

High Commission of India

Nairobi

Press release

Key Note address of High Commissioner Mr.Rahul Chhabra at Africa Day webinar ‘ NEXT STEPS IN INDIA-AFRICA PARTNERSHIP: PANDEMIC AND BEYOND’

High Commissioner and Secretary (Economic Relations) -designate at Ministry of External Affairs of India Mr. Rahul Chhabra gave a key note address today in a webinar, entitled ‘Next Steps in India-Africa Partnership: Pandemic and Beyond’ , organized on the occasion of Africa Day by ‘India Writes Network’ magazine.

2. Mr. Chhabra gave a brief outlook on the current economic situation of Africa, caused by the crisis due to COVID19 pandemic. He spoke on the existing India-Africa cooperation in multiple sectors - nearly 50,000 ITEC scholarships, over USD 700 million aid in form of grants, USD 10 billion worth Lines of credit in nearly all sectors, supply of medicines and state of the art medical technology, supply of defence equipment, offer of duty free market access for LDC countries, provision of e-Visas etc. He highlighted that India’s support and assistance to Africa is demand driven and is in line with AU 2063 agenda.

3. Mr. Chhabra informed about the efforts taken by India and its leadership to support various African countries during this crisis. He highlighted the telephonic conversation between External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India Dr. Jaishankar and Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Amb. Raychelle Omamo, during which EAM Dr. Jaishankar promised to provide chlorine to Kenya for water treatment, as requested. Following the conversation, India also allowed one-time commercial export of Hydroxychloroquine tablets to Kenya. Mr. Chhabra also touched upon the multiple spin off effects of RIVATEX modernization project in Kenya, funded by Indian line of credit.

4. High Commissioner Chhabra outlined next steps in various areas of cooperation with Africa such as the solar energy projects under the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework, bridging of digital divide (ongoing online e-ITEC courses on COVID 19 pandemic management and offer to connect hospitals and universities through e-Arogya Bharati and e-Vidya Bharati network projects), blue economy, traditional medicine, Study in India programme with various scholarships, establishment of health infrastructure such as the proposed cancer hospital in Kenya and, women empowerment, among others. Though India is the fifth largest investor in Africa, with an investment of over USD 54 billion, Mr. Chhabra underscored the need of sensitizing Indian companies about the upcoming Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which will enhance intra-African trade, thereby making Africa the largest free trade area in the world. He also expressed hope that India and Africa will work together for UN reforms, and explore areas of further cooperation in sectors such as tourism, peaceful use of outer space, energy security, counter-terrorism and peace building.

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