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# **INDIA-AFRICA DEFENCE COOPERATION**

**An Overview of an Untouched  
Possible Opportunity**

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# Introduction

India and Africa have maintained steadfast friendship and have been extended neighbours for decades. The broader political commonality between these two nations have been associated with the context of Non-Alignment Movement and the historical suffering of being colonised and imperial. India and Africa have a long-standing relationship based on shared values, historical ties, and common interests. Great leaders like MK Gandhi and Nelson Mandela have also contributed to the formation of the friendship between the two nations who share the Indian Ocean thus becoming close neighbours than extended ones<sup>1</sup>. This interactions between the two leaders fostered and increased the interaction between the two States. Trade between them increased, bringing not only products but also sharing diasporas; over two million Indians migrated to Africa since the rise. Along with this India contributed largely to United Nations Peacekeeping forces which deepened their ties more than before. India has been actively engaged with Africa in various fields, including defence and security. India's defence cooperation with Africa has been growing steadily over the years, with the focus on capacity building, training, and equipment supply. The cooperation is based on mutual respect, mutual benefit, and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

India has been a key partner in Africa's development, providing assistance in areas such as infrastructure development, agriculture, education, and health. Defence cooperation is an integral part of this partnership, as it provides the necessary support for the maintenance of peace and security in the region. India's defence cooperation with Africa is guided by its commitment to the principles of the United Nations Charter, which emphasizes the importance of international cooperation for peace, security, and development. This paper provides an overview of India-Africa defence cooperation, highlighting the key areas of cooperation, challenges, and opportunities. The paper also examines the significance of the cooperation and its implications for the region's security and stability.

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<sup>1</sup> *India-South Africa relations* (no date) *High Commission of India Pretoria* . Available at: [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South\\_Africa\\_Sept2019-1.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South_Africa_Sept2019-1.pdf) (Accessed: 29 May 2023).

## Historical Context of the Cooperation

India-Africa defence cooperation has a history that dates back to the 1960s when several African countries gained independence from colonial powers. India was among the first countries to support the decolonization of Africa and played an active role in the Non-Aligned Movement, which emphasized the need for countries to remain independent of the superpowers during the Cold War<sup>2</sup>. In the early years of Indian independence, India supported the struggle against colonialism in Africa and provided assistance to African countries in various fields, including education, agriculture, and healthcare. In 1955, India hosted the first Afro-Asian Conference, which was attended by leaders of newly independent African countries. During the 1960s and 1970s, India provided military training and equipment to several African countries. India's defense ties with Africa were based on the principles of mutual respect, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and support for the national liberation movements<sup>3</sup>. In the 1980s, India-Africa defense cooperation was affected by the end of the Cold War and the emergence of new power centres. However, India continued to provide assistance to African countries in the form of military training and equipment, as well as peacekeeping operations.

In recent years, India's defense cooperation with Africa has gained momentum with the growing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean region. India has signed defense agreements with several African countries, including South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, and has provided training and equipment to African peacekeeping forces. Over the years, this cooperation has grown stronger, and several elements have emerged that define the nature of India-Africa defense cooperation.

## Interactions between India-Africa

Expansion of China's presence in Africa has become a great threat to India. The strategies and tactics used by the Chinese in order to gain more support from Africa is also quite evident. India

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<sup>2</sup> Banda, P.C. (2020) *India-Africa Relations: 1947 to the present*, *Diplomatist*. Available at: <https://diplomatist.com/2020/08/26/india-africa-relations-1947-to-the-present/> (Accessed: 30 May 2023).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

on the other hand has been more mellow with its approach, there was less attention on Africa until 2008, when the first India-Africa-Forum was held (in Delhi, 2008)<sup>4</sup>. This was the first meeting, which gave new meaning and insights towards enhancing the fading relationship between. Effort since then has been considered but very slow. However, the emergence of the India-Africa Forum Summits (IAFS), the cooperation between the two countries reached a new level, where the relationship became more structured and the commercial relationship grew consistently. The Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme, a new credit line of US\$ 5.4 billion, and an increase in the number of scholarships for African students were all announced by India at the first summit in 2008<sup>5</sup>. A strategy to foster tighter collaboration for food security was revealed at the second Summit in 2011. A fresh \$5 billion credit line and \$700 million in funding have also been promised by India in support of the establishment of new institutions in Africa<sup>6</sup>.

On the other hand, the third India-Africa Forum Summit unquestionably signalled a turning point. Compared to the previous two summits, this one adhered to the Banjul Principle and included all 54 African countries. In addition to announcing a new credit line worth \$10 billion, financial assistance of \$600 million, and an increase of 50,000 scholarships for African students, India made a number of financial announcements at the summit. Following the meeting, the Indian Prime Minister, Vice President, and President paid several notable visits<sup>7</sup>. In order to promote better marine security cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, the prime minister visited Africa in July 2016. A subcommittee review meeting for the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) held in Delhi in September 2019, covered all facets of developer collaboration, a topic that has gained interest

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<sup>4</sup> Alex Vines. Programme, “India’s Africa Engagement: Prospects for the 2011 India– Africa Forum”. Paper: AFP 2010, December 1, 2010, p. 4, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/1210vines.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Singh, S.P. (no date) *India-Africa Defence Cooperation: Moving Beyond Engagement*, CAPSINDIA. Available at: <https://capsindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/DD-Journal-January-March-2022-Swaim-Prakash-Singh.pdf> (Accessed: 29 May 2023).

<sup>6</sup> Alex Vines. Programme, “India’s Africa Engagement: Prospects for the 2011 India– Africa Forum”. Paper: AFP 2010, December 1, 2010, p. 4, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Africa/1210vines.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Malancha Chakrabarty, “Understanding India’s Engagement with Africa”, *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, vol. 11, no. 3, July–September 2016, p. 268, [http:// associationdiplomats.org/Publications/ifaj/Vol11/11.3/11.3-ARTICLE per cent204. pdf](http://associationdiplomats.org/Publications/ifaj/Vol11/11.3/11.3-ARTICLE per cent204. pdf).

recently. To improve bilateral relations, new areas of collaboration have been created in fields including digital technology, solar energy, conventional medicine, Indian Lines of Credit, and others. The International Solar Alliance, which was founded by India with the fervent backing of African nations, was a resounding success.

## The China Factor

Africa is a bowl full of opportunities, especially for those countries that seek to show their dominance on the global stage, Africa provides a scope to expand diplomatic influence, enlarge military capabilities and markets to supply resources. China utilized this platform to its full potential. Under the communist regimes of Mao Zedong, China was quick to make use of the opportunity in 1949, maintaining good relations with Africa became a strategic goal for China<sup>8</sup>. For Mao, the export of Maoist ideology became an incentive to the relations. After him, Premier Zhao Ziyang, enhanced the importance of Africa for China as the former is rich in scarce minerals, land and oil. Currently, Africa, after the Middle East is the highest exporter of oil to China—especially Angola, Nigeria, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Sudan—exporting 28 percent of the oil in China. The People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) also views Africa as the potential base to expand and extend its operational reach into the India Ocean as their presence in these waters is strategically important<sup>9</sup>.

Beijing maintained this relationship with Africa by regularly interacting at the Party and Ministerial levels. Along with this China sent thousands of teachers, doctors and medical staff and aid teams to Africa. It has also used its soft power in establishing over 38 Confucius Centres and classrooms. The China-Africa summit has also been organised regularly since 2000, which have been attended by Heads of State and Ministers to strengthen their relationship.

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<sup>8</sup> Ranade, J. (2015) ‘China in Africa: Resourcing its Global Ambitions’, *India and Africa: Forging a Strategic Partnership* [Preprint], (October).

<sup>9</sup> Ranade, J. (2015) ‘China in Africa: Resourcing its Global Ambitions’, *India and Africa: Forging a Strategic Partnership* [Preprint], (October).

China has always viewed the West as a threat and in order to counter the western influence in Africa China utilized a positive sentiment strategy by portraying itself as a non-dupable nation by adopting people-centric infrastructure projects and shelling out easy, low rates financial assistance without stern conditions on corruption etc. Additionally, China provided private loans to leaders, for example, China's Export-Import Bank extended \$67.2 billion in loans to sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, China appeared to be a more preferred partner for aid. China has invested \$12 billion in infrastructure projects in 35 countries and until 2013 China had already built 3530 kilometres of road and has built 34 power plants, 9 ports, 11 bridges and 14 airports. Today, China has great influence in the region which is a result of decade long investments in cultivating and constructing Africa. Consistent interactions between officials of both States has assured the leaders of Africa about their importance in the international community. The assistance in the construction of public services and other infrastructure projects has put China in the positive light<sup>10</sup>.

## Key Areas of Cooperation

Over the past few decades, the international system has seen the creation of fresh and complicated security issues, both within and among nation-states. Effective solutions to emerging and non-traditional challenges, such as combating climate change, international terrorism, transnational organised crime, the spread of infectious illnesses, and illegal immigration, have thus become critically important. Due to the nature of these new issues, it is difficult, if not impossible, for any state to act on their own. When all these dangers are considered, it is clear that greater cross-regional security cooperation is required. India and African nations have attempted to develop strong defence and security ties considering this. Although these relationships are neither established nor conclusive, they are nonetheless moving forward<sup>11</sup>. The fact that so many of the thematic focal areas of Agenda 2063's long-term strategic vision connect to significant issues in Indian foreign policy is very intriguing. These include issues like climate change, transnational crimes, and peacekeeping, as well as the women, peace, and security agenda. Additionally, the

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<sup>10</sup> ibid

<sup>11</sup> Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, IndiaAfrica Strategic Dialogue: Session V – Bilateral Issues – Security, [https://idsa.in/event/IndiaAfricaStrategicDialogue\\_sessionV](https://idsa.in/event/IndiaAfricaStrategicDialogue_sessionV).

leaders of India and Africa openly acknowledge the link between peace and security and economic success. Without a stable and safe environment, development cannot take place.

## Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

India and African countries are conscious of the serious threat terrorism and violent non-state actors pose to their shared objectives of accelerated economic expansion and social stability. Many African countries, as well as India, have been impacted by terrorism and violent extremism carried out by Boko Haram, al-Shabaab, Ahlu Sunnah Wa Ja'ma, Jaish e-Mohammed, and al-Qaeda. Indian and African peace and security actors have exerted significant efforts to break up terrorist networks, restrict illegal financial flows, and halt cross-border unlawful movements in order to confront the threats posed by terrorism<sup>12</sup>.

In order to assist the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, which India proposed in 1996, African countries and India worked together<sup>13</sup>. Its objectives include criminalising all types of international terrorism and depriving terrorists, their sponsors, and sympathisers of cash, weapons, and safe havens<sup>14</sup>. These endeavours have also been supported by shared pledges and objectives between the governments of India and Africa through multilateral bodies like the UN Security Council.

Indian institutions have trained African defence, military, naval, and civilian personnel. Indian institutions have also ensured maritime security, primarily through joint sea patrols and anti-piracy operations. Finally, Indian institutions have sent troops and police units to UN peacekeeping missions. The African Union's Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) has long had the support of India. To support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and the functioning of the African Standby Force, it has made financial contributions to the UN Trust Fund (\$2 million in 2011 and \$1 million in 2021).

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<sup>12</sup> Singh, P. and Mishra, A. (2021) *The untapped potential of India-Africa Security Cooperation*, Institute for Security Studies. Available at: <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/AR-36-01.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> BRICS Condemns all forms of terrorism, calls for early terror convention, NDTV, 27 September 2019, [www.ndtv.com/worldnews/brics-condemns-all-forms-of-terrorism-calls-for-early-terrorconvention-2107919](http://www.ndtv.com/worldnews/brics-condemns-all-forms-of-terrorism-calls-for-early-terrorconvention-2107919).

<sup>14</sup> Lucknow Declaration: 1st India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave, 2020, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 6 February 2020, <https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/32378>.



## Capacity Building

Capacity building is another element of India-Africa defense cooperation. India has been providing technical assistance to African countries to improve their defense capabilities. India has been sharing its experiences in defense modernization and military planning with African countries. India has also been providing scholarships to African military officers to study in Indian defense academies. India has been providing training to African military personnel in various fields, such as counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, and disaster relief operations and has also been supplying military equipment, including aircraft, helicopters, and naval vessels, to African countries. Two important recent developments show the military and political implications of developing Indo-African security cooperation:

The 2019 Africa-India Field Training Exercise, or AFINDEX-19: The inaugural India and African Nations Index (AFINDEX) was held in March 2019 at the Aundh Military Station in Pune, India. Participating in the 10-day drill were 17 African nations, including Benin, Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe<sup>15</sup>. The exercise's main goals were to plan and execute humanitarian anti-mine aid and peacekeeping operations by sharing best practises, assembling teams, and carrying out tactical-level operations while carrying out UN-mandated duties<sup>16</sup>. Additionally, there were tactical drills for securing convoys and neutralising improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The regularity of these training sessions would improve military coordination between the armies of India and African countries. The ultimate objective is to improve security cooperation and defence readiness between India and Africa.

The Indo-African Defence Ministers Conclave (IADMC) and the Lucknow Declaration The first IADMC took place concurrently with DefExpo-2020 in February 2020 in Lucknow, India<sup>17</sup>. The

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<sup>15</sup> Opening ceremony: Africa-India field training exercise – 2019, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, 18 March 2019, <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1569009>.

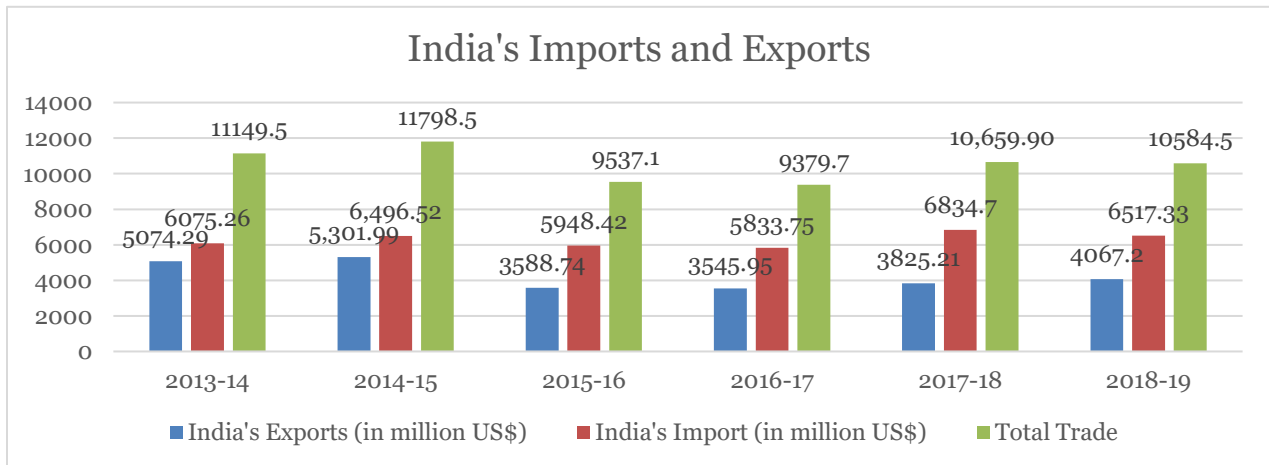
<sup>16</sup> HHS Viswanathan and Abhishek Mishra, The ten guiding principles for India-Africa engagement: Finding coherence in India's Africa policy, Observer Research Foundation, Occasional Paper, 25 June 2019, [www.orfonline.org/research/the-ten-guiding-principles-forindia-africa-engagement-finding-coherence-in-indias-africa-policy/](http://www.orfonline.org/research/the-ten-guiding-principles-forindia-africa-engagement-finding-coherence-in-indias-africa-policy/).

<sup>17</sup> 1st India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave 2020, Lucknow, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 6 February 2020, [https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32380/1st\\_IndiaAfrica\\_Defence\\_Ministers\\_Conclave\\_2020\\_Lucknow](https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32380/1st_IndiaAfrica_Defence_Ministers_Conclave_2020_Lucknow)

conclave was attended by representatives and parliamentarians from 38 African countries, as well as 13 defence ministers and leaders of the armed forces from 14 African countries. The outcome of the gathering was the adoption of the Lucknow Declaration, the first agreement between Indian and African leaders specifically dealing to defence, security, and military cooperation<sup>18</sup>. The IADMC provides leaders from India and Africa with a genuine platform for in-depth discussion at the highest level. This platform helps Indian and African leaders investigate joint projects and investments in the creation of defence software, research, and cybersecurity, as well as the provision of defence equipment, spare parts, and maintenance.

## Commercial Ties

The number of commercial interactions has increased since diplomatic ties were established in 1993. In 2012–13 and 2013–14, India's imports from South Africa decreased, primarily as a result of restrictions the GOI placed on the purchase of gold. the latest figures on bilateral trade<sup>19</sup>.



**FIGURE 1: CREATED BY THE AUTHOR, DATA ACCESSED FROM HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA**

<sup>18</sup> Lucknow Declaration: 1st India-Africa Defence Ministers Conclave, 2020, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 6 February 2020, <https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/32378>.

<sup>19</sup> *India-South Africa relations* (no date) *High Commission of India Pretoria*. Available at: [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South\\_Africa\\_Sept2019-1.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South_Africa_Sept2019-1.pdf) (Accessed: 29 May 2023).

Trade between the two countries has a lot of space to grow. Some of the things that India sends to South Africa include automobiles and their components, transportation equipment, pharmaceuticals, engineering products, footwear, dyes and intermediates, chemicals, textiles, rice, diamonds, and jewellery. Among the minerals that South Africa exports to India are gold, steam coal, copper ores and concentrates, phosphoric acid, manganese ore, aluminium ingots, and other minerals<sup>20</sup>.

## Training and Assistance

By training hundreds of African military officers and security guards at Indian institutions like the Indian Military Academy, the National Defence College, the Indian Naval Academy, and the Centre for UN Peacekeeping in New Delhi, among others, India has prioritised knowledge and expertise transfer with its African partners. A large number of educational facilities and military academies were also built with support from India in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria. Collaboration in the sectors of defence and security is crucial given the similarities between Indian and African military histories, strategic theories, command structures, and training techniques. Training missions have previously been held in Uganda, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania, and Mauritius. India has provided assistance for the building of armed forces war game facilities in Uganda, Ghana, and Nigeria as well as a defence and navy war college in Nigeria<sup>21</sup>.

## Maritime Security

The expanding security collaboration between India and Africa now includes maritime security as a key element. For the Indian and African Indian Ocean littorals to preserve their respective common interests and achieve sustainable national development, a safe and secure marine environment in the IOR is a necessary condition. India has a long history of engaging in marine

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<sup>20</sup> *India-South Africa relations* (no date) *High Commission of India Pretoria*. Available at: [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South\\_Africa\\_Sept2019-1.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/South_Africa_Sept2019-1.pdf) (Accessed: 29 May 2023).

<sup>21</sup> India helps Uganda to set up military war game centre, *The Economic Times*, 24 May 2020, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-helps-uganda-to-set-up-military-wargame-centre/articleshow/75941090.cms>.

trade and commerce with nations in the area and has helped African nations by providing them with military assistance, capacity-building tools, and training support.

India recognises the importance of the 'Vanilla Islands' in the Indian Ocean as well as the inclusion of South Africa, Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania in its Indo-Pacific policy. The emphasis has been on fostering more collaboration in order to secure crucial communication routes and stop transnational maritime crimes including illicit fishing, piracy, and armed robbery<sup>22</sup>. On the issue of marine security between India and Africa, these are all areas of agreement<sup>23</sup>.

India focuses on marine domain awareness capabilities throughout the region via data exchange and surveillance in conjunction with African Indian Ocean littorals. This is mostly tied to Indian concerns over growing Chinese influence and competition in the region<sup>24</sup>. In order to better track risks on the high seas, India hopes to include additional African countries in its coastal radar chain network. Inclusion of Madagascar, Seychelles, and Mauritius into India's array of coastal radars has already occurred. At its Information Fusion Centre, which is jointly controlled by the Coast Guard and Navy, India is actively seeking African countries to station their liaison personnel.

## Challenges and Recommendations

India-Africa defence cooperation faces several challenges, including inadequate funding, lack of institutional capacity, and bureaucratic hurdles. African countries often face budgetary constraints that limit their ability to invest in defence and security. This limits their capacity to acquire modern military equipment and invest in training programs. India has been providing assistance to African

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<sup>22</sup> Ensuring secure seas: Indian maritime security strategy, Indian navy, Naval Strategic Publication (NSP) 1.2, 15 October 2015, [www.indiannavy.nic.in/sites/default/files/Indian\\_Maritime\\_Security\\_Strategy\\_Document\\_25Jan16.pdf](http://www.indiannavy.nic.in/sites/default/files/Indian_Maritime_Security_Strategy_Document_25Jan16.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> R Chaudhury, India joins Indian ocean commission as observer bolstering Indo-Pacific vision, The Economic Times, 6 March 2020, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-joinsindian-ocean-commission-as-observer-bolstering-indo-pacificvision/articleshow/74518307.cms>. See also R Chelin and D Reva, Africa can learn maritime lessons from its small island states, Institute for Security Studies, ISS Today, 4 March 2021, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/africa-can-learn-maritime-lessonsfrom-its-small-island-states>.

<sup>24</sup> China's growing presence in Indian Ocean a challenge for India: Navy Chief Lanba, The Economic Times, 14 March 2014, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/chinasgrowing-presence-in-indian-ocean-a-challenge-for-india-navychief-lanba/articleshow/68409545.cms>

countries in these areas, but there is a need for more investment in defence and security. Another challenge facing India-Africa defence cooperation is the lack of institutional capacity in African countries. Many African countries lack the necessary institutions and infrastructure to manage and maintain modern military equipment. This limits their ability to effectively utilize the equipment provided by India. India has been providing technical assistance and training to African countries in this regard, but more needs to be done to develop institutional capacity.

Despite these challenges, India-Africa defence cooperation presents several opportunities. India's growing economy and military strength provide African countries with a reliable partner in the defence and security field. India's experience in dealing with non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism and cybercrime, can be valuable for African countries facing similar challenges. India-Africa defence cooperation can also contribute to the maintenance of regional peace and security. Trade between the two countries has a lot of space to grow. Automobiles and their parts, transportation equipment, pharmaceuticals, engineering products, footwear, dyes and intermediates, chemicals, textiles, rice, gems and jewellery are just a few of the items that India exports to South Africa. Gold, steam coal, copper ores and concentrates, phosphoric acid, manganese ore, aluminium ingots, and other minerals are some of the minerals that South Africa sends to India<sup>25</sup>.

India's long-term strategic objective is in positive interaction with African nations. Given the growing influence of the US and China in Africa, it is prudent to take action to more fully include African nations. It is believed that the military diplomacy tool should be more effectively used to advance overall relations between India and African countries. Additionally, cooperation with nations that have strategic offshoots must be actively pursued. India should pursue a proactive strategy of military engagement in Africa, including with both regional organisations and individual nations. Additionally, it is thought to be crucial to increase the African Union forces' capacity, particularly in the areas of logistical management and communication and information systems, where they rely heavily on outside assistance. Relevantly, improved military ties with

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<sup>25</sup> Dutta, A. (2008) *Indo - African Defence Cooperation: Need for Enhanced Thrust, Indo - African Defence Cooperation: Need For Enhanced Thrust | Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses*. Available at: [https://www.idsa.in/jds/2\\_2\\_2008\\_IndoAfricanDefenceCooperation\\_ADutta](https://www.idsa.in/jds/2_2_2008_IndoAfricanDefenceCooperation_ADutta)

African countries will present fantastic chances to increase India's influence in this crucial region. Depending on its strategic significance and potential consequences, the contact with pertinent nations needs to be categorised.

Nevertheless, it's crucial to proceed slowly and deliberately. The military-to-military interaction between India and Africa must increase especially with key nations like South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Ghana, and Kenya through staff meetings and other formalised defence cooperation mechanisms that are a part of the strategic level framework. India should also maintain impartial communication with nations such as Seychelles, Lesotho, Egypt, and Ethiopia through institutionalised military cooperation mechanisms, such as staff meetings at the functional level. Additionally, it is seen wise to engage in military-to-military exchanges with other nations as needed, depending on the circumstances. These efforts could be focused on a nation's interests or on what we need. India can also use a combination of exercises that help the development or enhancement of doctrine, intelligence, and logistics. India must establish a framework of regional cooperation with the countries along the Indian Ocean's coastline in order to combat threats from non-state actors, particularly those linked to terrorism, armed robbery, and piracy when it comes to safeguarding maritime security.

Another important recommendation for the relations is that the UN and AU's initiatives should be tied into and complemented by strong India-African partnerships. The challenge, once more, will lie in the specifics of any novel security cooperation frameworks. As a result, key political actors on both sides must fully support routine interventions and exchanges that can be sustained over extended time periods. Most importantly, these exchanges must effectively harness the strategic value of each side to forge closer bonds of cooperation on matters of common interest for peace and security.

## Conclusion

The necessity for expanded India-Africa security cooperation stems from the untapped potential of a strategic alliance that downplays peace and security as a prerequisite for the full accomplishment of both countries' political and economic goals. Even though such an admission has been made in writing, Indian and African stakeholders should give it much more thinking given the widespread lack of action and follow-up to affect the peace and security component of

the India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation. Because of this, there are many chances and points of entry for further cooperation, especially considering the significance of the AU.

It is impossible to emphasise the relevance of this relationship given the growing geostrategic weight that some African states have in India's foreign policy considerations. India aims to safeguard its long-standing sphere of influence while balancing its security bets throughout the greater Indian Ocean region. Similar to this, in a geopolitical landscape that is becoming more crowded, African peace and security stakeholders, particularly African island and littoral states in the Indian Ocean, would need to recognise India's goals and ambitions in international relations. Working through formalised multilateral venues like the IAFS provides a key opportunity to advance shared international objectives, promote standards, and manage any instabilities that may arise due to unilateral actions that have not been well studied.

The fundamental challenge is to identify specific areas of mutual benefit and integrate them into a complete framework for security cooperation that is in accordance with the larger regional and global interests of both parties. Additionally, the strategic partnership between India and Africa may act as a catalyst for innovative new forms of south-south security cooperation in terms of talent and knowledge transfer, peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and mediation. In addition to strengthening UN and AU-led multilateral initiatives, a more security-focused India-Africa strategic engagement should consider the limitations of traditional peace and security measures in light of the dynamic nature of international crises. As a result, a strategic partnership between India and Africa based on a more extensive and meaningful form of security cooperation might serve as a testing ground for fresh, innovative concepts and tactics that more effectively serve and work towards the full realisation of shared African and Indian goals.

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