

Future Africa

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**Panel: India's involvement in Africa – India, Quo Vadis?
Session 1: Indo-African Policy and Diplomacy**

ABSTRACT

India's African Engagement: From a New Perception to a New Policy

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India's African policy has taken a realistic turn in the recent decades, with New Delhi's ambition to emerge as one of the main powers in a multi-polar world. The need for a strong economy, which is the main prerequisite for this new status that India is seeking, has led New Delhi to change its perception of Africa. It should not just be a continent where India endeavors to exert its political and diplomatic influence, but one where it should build, project and protect its economic power. As a result the new India's African policy is a combination of these objectives and can be laid out in four ambitions. A political one which consists of engaging the African countries both bilaterally and multilaterally through the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities, in order to build political influence which can help India in a number of topics such as UN reform, Climate Change, WTO talks etc. An energy ambition, which would allow India to access resources in Africa for its energy security strategy. An economic ambition through the increase of trade relations and the Indian investments in Africa to take advantage of Africa's potential. Finally a geostrategic ambition, whereby India seeks to integrate the African coasts of the Indian Ocean in its global strategy of gaining control of this eponymous sea in order to protect its foreign trade and counter the presence of China. This paper undertakes to discuss these four ambitions which shape the core of India's African policy by showing how they fit into India's ambition to emerge as a global power.