

INDIA'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT AFRICA HAS BEEN UNEQUIVOCALLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE AFRICAN LEADERSHIP: VICE PRESIDENT

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Vice President's Secretariat

India's commitment to support Africa has been unequivocally acknowledged by the African leadership: Vice President

Inaugurates 'India for Humanity' meant to commemorate the 150 birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Malawi;

Launches the very first Jaipur Foot Camp in this series;

Vice President successfully completes 3-nation Africa Visit

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Extending India's continuous engagement with Africa, the Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has successfully completed the three nations visit to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi, today. During his weeklong visit, he held wide range discussions with the President of Botswana, Mr. Mokgweetsi Masisi, the President of Zimbabwe, Mr. Emmerson Mnangagwa and the President of Malawi, Mr. Peter Mutharika and other leaders in line with Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi had recently set out 10 guiding principles to enhance our engagement with Africa.

The Vice President was received with great warmth and affection in all the three nations. The President of Botswana broke protocol and flew back from his visit to Mozambique to meet the Vice President when he was leaving for Zimbabwe at the airport.

The President of Zimbabwe, Mr. Emmerson Mnangagwa spent more than an hour with Shri Naidu to discuss various issues of mutual interest and in Malawi, the President hosted luncheon in the honour of the Vice President where the first lady was also present.

The Vice President's visit was very significant as this was the first high level visit after a significant gap to these three countries. In fact, in Zimbabwe, it was after 21 years.

Speaking to media onboard Air India One, the Vice President said that with the high level visit of the Vice President, India has been able to make 29 visits to Africa at the

level President, Vice President and Prime Minister and called it an unprecedented feat. He further said that his visit would help to build on strong foundations and take relations to next level by reinforcing existing ties and forging relationship in new areas. The outcome of my visit clearly indicates that this has been achieved, he added.

India's commitment to support Africa in its developmental process and its efforts in improving diplomatic, bilateral and people-to-people contacts have been unequivocally acknowledged by all the three Presidents, he said.

The Vice President said that Zimbabwe President openly thanking India for standing by the country during their period of isolation was recognition to India's commitment. He said the leadership of the all three nations thanked India for a sustained development assistance extended through Lines of Credit and grants for various projects.

During his visit, India made substantial commitment to Botswana, Zimbabwe and Malawi on development partnership and assistance. US\$ 350 million for projects in Zimbabwe, US \$ 220 million of Lines of Credit for water supply projects in Malawi as well as setting up of Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre in Zimbabwe and Malawi as grant assistance were among those.

The Vice President said that capacity building was of special interest to all three countries and they were uniformly appreciative of India's ITEC programme and the generous slots we give for training of their nationals in a variety of fields. With Botswana, the Vice President offered to increase the slots from the current 140 per year. India also agreed to depute experts for training of their junior diplomats. We are also deputing 5 experts in various fields to assist Zimbabwe under ITEC, he added.

During his interactions with the Vice President and the leadership of three African Nations crucial issues including capacity building, technological knowledge sharing through ITEC programmes, opportunities in trading Minerals including uranium, copper, nickel and railways and infrastructure, logistics etc topped the list. India's support in providing Skill Development, tele-education and tele-medicine in African region was appreciated by the leadership.

The Vice President's visit also witnessed signing of Memorandum of Understandings with all the three nations. MoU with Malawi on providing capacity building in nuclear energy regulatory framework, and its protection, MoU on geology, mining and minerals was signed with Zimbabwe apart from exploring options to have direct trading in raw diamonds with Botswana and Zimbabwe. India signed an MoU on Traditional Medicine with Zimbabwe too.

Other important Agreements included Extradition treaty with Malawi and an agreement in Broadcasting by Prasar Bharati, another one in Arts, Culture, Heritage and an Action Plan on ICT with Zimbabwe.

In the area of health, all three countries were deeply appreciative of medical services

in India as well as the services being rendered by our private sector hospitals in their respective countries and the ever-increasing need for Indian pharmaceuticals products. The Vice President also announced the gifting of Bhabhatron Cancer machine in Malawi and ambulances and life saving drugs in all three countries.

The Vice President informed them about Indian traditional medicine, particularly ayurveda and yoga, and the leadership was in agreement of the fact that there was considerable scope in these areas since all three countries have their own traditional medicine as well.

Agriculture being a crucial area of interest for Africa, All three leaders welcomed the possibility of greater involvement of India in their agriculture sector. The Vice President promised to explore the possibility of greater involvement from our side particularly for value addition and food processing.

The leadership on both sides recognised the need to have greater cooperation in defence sector. Sending Indian Army Training team to Botswana, extending training slots in defence to Zimbabwe and Malawi were among those discussed during Shri Naidu's interactions. All three leaders agreed with the Vice President that security cooperation, particularly in counter-terrorism needs to be strengthened.

In all the three countries, the Vice President interacted with the local and Indian businessman operating there. He was also given the rare honour of inaugurating their prestigious annual Global Expo 2018 where India was represented by 28 companies making it the largest contingent in the event.

Amidst the hectic schedule of bilateral meetings, the Vice President also took time to visit the Diamond Trading Center in Botswana. He also unveiled the plaque to inaugurate the Business Incubation Centre in Malawi built with Indian grant assistance.

The Vice President addressed Indian communities in all the three nations and addressed them during community receptions hosted by respective Ambassadors. During his interactions, he highlighted the transformative reforms undertaken by the Narendra Modi government and informed the audience the growth story of India that is inching closer to become third largest economy in the world.

The Vice President had expressed his happiness for the contribution of the Diaspora in India and their present place of stay. He said that it was heartening to hear about the Diaspora's contribution in the economic development of the three nations.

The Vice President thanked the leadership for supporting India at various international fora including the United Nations. All three leaders expressed their desire to work with India on Solar energy and deeply appreciated India's initiative on the International Solar Alliance.

While Malawi had already signed and ratified the framework agreement on International Solar Alliance, Zimbabwe has signed ISA and, during the Vice

President's visit Botswana, they conveyed to him of their decision to sign it shortly.

The Vice President inaugurated the unique event "India for Humanity" meant to commemorate the 150 birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Malawi. India would be organising camps of the well known Jaipur Foot in all parts of the world and serve the needy with necessary support.

The Government is partnering Bhagwan Mahavir Viklang Sahayata Samiti in this "India for Humanity" initiative.

The Vice President was given the honour of launching the very first Jaipur Foot Camp in this series in Malawi in Africa as Mahatma Gandhi spent more than two decades and eventually led a non-violent movement that liberated India from colonialism and inspired African leaders to free their countries as well.

The Vice President was accompanied by a high level delegation comprising of the Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment, Shri Krishan Pal Gurjar and two members of Parliament namely Shri K. Suresh and Shri V. Muraleedharan, in addition to senior officials.

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