



# Africa: Perspectives from India and Russia

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Proceedings of the  
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OBSERVER RESEARCH FOUNDATION, NEW DELHI  
EXPERIMENTAL CREATIVE CENTRE, MOSCOW

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## Roundtable Partners

### OBSERVER RESEARCH FOUNDATION (ORF)

**T**he Observer Research Foundation was established as a private, not-for-profit, think tank that seeks to influence public policy formulation. Since the Foundation's inception, ORF scholars have made significant contributions toward improving government policies.

ORF research projects have resulted in immediate and tangible impact on economic and strategic policies of the country. Today, ORF is known among policy-makers, both in India and overseas, as a place pulsating with fresh ideas that help shape public policy. At ORF, ideas are reflected in the projects and programmes that are undertaken by various institutes and programmes.

The Foundation's activities are divided into two categories: Projects and Events. Both are an intrinsic part of the Foundation's objective to shape and influence public opinion and create viable, alternative policy options in areas as divergent as employment generation in backward districts and real-time strategies to counter Nuclear, Biological and Chemical threats.

# EXPERIMENTAL CREATIVE CENTRE (ECC)

The International Public Foundation “Experimental Creative Centre” - IPF-ECC (or Kurginyan Centre) is an independent public association based in Moscow. It was established by a group of political scientists, sociologists, and specialists in cultural studies in 1990.

The Kurginyan Centre's principal programs of research cover the following areas:

- Political Philosophy of Transitional Social Processes
- Political, Economic, Scientific and Cultural Elites
- Religious and Cultural Challenges to the Russian Statehood
- Security of the Russia's National Resource Base
- Processes Developing at the Macro-Regional and Local Levels
- Principles and Technologies of Management in Unstable distributed systems.

Analytical products prepared by the Centre are used by political structures of diverse spectrum, as well as by the state agencies of the Russian Federation.

Through the years of its existence, the Centre has published a number of books written by Sergey Kurginyan and other experts. The socio-political and scientific bimonthly, RUSSIA XXI journal, has been published by the Centre since 1993. Well-known Russian and foreign experts, scientists, political essayists and public figures are among its contributors.

The School Of Integral Analysis almanac, which first went to press in 1998, is yet another product of the Centre. It provides analytical assessments of the broad spectrum of Russian and global socio-political problems, as well as their theoretical interpretation. The Centre was among the founders of the International Counter-Terrorism Academic Community (ICTAC) created in 2003 to research and counter terrorism. In December 2004, the Centre was granted the status of an NGO, associated with the UN Department of Public Information.

# Programme Agenda

**Session 1:** **Challenges to Peace and Stability in Africa**

**Session chair:** HHS Viswanathan

**Speakers:** Maria Podkopaeva  
Kanchi Gupta

**Session 2:** **Is There a Competition for Africa?**

**Session chair:** Yury Byaly

**Speakers:** Uma Purushothaman  
Mikhael Dmitriev

**Session 3:** **Russia's and India's Engagements with Africa**

**Session chair:** Uma Purushothaman

**Speakers:** Eduard Kryukov  
Malancha Chakrabarty

**Session 4:** **Political and Economic Scenarios for Africa**

**Session chair:** Maria Podkopaeva

**Speakers:** HHS Viswanathan  
Yury Byaly

# Introduction

ORF and ECC have had fruitful and productive interactions in the last ten years. Together, we have held eight conferences on various themes. These have added new perspectives to complex issues facing the world.

The ninth conference held in Moscow from 27 to 29 June 2016 focused on Africa. This continent has been in the limelight for a decade now, due to certain positive developments, including a significant resurgence in politics and the economy. In the past few years, seven of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world have been African. Most African nations have also embraced multi-party democracy with regular elections. Indeed, it is often referred to as the 'continent of the future'. While the opportunities for the continent seem limitless, there are also many challenges, among them, terrorism, extremist religious ideologies, unequal and non-inclusive growth, need for industrialisation, and inadequate livelihoods.

India and Russia have a great interest and stake in the stability, growth and development of Africa. India's engagement with Africa has been more intense because of historical ties. How the two countries view the challenges and opportunities in Africa is a subject to be studied at great depth. Connected with this is the question of the possibilities of joint initiatives by India and Russia in Africa's development trajectory.

The Conference in Moscow produced some free, frank and productive discussions, in which many new ideas came up. Four critical areas were selected for the four sessions: peace and security; the competition for Africa; India and Russia's bilateral relations with the continent; and the broad emerging political and economic scenarios for Africa.

ORF would like to thank ECC, Dr. Yury Byaly and his team for organising an excellent conference and for their exceptional hospitality.



# Challenges to Peace and Stability in Africa

## Session 1

Session Chair, **Mr. HHS Viswanathan**, introduced the session by acknowledging that Africa has become much more peaceful today than it was about three decades ago. However, he stated, there are currently some new challenges to peace and stability in Africa. For rapid growth and development in the continent, these new challenges must be addressed. Efforts to secure peace need to be undertaken at three different levels. First, there are some challenges that the African continent must address as a whole. Secondly, some challenges need to be addressed by individual African nations. Finally, there are some conflicts that can be solved only through international cooperation.

## PRESENTATIONS

### Maria Podkopaeva

New alliances between radical groups have emerged in Africa in the last few years. The number of such radical groups is quite high but this paper focuses on two poles of ultra-Islamism in Africa, namely Libya and Nigeria. Libya's case is particularly important because of its unique location. For Europe, Libya is its closest and most aggressive Arab neighbour. On the other hand, for Africa, it is a hotspot of militant Islamic radicalism. It is widely believed that the spread of the influence of Al-Qaeda started from Libya. At present, the Libyan situation also become an incentive for the explosive growth of Boko Haram, which claims its allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). Moreover, Libya is regarded as the spare airfield for ISIS in the Arab world. Libya also plays an important role as a collector and trainer of African militants for ISIS.

Chaos and clashes have been the norm in Libya since the Arab Spring. In the aftermath of the two conflicting parliaments in Tripoli and Tobruk and the renouncement of the Government of National Unity, established under pressure from the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU), the influence of ISIS has grown rapidly in Libya.

The western approach began to change with the growth of ISIS in Libya. In December 2014, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Paolo Gentiloni, admitted that the actions of Western countries in Libya in 2011 were a mistake. However, by the end of 2014, Libya had entered a new phase of “war for oil.” At the end of 2014, both the Dawn of Libya and the IS forces began attacking oil fields and facilities related to oil exports in the country. By the beginning of 2015, it was clear that ISIS wanted to establish a strong base in Libya. It became even more evident after the showcased execution of the Egyptian fisherman in February 2015. While Europe was mainly concerned about the problem of Libyan refugees, ISIS began training pilots using cutting-edge simulators imported from abroad. According to some experts, there are threats of an attack on the lines of 9/11 on the US, this time by ISIS.

The Nigerian Boko Haram is one of the bloodiest radical groups in the world according to the global terrorism index published in 2015. In 2014, the group murdered about 6,500 people. The Boko Haram is a product of the Libyan disaster of 2012. In 2015, this radical group declared their allegiance to ISIS. By January 2015, Boko Haram controlled 15 regions in the Northeast of Nigeria, entirely, and 15 more regions partially. In March 2015, they started calling themselves the 'western African province' of the IS. In April 2015, the Boko Haram captured the strategic island of Karamja in the lake of Chad and named their province the IS territory. Thus, Boko Haram extended the geography of their attacks to Chad, Cameroon and Niger. At present, there are concerns over talks between Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab in Somalia. At the same time, ISIS wants to get some followers in Tunisia. Since Boko Haram extended their control, they are trying to get fighters from Cameroon, Niger, Chad and Central African Republic.

The spread of the Caliphate in Africa largely depends on the possibility of cooperation between Al-Qaeda and ISIS. A merger of all the caliphatist groups will convert the entire Northern Africa and the Sahel region into a conflict zone.

Boko Haram has also established close connections with Al-Qaeda. In 2009, headed by Mohammad Yusuf, Boko Haram staged a coup d'état in Nigeria and declared their goal of establishing an Islamic state there. The government of Nigeria responded by starting a full-scale war on them and killed about 800 militants including their leader. However, Boko Haram was resurrected and came back even stronger. This was largely made possible by the Algerian organisation, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). The remaining militants left for the territory of Chad and merged with the AQIM. Al-Qaeda's infrastructure played a very important role in resurrecting Boko Haram.

## Kanchi Gupta

Africa has emerged as one of the most important arenas of jihadism, with the level of violence and deaths steadily rising in recent years. Boko Haram is now one of the deadliest terrorist groups the world over, with a growing number of suicide bombings, and has expanded the scope of its attacks to include Chad and Cameroon. As Nigeria grapples with the fall in oil prices, a slowing economy creates more space for Boko Haram's expansion. The AQIM is also attempting to re-emerge to prominence and has expanded operations beyond the Sahel. It recently launched attacks in Burkina Faso, Algeria and Cote d'Ivoire. AQIM's escalation will also have implications for Al-Shabaab, which recently attacked a military base in Southern Somalia, killing 180 Kenyan soldiers, and bombed a civilian airliner. Greater coordination with AQIM will allow Al-Shabaab to transcend operations beyond Somalia and become a larger part of the regional turmoil.

This presentation identifies three main developments in North Africa that the waves of violent extremism in Algeria, Libya, Mali, Tunisia, Egypt, Somalia and Nigeria can be traced back to. First is the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which saw a huge influx of jihadists from Algeria, Egypt and other African states. The second pivotal development is the United States' (US) invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan in 2003, which laid the foundation for greater instability in the Middle East and North Africa. The third major development is the fall of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 after the NATO-led military invasion, which eventually led the country to emerge as a haven for jihadist groups.

Drawing from these drivers of extremist groups in Africa and their relevance to each specific case, the presentation outlines certain trends that are likely to determine peace and stability in the continent. First, most of these groups have been plagued by factionalism and infighting. This is likely to inform the spread of violence, particularly as Daesh cements its stronghold in the region. Even as Al-Shabaab and AQIM remain firmly embedded in the Al-Qaeda camp, splinter factions have been joining Daesh. This could either undermine their ability to plan large-scale attacks in the future or could lead to greater violence from the groups as an attempt to assert their power and influence.

Second, the globalisation of jihad has led to the movement of fighters across borders and created new narratives of political dissent and jihad in the fighters' home countries. Many jihadists from Africa have participated in the wars in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Just as the return of battle-hardened jihadists from Afghanistan prompted waves of violence in Algeria and Libya, the return of fighters from the Middle East will have an impact on the level of Islamic terror in Africa.

Third, the use of social media and the internet as mediums of radicalisation has significantly

expanded the recruitment pools for extremist groups. Transcending borders, social media has become a game changer in the spread of global terror. Just as it played an important role in the Arab Spring protests, social media has allowed extremist groups, particularly the Daesh, to spread its propaganda far beyond the territories under its control.

Regional and global military responses have seen tepid successes. The need to bolster weak structures of governance, provide inclusive economic growth and support fragile states will require moving beyond military responses and towards long-lasting political solutions.

# Is there competition for Africa?

## Session 2

Session chair, **Mr. Yury Byaly**, introduced the session. The objective of this session was to understand whether there is a competition between major powers over the African continent, particularly over its resources.

### PRESENTATIONS

#### Uma Purushothaman

Without a doubt, there is a competition over Africa. This presentation examines where this competition is concentrated instead of just looking at the major powers involved in the competition. This is because this competition is not restricted to states; multinational corporations (MNCs) are also involved.

The reason for this competition lies in the weakening of US predominance, globalisation, and the rise of new powers. These powers, too, have to fuel their own growth by acquiring resources and infiltrating the African market; this is what leads to competition.

This competition is taking place at four broad levels, each of which is linked to the other and plays into the other. The first is the competition for Africa's rich mineral and oil wealth. Africa has what is known as the 'resource curse' or the 'curse of riches'. It is rich in resources, but its people are poor. Its resources are exploited and exported by external powers and corporations. This is true especially of oil and mineral resources. There is also competition for agricultural products as well as for land for producing biofuels and for farming and exporting food abroad.

The second level at which the competition plays out is the contest over markets for industrial and consumer goods. This is not only because of the population but also because of Africa's increased prosperity and rise in disposable incomes. Africa, according to some reports, has the fastest growing

middle class in the world. The continent has further emerged as a large market for defence exports because of the number of conflicts within the continent, including terrorism.

The third kind of competition is political competition. This is primarily because of the number of countries in the continent, i.e., 55. The support of African countries is crucial in multilateral groupings like the UN. For instance, China and Taiwan have long competed for recognition from African countries.

The fourth and final aspect of the competition is the contest for military bases in Africa. This is because foreign powers want to ensure continued access to Africa's natural resources and protect their political and economic interests. Moreover, with terrorism gaining strength in many African countries, foreign powers want to make sure they can respond to threats immediately.

Soft power is being used by all major powers to achieve their objectives. The competition for resources and markets is beginning to resemble neo-colonial trade; raw materials are exported and finished consumer goods are imported. This is particularly true of China's trade with Africa.

China has an edge over other powers. Its trade with Africa is three times that of the US. In addition, China's ability to deliver projects quickly and give aid with no strings attached has helped it gain a strong foothold in the continent.

Each of these kinds of competition feeds into the other. For instance, if a country has more political influence, it is easier for it to get access to resources. Similarly, if it has access to a country's resources and markets, its political influence automatically increases. The pertinent question, then, is how this competition is affecting African countries and how they will deal with it.

For one, they will compete among themselves to draw the most benefits from the major powers and to attract investments, aid and technology. However, sometimes, to attract such things, they might give away too many concessions. Their weak state structures are an invitation for external powers to interfere in their domestic politics. On the other hand, if a country can cut good deals and is able to manipulate and manoeuvre among competing interests, it could lead to prosperity for that country.

Second, often it is the elites who benefit from engaging with the major powers. Moreover, some of these countries are becoming too dependent on natural resources and are becoming rentier states.

Finally, the competition among the major powers is likely to continue as long as Africa has resources and a huge market. However, let us not forget that, unlike in the past, today's Africa has agency and will soon learn to protect itself.

## Mikhael Dmitriev

There is real competition for Africa because it is a strategic source of minerals, land and labour resources. Moreover, the African continent provides strategic access to many different oceans, seas and areas. Its geopolitical significance is high, because it is located between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and the Indian and the Atlantic Ocean. It also has strategically important ports. As a result, major world powers have clashed over the African continent since the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

There were several stages of competition between major powers in Africa. The first stage was colonial in nature, and the form of control was direct military conquest. That often led to situations when the countries were on the brink of a war. The process of decolonisation began after World War II. This was the beginning of the second stage of conflict for the continent. As the national freedom movements intensified, it became more difficult to deal with them using violent repression. Moreover, new players such as the USSR and the US emerged. Both the US and the USSR followed a policy of dismantling old colonial empires for different reasons. China and India and other newly independent countries followed their own policies for Africa. In 1961, India initiated the process of non-alignment. On the other hand, older stakeholders, such as the United Kingdom and France, wanted to preserve their power by using new mechanisms of keeping these former colonies within their sphere of influence.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union led to a new stage of competition for Africa, where the US was the main contender. From the 1990s onwards, EU emerged, which was not always dependent on the interests of the individual countries within the EU. China and India have emerged as important players in the last decade. Russia has also declared its intention of returning to the African continent. There are two models operating in Africa at the moment: the western model, represented by the US and the EU, that offers financial help to African countries against strict conditions on human rights and democracy; and the eastern model, represented by China and India, which are dominant powers in Africa. China and India do not impose political conditionalities and respect national sovereignty, and at the same time, both countries provide significant financial help and pursue their own strategic interests in Africa.

The Forum for China–Africa Cooperation in 2006 was the beginning of China's rapid growth in Africa. China's main interest in Africa is access to resources. Moreover, labour costs have risen in China in recent years, so Chinese firms are ready to relocate production to African countries. Unlike the West, China has intensified its participation in almost every sector of the economy and places major thrust on infrastructure creation in Africa.

China has also expanded its military presence in Africa, by sending peacekeeping forces in Western Sahara, Congo, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire. In October 2015, while speaking at the General Assembly, Xi Jinping declared that his country will deploy 8,000 peacekeeping troops in Africa. In December 2015, he also declared China's intention to create a structure of united operative command by 2020, as they are trying to increase their combat forces and readiness to conduct operations abroad. In spring 2015, they built their own naval base in Djibouti.

The US has countered China's growing influence in Africa at each step. In 2008, they established the US–African command called the Africom. In 2011, Africom controlled the international military campaign against Libya, called Odyssey Dawn. Another recent event that reflects the competition between the US and China is the growth of tension in the South African Republic. Many experts have noted that mass protests in South Africa were funded by American institutions. The intensification of Chinese and Indian influence in Africa is viewed as a challenge to European interests.

China and India are both partners and competitors in Africa. On the one hand, they are both members of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). On the other hand, they have many bilateral issues. South Africa is another field of battle between these two countries, where technological companies of China and India compete for tenders in various sectors. These relations with South Africa are, therefore, strategically important for both India and China.

As Russia is steadily restoring its presence in Africa, it needs to evolve a new strategy for the African continent. The confrontationist approach of Europe may be beneficial for Russia. Many African leaders see in Russia a promising partner to safeguard themselves against attacks from EU and the US. At the moment, Russian businesses are not strong enough to follow China's policy of huge loans. Africa also commands a lot of importance in international institutions including the UN. Therefore, soft power will play a major role in Africa as opposed to direct military interventions.



# Russia's and India's Engagements with Africa

## Session 3

The session Chair, **Dr. Uma Purushothaman**, introduced this session as the most important. India's economic footprint in Africa has grown remarkably in the last decade, and Russia is re-emerging as a power in Africa.

### PRESENTATIONS

#### Eduard Kryukov

Soviet efforts in the 1960s and '70s influenced the freedom movement in Africa. As a result, many of the newly independent African states set up diplomatic relations with the USSR. By 1984, USSR had signed treaties with 48 African countries. USSR's cooperation with Africa was based on systemic work in the following three areas:

1. Political and diplomatic protection of state interests
2. Military cooperation to help the newly independent African countries build their armies
3. Economic and scientific cooperation

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, external political priorities of Russia turned towards the West. Thus, its relations with African countries weakened. Russia started restoring its connections with African countries during the 1990s. The value of Russia's trade with Africa increased from a mere US \$982 million in 1995 to US \$9.7 billion in 2013. Russia mostly exports oil and petroleum products, fertilizers, grain, rolled ferrous metals and cars. Machine building and transport vehicles account for about 11 percent of Russian exports to Africa. On the other hand, Russia imports bauxite and other types of minerals necessary for Russian industrial enterprise mostly from Africa. Russia also imports energy and agricultural products.

One of the main reasons for the revival of Russia's economic ties was its desire to build a multipolar system of international relations. Moreover, the growing Russian economy necessitated closer ties with Africa. The total direct investment of Russian companies in Africa in 2012 was valued at US\$9 billion. During the period 2013–2020, Russian companies plan to invest about US\$17 billion in Africa. Despite being well endowed with resources, Russia faces shortages in a few minerals, such as manganese, uranium, chromium and bauxite, that are crucial for its metallurgical, electronic, defence and nuclear industries. Therefore, the majority of Russian businesses in Africa focus on exploring and producing mineral resources.

Russia also exports technologically advanced military products, such as aircraft, missiles and tanks, to African countries. Russian military exports to Africa were valued at US\$12 billion in 2013. By 2014, Russia accounted for about 30 percent of the African arms market. Algeria, Egypt, Uganda and Ethiopia are Russia's main partners in Africa. Russia also helps African countries within various international structures as a member of the UN Security Council, participates in peacekeeping exercises and supports UN's food programme.

Russia enjoys considerable goodwill in Africa due to its support to the freedom movements there. Moreover, many of the current African leaders are graduates of Soviet military and civilian institutions. Both Russia and Africa want a multipolar international order that respects national sovereignty. African countries vote together with Russia in more than 70 percent of the cases in the UN General Assembly. Russia would like to support infrastructure projects in Africa, but a lot depends on its domestic economy. Russian companies are currently wary of investing in Africa due to the political risks in those countries. However, the solution to conflicts lies in international cooperation, and here, BRICS countries can play a very important role.

## Malancha Chakrabarty

Historically, India's relations with Africa were built upon the foundations of anti-colonialism and South–South Cooperation. However, the early 1990s saw a paradigm shift in India's policy towards Africa. Liberalisation of the Indian economy led to a shift in the country's approach towards Africa from the ideological realm to economic diplomacy. With higher economic growth, India's energy requirements increased manifold. At the same time, Africa's importance in the world energy markets grew rapidly. India's engagement with Africa became more structured with the inception of the India–Africa Summits. In 2015, during the third India–Africa Forum Summit, India announced an additional credit line of US\$10 billion and a grant assistance of US\$600 million. The Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme was announced in 2008, under which India provides preferential market access to Least Developed Countries of Africa.

After a long period of stagnation, trade between India and Africa grew rapidly starting in the mid-2000s. The growth of trade was mainly led by India's energy imports. Imports of mineral fuels and lubricants from Africa increased from US\$194.7 million in 2005 to US\$18,675.2 million in 2015. Oil imports grew tremendously, and Africa currently accounts for about 18 percent of India's oil imports. Nigeria and Angola are the largest sources of oil in Africa.

There was a concurrent increase in India's exports of refined petroleum products to Africa because Africa has limited refining capacity whereas India has surplus refining capacity. Africa is also an important source of coal (South Africa and Mozambique), natural gas (Algeria, Nigeria and Egypt) and uranium (Niger, Malawi, South Africa and Namibia). There was also a marked increase in agricultural trade between India and Africa. Much of the increase in agricultural exports to Africa was due to a massive growth in Indian exports of non-basmati rice from 2010 onwards.

Although African exports to India are concentrated in a few mineral commodities, Indian exports to Africa are more diversified and technology intensive. There has been no change in the commodity composition of African exports to India, while Indian exports have moved up the value chain.

Indian investments in Africa have also grown remarkably. About 70 percent of the Indian overseas direct investment in Africa is directed to Mauritius due to its favourable tax treaty with India, and much of the investment is “round-tripped” back to India. If Mauritius is excluded, Mozambique is the leading destination of Indian investment in Africa. Energy and agriculture are the two main sectors where Indian companies have invested. ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) is the most active Indian company in Africa. Other public sector companies active in Africa are Oil India Ltd., Bharat Petroleum, Indian Oil Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum. Indian private sector players, such as Taurian Resources Private Ltd., Earthstone FZE and Varun Energy Corporation, have also entered the African energy sector.

About 80 Indian companies have invested US \$2.3 billion in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Senegal and Mozambique's agriculture sectors. Many business enterprises, such as Jain Irrigation and Kirloskar Brothers, have established their presence in the agriculture sectors of several African countries. Most African countries have encouraged the growth of Indian private sector through business-friendly policies. Some have also offered land on lease to Indian farmers, and many farmers from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh have migrated to these countries. Many Indian firms, notably Karuturi Global Ltd. and Siva Group, have acquired large tracts of land in Africa.

The scale of India's development cooperation with Africa has also expanded greatly in recent years. Unlike western aid, Indian development assistance is demand driven and devoid of political conditionalities. Concessional credit lines are an important component of India's development assistance to Africa. So far, 133 Lines of Credit (LoCs) worth US\$6.28 billion have been extended to

about 48 African countries. Scientific and technological cooperation is another important element of India's development cooperation with Africa. India's growing economic footprint in Africa holds immense opportunities for the continent, but to deepen its economic ties with Africa, India must focus on improving African capacity and effective implementation of its schemes.

# Political and Economic Scenarios for Africa

## Session 4

The session chair, **Maria Podkopaeva**, introduced the session. This session focused on the emerging political and economic scenarios for Africa and its impact on the rest of the world.

### PRESENTATIONS

#### HHS Viswanathan

Africa is not a monolith, and there are wide diversities in the continent. Therefore, generalisations can lead to wrong conclusions. Yet, there is some merit in considering the issues of the continent from a larger perspective. Despite the diversities, because of historical reasons, there are certain convergences among the countries.

Today, the continent is witnessing its greatest resurgence in modern history. There is universal recognition that Africa is the continent of the future. It is, therefore, useful to look at some broad trends that will inform Africa's development in the short and medium terms.

Seven broad trends can be identified in the political and socio-economic domains:

- (1) The political resurgence of Africa after the end of the Cold War is seeing some changes. It is true that in the 1990s and 2000s, the number of violent conflicts and military coup d'etats went down drastically. Most of the African countries adopted multi-party democracies. Now, successful elections are being held in almost all countries. Yet challenges remain. There is an increasing trend towards constitutional amendments to extend term limits. This, per se, cannot be condemned as bad. In some cases, such as Rwanda and the Peoples' Republic of Congo, the leaders seem to be popular because of the good work they are doing. However, the question is whether most of the countries have become just electoral

democracies without further devolution of authority. The question of good governance is also relevant in this context.

- (2) Peace and stability in the continent has improved considerably. Today, most of the security threats are of a non-traditional nature. There are hardly any inter-state conflicts. Yet, there are pockets of instability such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia, which are fast turning into failed states. This is serious, because the instability could spread to other areas. The positive trend is Africa's efforts to deal with them. The recent establishment of a Rapid Reaction Force is an example. At the most fundamental level, the two basic reasons for instability are deprivation and institutional weakness.
- (3) Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism is increasing across the continent, and there seems to be no immediate solution. With a proliferation of terrorist groups, there is a new trend of so-called 'competitive terrorism', which is cause for worry.
- (4) The economic resurgence of the continent at the turn of the century is now slowing down. The global economic climate coupled with a decrease in demand in China for commodities may be the factors. African economies are not yet resilient enough to absorb such shocks. Many are still heavily dependent on a few commodities. The current situation should be an incentive for Africa to invest heavily in agriculture and manufacturing, for which both physical and human infrastructure must be improved.
- (5) Africa's demographic dividend is set to grow substantially. Two-thirds of Africa's population is less than 35 years of age. However, unless the young population is trained and skilled, the dividend could become a nightmare. This is an area where international cooperation could be vital.
- (6) The continent is integrating rapidly, and this trend will continue at an even faster pace. Already, sub-regional and regional integration are yielding great benefits to the countries, both small and big. Intra-Africa trade is still a small proportion of the continent's total trade. Efforts are on to change this. The merger of three RECs—EAC, COMESA and SADC—to form a mega FTA is an example.
- (7) Africa's growth and development in the short and medium term is likely to be circumscribed by Agenda 2063 adopted by the African Union in 2013. This is a bold new initiative to find African solutions to African problems. It lays stress on pan-Africanism, unity, solidarity and integration.

## Yury Byaly

The African continent has a special historical legacy. Traditionalistic way of life dominates in Africa. People have loyalties with their tribes, and old conflicts between tribes continue to influence political processes. On the other hand, Africa also has a very unique colonial history. African borders were made by the Europeans using simple rulers, and these borders do not reflect any real distribution of ethnicities and tribes. A typical African country is composed of at least a dozen different ethnic and tribal groups. Such ethnic groups often compete for political dominance. There are quasi state-like organisations within each African country. Therefore, it is difficult to come up with a system of power with an overwhelming majority. Further, tribalism often leads to a situation in which rules of law and justice are obligatory for only one group. In modern Africa, we often face the problem of imitation democracy. This means that while all western democratic procedures are absorbed, during any systemic crisis, it immediately turns into either open dictatorship of the elites of the dominant tribe or ends in another coup d'état.

In addition, given the high fertility rates, most African countries have witnessed high rates of population growth. As a result, there is an acute deficit of land and water resources. Poverty and the lack of gainful employment opportunities have exacerbated conflicts in these countries. Most of the urban residents in Africa live in slums without any prospects of a better life and separated from the traditional structures of control. Such slums become the recruiting ground for terrorist groups.

The demographic pressure combined with poverty and hunger leads to millions of internal refugees, who are willing to migrate to other parts of the world to look for a better future. According to UN data, there are 17 million registered refugees in Africa. Such a huge number of refugees puts an enormous pressure on Europe. In 2015, 12 million African migrants lived and worked in Europe. In Turkey, such transit control can be an important political capital and can be used as a bargaining chip with Europe.

Another impediment to African development is that its mineral wealth does not contribute to national development. The African elites corner most of the resource rents. Moreover, the large number of tribes make it difficult for foreign companies to extract resources. There is also an acute shortage of skilled labour in Africa. This is largely because the colonial governments spent no efforts towards developing skills in the local population. Most African countries also lack the financial resources to develop infrastructure. Therefore, most of the large projects are externally funded, and external funding of critical projects makes African countries dependent on other countries.

Unfortunately, the number of conflicts in Africa has increased in the last 15 years. Conflicts within African countries not only create impediments to African development but also pose security

threats to the rest of the world. The global community must understand the risks that African conflicts pose to the rest of the world.



# Closing Remarks

Summing up the conference, Mr. HHS Viswanathan stated that the discussions had been intense, and the experts had analysed all aspects of economic and political developments in Africa. He also mentioned that, as a scholar who works on African issues, he learnt a great deal from the new ideas that were brought up in the conference. He stressed the need for Indian and Russian scholars to carry forward the learnings from this conference by writing joint papers with each other in the future.

ECC's Mr. Yury Byaly said that the conference was productive. He pointed out that the experts from India and Russia brought out many new ideas that will help in shaping Indian and Russian policies towards Africa.

# About the Speakers

## HHS Viswanathan

HHS Viswanathan is Distinguished Fellow at the Observer Research foundation (ORF), New Delhi. Earlier, he was a member of the Indian Foreign Service for 34 years. He has a long and diverse experience in international relations and diplomacy. His former foreign assignments include Belgium, Zaire, Czechoslovakia, Germany, China, Italy, Cote d'Ivoire, US and Nigeria. He was the Head of Mission (Ambassador/High Commissioner) in Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria, with concurrent accreditation to Niger, Guinea (Conakry), Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Benin, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and Sao Tome and Principe. At the headquarters of Ministry of External Affairs, he has been Deputy Secretary (East Europe) and Joint Secretary (Administration). In the US, he was Consul General of India in San Francisco, with consular jurisdiction over 14 States in the mid-West and West coast of the US.

## Uma Purushothaman

Uma Purushothaman is an Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations and Politics, Central University of Kerala. Prior to this, she was a Research Fellow at ORF, New Delhi. An alumnus of Jawaharlal Nehru University, she has worked with the United Services Institution of India and SAGE Publications. Her areas of interest include US foreign and domestic policies, great power politics, human security, food security, foreign aid and soft power.

## Kanchi Gupta

Kanchi Gupta is an Associate Fellow with the West Asia Regional Studies Initiative at ORF, New Delhi. Her research focuses on India's West Asia policy, and the political and security dynamics in the region through the prism of extra-regional stakeholders.

Kanchi holds a Master's degree in International Studies and Diplomacy from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. She also has a Master's degree in International Politics from the University of Bath. Her articles have been published in *Foreign Policy*, *Haaretz*, *The Jerusalem Post* and *The Diplomat*.

## **Malancha Chakrabarty**

Malancha Chakrabarty is an Associate Fellow at ORF, New Delhi. Her research explores the nature and impact of Indian trade, investment and development cooperation in Africa. She is particularly interested in understanding the impact of emerging countries, such as India and China, on Africa's development process.

## **Yury Byaly**

Yury Byaly is the Vice President of the IPF-ECC. His area of research includes problems of geo-economy, global policy, and energy issues.

## **Maria Podkopaeva**

Maria Podkopaeva is the Head of Information and Analysis Division at the IPF-ECC. Her area of research includes historic religious tradition in Central Asia, and contemporary manifestations of Islamic radicalism.

## **Eduard Kryukov**

Eduard Kryukov is a Senior Analyst at the IPF-ECC. His areas of research are new international alliances, and history of emergence and current state of radical movements.

## **Mikhael Dmitriev**

Mikhael Dmitriev is an Analyst at the IPF-ECC. He concentrates on research of the current trends on the international arena, with special attention to drug trafficking.







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