

## South- South Dialogue: India's Africa Agenda

Renu Modi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Mumbai, Centre for African Studies, India

africamumbai@gmail.com

Tectonic changes that have taken place in the recent past on the African continent and worldwide. Two major noteworthy developments amongst several others are; first, the bipolar world has come to an end since 1989, subsequent to the dissolution of the USSR that has given way to a more globalized, inter-dependant and a multi-polar international system. And second, there has been a dramatic rise in the past decade of countries of the South; Brazil, China, India, and several countries in Africa that are emerging as “new poles of growth” in the revamped global politico-economic order, “...where North and South, East and West, are now points on a compass, not economic destinies...” (Zoellick R., 2010)

This paper highlights the increasing engagement of India in the present decade, one of the components of BRICS ( South Africa being the latest addition to the group), with countries in Africa, after a low point in the 1990s, considered as a ‘lost decade’ when India was dealing with her internal issues on the domestic front and trying to readapt to the post cold war scenario. (Bhatia R., 2010). In the 2000s the Indian government's five main initiatives, namely the ‘Focus Africa Programme’ of the Exim Bank (2002-07), the ‘Techno-Economic Approach for Africa and India Movement’ ( TEAM-9,2004) to upgrade economic relations with West Africa, the Pan-African e-Network (2007 onwards), the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) in 2008 and the India Africa Partnership Conclaves (an Exim Bank- India Inc. effort led by the Confederation of Indian Industries) since 2005 and reciprocal exchanges between political dignitaries and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between India and countries in Africa, bear testimony to the reaffirmation of India’s traditional engagement beyond peacekeeping, capacity building, and education, onto an increased economic engagement through trade and investments with the countries of the continent Newer areas of cooperation that have immense potential, inter-alia, are issues of maritime security and collaborations for counter piracy in the Indian Ocean

The increased engagement between BRICS and countries of Africa and India in particular has certainly provided more policy space and option for the partners in Africa that are now able to shun the conditionality laden Washington consensus- and to use the populist coinage of the World Socialist Forum the scenario has transformed from ‘ There Are No Alternatives’ (TINA) to the forces of globalization, is now transformed to ‘ There Are Many Alternatives’ (TAMA). However, if the engagement results in poverty alleviation on the continent depends on the ‘on whose terms’ does countries in Africa engage with their BRICS partners. This paper aims to offer a critical analysis on the subject, based on empirical data.