



Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Summit

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Why in News?

Recently, the China hosted [Forum on China-Africa Cooperation \(FOCAC\) summit](#) in Beijing, attended by 53 African nations, showcased China's evolving approach amidst economic pressures and its efforts to strengthen its partnership with Africa.

What is the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation?

- **Origins:** It was established in **2000 to formalise the strategic partnership between China and African nations**, with a summit conducted every three years, with host alternating between China and an African member.
- **Participants:** The FOCAC counts **53 African nations as its members**, with the exception of **Eswatini**, which has diplomatic ties with Taiwan against China's ["One China" Policy](#).
 - The [African Union Commission](#), the continental bloc tasked with ensuring cooperation and economic integration across its member countries, is also a member.
- **Highlights of 2024 Summit:** The summit's **theme is** *"Joining Hands to Advance Modernization and Build a High-Level China-Africa Community with a Shared Future."*
 - Summit aims to address key issues such as governance, industrialization, agricultural upgradation, and furthering [China's Belt and Road Initiative \(BRI\) projects](#).
 - China pledged approximately USD 51 billion of funding to African countries, supporting 30 infrastructure projects across the continent.
 - The summit adopted the **Beijing Declaration and the FOCAC-Beijing Action Plan (2025-27)**, focusing on deepening the China-Africa partnership.

China's Relations with Africa

- In 2023, trade between Africa and China reached USD 282 billion, according to the [International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#).
 - China accounts for 20% of Africa's exports (primarily primary commodities like metals, mineral products and fuel) and 16% of African imports (mainly manufactured goods, electronics, and machinery).
 - The **Tanzania-Zambia Railway**, a transnational railway was **China's first major infrastructure project in Africa**, marking a significant step in its engagement with the continent.
- China's investments in Africa, particularly under the BRI, have been significant. African nations have often turned to China for funding due to fewer constraints compared to Western loans, **but concerns about** ["debt trap diplomacy"](#) have emerged, with critics alleging that China's massive loans could lead to geopolitical leverage.

What is India's Current Engagement with Africa?

- **India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS):** The [IAFS](#) aimed at strengthening ties, has not **been held since 2015**. The Covid-19 pandemic delayed the fourth summit, initially planned for 2020.

- **Recent Initiatives:** The 2018 guiding principles for Africa focus on prioritising Africa in Indian foreign policy and promoting trade, digital innovation, and climate cooperation.
 - The **African Union (AU)** has been made a permanent member of the [G20 during India's 2023 G20 Presidency](#).
 - Since the G20 presidency India has been hosting the [Voice of the Global South Summit \(VOGSS\)](#), which sees the participation of all African countries.
 - Three editions of the VOGSS have been held so far during and after India's G20 presidency.
- **Defence and Security:** The [India-Africa Defence Dialogue \(IADD\)](#) highlights India's commitment to security cooperation.
- **Economic Relations:** India is the **fourth largest trading partner for Africa** with a bilateral trade of about USD 100 billion and cumulative investments of more than USD 75 billion.
 - The [African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement \(AfCFTA\)](#) opens up prospects for a deeper economic integration. India is the first developing country to provide **non-reciprocal duty-free market access to Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** through its [duty-free tariff preference \(DFTP\) scheme](#).
- **Digital and Technological Cooperation:** India is focusing on leveraging its expertise in digital public infrastructure to support Africa's digital transformation.

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UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2016)

The India-Africa Summit

1. held in 2015 was the third such Summit
2. was actually initiated by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1951

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (a)