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# Africa-Russia+: Achievements, Problems, Prospects

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Africa entered the 21st century with significant achievements and challenges relevant for both the development of the continent and world affairs. Although Africans are responsible for finding solutions to arising problems themselves, Russia is quite capable of making its unique contribution to the search.

A joint report by the Russian International Affairs Council and the African Business Initiative Union provides an analysis of the possibilities of building a multilateral system of cooperation between Russia and world powers with the African community. Such cooperation would be based on the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of African states.

The report used the method of SWOT-analysis to study potential and current problems facing the continent, determine Russia's policy towards Africa and formulate relevant recommendations.

The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of RIAC.

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# Summary

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- In holding the first ever Russia–Africa Summit in Sochi this past October, Russia opened a new chapter in its relations with the continent of Africa, particularly in the economic sphere.
- Competition is heating up among global players on the African continent. The region, which had for centuries been the colonial appendage of several European states, is now attracting an increasing amount of attention from politicians and investors from China, India, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, the United States and, of course, Russia. The success of the Summit demonstrates Russia’s desire to carve out a place for itself on the African continent. And since none of the global players are going to give up their positions in Africa any time soon, the process may very well take on the features of a geopolitical battle if events take an unfavourable turn.
- The continent of Africa entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century on the back of a number of achievements, yet it also faces many challenges. The achievements included stable GDP growth, the gradual strengthening of statehood, the shift towards a new level of economic cooperation, better education, the institutionalization of a number of economic sectors, regulatory initiatives and a general change in the political and economic climate on the continent (for example, the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area). At the same time, Africa faced a number of problems at the turn of the century: the turbulence and “fragility” of a number of African jurisdictions; the imbalance and relative instability of political systems; the lack of social reforms; deadly diseases; and the increase in the number of people born and raised in an atmosphere of military confrontation and active hostilities.
- Despite the fact that the cumulative GDP of African countries still lags far behind that of developed nations, the continent as a whole has great potential. The high economic growth rates and deepening integration of the countries on the African continent set it apart from other regions, which are experiencing increasing economic stagnation and protectionism.
- One of the main problems of the political system in Africa today is the fragmentation of its political map. This is not a result of political diversity as such, but rather of the continent’s colonial legacy and the diverse nature of its cultures, peoples, beliefs and traditions. The rich palette of the historical and cultural substratum of African nations is actually one of the causes of its numerous political problems.
- Of course, Russia is not in a position to single-handedly develop and put into practice an alternative paradigm of interaction between African countries and the outside world. No single global player is capable of this. It is the task of the peoples and leaders of the African countries themselves to resolve the numerous issues facing the continent. What Russia can do, however, is add something unique to the search for solutions. All the more so since the multipolarity of the

modern world demonstrates the need for constructive interaction, rather than the uncoordinated pursuit of narrow interests by individual players.

- We need to take stock of the resources that are available to us and figure out how we can be of use not only in the Africa of today, but also in the Africa of tomorrow. More importantly, we need to discuss all aspects of the opportunities and restraints that currently exist in terms of Russia's involvement in Africa and determine what these opportunities and restraints will look like in the near, medium and long term. It would appear that there is a need to carefully monitor Russia's involvement in Africa, where it has succeeded and where it has failed.
- Russia is an active and sometimes key player in such large alliances and integration associations as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), BRICS, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). By developing trade and economic cooperation with Russia, the countries of Africa gain access to a common market of over 183 million people for their goods and services thanks to Moscow's membership in the EAEU alongside Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Eurasian integration thus opens up additional opportunities for African countries to increase trade with Russia's partners in the EAEU. The fact that African exports to EAEU countries increased from \$2.4 billion in 2010 to \$3.5 billion in 2018 is proof of this. Trade has grown with all five EAEU countries.
- Potential areas for cooperation are already well-developed in Russia. These areas include geological exploration and mining, space exploration, the energy industry (power generation and infrastructure projects, including alternative energy and electric power distribution), the defence industry, healthcare, education, social services, the environment, etc. The need for action and decision-making in a competitive environment is a challenge that can lead to breakthrough in the process of the development and implementation of new approaches in economics, politics, humanitarian aid, etc.
- In working with Africa, Russia gains access to a large and constantly growing market that has positive demographic dynamics and a rapidly emerging middle class.
- All Russian actors present on the African continent are bound by the need to develop a comprehensive, consistent and consolidated approach to the search for solutions to a range of issues that are of concern to modern Africa. In this situation, we need to find new and effective forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation that are firmly rooted in our common past, take due account of the current geopolitical situation and are aimed at resolving global tasks.

# Introduction

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The First Russia–Africa Summit held in Sochi in October 2019 became a milestone event for both the Russian Federation and the African continent. Contrary to the concerns (or hopes) of sceptics, the Summit brought together representatives of all 54 African countries, 45 of which were represented by heads of state and government. The event was also attended by the heads of eight major African continental and regional organizations, over a hundred ministers, and a large number of business owners and top managers of the largest corporations from Africa’s leading countries.

The success of the Summit can largely be put down to the fact that a solid foundation had already been laid for positive relations between Russia and the countries of Africa. The continent still remembers the large-scale support it received from the Soviet Union during the national liberation movements and Africa’s fight against apartheid, discrimination and racism. The inherent fear of finding themselves under the power of “neo-colonialism” once again also played a role. Russia’s proactive stance in maintaining peace and security in the neighbouring Middle East and combating terrorism, extremism and other “diseases” of today’s global policy system was of great importance.

Additionally, over the past several years, Russia’s foreign policy in Africa has been characterized by consistent and coherent actions and predictable and well-weighted decisions. Russia’s strategic certainty could not but elicit the respect of African leaders, especially against the background of uncertain and inconsistent policies of some western states. This, in turn, served to expand interaction with African countries on the international stage given coinciding or proximate stances on the formation of a new international order and other key problems. It also expanded the range of opportunities for consolidating Russia’s position as an independent and influential centre of global politics.

By holding the Summit, Russia opened a new chapter in its relations with Africa, primarily in the economic domain. In the two decades when Russia did not show any visible economic interest in the African continent, major foreign actors such as China, India and European countries actively developed their strategies of economic interaction with Africa, announcing serious programmes of financial support for African states. For some countries, this foreign support temporarily served as an “impetus” for breaking out of poverty, backwardness, illiteracy and forced non-participation in key global economic processes.

This support, however, failed to solve the problems of creating and promoting innovative models of national socioeconomic development and regional or continental integration. Moreover, the practice of regular financial infusions and periodical debt write-offs could not but lead to the emergence of donorship-driven economies. A number of the continent’s countries have formed and consolidated the role of an “eternally soliciting” and externally financed foreign aid recipient. Over time, this led to a significant drag on socioeconomic progress. The starting positions of African and Southeast Asian countries was practically the same in

the 1960s. However, comparing the two now would lead us to the conclusion that the African continent has chronic systemic development problems.

Africa entered the 21st century loaded with a great deal of achievements and problems. Such achievements include stable GDP growth, the gradual strengthening of statehood, entering a new level of economic cooperation, improving the quality of education, institutionalizing several economic sectors, introducing regulatory initiatives, and overall changes in the continent's political and economic climate (such as African states spearheading the Continental Free Trade Area). Fundamental problems, on the other hand, include the turbulence and "fragility" of a number of African jurisdictions, the imbalance and relative instability of political systems, the lack of social reforms, the presence of deadly diseases, the growing number of people born and raised in an atmosphere of military confrontation and active hostilities.

All these problems (and the "Libyan situation" was an unequivocal confirmation of the fact that undermining the statehood of one country can affect not only its neighbouring states but also the entire world) cannot but affect the subsequent configuration of both the continental and the global picture. Several influential experts believe that Africa will replace the Middle East as the principal source of global instability, conflicts and terrorism as early as the middle of the 21st century. And these problems cannot be contained within Africa itself. On the contrary, they will overflow into the rest of the world in the form of uncontrollable migration, deadly epidemics, radical movements within African diasporas, etc.

Naturally, Russia cannot single-handedly develop and implement an alternative paradigm for the interaction of African states with the rest of the world. Today, this is an insurmountable task for any individual actor. It is primarily the responsibility of the people's and leaders of the African states themselves to resolve the continent's many problems. However, Russia is quite capable of making a unique contribution to the search for solutions to these issues, especially since the multipolarity of the modern world demonstrates the need for constructive interaction as opposed to individual actors' disparately pursuing their own narrow interests. Russia supports this cooperation at all levels and calls for others to do the same.

What areas of interaction with other international partners can the Russia–Africa track open? What are the prospects of Russia and its potential partners using the Russia–Africa vector as a means of overcoming their differences on a range of issues? What advantage of Russia's return to Africa can be identified for future points of cooperation with its partners in the East and the West? How do we demarcate the inevitable competition of external actors in African venues on the one hand and cooperation imperatives between them on the other?

It is challenging to find definite answers to these and similar questions right now. However, it seems evident that building a new world order would involve searching for new interaction models, as well as a new paradigm of relations and new, radically different approaches to building an international dialogue. Supranational strategies should be based on the principles of openness and balance of interests. Relations with Africa, firstly, offer a chance to build a multilateral system of



cooperation between world powers on the one hand and the pan-African community on the other. Secondly, they can open the door for maintaining the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of African states and for sharing the principal stance of the African people – “African solutions to African problems.”

In a sense, the African continent may become a global laboratory for fine-tuning the practical mechanisms of multilateral interaction in resolving economic, social, environmental, migration and other problems, especially since most “African” issues essentially manifest global problems that, in some form or other, are felt in other parts of the world too. The key goal is to avoid repeating past mistakes and prevent a game of “geopolitical chess” in Africa, a game that is often provoked and supported by radical politicians and irresponsible media outlets that, carried by the momentum of the past, continue to provoke clashes between the interests of different powers and determine their roles to limit geopolitical tension.

Civil society and private sector institutions will increasingly act as a driver of many political and economic processes in Africa. The future generation will live in a different dimension: it will use sociocultural communication to promote humanitarian values; and new economic, social and political practices will appear and become entrenched in the formats of new regimes and models, including international ones. It should be noted that Africa is the “youngest” continent on the planet, and it is no coincidence that its states primarily focus on developing their young generation. This is largely the reason why the general interest in Africa has grown so much recently.

Seemingly overnight, the global community made the momentous discovery that Africa will become the main generator of “human capital” in the coming decades and will consequently occupy a radically new place on the global political and economic stage. Today, Africa is on the threshold of changes that are no less significant than the decolonization of the 1960s, and the upcoming changes will have planet-wide consequences: either Africa will become a long-term “pain in the neck” for the whole of humanity, or it will become one of the critical global generators of economic growth and social capital.

All foreign actors on the continent, including Russia, should take this circumstance into account. Russia needs to evaluate its resources and understand how it can be of use not only to Africa of the present but to Africa of the future. The outside forces that the African youth will be building bridges with today, and with which they will be developing cooperation tomorrow, will be the beneficiaries of the significant advantages that the continent has to offer for years and decades to come.

Russia holds important positions in such alliances as BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), all of which are becoming progressively more important today. Consequently, Russia could act as an architect of a fundamentally new idealistic and practical approach to many global problems, including those faced by Africa. For instance, Russia’s experience of multilateral diplomacy in the Middle East, where it has succeeded

not only in maintaining constructive relations with opposing sides in many conflicts but also in contributing to a rapprochement between even the most intractable opponents, could be of interest to Africa.

Cooperation with Russia could be used as a good “reputational” shoulder for a number of countries whose relations with Africa are overshadowed by a colonial past, as well as an additional (and sometimes only) opportunity to diversify their business and political approaches in the eyes of their African colleagues. The creation of multilateral partnerships and coalitions on specific issues under the auspices of Russia would, in many cases, make it possible to improve the effectiveness of international strategies. Additionally, discussing African topics with leading foreign experts could help articulate potential problems and competitive challenges in working with the continent, while relying primarily on the objectives of African partners themselves.

The declaration signed by all the participants in the Russia–Africa Summit is clear evidence of Russia delineating its cooperation priorities in the broadest format. The subsequent dynamics of the relations will be primarily determined by Russia’s ability to enhance the agreements achieved by focusing on concrete collaboration opportunities to prevent African issues from transforming into another “seasonal fad” failing to receive any serious development or practical implementation. This is all the more important since another Russia–Africa Summit is already slated for 2022, and the parties have to be adequately prepared for the event in order for it to be a significant step forward compared to the first one. The principal workload in this regard lies with the relevant Russian ministries and agencies, private business, and also educational institutions and civil society organizations.

Russia’s African studies specialists will also much to do. At the very least, constant and persistent efforts are needed to clarify, both in Russia and at international venues, the goals and objectives in Africa and the basic principles of Russia’s approaches to security and development problems on the continent. It is no secret that these goals, objectives and principles often become the subject of bad-faith speculations and accidental or deliberate distortions. Russian approaches to Africa are frequently interpreted, particularly in the West, as a desire to “fish in troubled waters” and use the political instability and weakness of state institutions in some African states to achieve tactical advantages and immediate profits. The attempts to discredit Russia’s role in Africa must be counteracted, as, unfortunately, they are unlikely to cease in the foreseeable future.

Of even greater importance is the extensive expert discussion on existing opportunities and restrictions of Russia’s involvement in Africa, as well as on projecting these opportunities and restrictions on the short, medium and long term. Apparently, there is also a need to closely monitor the current achievements and failures of Russia’s involvement in African states. A substantive discussion needs to be held regarding which international partners Russia could cooperate with in Africa and the formats that this cooperation could take. We consider this report an invitation to engage in such a discussion.

# Tools

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The SWOT analysis method was chosen as an instrument to analyse materials and develop relevant recommendations in this report.

Definition of Basic Concepts:

SWOT analysis is a method of strategic planning and situation assessment used to discover factors and phenomena that influence the Project.

SWOT analysis: abbreviation explained:

STRENGTHS – potential, competences

WEAKNESSES – faults, drawbacks

OPPORTUNITIES – opportunities, promising areas

THREATS – dangers, obstacles, barriers

This SWOT analysis focuses on Africa and its place in the multipolar world with its current opportunities, problems, potential and requirements, as well as on Russia in its relations with and towards Africa, both as they are today and in their historical perspective.

# Section I. Africa's Competences. What Can Africa Offer Russia and the World?

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International rivalry in Africa is picking up pace. Today, the territory that had been the colonial lands of several European powers for centuries is attracting increasing attention from politicians and investors from China, India, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, the United States and, of course, Russia. The successful Russia–Africa Summit held in October 2019 demonstrated Russia's desire to carve out a place for itself in Africa. Since none of the principal actors are going to yield their positions on the continent, this process will likely become a geopolitical battle, should events take an unfavourable turn.

Africa's new political and economic realities make traditional interaction models virtually unacceptable. Colonial or neo-colonial approaches to building bilateral relations, and the desire to obtain maximum profits while expending minimal efforts, are becoming a thing of the past. Today, all parties are increasingly interested in finding “win-win” cooperation models and studying the continent carefully, paying particular attention both to the expanding spectrum of opportunities and to the challenges that come with them.

Today, as China, the United States, France and the United Kingdom – the leaders in foreign direct investment in Africa – are developing various strategies for entering the African market in the best possible way, it is the perfect time to ask the question of what makes the continent special. Why are African governments still unable to cope with many regional conflicts and outbreaks of deadly diseases while smartphone manufacturing facilities are being opened and new technology hubs are being launched across the continent?

Even though historical prejudices regarding Africa are gradually dissipating, some of the continent's very real “classical” problems remain relevant. To better understand the challenges faced by African countries, and to demonstrate ways to resolve them, we will conduct the SWOT analysis of the continent's four key areas.<sup>1</sup> The first section of this report is given over to such an analysis.

Areas for an analysis:

- economy;
- politics;
- the environment and natural resources;
- the social sector.

## Economy

### 1. Strengths

- High growth potential
- The largest continental free trade zone

<sup>1</sup> SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method that entails uncovering the factors of an organization's internal and external environment and dividing them into four categories: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Even though the total GDP of African states is still far from that of developed countries, the continent has tremendous potential. Several African countries have demonstrated vigorous economic growth in recent years. For example, GDP growth reached impressive levels in the following states in 2018: Rwanda (8.7 per cent), Côte d'Ivoire (7.4 per cent), Ethiopia (6.8 per cent) and Ghana (6.3 per cent).<sup>2</sup>

Rwanda is a unique example, a state that, having experienced genocide and the collapse of its state institutions in 1994, became a stable and secure country with an innovative and dynamically developing economy by 2019. Rwanda is not the only African country that can boast such successes. Ghana is expected to become the leading country in the world in terms of economic growth rate. The new state policy is expected to result in a 6 per cent growth of industry and agriculture by the end of 2019.<sup>3</sup> In addition, several other states, mostly in East Africa, are also demonstrating accelerated economic growth.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the trend toward integration is growing. The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) was signed in the city of Kigali in Rwanda on March 21, 2019. Signed by 54 states and ratified by 27, AfCFTA is the largest such agreement in terms of the number of participating countries. The free trade zone was officially launched on July 7, 2019. UNCTAD estimates that intra-continental trade will have increased by USD 34.6 billion, or 52.3 per cent by 2022.<sup>5</sup> The text of the Agreement proclaims such objectives as establishing a continental customs union, simplifying customs registration of commodities, removing tariff and non-tariff barriers and deepening inter-state cooperation in trade and investment, protecting intellectual property rights, and coordinating competition protection policies. The abolition of customs duties is intended to enhance internal trade and promote the more efficient redistribution of resources in the region. The FTZ is becoming the largest association of its kind. In the future, it may become the forerunner of a more advanced form of economic integration, a Pan-African Customs Union. The priorities of the integration agendas of sub-regional unions already largely determine the areas and nature of large infrastructure projects launched in various parts of Africa. At the same time, the geography of international cooperation with such unions partially determines which potential foreign partners involved in their implementation, including development institutions, specialized international funds and banks. High economic growth rates and increasing integration of the continental states are what sets Africa apart from other regions, which more frequently manifest economic stagnation and increasing protectionism.

<sup>2</sup> World Development Indicators // The World Bank.  
URL: <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators>

<sup>3</sup> Overview. The World Bank in Ghana // The World Bank.  
URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview>

<sup>4</sup> Naturally, when assessing the dynamics of economic growth of African countries, we also need to take the world's highest population growth rates into account, which makes the per capita economic growth rates somewhat more modest.

<sup>5</sup> Mevel S., Karingi S., Towards a Continental Free Trade Area in Africa – A CGE Modeling Assessment with a Focus on Agriculture, Chapter 8. Shared Harvests: Agriculture, Trade and Employment // ILO-UNCTAD. Geneva. 2013.  
URL: [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditctncd2013d2\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditctncd2013d2_en.pdf)

## 2. Weaknesses

- Financial instability
- Low investment activity

Despite robust economic growth in several African states, the significance of their development should not be exaggerated. The so-called “low starting point” effect and the correspondingly long route the economies of African states still need to be taken into account. The World Bank puts the total GDP of Sub-Saharan African states at about 2 per cent of gross world product.<sup>6</sup> Even the continent’s largest economies, such as Nigeria and South Africa, are only creeping up on the Top 30 countries in terms of GDP (30<sup>th</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> places, respectively). At the same time, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana hold the 143<sup>rd</sup>, 66<sup>th</sup>, 90<sup>th</sup> and 73<sup>rd</sup> places, respectively.

In particular, one of the problem areas is the falling costs of raw materials which are actively exported by African countries and make up a significant portion of their budget.<sup>7</sup> To overcome this trend, African states need to mobilize their domestic resources to diversify their economies further and improve measures for managing government investment. We are talking about measures intended to increase tax revenues, mobilize savings and increase the efficiency of state budget spending.<sup>8</sup>

## 3. Opportunities

- Using new technologies
- Free niches for investment

The African free trade zone is expected to open the borders of African countries not only for each other but also for third states wishing to cooperate with the continent. The extent to which trade barriers will be lowered largely depends on the outcome of the talks between the Agreement’s participating states. The so-called “Phase II Negotiations” are continuing today, and they are expected to produce a consensus on issues such as protecting intellectual property and investments and developing coordinated policies on ensuring competition. Understanding the logic of African integration processes is extremely important from an applied point of view, primarily for businesses. In today’s reality, when planning, for instance, long-term investment in the region, businesses should certainly look at those parts of Africa where a single market already operates or can be established, where all or at least some freedoms, such as the movement of goods, services, capital and workforce, are guaranteed.

The technological revolution that is taking place on the continent opens up new opportunities for closer cooperation between Africa and countries wishing to invest in promising markets. Africa is expected to change more over the next

<sup>6</sup> World Development Indicators // The World Bank.  
URL: <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators>

<sup>7</sup> Gnevasheva V. «Dutch Disease» in Russia // International processes, Vol. 14, No. 4. P. 146-154.  
URL: <http://www.intertrends.ru/system/Doc/ArticlePdf/1752/8q0kiO1yGX.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Based on the proposals developed by the T20 Working Group.

ten years than it has over the last century. First, that opens up paths for accelerated development across the continent, since African countries can introduce new technologies and apply more sustainable practices now, essentially jumping over several steps compared to European and Asian economies. Due to the rapidly changing digital picture of the world, Africa does not have substantial time resources to get things moving. Second, the transformation of Africa creates promising new areas where foreign technology and know-how (that is, areas that may attract foreign investment) may be in demand.

In its *Africa Attractiveness Report*, Ernst & Young claims that the United States finances the largest number of technology projects in Africa (463 projects, 62,004 jobs), followed by France (329 projects, 57,970 jobs) and the United Kingdom (286 projects, 40,949 jobs).<sup>9</sup> China is the recognized leader in the area of foreign direct investment.

The development of regional value chains as part of the African Continental Free Trade Area opens up new opportunities for the continent. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) notes that “one of the most important challenges facing African countries is triggering structural transformation in the economies of the region, and in the process, creating more value addition in its exports and generating higher employment [...] One of the ways of triggering this transformation is to increase the competitiveness of the countries producing and exporting manufactured products using the large base of natural resources available within the region.”<sup>10</sup>

According to the GSMA trade association, over 618 technological hubs were operational in Africa as of June 2019. They are used to develop and implement innovative solutions for regional problems, including launching start-ups and social initiatives and building up the local population’s entrepreneurial potential. Most of these hubs are located in the so-called “innovative quad” of Lagos (Nigeria), Nairobi (Kenya), Cape Town (South Africa) and Cairo (Egypt).<sup>11</sup> Importantly, 25 per cent of those hubs are essentially co-working spaces, which distinguishes them from a traditional “technological hub,” but is conducive to creating an innovative environment.<sup>12</sup>

#### **4. Threats**

- The raw materials dependence of the continent’s largest economies
- High level of debt and budget deficits

In 2019, the economic growth rates of Africa’s three largest economies fell below expectations. The results of Nigeria (1.9 per cent) and Angola (–2.1 per cent)

<sup>9</sup> EY’s Attractiveness Program Africa//Africa Attractiveness Report. 09.2018.  
URL: [https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-africa-attractiveness-survey-2018/\\$File/ey-africa-attractiveness-survey-2018.pdf](https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-africa-attractiveness-survey-2018/$File/ey-africa-attractiveness-survey-2018.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Identifying Regional Value Chains in Leather and Leather Products in Africa // UNCTAD. 2018.  
URL: [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/gdsecidc2017d6\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/gdsecidc2017d6_en.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Landscape Report, 2018. Ecosystem Accelerator Tech Hubs // GSMA.  
URL: <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/blog/618-active-tech-hubs-the-backbone-of-africas-tech-ecosystem/>

<sup>12</sup> Coworking is a space anyone can use as a temporary or permanent workplace.

were below forecasts due to the slow growth of non-oil sectors, while South Africa (0.8 per cent) did not live up to the expectations because of low investor confidence.<sup>13</sup> Even though Nigeria and Angola are working on diversifying their economies, it will take some time for the initial results to become apparent.<sup>14</sup>

According to the *African Economic Outlook*<sup>15</sup> report prepared by the African Development Bank and the OECD Development Centre, the continent's total GDP grew by 3.5 per cent in 2018. The growth is expected to reach 4.0 per cent in 2019 and 4.1 per cent in 2020. Nevertheless, even with growth rates such as these across the continent's economy, budget deficits and the unacceptable level of total debt pose a grave threat for Africa. Moreover, emerging global financial uncertainty is also capable of delivering an unpredictable blow to Africa's economy.

At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the opportunities the African FTZ can open up for the continent do not rule out the probability of the market exerting negative pressure on more vulnerable economies. Ngairé Woods, Dean of the Blavatnik School of Government and director of the Global Economic Governance Programme at Oxford University, believes that the consequences of liberalization may hurt the poorest population groups of some states. Still, it should not be an obstacle for the project. On the contrary, it is essential to develop truly functioning support strategies for this population group.<sup>16</sup>

Companies that do business in Africa point out defects in infrastructure, logistics and electricity as the main challenges to their activities on the continent. However, we should bear in mind the fact that these defects may be seen not only as factors that hold back potential investors but also as a source of opportunities for major investment projects to develop the infrastructure of states, regions and the entire continent.

## Politics

### 1. Strengths

- Developing democratic processes, boosting democratic traditions and statehood
- The Pan-Africanism wave
- Developing new strategies for the African Union

The complicated legacy of colonialism, wars, genocide, coups, apartheid and other upheavals on the African continent determines a number of political processes whose specific features might not be immediately apparent to third countries. For example, South Africa is often associated with political and social tur-

<sup>13</sup> World Development Indicators // The World Bank.  
URL: <https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators>

<sup>14</sup> According to Ernst and Young's Africa Attractiveness Report.

<sup>15</sup> African Economic Outlook 2019 // African Development Bank, 2019. P. 3.  
URL: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/2019AEO/AEO\\_2019-EN.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/2019AEO/AEO_2019-EN.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Africa's new free trade is promising, yet full of hurdles // World Economic Forum on Africa. 4-6.09.2019.  
URL: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/09/africa-just-launched-the-world-s-largest-free-trade-area/>



bulence primarily connected to the history of apartheid. Today, this perception is focused on the mixed success of such programmes as the BEE,<sup>17</sup> growing lack of confidence in the authorities and, among other things, such factors as conflicts between South Africans and labour migrants willing to work for significantly less money. One often overlooks the fact that these local processes are taking place against the background of the developing democratic process and the strengthening of the country's democratic traditions laid down by Nelson Mandela. Another example is the focus on freedom of speech restrictions in Rwanda, which ignores the fact that these restrictions are directly related to efforts to prevent new ethnic conflicts in the country.<sup>18</sup> These examples emphasize the need for an unconventional and analytical approach to understanding Africa's political realities that should also be viewed in the historical perspective.

The disappointment of African states with international organizations, and the UN in particular, can be explained by two factors: the inability of these organizations to respond to critical situations that arise on the continent in a timely and adequate manner; and the feeling within Africa that its rights are being infringed upon in such bodies, as, for instance, in the UN Security Council, in which the continent only has temporary membership. At the same time, this loss of confidence in international institutions boosts Africa's collectivist spirit as the continent increasingly moves towards pan-Africanism. The growing pan-Africanism is also manifested in the implementation of the African Union's new long-term strategy in various economic, political and security areas, as well as in the social sphere, called the African Union Agenda 2063.<sup>19</sup>

## **2. Weaknesses**

- Military confrontations, territorial conflicts and internal instability
- High level of terrorism and protests
- Obstacles in overcoming the consequences of colonialism

Despite the emergence of new trends of peaceful conflict settlement, Africa remains one of the world's most turbulent regions. Its history over the last few decades includes approximately 100 political coups d'état, 20 civil wars and 10 mass genocides which resulted in simmering inter-ethnic and territorial conflicts. In particular, such conflicts stem, among other things, from the legacy of the colonial system: about 20 per cent of the continent's territory is still involved in territorial disputes.

The region's colonial past still remains a key factor of its socioeconomic backwardness and a cause of its inter-ethnic and religious confrontations. A number of obstacles prevent this historical problem from being overcome, including:

- the continent's political disconnectedness;
- the instability of the national systems;

<sup>17</sup> Black Economic Empowerment is a programme for distributing resources after the end of apartheid.

<sup>18</sup> The genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

<sup>19</sup> Agenda 2063. The Africa We Want//Final Edition, 04. 2015 // African Union Commission.  
URL: <https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063.pdf>

- the deep-running roots of territorial conflicts;
- the lack of working integration mechanisms.

One of the main problems of the political system in Africa is its disjointed political map, which is caused not so much by political diversity as by the continent's colonial legacy and its diversity of cultures, peoples, beliefs and traditions. The rich and varied historical and cultural background of African countries, in fact, causes multiple political problems.

Another weakness of African politics is the inability of many leaders to control domestic processes when either the executive chain of command is lacking or the state system is replaced with a military dictatorship or tyranny.

Since the African continent is still insufficiently prepared for democratization processes, despite the tendencies in this direction, the population of many African countries regularly exhibit anti-governmental sentiments and support extremist groups. To a large degree, the weak democratization of societies is caused by the low level of technological development of African states, although this is slowly changing.

Revolution is another concept that is relevant to Africa. The recent history of African nations abounds in examples, not so much of classical revolutions, but instead of coups d'état, most of them militarized. This situation is not conducive to political stability on the continent.

An important link that severely weakens African sovereignty and statehood is the regular attempts of foreign states to influence political processes in Africa. Foreign investment is a reliable instrument of political pressure, and many leaders of African states are forced to cooperate and accept terms and conditions imposed from the outside. This trend has long been and partially remains typical of developing Asian states. Essentially, the mechanisms previously used in Southeast Asia involving the replacement of national interests with the need for financial aid are copied in Africa.

### **3. Opportunities**

- The search for strong partners working under the "win-win" principle
- Prospects of participating in global processes

Increasing political and economic independence, closer continental cooperation and the increased interest of third countries allow Africa to choose partners based on its own interests. Interaction with the continent is no longer limited to exploring its natural resources.

Today's Africa is a dynamically developing region that, to some degree, aspires to continental integration. The introduction of common banking, judicial and legislative mechanisms go some way to achieving this, although the process is significantly complicated by the internal contradictions mentioned above. Today, however, we can confidently speak about the prospects of Africa developing as a political system.

The African Union's agenda marks the main integration trends and largely inherits the set of projects and programmes proposed by similar interstate unions, namely the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union. For example, Africa's interaction with both Russia and the EAEU is relevant in the context of African manufacturing thus far failing to meet domestic demand. African exports of consumer goods to African markets fell from USD 12.9 billion in 2009 to USD 11.8 billion in 2016 (or from 0.8 per cent of Africa's GDP in 2009 to 0.5 per cent in 2016). Thus, there are good prospects and, crucially, demand for increasing exports from the EAEU countries to Africa.<sup>20</sup>

The objectives outlined by the African Union for the coming years involve emphasizing the coordinated socioeconomic and technological development of the continent. Without this, the processes of democratization, political stabilization, and implementing the principles of equality and fairness are impossible.

In addition to the African Union, which boasts 55 member states (the 55<sup>th</sup> being Western Sahara, not recognized by the UN) and acts as a universal platform for dialogue, the region has a fairly well-developed network of sub-regional economic alliances: the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), G5 Sahel, the Arab Maghreb Union, etc. Integration within these alliances takes place at different speeds, has its own characteristics, and varies in terms of the depth of interaction among the participating states.

We also continue to observe the increasing influence of civil society institutions, a stable trend towards the transformation of political systems, the gradual change of government regimes and a steady increase of the public's interest in participating in socio-political processes.

#### **4. Threats**

- The risk of failing to overcome territorial, religious and political conflicts
- Destabilization of the intra-African economic system

The risk of failing to overcome territorial, religious and political conflicts is a significant threat to the continent's sustainable development. Such a failure is in general unlikely, but possible and is due to the fact that the historical development trends of African countries are conflict-ridden in nature. The only way to eliminate the risk of another destabilizing event in each individual country, and on the continent in general, is to overcome these trends by democratizing society and political systems and increasing the political and economic literacy of the population (which should happen sooner or later).

One should also mention the global and local conflicts that affect the territorial interests of African states. We cannot rule out a situation whereby military

<sup>20</sup> Africa's Development Dynamics 2019: Achieving Productive Transformation // OECD Library.  
URL: <https://doi.org/10.1787/c1cd7de0-en>

clashes in Africa are provoked from the outside, or in which some African states are pulled into a global conflict. In such a case, little depends on African nations themselves, even though their voices are taken into account when making decisions in the UN and via other sustainable development international mechanisms. These risks could be eliminated by increasing the global political influence of African countries, which, for obvious reasons, will not happen soon.

The escalating terrorist crisis in the west of Africa continues to destabilize the political situation and affect economic growth, pushing away investors who are wary of another security threat. This primarily applies to Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Mali. At the same time, external influence is growing in Africa, and this influence is by no means exclusively positive for the national interests of African states. When investing in Africa's economy, the United States, China and other countries pursue solely "raw material" interests, which is reminiscent of the situation in Eurasia following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Whether Africa remains a "raw materials" source with a poor population or is transformed into a powerful union of states depends entirely on the political will of the leaders of African countries. Today, however, as we have already noted, the consolidation of their efforts is rather declarative and appears to be dictated by the need to obtain external support and subsidies.

## Energy, Environment and Natural Resources

### 1. Strengths

- The continent's major deposits of natural resources (confirmed and prospective)
- The potential for developing ecotourism

Africa has the world's largest arable lands and extensive tropical forests. Its multiple rivers serve as transportation routes and make it possible to build large irrigation systems.

Africa has approximately 30 per cent of global mineral deposits. The continent's oil deposits total about 16.9 billion tonnes (8 per cent of the world's deposits), and its natural gas deposits total 17.5 trillion cubic metres (7 per cent of the world's deposits). We are already witnessing a rapid increase in exports of hydrocarbons from East Africa, and Tropical Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa) could become a major gas supplier by 2040. Additionally, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, Mauritania and West Sahara soon will be able to produce shale gas.

Today, mineral resources constitute approximately 70 per cent of the total volume of African exports and account for about 28 per cent of GDP. The treasury revenues of some African states depend almost entirely on the extractive industry.<sup>21</sup>

According to the African Development Bank, the extractive industry could guarantee annual revenues of USD 30 billion for the treasuries of certain countries

<sup>21</sup> African Natural Resources Centre (ANRC). Strategy (2015–2020). Revised version // African Development Bank Group. 06.2015.  
URL: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Boards-Documents/ANRC\\_Strategy\\_2015-2020\\_Rev\\_.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Boards-Documents/ANRC_Strategy_2015-2020_Rev_.pdf)

over the course of the next 20 years.<sup>22</sup> Recently discovered deposits of oil, gas and various minerals could increase treasury revenues from 9 per cent to 31 per cent over the first ten years in such states as Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Uganda.

An equally valuable resource for Africa is its land, water bodies, natural reserves and national parks that can be used to develop ecotourism and the related services sector.

## **2. Weaknesses**

- Low employment in the energy sector, lack of a qualified labour force
- Illegal trade in natural resources
- Low efficiency of managing revenues received from natural resources
- The virtual absence of a power grid (energy distribution system) as such
- Energy poverty
- The weak use of the potential of renewable energy sources (RES)

Despite impressive quantities of natural resources on the continent, the capital intensity of the extractive sector and excessive focus on exporting raw materials result in relatively low employment in the industry, particularly compared with other regions that are no less rich in natural resources. The situation could be altered by investing in infrastructure development, increasing the quantities of natural resources processed *in situ* and developing the processing industry in general.

The situation is exacerbated by the serious problem of illegal trade in natural resources. Today, the illicit logging and sale of timber cost African countries billions of dollars in lost profits. Gabon loses up to USD 10.1 million annually, while Cameroon loses USD 5.3 million. Illegal fishing costs West Africa up to USD 1.3 billion every year.<sup>23</sup>

Abundant natural resources could provide financing for projects intended to combat poverty. Nevertheless, many African countries have failed to use this potential and transform their natural riches into long-term investments into their population's well-being. The *Africa's Pulse* report published by the World Bank states that dependence on natural resources is often detrimental to the quality of a state's institutional systems. Moreover, it is noted that the efficiency of government spending of funds earmarked for developing human resources in these countries is significantly lower than in countries not dependent on natural resources.

<sup>22</sup> Global Consumption to Double by 2050 // Africa to Double Natural Gas Production by 2040.  
URL: <https://africaoilandpower.com/2019/11/27/africa-to-double-natural-gas-production-by-2040-global-consumption-to-double-by-2050/>

<sup>23</sup> Africa Natural Resource Center 2015-2020, 06. 2015, Part A, P. 1.  
URL: [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Boards-Documents/ANRC\\_Strategy\\_2015-2020\\_Rev\\_.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Boards-Documents/ANRC_Strategy_2015-2020_Rev_.pdf)

Energy poverty<sup>24</sup> is perhaps one of the main challenges facing Africa today. Over 600 million Africans lack access to electricity at present.<sup>25</sup> The African Development Bank reports that per capita energy consumption in Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) is 180 kWh, compared to 13,000 kWh in the United States or 6500 kWh in Europe. Access to electricity is crucial in manufacturing, healthcare, agriculture and education. It is also vital for reducing the costs of doing business and creating new jobs.

Even though hydropower already provides about one-fifth of current capacities, less than 10 per cent of the overall hydropower potential is currently being used. Similarly, despite the tremendous potential of RES and their priority in the strategy of the African Development Bank, fossil fuels still remain crucial for the overall energy balance.

### 3. Opportunities

- Developing RES
- Africa's new energy policy
- The implementation of resource management strategies

Africa has significant RES potential. For example, its hydropower potential is estimated at 13 per cent of the global potential and, due to its geographical location, Africa is considered the most promising continent for using and developing solar energy. Among the promising projects is the Africa Clean Energy Corridor, which is intended to rapidly develop RES and cross-border trade within the East African and South African united energy systems.

The lack of serious energy infrastructure opens up new opportunities for the initial introduction of sustainability-focused infrastructure.<sup>26</sup> To achieve this, the African Development Bank signed the New Deal on Energy for Africa in 2015. The document includes the following objectives:

- increasing total energy production (160 GW of new capacities by 2025);
- increasing energy grid transmissions and the number of grid connections to create 130 million new connections by 2025, that is, 160 per cent more than at present;
- expanding access to clean energy for cooking for about 130 million households.

No less important for the continent today is the growing desire to manage available resources properly. Value chains may provide Africa with an opportunity to increase production volumes, reduce the amount of raw materials sold and gain far more benefits from its resource potential.

<sup>24</sup> What is energy poverty? // Energy Poverty Observatory // European Commission.  
URL: <https://www.energy-poverty.eu/about/what-energy-poverty>

<sup>25</sup> Africa Energy Outlook 2019//World Energy Outlook Special Report. 11. 2019 // IEA.  
URL: <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2019>

<sup>26</sup> Africa's Development Dynamics 2018: Growth, Jobs and Inequalities//OECD Development Centre. 07.2018.  
URL: <https://www.oecd.org/publications/africa-s-development-dynamics-2018-9789264302501-en.htm>

The African Natural Resources Centre (ANRC) was established in 2013 for this very purpose. Its objective is the competent management of natural resources to improve the quality of life of regular citizens. This objective is particularly important in the context of the continent's history of bloody conflicts caused by the resource struggle. Take Sierra Leone's blood diamonds, for example, which were swapped for weapons that were then used to incite the civil war in the country further. Another example is the activities of Angola's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, established on the basis of an armed insurgent group, that was financed through the sale of USD 3.72 billion worth of diamonds in 1992–1998.

This explains the importance of obtaining the highest social and economic value from Africa's resources through well thought out strategies and their successful implementation.

In this situation, attention is focused on illegal trade in resources, the rational use of natural resources and increasing their economic value.

#### **4. Threats**

- The Dutch disease
- Limited natural resources
- The risk of an environmental disaster

Natural resources account, on average, for 70 per cent of Africa's total exports and 28 per cent of the continent's combined GDP. The government revenue of some African countries depends almost entirely on the extractive sector. The lack of full-fledged economic diversification makes the continent vulnerable to the cyclical jumps in the prices of natural resources. This economic model is highly unstable in the long term due to the inevitable exhaustion of resources, as well as climate change, which limits the capabilities of the extractive sector.

The availability of essential natural resources (water, arable land and resources whose exports are vital for the economies of African states) will be affected by economic growth, an expanding population and climate change. Consequently, the sustainable management of natural resources will become a national priority for all countries.

Although the continent's resource potential opens up new opportunities for developing the economy and human potential in general, it is paramount to focus on problematic areas and challenges that will play an increasing role as time goes by. The strategy developed by the African Natural Resources Centre identified a number of issues that have to be addressed, including:

- objectives in sustainable development and governance;
- the influence of the changing climate on the accessibility and value of resources;
- desertification;
- rational use of resources;
- the forced displacement of communities;

- the lack of clear government policies in ecology and environmental protection;
- unsuccessful investment and poor budget management.

In this regard, it is necessary to respond rapidly to emerging challenges. Growing consumption and appearance of promising new niches that depend on the state of the environment highlight the need to protect natural resources. Many developing states now have to choose between extensive resource development and preserving specific attributes of the unique regions in their countries. This could mean, for instance, having to choose between developing the mining industry and ecotourism.

In addition, high levels of poverty, unemployment, inequality and the growing role of civil society institutions put increasing pressure on governments and investors, forcing them to be more conscious when distributing the benefits obtained from the exploitation of natural resources among all population groups.

It is thus necessary to search for a balance between the accelerated pace of the continent's economic development and environmental protection.

## The Social Sector

### 1. Strengths

- High population growth rates
- Falling infant and maternal mortality

The population of Africa is growing. The continent is currently home to 1.3 billion people, and the African Development Bank estimates that this number will grow to 4.5 billion by 2100, with the average age being 25. This means that Africa has powerful human capital and consumer activity that can transform its economy.

Africa has taken a tremendous step forward in terms of improving the well-being of regular citizens. Between 2000 and 2017, infant mortality fell by an average of 10 per cent per year in Rwanda, and by 6 per cent in Malawi, Uganda and Senegal. In addition, maternal mortality is falling by over 7 per cent yearly in Botswana and Rwanda.<sup>27</sup>

### 2. Weaknesses

- Low level of education
- Low level and quality of life (unsanitary conditions, lack of habitable accommodation, of clean potable water, etc.)
- Lack of jobs

The rapid growth of Africa's population also entails certain negative aspects. People need to be fed, clothed, educated and provided with jobs. The World Bank estimates that 416 million Africans still live in extreme poverty (USD 1.90 per day in 2015). Accessibility to healthcare leaves much to be desired, and as of today,

<sup>27</sup> Africa Human Capital Plan. Powering Africa's potential through its people // The World Bank.  
URL:<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/910151554987573474/HCP-Africa-Screen-in-English.pdf>



only 40 per cent of the population have a high school or college education. The *Africa's Pulse* report published by the World Bank states that the cost of imported foods has grown by USD 30 billion over the past 20 years. This is a significant loss for the continent's economy since many of those foods could have been produced in Africa.

As for unemployment, despite its relatively low level of about 6 per cent in 2018 in Sub-Saharan Africa, most jobs do not require specialised knowledge or qualifications.<sup>28</sup> Consequently, 70 per cent of the continent's workforce is considered "vulnerable" since they do not have in-demand specialised professional knowledge and skills that could guarantee stable wages and career prospects. According to the World Bank, the share of the global population that can be considered "vulnerable" was 44.8 per cent in 2019.

Another threat to stability in Africa is rapid urbanization, which, on the one hand, could become a catalyst for further development. On the other hand, it could overload the transport infrastructure, which is already lagging behind the population growth rate. What is more, increased urbanization and urban overpopulation could negatively affect living conditions, healthcare and education.

Today, approximately 60 per cent of Africa's poor live in so-called "chronic" poverty, meaning they have been living below the poverty line for several years in a row at the least. This is an indication of the systemic nature of poverty across the African continent, which stems from the shortage of assets and savings, the low availability of public goods (including infrastructure and transportation services) and the dearth of earning opportunities among regular citizens. The World Bank predicts that poverty will soon become a predominantly African phenomenon. By 2030, the share of African people living in poverty will account for 90 per cent of all poverty around the world (compared to just 55 per cent in 2015).

### **3. Opportunities**

- Developing agriculture and solving food security problems
- Introducing new technologies to resolve social problems

Two areas are of particular importance for the continent's development: education and food security. If African states manage to agree both on purchasing new technologies and on providing the knowledge required to introduce them, then new jobs will be created and the professional skills of the regional workforce will be improved.

The second and no less critical area for cooperating with other states is food security. Feeding 1.3 billion people requires increasing food production volumes. Transitioning to intensive agriculture will require new methods, machines, equipment, fertilizers, chemical pesticides and chemicals for crop preservation. Given Africa's changing relations with the rest of the world, we can rather confidently assume that the continent strives to create and process the main volume of prin-

<sup>28</sup> Unemployment, total (% of total labour force) (modelled ILO estimate) – Sub-Saharan Africa // World Bank Data Bank.  
URL: <http://datacatalog.worldbank.org/database/world-development-indicators>

cial elements of agricultural production and processing locally. This opens up opportunities for profitable investments and partnerships.

What is more, the growing role and accessibility of digital technologies create new opportunities for tackling Africa's poverty problem. Most people living below the poverty line in rural areas (this applies to urban areas as well, although to a smaller degree) do not have access to information, communication, energy and transportation infrastructure. This creates new barriers to entrepreneurial activity, as it restricts access to markets and public services, while also impeding the growth of productivity and revenues from agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

A true transformation in telecommunications made it possible to resolve some of these problems. Today, Africa is the world leader in mobile financial services, and in 2017, over half of all companies offering such services were headquartered in Sub-Saharan Africa. What is more, the region had over 100 million active users of such services in 2017.<sup>29</sup> Kenya's M-Pesa ("M" standing for mobile, and "Pesa" meaning "money" in Swahili) is the recognized leader in the area. This company makes it possible for every person to have a "mobile wallet" on their phone, which increases the accessibility of banking services and reduces the share of the population considered to be underbanked.<sup>30</sup>

#### 4. Threats

- Social tensions
- Conflicts stemming from the polyethnic nature of the African population
- Religious conflicts

As the continent's population grows, public administration in Africa also faces new challenges. If states fail to provide a decent quality of life for their people, the continent may once again descend into social conflicts and lose achieved progress. According to World Economic Forum experts, the lack of infrastructure and shortage of resources make the businesses of young African entrepreneurs 14 per cent more likely to fail than anywhere else in the world.

The polyethnic nature of the African population is one of the leading causes of territorial and inter-ethnic conflicts. This complicates continental integration, and the negative factors impeding sustainable development and safety in Africa continue to accumulate.

Religious conflicts are one of the main reasons for disunity in the African community. Islam and Christianity dominate the continent, and in many regions, the two are mixed in with local religions and ritualistic culture. This diversity of beliefs often prompts marginal population groups to commit extremist acts.

<sup>29</sup> Chironga M., De Grandis H., Zouaoui Y. *Mobile Financial Services in Africa: Winning the Battle for the Customer* // McKinsey and Company. 09. 2017.  
URL: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/financial-services/our-insights/mobile-financial-services-in-africa-winning-the-battle-for-the-customer>

<sup>30</sup> A person dependent on cash for payments and with no access to banking services.

## Section II. Russia–Africa Relations. Russia’s Competences for Africa

Elena  
Kharitonova

Today, Russia–Africa relations are more active than they have been at any point over the past 30 years. The sheer number of joint Russia–Africa events in 2019 made it the year of Africa. The First Russia–Africa Summit and Economic Forum was held in Sochi on October 23–24 under the motto “For peace, security and development.”

According to the ROS Congress Foundation, the Russia–Africa Economic Forum was attended by over 6000 participants and media representatives from Russia and 104 foreign states and territories.<sup>31</sup> More than 1100 foreign businesspeople, approximately 1400 representatives of the Russian business community, over 1900 members of official foreign delegations and more than 300 members of official Russian delegations attended the event.

The Russia–Africa Summit and Economic Forum was attended by official representatives of all 54 African states, including 45 heads of state and government: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Cape Verde, Chad, the Comoros, the Republic of the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Republic of The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, the Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

At the conclusion of the Summit, the participants adopted a final Declaration containing coordinated objectives and tasks for the further development of Russia–Africa cooperation in all dimensions: politics, security, economy, science and technology, culture and the humanitarian sphere. The Declaration identified a total of 47 items divided into seven blocks:<sup>32</sup>

- Establishment of Mechanism for Dialogue Partnership
- Political Cooperation
- Security Cooperation
- Trade and Economic Cooperation
- Legal Cooperation
- Scientific, Technical, Humanitarian and Information Cooperation
- Cooperation in Environmental Protection

<sup>31</sup> The results of the first Russia – Africa Summit and Economic forum were summed up. The ROS Congress will continue to work on the African track until the next Forum // The ROS Congress.

URL: <https://roscongress.org/news/podvedeny-itogi-pervogo-sammita-i-ekonomicheskogo-foruma-rossija-afrika-roskongress-prodolzhit-rabotu-na-afrikanskom-treke-v-period-do-sledujushego-foruma/>

<sup>32</sup> Declaration of the first Russia-Africa summit // Presidential Executive Office. 24.10.2019.

URL: <http://www.kremlin.ru/supplement/5453>

A total of 92 agreements, contracts and memoranda of understanding were signed at the event. Documents worth a total of RUB 1.004 trillion were signed, excluding agreements whose value is a trade secret.<sup>33</sup>

All the items listed in the Declaration present significant opportunities for developing Russia–Africa relations in the current geopolitical circumstances.

Today, following declarations and preliminary agreements on the need to increase cooperation in various areas, such as economy and trade, politics, finance, security, science, education and culture, it is time to take concrete actions. The parties need to move from intentions and agreements to implementing plans.

Priority objectives are both tactical and strategic.

On the one hand, a *long-term, carefully elaborated, clear and attractive strategy for all participants* is needed, one that will make Russia's cooperation with African countries effective, sustainable, diversified and competitive.

On the other hand, it is necessary to develop *specific mechanisms (financial, technological, managerial and organizational) and forms for implementing this strategy*.

Russia–Africa relations have major development potential.

At the same time, there are several weaknesses in and obstacles to the implementation of programmes for establishing effective business relations between Russia and African countries, and they need to be analysed comprehensively to be overcome.

In order to move forward in terms of achieving the goals and objectives set at the Russia–Africa Summit, we suggest conducting a SWOT analysis assessing Russia's strengths and weaknesses in its relations with Africa, as well as the opportunities and threats that exist and/or may emerge in the system of Russia–Africa relations.

The focus of the SWOT analysis is on Russia in its relationship with Africa and its relationship to Africa at the present time and in the historical context.

Let us consider all four elements of the SWOT analysis in detail.

### **Strengths – Potential, Competences:**

- Russia intends to progressively develop its comprehensive interaction with African states and Africa's leading sub-regional organizations. This intent was expressed at the First Russia–Africa Summit and is enshrined in its Declaration (Sochi, October 2019).
- Russia places a high value on its relations with African countries at the governmental level. There are prerequisites in place for making Russia–Africa relations strategic, systemic and comprehensive.

<sup>33</sup> Outcomes of the First Russia–Africa Summit and Economic Forum. ROS Congress to Continue Working on the African Track until the Next Forum // Agreements and Business Negotiations Section // ROS Congress.  
URL: <https://roscongress.org/news/podvedeny-itogi-pervogo-sammita-i-ekonomicheskogo-foruma-rossija-afrika-roskongress-prodolzhit-rabotu-na-afrikanskom-treke-v-period-do-sledujushchego-foruma/>

- The partnership's coordination mechanisms are being structured. The Russia–Africa Partnership Forum has been established with the Russia–Africa Summit as its supreme body. The Forum is intended to promote sustainable progressive development of Russia–Africa relations.
- Russia understands and supports the objectives of African states enshrined in the socioeconomic African Union Agenda 2063 (January 2015, Twenty-Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (approved by the UN General Assembly under Resolution 70/1 dated September 25, 2015).
- The parties have proximate and coinciding assessments of and approaches to many issues of global and regional politics.
- The successful experience and traditions of jointly fighting for the decolonization and independence of African states. The Soviet Union made a significant contribution to successfully decolonizing Africa in the 1950s–1960s.
- The adherence of Russia and African countries to the fundamental principles and goals of the UN Charter and the norms of international law. The understanding of both sides of the need to establish a new world order based on polycentrism, democracy and fairness.
- Russia's significant experience of multifaceted, mutually profitable and efficient cooperation with African countries that meets the interests of both parties. This cooperation has been implemented in various areas: politics; trade and economy; security; environmental protection and the ecology of planet Earth; healthcare; science and education; and the cultural and humanitarian sphere.
- The memory of Russia's historical past that is attractive for African countries (the USSR and pre-revolutionary Russia) and comprises *ideological, economic and political* components: the ideas of justice, solidarity and equality; economic and financial aid; support in international organizations and combating terrorism.
- At the Forum, Russia declared its commitment to the ideas of justice that are an essential part of the value system of the African people. The Declaration expresses the desire to build a fairer and more equal system of international relations and eliminate exploitation in all of its possible manifestations.
- Russia adheres to the principles of international relations based on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, the preservation of ethnic uniqueness and civilizational diversity.
- Africa has confidence in Russia both historically (as the successor of the USSR) and in the current circumstances.
- Russia does not have a colonial past in Africa.
- Interaction and mutual understanding with representatives of the African elites who were educated in the USSR and/or have experience of working together in various areas of international cooperation.

- The Map of Russian competences for Africa in various areas, as well as Russian products that can be competitive in international markets, includes *39 products* representing *seven competences*: medicine, mineral resources management, digital state, transport infrastructure, energy and agriculture.<sup>34</sup>
- Russia has clear competitive competences in areas that are relevant for Africa: (the military-industrial complex; defence and security; high technologies; geological exploration; energy, including nuclear energy; processing industry equipment, etc.).
- Russia's well-established image as a successful negotiator in bringing together irreconcilable parties and of a "guarantor" of peace and security.
- The readiness to expand cooperation with sub-regional integration communities. The Forum's events were attended by heads of the executive bodies of Africa's eight regional organizations: the African Union, the African Export-Import Bank, the East African Community, G5 Sahel, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Southern African Development Community, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States, as well as by members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa.
- Russia is an active and sometimes crucial participant in major alliances and integration unions, such as the SCO, BRICS, EAEU and ASEAN. By developing trade and economic cooperation with Russia, African *goods and services gain real access to the single market of more than 183 million people* that includes Moscow's partners in the Eurasian Economic Union – Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Thus, Eurasian integration opens up additional opportunities for African countries to develop trade with Russia's EAEU partners. The increase in African imports to the EAEU from USD 2.4 billion in 2010 to USD 3.5 billion in 2018 essentially confirms this. Positive dynamics can be observed for all members of the Eurasian Five.
- The formation of financial mechanisms for sustaining and supporting Russia–Africa business interaction. Examples include the Russian Export Center and Russia's participation in the African Export-Import Bank as a shareholder. Projects implemented with the use of these mechanisms will prove their worth.
- The Russian Export Center assisted in developing cooperation and achieving agreements with various financial institutions in Africa. Mutual credit exposure limits for trade finance transactions with the following banks have been established: Banque MISR (Egypt), the National Bank of Egypt (Egypt), Sterling Bank Plc (Nigeria) and the Commercial International Bank (Egypt). Trade financing transactions have been successfully implemented within the framework of those agreements.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Oreshkin M. Presentation by Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation // ROS Congress. URL: <https://roscongress.org/news/podvedeny-itogi-pervogo-sammita-i-ekonomicheskogo-foruma-rossija-afrika-roskongress-prodolzhit-rabotu-na-afrikanskom-treke-v-period-do-sledujushchego-foruma/>

<sup>35</sup> Head of the REC: More Russian Exporters Should Gain Access to African Markets. Interview with Head of the REC Slepnev A. // TASS. 07.18.2019. URL: <https://tass.ru/interviews/6563816>

- Large Russian businesses participate in offering African students scholarships to study in Russian universities (ROSATOM: approximately 300 students are studying for degrees in nuclear energy. The students come from over 15 African countries: Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. RUSAL has launched a scholarship programme for talented youth from Guinea).<sup>36</sup>
- Russia has well-developed *African Studies* programmes, as well as strong academic and educational centres training personnel who can work in Africa and provide reliable information and analytical support for political, diplomatic and business structures. These include the Institute for African Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Asian and African Studies at Moscow State University, the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia and Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO).
- The Institute for African Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences has been engaged in the study of the African continent for 60 years. Its researchers travel to Africa, conduct public opinion surveys, expert polls and talk to the local population. A massive amount of systematized information on the continent's historical, cultural, economic, social and political problems has been accumulated. This information makes it possible to both uncover existing problems and develop algorithms for resolving them.
- Russia has long-standing and effective interaction with universities, research centres and representatives of public political parties and movements and diplomatic and governmental bodies, many of whom were educated in the USSR and Russia.

### **Weaknesses – drawbacks:**

- The long-standing “hiatus” in Russia–Africa relations (traditionally called Russia's “withdrawal” from Africa) that started in the late 1980s to the early 1990s (accordingly, today's situation as set forth at the 2019 Russia–Africa Summit is called Russia's “return” to Africa). In that time, the vacant “niche” was filled by strong “actors.”
- During the years of Russia's absence from Africa, trade and culture missions were closed, and the number of Russian language centres shrank. The number of Russian embassies is several times smaller than the number of U.S. and Chinese embassies.
- The modest trade volume of African countries with Russia amounts to USD 20 billion. *To compare:* Africa's trade with the United States totals USD 54.2 billion (2017 data), while its trade with the European Union equals USD 303 billion (2018 data) and its trade with China is USD 148 billion. Additionally, China intends to invest USD 60 billion in Africa, while the European Union has earmarked USD 40 billion for investment into the continent.

<sup>36</sup> Why African Students Enrol in Russian Universities and What They Choose to Study // TASS. 10.21.2019.  
URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/7027479>

- There is a clear imbalance in Russia's trade relations with Africa.<sup>37</sup> In 2018, Russia's principal trade partners in Africa were Egypt (1.1137 per cent *of Russia's total foreign trade turnover*), Algeria (0.7853 per cent), Morocco (0.2145 per cent), South Africa (0.1553 per cent) and Tunisia (0.1191 per cent). The figures that reflect Russia's trade relations with other African states are small.
- In 2018, Egypt (1.5862 per cent *of Russia's total exports*), Algeria (1.1986 per cent), Morocco (0.2065 per cent), Nigeria (0.1631 per cent) and Tunisia (0.1518 per cent) held the highest *share of Russia's exports* among all African countries.
- In 2018, South Africa (0.3288 per cent *of Russia's total imports*), Morocco (0.2296 per cent), Egypt (0.2211 per cent), Côte d'Ivoire (0.0801 per cent) and Tunisia (0.0574 per cent) held the highest share of Russia's imports among all African countries.
- Russia's trade turnover with other countries on the continent is insignificant. For example, Kenya's share in Russia's trade turnover in 2018 was 0.0498 per cent, compared to 0.0295 per cent for Ghana, 0.1115 per cent for Nigeria and 0.0022 per cent Zimbabwe (0.0007 per cent in 2017).<sup>38</sup>
- Economic problems. As of December 1, 2018, Russia's economy accounts for 1.98 per cent of the gross world product (compared to almost 23.5 per cent for the United States, the global leader in this respect, followed by China with a little over 16 per cent).<sup>39</sup>
- Russia's trade relations with Africa (*let us take the example of Egypt, Russia's main trade partner in Africa*) are dominated by food and agricultural raw materials (HS codes 01–24), which make up 30.09 per cent of Russia's total imports into Egypt; metal and metal products (HS codes 72–83) – 15.35 per cent; mineral products (HS codes 25–27) – 11.63 per cent; timber, pulp and paper products (HS codes 44–49) – 6.89 per cent; machines, equipment and transportation (HS codes 84–90) – 6.25 per cent; and chemical products (HS codes 28–40) – 1.19 per cent. *Machines, equipment and transportation are in the last places on the list of Russian exports* in its trade with virtually all African states.
- China's main competitive advantage in terms of the structure of its exports into Africa is that it is actively building up its supplies of industrial goods to the continent. And we are not talking exclusively about consumer goods, such as home appliances, clothes or kitchenware, but also about sophisticated equipment such as *power plant turbines and telecommunications equipment for mobile networks*.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Russia's Trade with African States in 2018. 02.16. 2019// Reviews of foreign trade in Russia // Foreign trade in Russia. Compiled by the Russian Foreign Trade website based on the data of the Federal Customs Service of Russia. URL: <https://russian-trade.com/reports-and-reviews/2019-02/torgovlya-rossii-so-stranami-afriki-v-2018-g/>

<sup>38</sup> Russia's Trade with African States in 2018. Reviews of foreign trade in Russia // Russian Foreign Trade. 02.16.2019. URL: <https://russian-trade.com/reports-and-reviews/2019-02/torgovlya-rossii-so-stranami-afriki-v-2018-g/>

<sup>39</sup> Country Shares in Gross World Product // FINCAN. URL: [http://fincan.ru/articles/55\\_dolya-stran-v-mirovom-vvp/](http://fincan.ru/articles/55_dolya-stran-v-mirovom-vvp/)

<sup>40</sup> Zakharov A.N., Rusak N.A. China's Foreign Trade with African States // Russian Foreign Economic Bulletin 2018 (4), 6875.



- There is a shortage of personnel with a higher or specialized vocational education (i.e., the system of vocational and community education is weak).
- According to the archival data of the Ministry of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education of the Soviet Union, a total of 60,000 people graduated from Soviet universities, research institutes, vocational colleges and community colleges between the early 1960s and the early 1990s. The most popular degree courses were in engineering and the technical and natural sciences majors. The collapse of the Soviet Union weakened Russia's educational ties with Africa.<sup>41</sup>
- Russia depends rather heavily (in terms of technology and investments) on foreign supplies. The sanctions imposed on Russia exacerbate this situation.
- China is becoming one of Russia's main partners in terms of economic cooperation. Russia and China plan to increase their mutual trade turnover to USD 200 billion per annum. This enhances the opportunities for China to exert an influence on Russia, including on the African market, and could act as a containment factor for Russia increasing its trade turnover with Africa.
- China will be Russia's main competitor in Africa in the coming years, while competition with India, Brazil, Turkey and the Persian Gulf states will also increase. Competition with the United States and European countries remains.
- In the long run, the demographic crisis may lead to a shortage of personnel.
- The mechanisms for certifying commodities and developing uniform certification forms are insufficiently developed.
- The financial mechanisms for supporting small and medium-sized businesses entering the African market are poorly developed.
- Problems reducing the investment attractiveness of Russia and some African countries.
- In 2018, *Forbes* placed several African countries on its list of *worst countries for doing business*. Ethiopia (130<sup>th</sup>) и Algeria (131<sup>st</sup>), Zimbabwe (132<sup>nd</sup>) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (133<sup>rd</sup>) are at the bottom of the ranking, while the Republic of The Gambia (138<sup>th</sup>) and Chad (139<sup>th</sup>) bring up the rear.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2018, *Forbes* placed Russia 58<sup>th</sup> (*out of 153 countries*) in terms of its *investment attractiveness* over the last 12 years using 15 different factors including: property rights, innovation, taxes, technology, corruption, freedoms (personal, trade and monetary), red tape and investor protection. (All categories have equal weight). The worst states for doing business are Zimbabwe (145<sup>th</sup>), Burundi (146<sup>th</sup>), Guinea (147<sup>th</sup>), Libya (149<sup>th</sup>), Republic of The Gambia (152<sup>nd</sup>) and Chad (153<sup>rd</sup>, last place).<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Why African Students Enrol in Russian Universities and What They Choose to Study // TASS. 10.21.2019.  
URL: <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/7027479>

<sup>42</sup> Forbes has published a rating of the best countries for doing business // Forbes. 12.22.2016.  
URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/news/335911-forbes-opublikoval-reyting-samyh-luchshih-dlya-vedeniya-biznesa-stran>

<sup>43</sup> Badenhausen K. Best countries to do business in 2018. Forbes Rating // Forbes. 12.21.2017.  
URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/biznes/354709-luchshie-strany-dlya-vedeniya-biznesa-v-2018-godu-reyting-forbes>.

- Russian entrepreneurs are not eager to take part in long-term projects in Africa, preferring instantly profitable businesses.
- Given the level of political and commercial risks and the need for “long money” for investment projects, a certain pessimism persists in broad entrepreneurial circles concerning doing business in Africa.
- Some Russian entrepreneurs are fearful of working in Africa due to stereotypes that were formed during their childhood (a popular Russian children’s song says, “children, do not go play in Africa,” because it is full of dangerous animals and is also the hunting grounds of a notorious villain), which are bolstered by a flood of information in today’s media that cover, as a rule, African emergencies such as wars, epidemics, famine and attacks by terrorist groups such as Boko Haram.
- There is a dearth of positive information about Africa in the Russian information space. The Russian media perpetuate a negative image of Africa without taking the positive and constructive transformations that are taking place on the continent into account.
- The Russia–Africa News Agencies Forum was held on the sidelines of the Summit, where the media’s role in Russian–African relations was discussed. However, this is not enough. What is more, a quality *public relations strategy in the system of Russia–Africa relations is currently lacking*.
- The coverage of problems and solutions in the system of Russia–Africa relations has many errors and shortcomings that stem from the lack of a media strategy and the unpreparedness, incompetence and, in some cases, irresponsibility of representatives of the media. The fact that the positions of certain media outlets position differ from that of the government and may even run counter to its interests also plays a role (one example is the media coverage of Russia writing off African debts without explaining the entire historical and financial background for doing this).
- Russian business often ignores the specifics of Africa’s cultural, historical, civilizational and cognitive features, which results in grave mistakes in relations with African business partners and leads to poor decision-making.

### **Opportunities – Promising Areas:**

- In an interview with the TASS news agency, Vladimir Putin called Africa “a continent of opportunities,” adding that strengthening ties with African countries was one of “Russia’s foreign political priorities.”<sup>44</sup>
- The first Summit was a “unique chance to meet the key African business figures, become immersed in the real state of affairs on the continent and establish effective contacts for the future.”<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Pyatin A. Experts assessed Russia’s chances of winning the “competition for Africa» // Forbes. 10.23.2019.  
URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/newsroom/obschestvo/385967-eksperty-ocenili-shansy-rossii-na-pobedu-v-sostyazanii-za-afriku>

<sup>45</sup> Head of the REC: More Russian Exporters Should Gain Access to African Markets. Interview with Head of the REC Slepnev A. // TASS. 06.18. 2019.  
URL: <https://tass.ru/interviews/6563816>

- According to Bloomberg, “Russia increasingly sees Africa as a region where it can demonstrate its power and influence.”<sup>46</sup>
- African partners are waiting for Russians to invest in African countries.
- Russia has been invited as a *strategic partner* to establish a balance of power given the neo-colonial economic plans of “Western” countries.
- Russia is viewed as an *alternative opportunity for cooperation* to establish a balance of power and avoid becoming dependent on a single partner (China) that is exceedingly active on the continent.
- Russia is invited to implement *long-term projects* with a social/infrastructural component.
- Russia has developed the following *potential areas of cooperation*: geological exploration and the extraction of mineral resources; space exploration; energy (generation and infrastructure projects, including alternative energy and the distribution of energy resources); the military-industrial complex; healthcare, education; the social sector; the environment, etc.
- Cooperating with Africa, Russia gains access to a large and continuously expanding market. This is primarily due to the positive demographic dynamics in African countries and the active formation of its middle class.
- Russia gains access to resources that are of crucial significance in terms of developing the country’s economy and implementing national projects.
- Russia participates in the development of the security system in Africa, supplying relevant equipment and technologies.
- Opportunities could open up for strengthening global governance in the case of a potential UN Security Council reform that would make it a representative body by ensuring the broad participation of African states.
- Opportunities are opening up for the widespread use of mutual support mechanisms in elections to the governing bodies of several international organizations and in decision-making processes on issues of particular significance for the Russian Federation and African states.
- Participating in humanitarian and social projects: developing a healthcare system and preventing epidemics.
- Implementing educational projects, restoring the scholarship system for African students and, as a consequence, creating a circle of qualified Africans interested in cooperation with Russia in various areas, such as politics and economics.
- The possibility of creating economic and political blocs, restoring the system of building support in the UN Security Council.

<sup>46</sup> Pyatin A. Experts assessed Russia’s chances of winning the «competition for Africa» // Forbes. 10.23.2019.  
URL: <https://www.forbes.ru/newsroom/obshchestvo/385967-eksperty-ocenili-shansy-rossii-na-pobedu-v-sostyazanii-za-afriku>

- An opportunity to compete with the United States, the European Union and China, the key actors in Africa, for influence on the continent.
- In 2020, Russia will succeed India as the chair of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS). The KPCS includes over 80 countries, 21 of which are in Africa and make up 99 per cent of the global diamond market. This will allow Russia to support diamond-producing countries in Africa, which will boost its standing among them.
- The rapid growth of several African economies which could expand the opportunities for export-import relations.
- Given economic sanctions and the fact that the majority of markets in developed and various developing countries are now closed to Russia, Africa is becoming a promising (and to some degree “compensating”) region for implementing trade and economic projects.
- The need to act and make decisions in a competitive environment is a *challenge* that could lead to a breakthrough in the development and implementation of new approaches in the economic, political and humanitarian spheres.

### **Threats – Dangers, Obstacles and Barriers:**

- Active competition on the African market. Conflicts of interests between “actors” on the continent are possible.
- The “niches” that were taken over during Russia’s lengthy “absence” from the African continent (essentially, 30 years).
- Russia’s strengthening positions in Africa and the Afro-Asian region are a challenge for Russia’s geopolitical and economic adversaries and can prompt symmetrical/asymmetrical responses.
- Members of African elites who were educated in Europe, China or the United States and have been integrated into the economic and political systems of those countries to lobby the interests of Russia’s competitors.
- There is a distinct discrepancy of expectations in the sense that the image of African countries is not always favourable, which pushes away entrepreneurs who have little to no knowledge of the real state of affairs. This gives rise to a serious contradiction in business relations: African countries are interested in long-term cooperation, creating jobs for the local population, solving social issues, developing processing technologies and making profit through added value. Medium-sized businesses (excluding Russia’s largest companies) prefer trade and quick profits to long-term cooperation. Today, Africa does not need another trade partner, there are enough of those already. Africa needs a strategic partner.
- There are terrorist threats in some African countries, in particular, in Sub-Saharan Africa, in connection with the activities of the radical terrorist organization Boko Haram, which has proclaimed itself to be the West Africa Province of Islamic State (ISIS) [*which is banned in Russia – ed.*], as well as in North Africa following the so-called Arab Spring.

- Africa's *regions of instability* contain potential threats to Russia–Africa business relations in general, as well as to bodies working in Africa.
- Russia does not have a well-developed “*model of the future*” that would be attractive for the people of African (what the USSR had as a model of a *fair society and what Russia has currently lost*, although this is what the Declaration of the First Russia–Africa Summit notes as a priority in Russia–Africa relations).
- The destabilized situation in North Africa entails significant losses. For example, the withdrawal of LUKOIL, Russian Railways and Tatneft from the continent resulted in estimated losses of approximately USD 7–8 billion.
- Russian companies often focus solely on generating profits for themselves, which may run contrary to the national interests of Africans countries.
- Russia has several economic problems that distract it from resolving long-term strategic tasks.
- External threats to Russia's national security in connection with the actions of NATO countries, the withdrawal of the United States from the INF Treaty and international terrorism can distract Russia from resolving long-term strategic tasks.
- African countries need to understand that Russia is not the socialist USSR. Rather, it is a country following the path of capitalist development. In the period following the collapse of the USSR, the mindset of Russian entrepreneurs was formed and/or reformed into thinking in accordance with the capitalist adage that “profit is the only purpose of business.” Africa, which expects Russia to implement the principles of fairness, may be disappointed.

Therefore in the **Field of strengths and opportunities** the strengths of Russian-African relations allow us to take full advantage of the opportunities presented (an exceptionally favourable trend).

In the **Field of strengths and threats** the strengths of Russian-African relations allow us to neutralize threats successfully, but only for a local limited period of time. In the absence of active actions to maintain the current competitive advantages and actions to develop a new resource, Russia may lose its existing strengths and competitive advantages. In order to maintain the current favourable trend, rapid, conceptual and strategic actions are needed (in the field of Economics, in the field of image strategies, in the implementation of social projects, etc.).

In the **Field of weaknesses and opportunities** Russia's weaknesses in its attitude to Africa can be compensated for and partially neutralized by the opportunities offered by cooperation with the countries of the African continent. Among them, the acquisition of a strategic partner in the field of political issues, strengthening the role and influence of Russia through the formation of blocs and alliances with the participation of African countries. As a result, geopolitical shifts towards a multipolar world, activation of the Russian economy, acquisition of resources necessary for economic development, expansion of trade relations, acquisition of new serious sales markets, etc. are likely.

In the **Field of weaknesses and threats** weaknesses combined with the threats described above constitute a negative trend in the development of Russian-African relations. In general, this combination contains very significant risks that need to be seriously evaluated in order to overcome negative trends.

**The outputs, opportunities and prospects:**

- In the current situation, we need to look for new, effective forms of cooperation that have a solid foundation in our common past, take into account the current geopolitical situation and are aimed at solving the goals and objectives of Russia and Africa, at realizing the national interests of Russia and the countries of the African continent.
- We will need to systematically manage the image of Africa in Russia using scientific information about the countries of the African continent, to study the investment climate, laws and precedents. In order to create a positive image of both African countries and the image of Russian-African relations, it is necessary to involve public organizations, the business community, state institutions of Russia and Africa, as well as the media (on both sides).
- We need a state program that supports universities (as well as technical schools) that provide scholarships and budget places to African students, as well as the involvement of business structures in the implementation of educational projects.
- Russia, having embarked on the path of capitalist development, goes to the African continent with Western models of economic interaction – that is, with the same models that the West comes there with. In this regard, it is necessary to work out the concept of Russia's competitive advantages at this new stage of development. Russia needs to develop models of interaction with Africa that will favorably distinguish Russia from other “players” on the African continent. Such an advantage can be the idea of a strategic partnership, as well as the implementation of the principles of social justice.
- A number of organizational and managerial decisions will be required. Without comprehensive and coordinated actions by various participants in the Russian-African cooperation process, solutions will not be effective enough and will be high-risk. Each participant in the process (actor) needs to clearly understand their role and tasks and act in a coordinated manner with others. We are talking about the following structures: government; financial system; business; science. Four pillars – four actors.

Let's briefly discuss the role of each participant in the system of Russian-African relations.

- **Government.** Sets long-term goals, provides support and guarantees.
- **Financial system.** Having state support and guarantees, it provides effective business financing.
- **Business.** It does its job with state support and guarantees and receives the necessary funding.

- **Science.** Performs expert functions, develops effective algorithms of actions, conducts scenario analysis, provides information and analytical support to the government, financial structures and business structures at all stages of the Project development.

# Recommendations

Nataliya Zaiser

The above analysis clearly demonstrates that a whole range of issues that are of great concern for Africa today binds all the Russian actors who are present on the continent, and a comprehensive, consistent and consolidated approach to finding solutions needs to be adopted. In the current situation, new and effective forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation must be found that rest on the solid foundation of the past that Russia and the continent of Africa share, take the geopolitical situation into account, and are aimed at solving global tasks and objectives.

The image of Africa will need to be comprehensively “managed” using research on the continent’s countries. Africa’s investment climate, laws and precedents will need to be studied. Public organizations, business communities, governmental institutions and the media should be involved in shaping a positive image both of African countries and of the continent’s international relations. A series of organizational and managerial decisions will be required. Solutions that do not rest on the comprehensive and coordinated actions of various actors who cooperate with Africa will be insufficiently effective and fraught with risk. All actors need to clearly understand their role and objectives and act in coordination with others. To prevent Africa from becoming a global “detonator,” serious efforts must be made to establish a new equilibrium by abandoning movement along narrow political corridors.

Despite the long-term documents adopted and looking forward 20, 30, 40 and more years into the future (such as the African Union Agenda 2063 that has already been mentioned), the current realities and the unpredictability of global processes created objective prerequisites for thinking in short-term intervals. Consequently, we suggest taking the three years that separate the First Russia–Africa Summit (2019) and the next summit to be held in 2022 as the qualitative starting point in reviving Russia–Africa relations.

## 1. Using a Dialogue Integration Partnership to Develop Joint Cooperation Models

Given the serious attention that Africa is devoting to developing integration processes, it would seem that Russia needs to have its own proposals for interaction with its partners on this track. Moreover, Russia approaches the current situation with serious experience in building integration in various areas, including economics (the Union State, the Eurasian Economic Union), military and political cooperation (CSTO), and universal cooperation (the CIS, SCO, BRICS, etc.). As regards economic integration, Russia can offer Africa an example of an active and efficiently developing integration model and the opportunity to exchange experience that can be applied to strengthening regional and sub-regional integration processes in Africa. This work can be done, in particular, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding in Trade and Economic Cooperation signed between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the African Union in Sochi on October 24, 2019.



The following areas appear potentially promising:

- The experience of creating and operating a supranational regulatory body, namely, the Eurasian Economic Commission.
- The development and introduction of cutting-edge supranational legislation, in particular, in customs administration, technical regulations, protecting the domestic market, etc. Interestingly, the Eurasian Economic Council's legal provisions are being used as the basis for international conventions, in particular, UN customs regulations standards.
- Approaches to coordinating the activities of states in key economic areas (industry and agriculture, transportation and infrastructure, energy, competition).
- The adaptation of states to functioning within an integration alliance, including the experience of creating the necessary infrastructure in customs and other areas.
- Approaches to removing barriers impeding the movement of goods, services, capital and workforce.
- Exchanging experience in developing free trade zones.

At the same time, it is clear that the experience of African countries can also be useful for Russia and its partners both in Eurasian integration and in BRICS, where Africa is represented by South Africa. This, in particular, can apply to developing infrastructure projects, harmonizing monetary and financial interaction and building a dialogue with international organizations. Africa has accumulated significant experience in these areas, as well as in several others since the first integration alliances appeared in the region in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (for instance, the Southern African Customs Union) and today, their experience, particularly in implementing solutions on deepening integration, could be used together with the knowledge of the European Union, ASEAN and similar bodies in Latin America.

## **2. Political Cooperation**

At the present juncture, it appears necessary to involve African partners in global geopolitical issues for them to obtain noticeable weight in international relations. Russia can launch such an international dialogue using the African vector. The global community today has strong and well-founded reasons for building systemic political and democratic communication channels where African political elites can take a prominent place. Consequently, their immediate involvement in global political processes, as well as their knowledge and awareness, will enable them to improve their political literacy to some extent, demonstrate their involvement in global processes, and state their opinions on issues of the changing world order. In addition, it can make a positive contribution to the emergence of modern national statehood in African countries and the dismantling of old systems based on the remnants of the colonial past. The political and socioeconomic degradation of the continent is fraught with the most global consequences. Increasing

the political influence of African countries will thus complement the attempts to achieve a consensus in resolving pressing problems.

### 3. Security Collaboration

For all actors, the main obstacles in the way of doing business in Africa are associated with risks stemming from the instability and “fragility” of certain jurisdictions. After Russia successfully implemented its strategy in Syria, it has with increasing frequency been referred to as an “exporter of security.” At the same time, European countries have been involved heavily in various activities in the past, expressing their interest in their “peacekeeping” patronage and presence in Africa. It should also be noted that China has significantly increased its peacekeeping potential in recent years, outstripping all the permanent members of the UN Security Council in the number of troops supplied.

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council have deployed the following numbers of peacemakers:

China – 2151; France – 741; the United Kingdom – 571; Russia – 71; the United States – 35.

The best practices accumulated by Russian peacekeepers on missions to Africa is an essential part of the overall peacekeeping process that includes political, military, diplomatic, police and geographical components. Holding joint exercises. Training African personnel. Teaching the art of negotiation and diplomacy to adhere to the principle of peaceful dispute resolution and thus help ease tensions. And establishing peaceful cooperation between states. By doing all of this, Russia can spearhead the dialogue on security in Africa and be its platform, thereby taking its expert assessment to the level of international interaction on the continent.

It would be worthwhile to involve various crisis resolution groups in the dialogue on “African” security issues and build close cooperation with the Conflict Resolution Peace and Security Group of the African Union that was set up relatively recently.

This issue also covers matters of cooperation to ensure the integrity, vitality and universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the ban on biological weapons, and work on preventing an arms race in outer space.

### 4. Trade and Economic Cooperation

Trade and economic cooperation arguably offer the broadest range of possibilities for interaction. On the one hand, Africa is a highly competitive environment for global business participants. On the other, an entire range of issues remains unresolved, or out-dated mechanisms are in place that are gradually losing their workability and relevance. At the Annual Meeting of the World Bank in October 2019, European and American entrepreneurs raised the issue of the need to search for new financial models to implement projects in Africa. This means that even for European and American businesspeople, the established instruments of the World Bank and the IMF are no longer effective. The problem of (and in the

case of Russia, the lack of) a mechanism for financing large-scale projects in Africa (with the exception of government loans to build NPPs) is highly relevant.

Significant potential is opened up by technological interaction in various sectors, such as energy, infrastructure, telecommunications and the digitalization of the economy. Russia will continue to steer its course for promoting cooperation in energy security (including the diversification of energy resources), using renewable energy sources and implementing joint projects in civil nuclear technologies in Africa. Mutually profitable cooperation in the oil and gas sector will continue. The Summit featured talks on building nuclear research centres in several African states. Russia holds leading positions in the development and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, working with partners (suppliers) to produce individual components and equipment, as well as with other global actors in nuclear energy. Projects in this sector are rather costly, and finding financing for them is not easy.

Additionally, African states themselves are unable to provide co-financing. It is also difficult for countries with sizeable sovereign debt to obtain loans from international development institutions. It is important to note here that NPPs serve as a sort of security “guarantor.” Despite some turbulence, the African continent is still considered not as a hotbed of conflicts, but, above all, the platform for investment and development. What are the possible points of contact between Russia and other countries? The potential is great. For example, no one has compiled a map of the continent’s power grid, and it is unlikely that a single actor could do it on their own, etc.

## **5. Combating Viral Infections and Epidemics. New Technologies in Healthcare and Diagnostics. Improving the Quality of Life**

Clearly, combating deadly diseases is a crucial topic for African countries. Despite the level of development of medicine in the modern world, the diversity of methods of treating and preventing various diseases known to humankind, there are still a number of deadly diseases that kill tens of thousands of people around the world every year, and Africa is no exception.

The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), for example, is one of such diseases. There is still no effective treatment for Ebola, nor can it be successfully prevented.

Acting under the auspices of the World Health Organization and national and international organizations (including Russian organizations), the European Commission, the Economic Community of West African States, governments, foundations, private organizations and individuals participated in stemming the outbreak of EVD and its consequences in West Africa. A total of about USD 5 billion was spent on eliminating the outbreak.

The Russian Federation took active part in eliminating the EVD outbreak in West Africa. For the first time in Russia’s recent history, a public-private partnership between the Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Wel-

fare (Rospotrebnadzor) and RUSAL UC ensured the presence of Russian specialists directly in the epicentre of the outbreak where, over a short period, they established a research, treatment and educational facility. The centre still serves to handle the tasks of ensuring long-term cutting-edge biological security of the Russian Federation and its African allies. Russia's total contribution to combating the EVD was about USD 60 million. However, despite the experience gained eliminating the EVD outbreak and its consequences in West Africa, the problem of effectively counteracting further outbreaks and the spread of the Ebola virus remains relevant today.

Russia and African countries have come to an agreement on strengthening the national healthcare systems in Africa and increasing their reliability and stability in combating epidemics, pandemics and other public health problems. Joint efforts will be channelled, among other things, into developing national and local potential by strengthening qualified, productive, responsible, transparent and fair healthcare systems that are answerable to the state. This should lead to an improvement in the quality of basic medical services, increased R&D and greater economic potential of medical services providers. The parties also discussed the possibility of working together to prevent natural disasters and epidemics and eliminate their consequences, expanding ways to strengthen cooperation in such areas as humanitarian aid, combating climate change, droughts and desertification and monitoring and forecasting emergencies. Cooperation within the framework of international organizations such as the WHO, Doctors without Borders, the Red Cross and others could have promising results.

## **6. Scientific, Technical, Humanitarian and Informational Cooperation**

Africa needs to speed up socioeconomic reforms, first and foremost in order to create new jobs for the 29 million African people who will reach working age every year between now and 2030. It is of vital importance that new jobs be made available for young Africans and women across the continent: about 42 per cent of Africa's employed youth live on less than USD 1.90 a day (in purchasing power parity), and only 12 per cent of employable women in Africa are paid for their work. Although African people are the most entrepreneurial in the world, many entrepreneurs lack basic knowledge. For instance, most young entrepreneurs in Côte d'Ivoire and Madagascar do not have sufficient knowledge and opportunities to keep proper accounting records, deploy manufacturing means, use long-term planning instruments, identify relevant technological achievements and develop human capital.

Russia's interaction with other countries in this area could offer the continent the requisite opportunities for a breakthrough.

Developing interaction and cooperation between future generations and contributing to the global human capital is arguably the key point in expanding international interaction. All unresolved geopolitical issues will, in one way or another, be left behind (regardless of the degree to which they have been resolved). The

young generation of the future will create new civil society models. This is why current actors on the continent, including Russia, need to bank on the future. Interaction at the level of universities and non-governmental organizations, while still involving governments, is an effective instrument for establishing a dialogue with Africa. This is where the role of our project becomes particularly important and relevant.

## **7. Cooperation in Ecology, Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development**

The final document of the Russia–Africa Summit in Sochi was the Declaration, where special place is given to cooperation in environmental protection. Article 45 of the Declaration states the intent to “Strengthen efforts to address climate change in Africa, transfer necessary technologies, build the capacities and enhance the abilities of African States to build resilience against and adapt to the negative impact of climate change.” Russia recently ratified the Paris Agreement and is now joining the active phase of counteracting climate change on the planet. Russia, for its part, having a powerful scientific and methodological base, is ready to identify the possibilities of its fundamental and scientific research, which may be important for the continent. Cooperation with other participating countries within the African agenda may be particularly relevant and will offer additional positive dialogue formats.

## Addenda. Tables

### Africa

According to the Federal Customs Service of Russia, the 2018 foreign trade turnover between Russia and the entire African continent increased by 17.2% in comparison with the previous year, amounting to USD **20.4 billion**. Exports grew by 18.2% to USD **17.5 billion**, while imports increased by 11.5%, reaching USD **2.9 billion**.

*For reference:* Russian exports in 2017 – USD 14.8 billion; imports – USD 2.6 billion.

From January to November 2019, the volume of Russia-Africa trade dropped by 17.1% compared to the same period in 2018, amounting to USD **14.5 billion**. Exports decreased by 20.1% to USD **11.9 billion**, while imports remained unchanged (USD **2.6 billion**).

### Sub-Saharan Africa

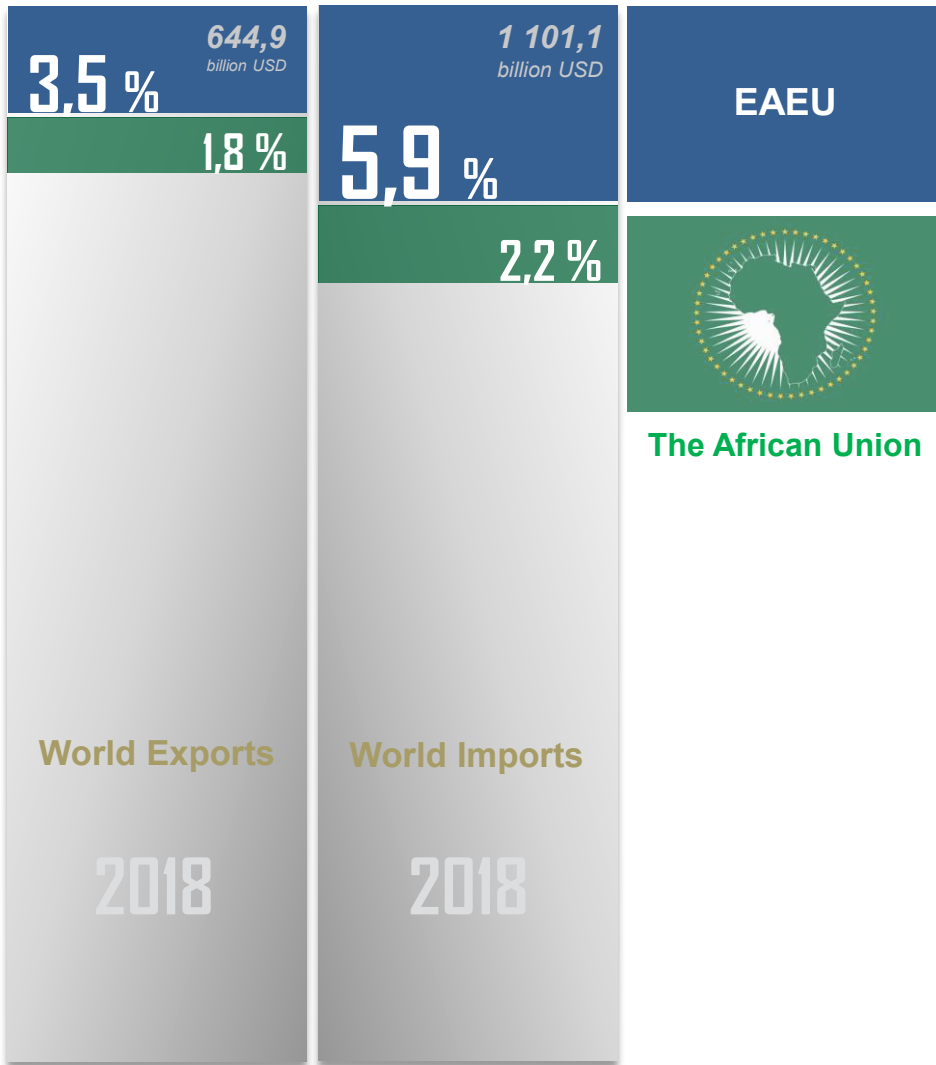
According to the Federal Customs Service of Russia, the foreign trade turnover between Russia and Sub-Saharan Africa in 2018 increased by 40% in comparison with the previous year, amounting to USD **4.9 billion**. Exports increased by 52.4% to USD **3.2 billion**, while imports increased by 21.4%, reaching USD **1.7 billion**.

*For reference:* Russian exports in 2017 – USD 2.1 billion; imports – USD 1.4 billion.

From January to November 2019, the volume of trade between Russia and the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa decreased by 2.3% compared to the same period in 2018, amounting to USD **4.3 billion**. Exports decreased by 6.9% to USD **2.7 billion**, while imports increased by 6.7%, amounting to USD **1.6 billion**.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Data provided by the Ministry of economic development of the Russian Federation

**Table 1.** International Trade in Goods



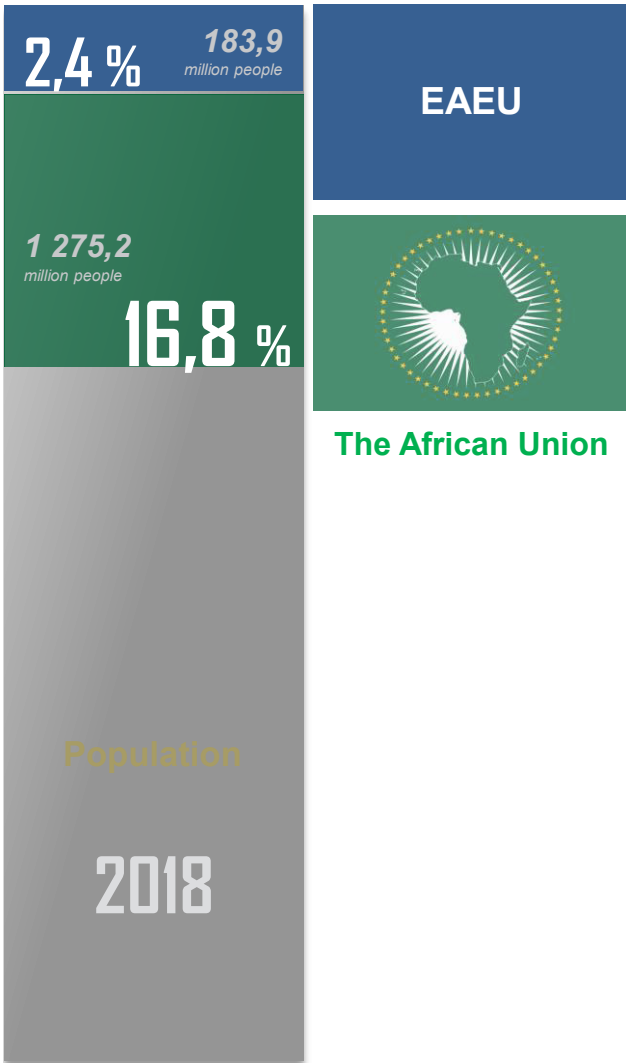
Source: URL: <https://comtrade.un.org/data/>

**Table 2.** GDP Data

Source: World Bank Data Base, World Development Indicators.  
 URL: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>

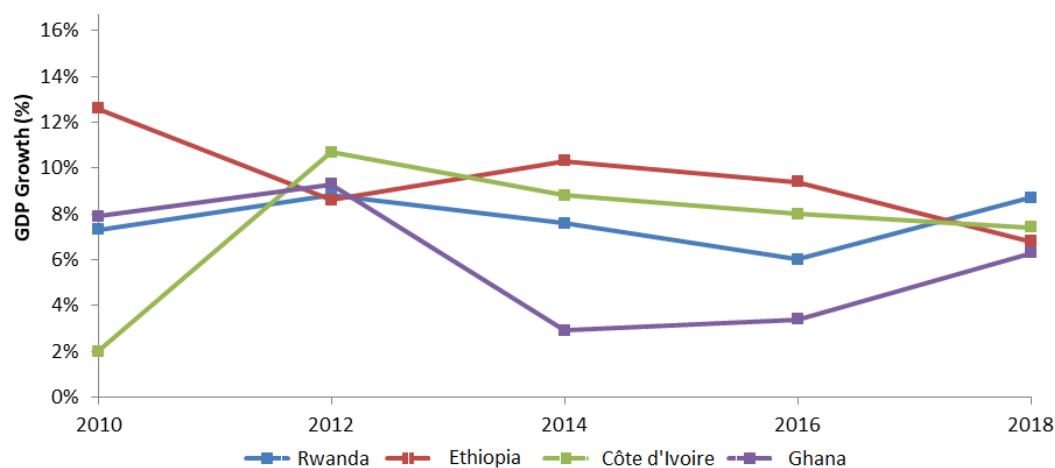


**Table 3. Population**



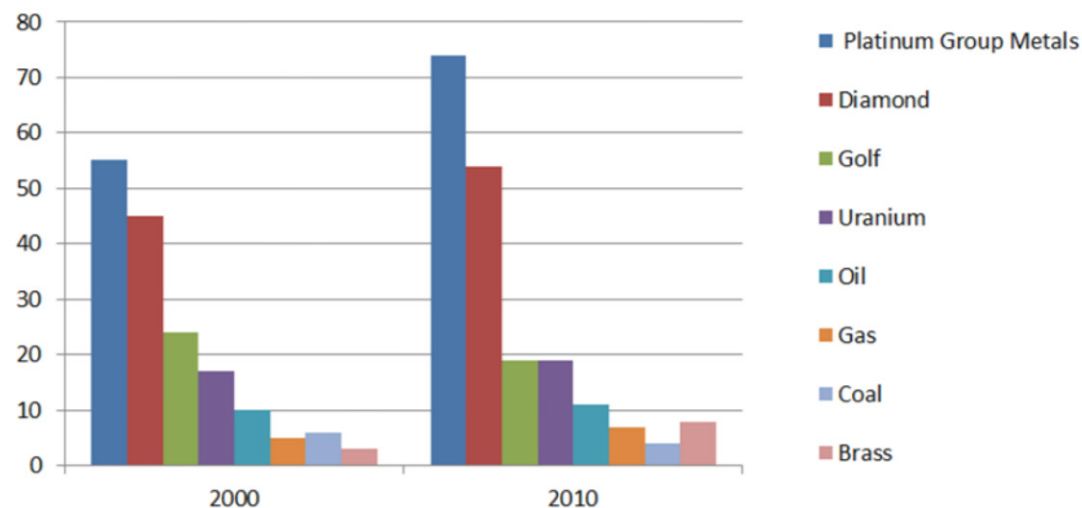
Source: World Bank Data Base, World Development Indicators.  
URL: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>

**Graph 1. Fastest Developing African Economies.**



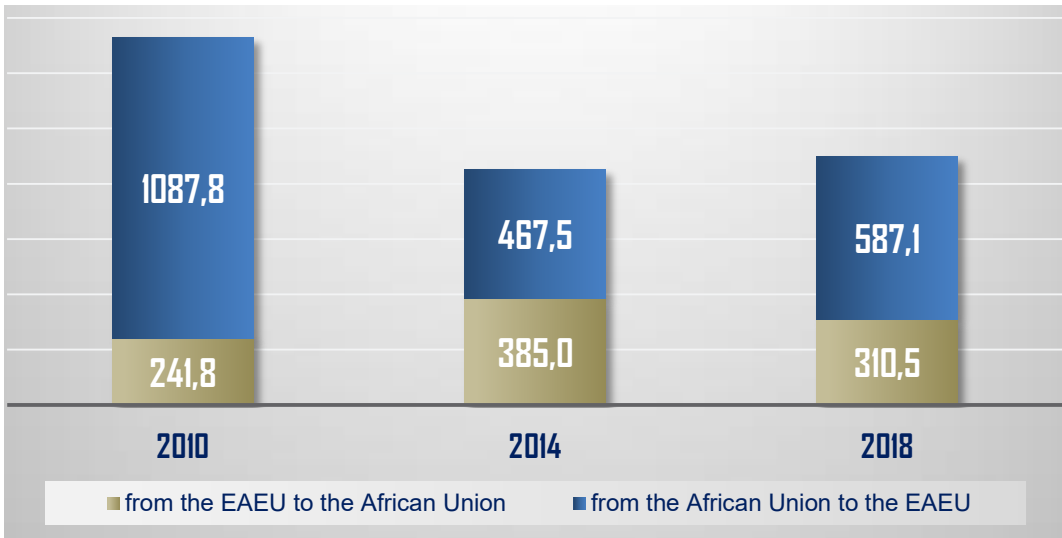
Source: World Development Indicators.

**Graph 2. Share of Global Natural Resource Extraction and Production in Africa from 2000–2010 (%)**



Source: African Natural Resources Center.

**Table 4.** Investments, million USD



Source: Eurasian Economic Commission statistics.

**Table 5.*****World Trade, million USD***

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
Turnover	30 196 246,1	37 127 603,5	<b>37 295 753,5</b>
Export	15 035 339,9	18 578 525,5	18 538 437,4
Import	15 160 906,2	18 549 078,0	18 757 316,1

***EAEU in Global Trade, %***

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
Turnover	5,1	5,4	<b>4,7</b>
Export	3,9	4,1	3,5
Import	6,4	6,6	5,9

***EAEU in Global Trade, million USD***

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
Turnover	1 553 838,0	1 989 940,1	<b>1 745 967,2</b>
Export	589 648,3	756 575,2	644 870,0
Import	964 189,7	1 233 364,9	1 101 097,2

***EAEU Countries, Turnover***

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
Turnover	964 189,7	1 233 364,9	<b>1 101 097,2</b>
Armenia	2 022,9	2 980,4	4 766,8
Belarus	50 566,9	72 161,1	67 452,3
Kazakhstan	114 488,1	158 917,5	122 218,1
Kyrgyzstan	2 976,8	3 638,9	3 670,3
Russia	794 135,0	995 667,0	902 989,7

***EAEU Countries, Import***

	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2018</b>
Импорт	589 648,3	756 575,2	<b>644 870,0</b>
Armenia	7 563,5	8 319,0	9 699,9
Belarus	69 768,9	81 004,7	76 817,8
Kazakhstan	48 047,3	82 590,9	67 316,9
Kyrgyzstan	6 445,3	11 362,9	10 583,9
Russia	457 823,3	573 297,7	480 451,5

***The African Union in Global Trade***

	%			million USD		
	2010	2014	2018	2010	2014	2018
Turnover	3,0	2,7	<b>2,0</b>	910 318,5	1 001 228,4	<b>746 151,6</b>
Export	3,1	2,6	1,8	464 640,4	475 071,0	340 561,7
Inport	2,9	2,8	2,2	445 678,1	526 157,4	405 589,9

***The East African Community in Global Trade***

	%			million USD		
	2010	2014	2018	2010	2014	2018
Turnover	0,1	0,1	<b>0,1</b>	37 777,6	30 152,9	<b>46 429,4</b>
Export	0,1	0,0	0,1	11 198,3	8 761,5	12 976,1
Inport	0,2	0,1	0,2	26 579,3	21 391,4	33 453,3

***The Southern African Customs Union in Global Trade***

	%			million USD		
	2010	2014	2018	2010	2014	2018
Turnover	0,6	0,6	<b>0,6</b>	189 688,4	228 449,2	<b>214 732,2</b>
Export	0,6	0,6	0,6	93 675,5	109 190,5	107 658,4
Inport	0,6	0,6	0,6	96 012,9	119 258,7	107 073,8

***The Southern African Development Community in Global Trade***

	%			million USD		
	2010	2014	2018	2010	2014	2018
Turnover	1,0	1,1	<b>0,9</b>	314 800,3	396 020,8	<b>338 639,1</b>
Export	1,1	1,1	0,9	167 410,8	197 843,9	173 264,9
Inport	1,0	1,1	0,9	147 389,5	198 176,9	165 374,2

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## **Russian International Affairs Council**

The Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) is a non-profit international relations think tank on a mission to provide policy recommendations for all of the Russian organizations involved in external affairs.

RIAC engages experts, statesmen, entrepreneurs and members of civil society in public discussions with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of Russian foreign policy.

Along with research and analysis, RIAC is involved in educational activities aimed at creating a solid network of young global affairs and diplomacy experts.

RIAC is an active player on the public diplomacy arena, presenting Russia's vision on the key issues of global development on the international stage.

RIAC members are the leaders of Russia's foreign affairs community – diplomats, businesspeople, scholars, public leaders and journalists.

RIAC President Igor Ivanov, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, served as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation from 1998 to 2004 and Secretary of the Security Council from 2004 to 2007.

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## Africa Business Initiative Union

Africa Business Initiative started as a project in March 2016 in close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation with the support of a number of Russian companies, the African diplomatic corps and the scientific community. The main objective of the project was to create a humanitarian and economic expertise aimed at restoring and strengthening relations between Russia and Africa. The main goal of the organization is the development of strategic tools to promote and support the interests of Russian business on the African continent, including the international cooperation angle. ABI UNION also takes an active part in developing the dialogue of civil societies, which in the global context is an integral and essential part of all areas of interaction, as well as an additional tool for promoting economic, political and humanitarian aspects.

ABI UNION was officially registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation on November 13, 2017 in the form of the African Business Initiative UNION, a non-profit organization «Union of Entrepreneurs in Representing Their Interests in Africa».

The members of the ABI UNION are Russian companies representing various sectors of the country's economy, doing business or having strategic interests in building economic relations with the African continent.

ABI UNION cooperates with relevant ministries and departments, embassies of African countries in the Russian Federation, Russian and international organizations, professional and business communities and associations.

The Chair of the Board of Africa Business Initiative UNION is Dr. Nataliya H. Zaiser, Head of the «Russia-Africa +» Working Group at the Russian Council on Foreign Affairs, Member of the Working Group «Improving Russia's Positions in Doing Business» World Bank Ranking at the Agency of Strategic Initiatives, Founder and Editor-in-chief of «Africa Active» business magazine.



**Russian International Affairs Council  
Africa Business Initiative Union**

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