

**SPEECH BY THE RT. HON. SIR ANEROOD
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**PLENARY SESSION OF THE THIRD INDIA-AFRICA
FORUM SUMMIT**

NEW DELHI, INDIA, ON 29 OCTOBER 2015

**Your Excellency, Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of
India,**

**Your Excellency, Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the
African Union,**

**Your Excellency, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma,
Chairperson of the AU Commission,**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like, at the outset, to join my fellow colleague Leaders from Africa to express my very deep gratitude to you Shri Modi-Ji and your Government, for the organization of the third India Africa Forum Summit.

We are at a defining moment in history. The history we have inherited from our forebears; the legacy of visionary leaders of the likes of Nehru, N'kruma and

Nasser. We are the proud torchbearers of that legacy.

Today, I am pleased to take part in the celebration of the meeting of the hearts and minds of Africa and India because we have together enjoyed close historical and cultural ties since the dawn of time.

Distinguished Guests,

My remarks before this august gathering will essentially focus on the great partnership that India and Africa are building together in a spirit of South-South cooperation.

For too long Africa has remained in the backseat and suffered the tragedy of oppression and subjugation.

The tide of the World Order has now changed and Africa is rising resolutely towards a brighter future, in full exercise of its sovereign rights.

It is poised to become a powerful magnet for investment, job creation and sustainable development.

In this endeavor, Africa relies on its close friends like India for support in order to tread the path of success.

Excellencies,

India and Africa have much in common.

Both have a young population, strong urbanization dynamics, and to-day our people have rising disposable income.

Together, we need to find ways and means to further enhance this trade partnership.

India's economic progress in the recent years is a matter of pride. Its technological advances, including in the ICT sector is inspiring and can help us bridge our infrastructural deficits.

As a pioneer of South-South Cooperation, India's investments into Africa are estimated to be over USD57 billion in sectors such as telecommunications, IT, energy,

automobile, with huge investment potential in other sectors.

I remain confident that with India's support, we will unlock the development potential that the continent bestows.

Special relations bind India to Mauritius.

Our relations are unique, multifaceted,
historical and cultural.

Indeed, most of our nation was founded
by the toils and troubles of both our
African and Indian ancestors.

Our relationship has grown in intensity
over the years.

This is testified by the countless bilateral agreements between our two countries, huge imports from India, constant increase in tourist arrivals in Mauritius and the hundred or so Indian companies operating in Mauritius. It will take me hours to elaborate on the special trade facilities between India and Mauritius.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In August this year, I elaborated a new vision 2030 for my country through an Economic Mission Statement. I identified 4 key focus areas that I will personally drive to ensure that we achieve a second economic miracle, namely:

(i) increase air connectivity to the eastern and southern African region, and make Mauritius an important regional aviation hub and an important air corridor between Africa and Asia;

(ii) harness the full potential of our Ocean economy;

(iii) develop our own Africa strategy by becoming a natural bridge between Asia and Africa, through our membership to COMESA, SADC and the Indian Ocean Commission and by conferring duty free and quota free access for products manufactured in Mauritius to encourage companies to conduct their business on the

Continent using Mauritius as a competitive base; and

- (iv) take our economic relations with Africa to the next level by developing special economic zones in our partner African countries with a view to enlarging the economic space of Mauritius, and the African continent as a whole.

It is heartening that many Indian companies have expressed interest in partnering with us to invest in such special economic zones. We very much welcome this.

We have taken a series of concrete measures to transform Mauritius into a regional investment and business hub.

We have also set up the Africa Centre of Excellence under the auspices of the Board of Investment to facilitate investment into the African Continent.

**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and
Gentlemen,**

The India Africa Forum Summit
epitomizes the determination of our two
continents to embark on a renewed
journey of rising tides of prosperity and
still waters of peace.

Today our two nations have gotten together to reaffirm our long-lasting spirit and to choose our better history.

We will remain faithful to the ideals of our forbearers, and look forward to the dawn of a golden Africa-India era.

Most importantly, we shall pledge for a better future for our children and generations to come.

I thank you for your attention.

Jai Hind

Jai Africa

And Jai Mauritius