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The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank (AfDB) on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2017. It is the first time in the history of the AfDB Group that India would be hosting the Annual Meetings of the Bank from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The annual meetings are the largest event of the Bank, which would witness about 3000 delegates from 81 member countries from across the world gathering at the sprawling Mahatma Mandir convention centre.

During the course of the event, the Board of Governors of the Bank will meet to dwell upon the major developmental challenges facing the African countries and the ways to achieve an inclusive and sustainable growth. AfDB has adopted a strategy called “**High 5s**”, which focuses on five major developmental priorities comprising agriculture, energy, industrialization, regional connectivity, and improved quality of life through access to social and economic opportunities. The core theme of the event is “**Transforming Agriculture for wealth creation in Africa**”, which has tremendous scope for cooperation between India and Africa.

During **India Africa Forum Summit 2015**, the announcement of a US\$ 10 billion line of credit by the Prime Minister of India marked a new beginning in India’s approach to engage with African countries in a more constructive manner. India’s support through lines of credit have not only helped finance the projects in African countries, but have also contributed to capacity building, IT education, and higher education.

While Annual Meetings of the Bank this year would be another opportunity to discuss the issues facing the regional member countries, India would seek to leverage this occasion to further deepen our economic cooperation with the African countries through various other events that have been planned. Government of India is organizing an Africa India Cooperation Event, in partnership with CII, on the sidelines of the main event. **The sessions would primarily focus on Agriculture, Healthcare, e-Governance, Renewable energy, Skill development and education, Manufacturing, trade and investment.**

Government of India is also organizing an exhibition, in partnership with FICCI, during the Annual Meetings of the Bank with the objective to **showcase the capabilities of Indian companies in terms of technology, innovation, and start-ups, which could be relevant for African countries.** The theme of the exhibition is centred around the priority areas of the Bank. It will witness the presence of a wide spectrum of industry leaders from India.

India joined the African Development Fund (ADF) in 1982 and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 1983, initiating a long history of cooperation spanning more than 30 years. India’s collaboration with the Bank Group is built around 4 main pillars: contributions to the General Capital Increase (GCI), contributions to ADF replenishment and a bilateral trust fund; and providing resources to support Highly Indebted Poor Countries and

the Multilateral Debt Reduction Initiative. Since joining the Bank, India has contributed to all its General Capital Increases. For the most recent African Development Fund replenishment, ADF-14 (2017-19) India pledged USD 29 million consisting of a grant and bridge loan in November 2016. **The Lines of Credit, executed through Exim Bank, has 152 operative LOCs to Africa, extended to 44 countries and amounting to US\$ 7.60 billion.** Of these, 147 LOCs aggregating to US\$ 7.51 billion to 41 countries are extended on behalf of, and guaranteed by GOI. Under the India Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, around 5000 scholarships have been offered to officials from African countries. The ITEC courses have been hugely popular with our partner countries in Africa. In last financial year around 4000 scholarships were used by African partners.

India is also looking forward to cooperation with Africa on the **International Solar Alliance (ISA) initiative**, which was launched at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in November 2015. The ISA is conceived as a coalition of solar resource rich countries to address their special energy needs. A total of 24 countries, most of them from Africa (Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Nauru, Niger, Republic of Guinea, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania and Tonga) have signed the ISA Framework Agreement in Marrakech on 15 November 2016. Rwanda signed the Framework Agreement on 9 January 2017. Guatemala, Djibouti, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mauritius, Chad, Yemen, Comoros and Somalia have also conveyed that they are ready to sign the ISA framework agreement.

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