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Russia-Africa: a growing power of attraction



On the 23rd of May 2024, on the occasion of Africa Day, a reception was held at the House of Receptions of the Russian Foreign Ministry on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov for the African diplomatic corps accredited in Moscow. The event was held in the traditionally warm and friendly atmosphere.

Every year, on the 25th of May, the world celebrates Africa Day. This day is also called African Liberation Day and is dedicated to the anniversary of the formation of the Organisation of African Unity, which was established by 30 African leaders on the 25th of May 1963, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This organisation was created to ensure the full autonomy of African countries. By a UN decision, this day has been declared the Day of the Liberation of Africa.

Considering the significance of this event, the Russian Foreign Ministry annually organises a celebratory meeting with representatives of the African diplomatic corps. This year's celebration of Africa Day was no exception, and it also coincided with the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the African Union's Peace and Security Council – one of the main bodies of the pan-African organisation, which allocates considerable efforts towards the formation of a modern African security architecture and to the political and socio-economic integration of the continent's countries.

Lavrov: Africa is one of the most important pillars of the emerging multipolar world order

Sergey Lavrov, the head of the Russian Foreign Ministry, addressed the audience with a **welcoming speech**, in which he underlined that “Africa continues to gain political weight and to establish itself as a crucial pillar of the emerging multipolar order”. Among the clear manifestations of the growing global role of the region, **the minister mentioned** “the African Union's G20 membership, which became possible with Russia's support, and the African peace initiative on Ukraine, which, at the suggestion of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, was discussed by a group of African countries and Russian President Vladimir Putin in June and July 2023, as they serve as compelling proof of the region's growing global role”.

Lavrov: Russia and Africa are historically united by close ties of friendship

Currently, little is known about Africa in Russia, although everyone knows about Russia there. Africa is the second-largest continent, and its population of almost one and a half billion people is growing rapidly.

According to President Putin, the Russia-Africa Summits have become a “genuine breakthrough”. The Russian foreign minister **noted** that “during the second summit held in St Petersburg in July 2023, we confirmed our overlapping approaches to building country-to-country communication based on the principles of international law, in particular, the principles of the UN Charter in their entirety and interconnection. We have agreed upon the mechanisms for practical cooperation across all areas of interest. A new dialogue format, i.e. the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum Conference, has been established at the level of foreign ministers. The first such meeting will be held this autumn”.

Africa needs Russia and Russia needs Africa

In his subsequent speech, the doyen of the African diplomatic corps in Moscow, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cameroon to Russia Mahamat Paba Salé, greatly appreciated Russia's role in the decolonisation of Africa and its assistance in the

process of the formation of young, independent African states. At the same time, he positively noted the intensification of complex ties between African countries and Russia after the historic Russia-Africa summits in Sochi and St. Petersburg, emphasising the African Union's vector to further strengthen traditionally friendly and mutually respectful Russian-African relations.

Africa needs Russia, and Russia needs Africa. The force of attraction between our country and the African continent is growing; a reassessment of our relations is taking place. The mechanisms of a mutual partnership are being strengthened and efforts are being combined to face the challenges of our time.

Happy Africa Day to our dear African friends!

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