hot bed for piracy. Africa's oil and mineral wealth has attracted worldwide attention. Numerous conflicts in African countries have invited intervention from outside powers. In the recent years, the African countries have found their place in global power hierarchy. He also expressed hope that both India and Africa can co-operate with each other without depending upon Western munificence.

According to Gupta, some of the global challenges that have brought India and Africa closer are:

- ♦ Global economic crisis has caused huge economic uncertainties. The United States may be tipping into a recession, and similarly, the Euro-zone sovereign debt crisis may spread to other areas. An economic recession will adversely impact Africa and India.
- ♦ Challenges relating to energy, food and security are concerns of the world today. Both India and Africa are cooperating closely with each other in these areas. Africa is important for India in terms of fulfilling India's energy demands, and similarly, India has been a help to Africa in terms of supplying pharmaceutical products at low cost. At the same time, India can play an important role in the development of agriculture in Africa.
- ♦ Cooperation between India and Africa is the need of the hour so far as piracy is concerned. The Indian Navy is involved in patrolling and anti-piracy activities in the Somalian waters.
- ♦ In the case of terrorism, both sides have similar positions. Terrorist groups have found shelter in some African countries. Some of these have links with al Qaeda.
- ♦ Climate change will adversely impact islands in the Indian Ocean and also lead to destruction of coral reefs. Both India and Africa are affected due to climate change.
- ♦ India and South Africa are playing important role in IBSA and BRICS and in the emergence of a multi-polar world. Both sides are interested in democratisation of the UN Security Council and World Trade Organisation.

In his concluding remarks, Gupta stressed on the need for both sides to strengthen strategic dialogue and form co-operative security relationship among them. The *India Africa Forum* is an important platform for improving ties between two sides. Both sides have adopted the *Africa-India Framework* for enhanced cooperation to supplement the existing framework.

During the Question and Answer session some important observations were made by the chair and the audience. They are:

- ♦ Piracy is a global as well as a regional issue. Stabilising the national governments is more important than tracing the pirates.
- ♦ Similarity between India and Nigeria in terms of population is a common factor. Both the countries can take lead in dealing with food security, agriculture, etc.
- ♦ India's rich experience of democracy can be shared with African countries.
- ♦ Cooperation in areas like food security, e-connectivity, agriculture, information and communication technology can strengthen India-Africa relations.
- ♦ It is time to convert the state-to-state relations to people-to-people interactions.
- ♦ Exchange of scholars between IDSIA and think tanks of Africa was also highlighted. IDSIA to start a news letter on major issues pertaining to India-Africa ties.

Session II: UN Peacekeeping and Prospects of Conflict Resolution

The second session was chaired by Amb. (Retd.) H.H.S. Viswanathan. The speakers were Mr. Festus K. Aubyn and Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Satish Nambiar. The session raised important issues such as preventive diplomacy, collaboration between the UN and regional bodies for peacekeeping and the question of state sovereignty.



Viswanathan opened the session by highlighting some key points on peacekeeping in Africa. He noted that with the increase in intra-state conflicts in Africa in the post-Cold War era (between 1990 and 1997, 14 out of 16 conflicts in Africa were intra-state conflicts), the UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) had to specialise to deal with such conflicts. The UN is suppose to act as an impartial broker where the consent of the host state becomes essential. However, it is unfortunate that when the UN completes its mandate, the situation reverts to square one and conflict persists. In such cases, follow-up action to sustain the peacekeeping efforts becomes essential. In this regard, he stressed on the need to ensure quick rehabilitation and reconstruction based on pardon and integration. India's contribution to peacekeeping has been universally acclaimed as one of the best based on which the country makes a strong bid for permanent membership in the UN Security Council. He also added that the need to deal with every conflict in Africa on the basis of *sui generis* arises because success stories need not be necessarily replicable.

The first speaker of the session, Festus K. Aubyn, remarked that the UN's mandate in African countries has over-stretched its capacity and resources. However, with increased complexities and conflicts in Africa, the number of UN peacekeepers has also doubled. Still, such a scenario

demands collaboration between the UN and the regional organisations of Africa, such as, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). According to Aubyn, UN's PKOs have seen mixed results in the continent. While cases like Liberia have been success stories, Rwanda and Somalia reveal the weaknesses of such operations. After 1993, UN was reluctant to venture into African conflicts as it was constrained in terms of logistics, capacity-building and funds. The complex and multi-faceted nature of African conflicts have thus proved to be a difficult terrain for the UN peacekeepers. These challenges prompted the much-needed cooperation between the UN and the regional bodies. Aubyn also pointed out that the African problems can be resolved only through African solutions. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the ECOWAS have taken up the responsibility of conflict management, conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa. In 1999, the role of the UN in Africa was re-examined. The Brahimi Report (2000) made an assessment of the UN PKOs and called for more effective and robust missions in the future. Aubyn takes two cases, Liberia and Darfur, to analyse the effectiveness of the efforts of collaboration between the UN and the regional bodies. In both the cases, the role of the regional organisations, such as, the ECOWAS and the African Union (AU) have paved the way for a larger UN presence in the countries and has thus proved successful.

However, there are various constraints like funds, capacity, and the lack of political will that hinders PKOs. Aubyn stressed that it is necessary to ensure that the mission mandate is clear, coherent, flexible and sensitive to the security situation of the conflict. A shared vision between the UN and the regional bodies would ensure division of labour and effective use of resources. He stressed on the need for a more formalised system to deal with the sub-regional bodies. It was also suggested that countries like India and China could help these regional bodies by providing assistance in capacity-building and in creating *African security force architecture*. He concluded by stating that since the UN lacks the capacity, resources and funds to carry out a mission all by itself, the international community could contribute to peacekeeping by complementing the regional bodies rather than supplementing their efforts.

The second speaker, Satish Nambiar, raised a number of issues that confronts UN PKOs today. He contended that till the late 1990s, since most of the UN's funding for peacekeeping was directed towards Europe, Africa was neglected. He also criticised the ongoing funding for redundant and out-dated UN operations in various parts of the world. The withdrawal of the Western world from PKOs and insufficient funds demonstrate a serious deficiency in UN peacekeeping missions. India, for its part, has been a major contributor to peacekeeping and it was also the first country to send an all-women contingent to Liberia. Peacekeeping commitment has wider implications for stakeholders in terms of decision-making and allocation of resources. He contended that the international community has to change the 'culture of post-conflict intervention' into a 'culture of conflict prevention'.

Nambiar argued that the African countries must instead resort to 'preventive diplomacy' and it would be prudent for the developing countries to look into regional solutions to conflicts. It is without doubt that political problems need political solutions. Political action is needed before, during and after the conflict. It was also pointed out that it is not the PKOs that fail, but it is the lack of political will that fails to ensure the sustainability of these operations. He argued that international mediation either through the UN or the AU is needed

to bring in legitimacy and impartiality to the resolution of a conflict. Humanitarian interventions must be put on reserve and negotiations have to be given prominence. Thus, it also becomes necessary that international actors are more sensitive to the issue of sovereignty.

Arguing strongly for the case of protecting a nation's sovereignty, Nambiar stated that robust military intervention must make way for robust diplomacy which is key to the reconciliation process. It is only through effective diplomacy and mediation that a conflictual situation can be immediately addressed. This will also ensure that the finger is on the pulse and the proximity to the problem, in terms of a regional solution, becomes essential to the successful resolution of a conflict. More 'professionalised' professionals who are well-trained also becomes critical. Nambiar also suggested that the AU could set up working groups on issues of power-sharing, ceasefires and the likes. Interaction between peacekeepers would also help evolve a common position to be taken in international fora.

Further, elaborating on preventive diplomacy, the Chair stated that a conflict situation is studied in terms of conditions, catalysts and triggers that lead to instability. He stressed that it is at the stage of identification of the catalysts that preventive diplomacy should begin. In the discussion that followed, problems of keeping peace in African countries were highlighted. In the case of Somalia, it was observed that the lack of political will or commitment has deterred the sustainability of PKOs in the country. This is due to the fact that African nations are not democratic enough to ensure the sustainability of political will. In Darfur, the reason for failure was the lack of consensus among the AU members. It was also pointed out that regional bodies by themselves cannot intervene into any nation unless sanctioned by the UN Security Council. It was suggested that India for its part could work with the African countries to seek an international platform to voice their grievances. Additionally, India should have rapid reaction capabilities in place that are quick to respond to crisis situations in Africa. A possibility for evolving an Africa-India template for peacekeeping was also recommended.

Session III: Regional Issues - Piracy

The third session was chaired by former Vice Admiral Pradeep Kaushiva. The two speakers were Mr. Richard Barno, Senior Research & Policy Advisor to the IGAD Capacity Building Program Against Terrorism (ICPAT), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Commander S. S. Parmar, Research Fellow, IDSA.

Richard Barno advocated a forceful regional response to piracy. According to him, the piracy off the coast of Somalia which he prefers to call 'piracy linked to Somalia' is a growth industry with its impact on both Somalia and the regions adjacent to it.



There have been talks of developing a network for information exchange and attempts to prosecute the pirates but a number of complexities have deterred the countries from speeding up the process. The international initiatives to counter piracy have been welcomed, but have not been embraced by the region. He suggested that for any counter piracy strategy there is a need to focus on three Cs – community participation, capacity building, coordination – and invited India to take initiative for counter piracy cooperation. Illustrating on the cost of piracy, he stated that it lies somewhere between \$5 billion to \$8 billion, which is 0.2 per cent of the global maritime trade. He referred to illegal fishing and dumping of toxic wastes near the coast of Somalia as two important causes for Somali people opting for sea piracy which has now turned into an organised crime. The characteristic of the Somali sea piracy differs from the traditional one as they are more concerned about ransom than selling loaded goods on the captured vessel. He expressed his concerns about the increasing use of sophisticated instruments by the pirates, intelligence available to them, price rise and unnecessary expenses as increased transportation costs and self-defence mechanisms set up due to piracy.

Though there is a Somali inland strategy to counter piracy, there are real capacity issues with the African countries. In this regard Indian efforts in patrolling the waters off the Somali coast are appreciable. However, any scheme in future must include local communities and the focus should be on building trust among them. The exploitation of Somali cultural values to turn the tide against piracy, and facilitating alternative livelihood should be the two pillars of the strategy.

According to Barno, stabilising Somalia is the best way to ensure maritime security and a big effort by the international community is required to align the Somali mind with the international mind. For the Somali people, fishing and toxic dumping pose bigger concerns than the piracy issue. There can be no solution without addressing the above concerns. The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) should be taken as the facilitator for the implementation of the strategy and ultimately reconciliation among the Somalis.

The world community should focus on enhancing the institutional capacities of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), Puntland and Somaliland. Puntland has a fairly efficient administration which may help in strengthening the other pillars of the strategy like patrol or observation bases, creating human capacity, forensics, data collection, and support for establishment of domestic legal instrumentalities.

Finally, he said that the issue of piracy has at least ensured that the international community pays the desired attention on Somalia. He concluded by emphasising on the need to let the counter piracy operations be Somalia-led since the region has not yet embraced the Western efforts.

S. S. Parmar presented a paper titled “Rise in Piracy-A Case Study Somalia.” He identified instability, conflict and poverty as the drivers of the rise in piracy off the coast of Somalia. Similar to Barno’s analysis, he also considered illegal fishing and toxic dumping near the coast of Somalia as catalysts to the rise in piracy off the coast of Somalia. He argued that the problem of piracy should be seen as ‘economic terrorism’.

He identified ransom, insurance, deterrent equipments, changes in ship design, rerouting, naval force deployments and prosecution of pirates as the factors directly increasing the costs of maritime trade. The secondary costs due to piracy are the adverse impact on regional trade, fishing, industry, rise in food prices, reduced foreign investment etc.

The main problem in understanding and dealing sea piracy is the non-availability of data about the exact ransom amount paid, increase in insurance costs, cost of rerouting, number of pirates, pirates' financial sponsors, their links with terrorist groups etc. The cost of piracy has risen from relatively meagre \$80,000 in 2006 to somewhere between \$7-12 billion in 2010. It has turned out to be a lucrative business for the pirates.

Speaking on the problems and complexities involved in dealing with the pirates, he emphasised on the need to coin a universal definition of piracy and explained how there is a complete chaos of laws in dealing with it. He stated that the UNCLOS (full form) is highly restrictive but different UN resolutions have mandated the navies to interdict pirates even outside the high seas.

Regarding the future role of India-Africa cooperation in counter piracy, Parmar advocated joint active and aggressive patrolling, making the Djibouti Code of Conduct as legally binding, making payment of ransom illegal, looking at modalities of prosecution and expanding capacities within the prisons. He informed that some steps have already been taken and India has started exercising with East African countries. A working group has been set up to look into the economics of piracy and three ships of the Indian Navy patrol the Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the area near Seychelles at any given time.

The following points were highlighted in the Q & A session:

- ♦ There are problems in the terminologies related to piracy. It was debated whether kidnappings and extortions on seas can be termed as piracy at all. It was informed that Kenya has taken the definition of piracy from the Suva Convention but the problem is how many would accept that. Equating piracy with terrorism is problematic as there is no politico-ideological base for piracy unlike terrorism. Calling piracy as 'economic terrorism' was also contested.
- ♦ In addition to the absence of anti-piracy laws and prison capacities in most of the countries, lack of evidence and lack of witnesses were identified as the biggest problems in the prosecution of the pirates. So, an urgent need to have different laws was felt. It was enquired whether international laws allow going on land in hot pursuit of pirates and arresting them. But, certainly, this becomes difficult because of the lives of hostages involved in it. The prosecution of pirates is extremely complicated because of the debate over the very definition of piracy and its sponsors. The real culprits of piracy often go unpunished as the pirates being prosecuted may not know the brains behind their act. The possibility of prosecuting them on economic basis was also raised as anti - piracy laws may be weak and insufficient, but there are ample economic laws.
- ♦ The involvement of the political groups in Somalia in piracy worsens the situation. Al-Shabaab had taken hostage of some pirates because it was not given the percentage in

the ransom amounts. There is also some evidence of Al-Shabaab being involved in the training of the pirates. A few politicians from Puntland and the TFG have also been alleged of involvement in piracy.

- Unhindered supply of finances to the pirates is a major concern. Ransoms are coming from America and Europe which is equivalent to financing terrorism. The real problem is in identifying the people behind piracy for which the creation of data collection network is essential. The government officials in the pseudo-states would not implement any data collection plan as they reportedly get a cut from the pirates. Though bringing the pirates back to normal life is difficult, criminalising the act of paying ransom might help. A determined political will is required to cut the finances and support to the pirates.
- The focus should be on stabilisation through the IGAD and, probably, a comparison between Afghanistan and other failed states is required.
- The absence of strategic interest of any nation in Somalia is the major constraint in coming together of the international community to solve its problems. Piracy has a destabilising potential for other economies as it has destabilised the Somalian and Kenyan economies. It is not the entire society that benefits from piracy, but only a very small section of the population. It also leads rise in prostitution, drugs problem, etc.

The Chair in his remark said that a figure of \$8 billion was mentioned by the Western navies as the cost of being in the region, out of which \$2 billion was mentioned as the cost of counter piracy deployment measures. But, these are said to be mere pretexts as they would have been there even without piracy. They are just accounting it as counter piracy expenditure what in real terms is their strategic expenditure. He, finally, emphasised on the need to cut finances to the pirates and to seriously look for methods to it.

Session IV: Bilateral Issues - Economic

The session was chaired by Amb. (retd.) V. B. Soni, Chairman, Overseas Infrastructure Alliance (India) Pvt. Ltd. Speakers of the session were Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, National Director, South African Institute of International Affairs, South Africa, and Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi, Senior Fellow, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, New Delhi, India.



In his opening remarks, the Chair highlighted the importance of economic ties in a bilateral relation. Quoting an IMF world survey, he said that more than 5 per cent of the total population in the sub-Saharan Africa

are Indians who have contributed in terms of human resources, knowledge resource, infrastructure development, and are now contributing in areas like energy and security as well. In India Africa Forum 2008 at Addis Ababa, the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had stated that the “economic growth story is emerging from Africa.” India announced \$5 billion as a line of credits and \$ 700 billion for institution and capacity building. As far as the China factor is concerned, they have been advancing their interest aggressively in Africa by offering economic and political support, and an all-weather friendship. India started slow and is appreciated by the people of Africa for not behaving as mercantilists.

In her presentation titled ‘Lions and Tigers: Africa and India’, Elizabeth Sidiropoulos tried to answer the question as to how the growing economic might of India along with the ‘Lions on Move’ concept in Africa be leveraged for development and inclusive growth. She argued that each country and its regional community must develop its own strategy and list of priorities for engaging with India. Commercial relations should be based on zero based tariffs. In order to leverage benefits, India must address the issue of barriers on investments and trade.

According to the World Bank Report 2011 - Africa can be on the brink of an economic take off. The report suggests that Africa is the last frontier after China, India and Latin America. The demographics suggest that east and west Africa will grow rapidly; the urbanisation will be at a much faster pace, which is presently at 40 per cent in cities. The rising middle class of Africa, with nine countries accounting for three-fourth of the total consumer spending, is worth mentioning. By 2030, Africa’s top 18 cities will have a combined spending of \$ 1.3 trillion; the infrastructure development can be a key area of investment along with agriculture. Through her presentation she highlighted the scope of growth in Africa and how beneficial it will be for the Indian development plans.

She also focused on how close are the bilateral and continental ties and ‘club’ relations- BRICs, IBSA, G-20 - between Africa and India, and how such forums are important for African developmental issues. They are the biggest and most diversified nations which have not found their true status in forums like Goldman Sach’s BRIC(s), and in Next 11.

India and South Africa can collaborate and reap benefits from each other in energy and mineral sector, processing, infrastructure, health, nuclear commerce, human resource development and space engineering. It can be achieved through forums and agreements like IBSA Trust Fund, SADPA and Preferential Trade Agreements. She also suggested that India may use South Africa as a gateway to Africa. The two nations need to approach the African market jointly, and in return South Africa should get access to Indian markets of retail, wines, banking, Greenfield investment etc.

Sachin Chaturvedi spoke on ‘Trade and Investments in India and Africa Relations: Trends and Prospects.’ He elaborated upon the dynamics of the policies followed by India in Africa which focuses on engagement with Africa in three spheres: Capacity Building and Skill Transfer, Trade, and Infrastructure Development. The investments in Africa have been made mainly in sectors like telecommunications, chemical and mining. During the first summit of the *India Africa Forum*, the *New Delhi Declaration* emphasised on the emerging global order

with focus on multilateralism and South-South Cooperation and global governance reforms. He emphasized on the point that institution building is key to strengthening the relations with Africa. He shared the numerical data on how much the Government of India has invested in various projects. Some of the key projects he referred to are Africa e-connectivity project, capacity building project called *Inspire* which talks about giving one per cent of the state budget to scholars in science stream and also in the health and education sector to deal with the issue of rising percentage of AIDS, malaria, malnourishment etc.

Session V: Bilateral Issues - Security

The fifth session of the conference was chaired by Ambassador (retd.) R. Rajagopalan, Member, Executive Council, IDSIA. The speakers were Dr. Paul Musili Wambua, Professor of Maritime and Commercial Law at the University of Nairobi School of Law, Kenya and Ms. Ruchita Beri, Senior Research Associate, IDSIA, New Delhi.



Wambua, presenting his paper on “India-Africa Security Cooperation: Gains, Challenges and Future Prospects” argued that India’s historical and diplomatic relations with Africa provided the best chance for Afro-Indian security cooperation at the beginning of the 21st century. Wambua pointed out that in the past one decade or so, the international system has witnessed the emergence of new and complicated security challenges both within and among nation-states that not only called for the redefinition of the concept of “security”, but also for enhanced cooperation between India and Africa to counter the emerging threats.

He pointed out that the nature and dynamics of 21st century security threats and their concomitant actors, structures and processes have made it clear that no state can act unilaterally and succeed fully in addressing them. In fact, the complicated nature of international terrorist organisations, narcotics and arms trade, human trafficking syndicates, as well as international economic crimes, that includes but is not limited to money laundering and piracy only, forms the greatest rationale for cross-regional security cooperation. In this regard, the establishment of regional cooperation between India and Africa is invariably seen as a safety net that helps reduce any security threat. He thought that this is an underlying and often unstated element in regional cooperation, and felt that there is a need for a strong argument in favour of such arrangements that may address issues of security, trade and economic cooperation. He assumed that stronger the web of such regional and cross-regional ties, the stronger is the threshold against internal, regional and global security threats.

Explaining India’s foreign policy towards Africa and the gains made so far through bilateral security cooperation, Wambua said that despite the absence of a comprehensive strategy,

India's strategic interests in Africa revolve around the urge to assume a leading role and responsibility in Africa as a major development and investment partner, especially in the energy sector and security of the Indian Ocean. In this regard, India has developed bilateral security relations with a number of countries, such as, Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania, Seychelles, Botswana, Lesotho, and others. In addition, India has also made a significant contribution in the field of military, social and economic sectors to further enhance stable and long-term bilateral relationships.

Despite these gains, however, there are still gaps and challenges remain in forging stronger security cooperation between the two parties. Wambua pointed out that India's sudden interests in Africa is driven purely by its projected energy insecurity. It is also seen as India's response to the growing influence of China around Africa in recent years. Nonetheless, he emphasised that it is important to develop a strong security relationship on a range of issues to address various security concerns that plague both India and Africa. Moreover, assessing the nature of the sources of instability and insecurity in India and Africa, Wambua said that despite different contexts, the underlying human security issues are quite the same.

The greatest challenge to Indian-African security cooperation is that it is not very well-coordinated. At the end of his presentation, he suggested that to overcome these security challenges and to materialise the gains made so far, India and Africa must further coordinate, focus and institutionalise their security cooperation frameworks.

Ruchita Beri in her paper "Evolving India-Africa Security Cooperation" argued that with the end of the Cold War and the restructuring of international politics, the entire notion of security has witnessed a number of changes. She argued that the concept of security has expanded in two ways i.e. first in respect of who or what the referent objects of security are, such as, the political, social, cultural, economic that must be secured; and second, in respect of nature of threats these referent objects face. Referring to the UN high level panel report on *Threats, Challenges, and Change*, she pointed out that "In today's world, a threat to one is a threat to all." In this regard, there is a growing realisation among the African leaders that non-traditional aspects of security are as important as the traditional ones.

Giving details about India's existing traditional security cooperation with Africa, she said that India-Africa security cooperation has rapidly increased in recent years. The range of bilateral security issues now includes training and infrastructural development assistance, peacekeeping, defence agreements, naval visits and assistance, joint exercises, defence equipment transfers etc. Talking about India's vital role in peacekeeping in Africa, she said that India has participated in all UN peacekeeping operations in the African continent till now and has contributed around 34,466 personnel. India is also currently the largest contributor to the peacekeeping operations in Africa. Moreover, it is involved in imparting training on peacekeeping at the Centre for UN Peacekeeping at the United Service Institution of India, New Delhi. It has also proposed to support the African Union Mission in Somalia with a grant of US \$ 2 million.

In the last two decades, India-Africa security cooperation has also improved in the field of non-traditional security issues, such as, food, health, and energy security. She pointed out

that India is today the leading producer of pulses, rice, wheat and sugarcane and could assist African countries achieve food security. In recent years, in fact, over 80 Indian private companies have invested up to \$ 2.3 billion in commercial farming initiatives in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal and Mozambique. So far as the cooperation in energy is concerned, she said, at present around 18 per cent of India's crude oil imports are sourced from Africa. At the same time, India has aggressively followed a policy of acquiring exploration and production assets abroad and importantly Indian companies like Tata group and others have been successful in procuring equity assets for mining coal in Mozambique. There are also efforts towards accessing uranium material from African countries like Malawi and Namibia to fuel India's ambitious nuclear power programme.

Despite these achievements, however, there are various challenges that this nascent relationship is facing and Africans are still questioning India's approach towards Africa. As India is making efforts to access energy sources from Africa, like China, it too is often accused of being neo-colonialists. Critics have warned India against following the Western strategy of supporting undemocratic and dictatorial regimes in pursuit of its national interests. Nevertheless, India has recently taken a number of cooperative initiatives with Africans to set up institutions related to food security, integrated textiles, weather forecasting, life and earth sciences, agriculture, rural development and financial assistance to achieve development goals. Concluding her presentation, she said that India is making conscious efforts to respect Africans as partners and this redefined partnership provides corridors of opportunity within which African countries can also redefine themselves in relation to their security issues.

During the Question and Answer session, the participants observed that the people-to-people cooperation has not been utilised well between India and African countries, particularly in the field of socio-economic integration. Thus, India's diaspora needs to be assimilated; otherwise, it will remain a diaspora. So far as capacity-building in Africa is concerned, it was asked whether India can help African countries in building political leadership? Africa has also not gained from India's experience of peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of the African people. The Chairperson, while responding to a question, said that the Indo-US nuclear deal will not in any way impact on India's relationship with Africa. It will not limit India's efforts and ability to help Africans in an era of globalisation. In fact, this nuclear deal has helped in strengthening the India-US strategic relationship and there is a growing cooperation between the two countries on regional and global security issues. Finally, the Chair said that the eastern part of Africa needs greater attention in terms of bilateral security cooperation in the coming years.

Session VI: Bilateral Issues - Diaspora

The session was chaired by Mr. J.C. Sharma, Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India; and the Speakers were Prof. Philip O Nyinguro, University Of Nairobi, Kenya and Prof. Sanjukta Bhattacharya, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India.

The Chair opened the session by stating that diaspora as a discipline is a comparatively new phenomenon. Primarily it was looked at by the social anthropologists and was of not much

interest for the foreign policy makers in different parts of the world. However, with the coming of globalisation, the term has gained much consideration and is influencing the bilateral relations and notions of national security. Contemporary examples could be the LTTE and the *Operation Blue Star*. It has also impacted on the India-Australia relations in recent years. The presence of Indian diasporas in Africa can have both negative and positive impact.



While the positives can be witnessed in the development of African continent and its negative impact can be seen in countries like Tanzania and Kenya. The importance of the diaspora gained momentum as the regime in Uganda got its diaspora back to their homeland. It was said to be a benchmark decision.

The diaspora develop contacts and linkages in foreign lands and this gives leverage to capacity building through education, health, business and other expertise. Hence, diasporas can contribute majorly in strengthening bilateral ties. During the NDA regime in India, change in policies with regard to India's diaspora brought in historical changes and the way they were looked upon.

Philip O. Nyinguro stated that the relations between India and Africa have been close since the time of Mahatma Gandhi, and has since been consistent. Indian diaspora has been an integral part of Kenya; it is divided into several communities like the Punjabi, Gujarati and others. However, the role of diaspora cannot be overemphasised as it depends on the depth of the linkages they have to their country of origin. The question of Indian diaspora can thus be answered only if the depth of their linkages in their country of origin is known. So far, the Indian diaspora has not gained much of attention from their homeland government; hence, Indian leaders must pay attention to it. The diaspora can also help in times of frosty relations between the two nations.

But the idea of 'sons of soil' soon began to float among the African communities due to the failure of the indigenous people and this created problems for the Indian diaspora which is regarded as hardworking and competent. The example of US policy in the Pacific region is based on the diaspora, which could be a lesson for India as well. The advantage can be retained only if they are well-organised. Indian Government is sitting on a 'Goldmine' in terms of its foreign relations. In order to gain its rightful place in the world, India should focus on its diaspora across the continent not only in economic but also in terms of culture. The Indian diaspora is fabricated in different parts of Africa, like Mauritius (60.35 per cent), Reunion (31 per cent), Tanzania, and Uganda. However, not many Indians are residing in the north and west of Africa, which is not a good sign.

Nyinguro was of the view that South Africa can be very important from the point of view of

India's interests in Africa. It can work as a diplomatic and economic guarantor for India in Africa. He emphasised on the idea of India's greater involvement in Africa through various means to strengthen its relations as well as to have claims over its diaspora in foreign lands. India needs theoretical framework to study its diaspora and implement it in its international relations. It needs to identify its areas of cooperation to make it a mechanism to reach out to Africa. It needs to encourage people-to-people contact, especially in east Africa. The Indian embassies thus need to revive its relations and interactions with the Indian diaspora in Africa.

Sanjukta Bhattacharya in her presentation discussed the Indian attitude towards its diaspora. Her presentation was critical of the government's approach and general ignorance about the Indians living outside the country. Also, she brought in the numerical facts about the Indian diaspora in Africa in comparison with those in other parts of the world. The total number of Indians in Africa sums up to a total of 2.5 million, which is less than in West Asia, US etc. In Africa, the Indians are highly concentrated only in three countries- Mauritius, South Africa, and Reunion. These people of Indian origin were taken to Africa as poor labourers during the British colonial rule, Through hard work and enterprise they soon took charge of retail and other sectors of local economies. The colonial strategy of creating a wedge between the diaspora and the natives by giving constant attention to diaspora to some extent was responsible for anti-diaspora sentiments in Africa. Subsequently post independence certain countries within Africa adopted discriminatory policies against Indian diaspora.

However, the Indian government's policy towards the diaspora formulated by former Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru did not encourage return of people of Indian origin. Therefore, Indians in African countries, such as, Uganda, Kenya had to move to other nations like the US, UK and Europe in the face of increased discrimination. However, Indian attitude towards the diaspora has changed in recent years due to its rising power and global status. Recognising the contribution and potential benefits from the Indian diaspora, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was created in 2003 by the NDA Government. The ministry soon began granting dual citizenship to the Indian diaspora. The honouring of the Indian diaspora (Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award) for their achievements with regard to their contribution in improving the bilateral relations with India was also initiated. Bhattacharya concluded by stating that the Indian diaspora's response to the recent government initiatives has been mixed.

Panel Discussion: India-Africa Strategic Partnership: Way Forward

The panel discussion was chaired by Mr. Vivek Katju, Former Secretary, MEA, Government of India. The panellists were Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos; Prof. Abednego Edho Ekoko; Mr. H.H.S. Viswanathan; Ms Ruchita Beri and Prof. Paul Musili Wambua.

The panel discussion attempted to extract the main ideas that emerged during the two-day dialogue to chart out the agenda for future engagement. There was an unequivocal consensus

that the partnership between Africa and India is based on solidarity and that there is no fundamental conflict of interest. Sidiropoulos said that an overarching African Union strategy to deal with emerging powers is only beginning to emerge. In relation to India, the question that immediately comes to mind is how to match what Africa wants, and what India could offer. Therefore, Indian initiatives should be integrated into regional and national development plans. While Sirdopolous talked of the need to ensure transparency through better monitoring and evaluation, Viswanathan stressed the importance of timely implementation of India's line of credit projects. At the same time, there has to be better coordination with other partners so that efforts towards development are not duplicated. Other discussants pushed for more focus on priority issues, such as, agriculture, food security, health care and education.

Speaking on capacity building, Ekoko called upon India to use its increasing heft to address the problem of leadership in Africa. He went on to suggest that India should not be averse to placing aid conditionalities in ways that would facilitate Africa's democratic transformation. On this issue, Katju stated that New Delhi will continue to be shy in prescribing models of governance and development. Nevertheless, as India has a natural affinity towards democracies, it will contribute to the best of its abilities towards democratisation. On the methodology of engagement, Ekoko wanted India to focus more on regional African organisations, such as, ECOWAS and South African Development Community (SADC) so that regional priorities could be better addressed. Wambua, however, said that national sensitivities need to be kept in mind even as engagement with regional organisations is stepped up. Katju clarified that India follows a three-tiered approach in engaging Africa which involves the African Union at one, and regional organisations at another, while simultaneously strengthening bilateral ties with individual countries.

When the discussion turned to economics, there were interesting perspectives offered by the panellists. Sidiropoulos highlighted the fact that the current commodity boom presents enormous opportunities for Africa. She also said that African nations could learn from India's economic progress to increase their competitiveness. Viswanathan gave some perceptive insights on African economy and its prospects. Firstly, African countries have registered an economic growth of close to 5 per cent irrespective of whether they possessed natural resources or not. Secondly, Africa because of its demographic dividend has the potential to become the world's leading manufacturing hub by the year 2030. As India is ideally placed to facilitate Africa's industrialisation, he asserted that a clear strategy is needed to maximize the opportunities. Also, since Africa will have to leapfrog in terms of adopting technologies, the capacity building programmes have to be adjusted accordingly. He also pointed to the emerging Cairo to Cape free trade bloc comprising 26 nations within the South African Development Community (SADC), East African Community (EAC) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). This trading bloc when realised will be a market of 550 million people presenting enormous economic opportunities to India.

Discussing security matters, the panellists emphasised on greater cooperation and called for more specific engagements. Alluding to commonality of perception between both the sides, Ruchita Beri called for cooperation on matters related to Indian Ocean and drug trafficking within the regional framework. In her opinion, India could be more proactive in preventive diplomacy and enhancing African capacities. She also suggested seeking convergence with African countries on issues of common interest at the multilateral level. Wambua suggested

that India could do more in capacity building of existing security institutions, especially those countering insurgents and militant groups. On international issues, the African delegates wanted India to continue working towards democratisation of international negotiations, especially on trade-related issues. Appreciating the fact that India has supported Africa on many occasions, Sidiropoulos emphasised the need for regular discussions on how African positions on key issues could be brought to the table by India at different forums.

On taking the partnership forward, the participants agreed that more attention is required on giving shape to the official strategic dialogue accommodating mutual interests and specific concerns. They also felt the need for more people-to-people contacts. Viswanathan insisted upon the need for better awareness about Africa in India to build an enduring partnership. The possibility of providing work permits to African students who come to India for higher education should be explored. While diaspora can indeed be leveraged for better cooperation, complexities and diversities of the diasporic population require better appreciation. Summing up the discussion, Katju said that there is a genuine desire for an enduring, comprehensive and a mutually beneficial relationship between India and Africa. As cooperation in the realm of development intensifies, more innovative ways of capacity building and sharing best practices have to be thought out. Follow up and feedback reports on initiatives taken should be institutionalised. Since security of both sides is interlinked, challenges have to be collectively dealt with at different levels. He concluded reiterating the need for building more awareness and expansion of track two initiatives to strengthen this historic partnership.



This report is prepared by Dr. Anshuman Behera, Ms. Keerti S. Kumar, Mr. Saurabh Mishra, Dr. Saroj Bishoyi, Ms. Soumya Tiwari and Dr. Sundar M.S.