

First India Africa Defence Ministers Conclave

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First-Ever India-Africa Defence Minister Conclave was held in February 2020 at Lucknow in conjunction with DEFEXPO India with aim of exporting India made equipment to the African continent in keeping with long-standing defence partnership since the 1950s.

Key highlights

- The conclave is the **first in the series of Pan Africa events at the Ministerial level in the run-up to India Africa Forum Summit IV.**
- A **Joint Declaration – “Lucknow Declaration”**, was adopted after the conclusion of IADMC 2020 as an outcome document of the Conclave.
- Many delegates from Africa including Defence Ministers from **14 African countries**, Member of Parliament as well as 19 Defence and Service Chiefs from 38 African countries participated in this Conclave attesting to the high priority accorded to India-Africa engagement in defence and security.
- Along with the traditional partners in Eastern and Southern Africa, Western African states have also sought to **deepen defence ties with India** including training for its officers and joint defence exercises
- The **military to military ties** was revived as India seeks to emerge as a net security provider in Africa amid common challenges from terrorism and piracy.
- The leaders at DefExpo warmly recalled long-standing historical ties between India and Africa, India’s contribution to defence and security in the African

Continent especially through peacekeeping, setting up of Defence Academies, deployment of training teams and contribution of Indian Defence Forces in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operation including in Mozambique and most recently in Madagascar.

- The leaders recognised the importance of peace and security for both India and the African countries including “Silence the Guns; Creating Conducive Conditions for African Development” as the African Union’s theme of the year.
- They encouraged enhanced cooperation between India and Africa on the evolving concept of Indo-Pacific and welcomed the AU vision for peace and security in Africa that coincides with India’s vision of **SAGAR**(Security And Growth for All in the Region).
- Participating countries sought to **increase cooperation in securing sea lines of communications, preventing maritime crimes, disaster, piracy,** illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing through sharing of information and surveillance
- During the conclave Defence Ministers also **called for deeper cooperation in the domain of defence industries including through investments,** a joint venture in defence equipment software, digital defence, research and development, provisioning of defence equipment, spares and their maintenance on sustainable and mutually beneficial terms.
- The Leaders committed to **continue collaboration in the field of peace and security including conflict prevention, resolution, management and peacebuilding through an exchange of expertise and training,** strengthening regional and continental early warning capacities and mechanism, enhancing the role of women in peacekeeping and propagating the culture of peace.