

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2238
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15.03.2017**

RELATION WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES

**†2238. SHRI BHARAT SINGH:
SHRI MANSHANKAR NINAMA:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any specific steps to improve commercial, economic and cultural relations with African countries during the last three years;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government to increase the share of private companies of India in African countries; and**
- (c) the measures being taken by the Government to provide security to the persons of African origin in India keeping in view of recent attacks on them?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]**

(a) & (b) Government has taken steps to improve commercial, economic and cultural relations with African countries. India and Africa have recognized the benefits of trade, investment and technology linkages. This provides a strong dimension to India-Africa partnership. Both sides further recognize that there is huge potential for expansion of trade and investment between Africa and India. Some of the major trade related issues that have been discussed and agreed are: to fast track the implementation of the Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme offered by India; work towards creating conducive environment for trade facilitation in accordance with the WTO Bali Trade Facilitation Agreement; Support establishment of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Medium and Small Industries (MSIs) in order to promote employment creation and income generation for people of both sides; Promote

Public Private Partnership (PPP) by encouraging Indian businesses to set up skills development units in African industrial zones with the aim to train African engineers, technicians, managers and workers as well as other experts in areas such as food security and solar energy; create a mechanism to enable women groups to access credit for productive activities and markets for their products; enhance cooperation through training and collective negotiations on global trade issues, including at the WTO and enter into bilateral Preferential/Free Trade Agreements with African nations, wherever possible.

Important Indian business delegations accompanied President, Vice President and Prime Minister during their visits to African countries. In addition, our Missions are constantly engaged with Indian private firms active in the countries of their accreditation. Potential private sector companies are also encouraged to make exploratory visits and eventually commence business ties with these countries.

Special steps taken in this connection include encouraging and assisting private businesses/investors from India to explore the vast economic and commercial potential in these countries and increase investment, sending more business delegations, holding various market expansion/trade promotion activities, participation in various exhibitions, trade fairs, etc.

(c) Several measures have been taken by the Government to provide security to persons of African origin in India. The issue has been taken up with States having large numbers of African nationals and they have been requested to take steps to ensure safety and security. These measures include increased police patrolling, community sensitisation and interactions. A monitoring mechanism has been set up under the States Division in the Ministry of External Affairs to coordinate with the State Governments concerned regarding follow up of the cases reported. The sensitization efforts undertaken by Government and the monitoring mechanisms established have resulted in better appreciation of each others concerns in the localities where African nationals reside in large numbers.
