

After reading the chapter, the reader will be able to develop an analytical understanding on the following:

- Historical Background
- India and South Africa Diplomatic relations
- Commercial Diplomacy
- Multilateral Diplomacy
- Analysis of Indian PM visit

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

India and South Africa (SA) share a historic bond. The relationship goes back to the times of British colonial rule of SA, with the British importing indentured labour from India. The most important personality in the relationship is certainly MK Gandhi. It is during his stay in SA that Gandhi developed and practised the technique of Satyagraha that later on became a key component of the Indian National Movement. It is his experience in SA that later on took the concrete shape of Afro–Asian solidarity in the early 20th century.

INDIA AND SA DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

The continued struggle of South Africans against apartheid had two impacts. Firstly, India officially decided to discontinue any diplomatic relationship with SA while apartheid was being officially recognised and practised. Secondly, India widened its global struggle against imperialism and colonialism to include apartheid and raised these three issues whenever necessary in global platforms. Throughout 1940s and 1950s, India continued to push for resolutions seeking to censure SA for apartheid at the UN level and other multilateral forums, including NAM. India also provided monetary support to the Organisation of African Unity Assistance Fund for the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. The relationship has improved only after the formal end of apartheid in 1994 and since then has grown on the basis of past Afro–Asian solidarity.

The improvement in the bilateral relationship can also be analysed within India's larger Africa policy framework (explained in the first chapter of this section). As India needs resources to sustain growth and to project power, SA becomes a crucial player, being one of the most resource-rich nations in the southern part of the African continent. Moreover, all the governments of SA post-1994 have been quite pragmatic and have ensured the development of their country through pertinent foreign policy tools.

COMMERCIAL DIPLOMACY

One of the most pragmatic moves has been to include SA in BRICS and align with the

emerging economies than being dependent solely upon the west. The impact of pragmatism is visible on India–SA trade which has gone to reach almost 15 billion dollars at present. There is a huge demand of gold in India, and SA is one of the leading suppliers of gold to the country. Even the Indian private sector is quite keen to make use of SA as a base for sub-Saharan engagements. SA has a well-established financial market system, proper infrastructure and a stringent rule of law. Ranbaxy, Cipla, Tata, Mahindra are just some of the Indian firms to have made SA their base, to name a few. In order to enhance commercial engagement between India and SA, it is important for both to conclude a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA).

MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

Since both states are dominant players in the Indian ocean and since gold from SA comes via the ocean route, a potential area of cooperation for the two is piracy, peace and maritime security. SA has a strong navy but somehow is a little reluctant to project power in South East Africa as it feels that Africa lacks a coherent maritime strategy. SA is also reluctant to project power in Horn of Africa region because it believes that the problem of piracy in the area is more due to continuance of the failed state of Somalia. However, to protect its maritime zone, it has participated in joint naval exercises, despite its lack of urge to assert naval hegemonic power. Both India and SA can use Indian Ocean Rim Association as a forum to enhance maritime cooperation. The relation between the two nations is equally strong at the multilateral level. They are both represented at IBSA (India, Brazil, SA) framework and undertake broad cooperation. At the level of WTO and climate change negotiations through the BASIC group, both are known to undertake multilateral cooperation. A peculiar feature in their multilateral relationship is that SA intends to uphold a pan-African position in a majority of these cases, which, at time, strains the India–SA cooperation.



Arab Spring, SA and India and R2P

In 2011–12, India and SA, along with Nigeria and Guinea Bissau were represented in the UNSC as non-permanent members. One of the issues they confronted was NATO intervention against Libya. As the voting progressed, India abstained, while the three African states voted in favour of NATO intervention, clearly making cracks in India–SA multilateral diplomacy visible. The reasons that the Africans state voted in favour was because the UN Resolution 1973 synchronises with Article 4(h) of African Union’s Constitutive Act of 2000 which supports collective intervention in a state to put a halt to mass atrocities. On the other hand, India continues to form non-intervention and sovereignty as its ideal policy in such matters of Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Despite such strains, the relationship continues to grow and India will seek deep economic engagement in the time ahead with SA as its own demand for resources grows at home.

ANALYSIS OF INDIAN PM’S VISIT IN JULY—2016

The Indian PM, as a part of his four nation tour to Africa, in July 2016, visited South Africa and met Jacob Zuma.



In June, 2016, the annual plenary session of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) held its meeting in Seoul. In the meeting, an important agenda was India's membership to the NSG. However, some players, including South Africa, had raised procedural concerns, as a result of which India could not attain the membership in Seoul meeting. South Africa has been an ardent supporter of non-proliferation. Its non-proliferation credentials are so strong that in 1994, when South Africa ended apartheid, it went on to destroy its entire nuclear arsenal. During the PM's visit, an important dimension discussed was South African support to India for NSG. The PM, during his visit, also announced that India's pharmaceutical major Cipla will setup a biosimilars manufacturing facility in the Special Economic Zone of Duke Trade port in Durban and will manufacture drugs for cancer treatment using living organisms. This factory will be established with an investment of 591 crore Indian Rupees and will generate more than 300 science related jobs in South Africa.