

# Russia-Africa Summit

October 24, 2019 17:00 Sochi

---

Vladimir Putin took part in the Russia-Africa Summit. The heads of delegations attended the Russia-Africa Summit posed for photographs before the event.

At the Russia-Africa Summit, a final declaration was adopted, which sets goals and objectives for the further development of Russian-African cooperation in politics, security and the economy, as well as in the scientific, technical, cultural and humanitarian fields.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Russian Federation and the African Union on basic principles of relations and cooperation and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the African Union on economic cooperation were adopted at the summit in the presence of Vladimir Putin and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

The leaders of Russia and Egypt made statements for the press.

\* \* \*

**President of Russia Vladimir Putin:** Colleagues, dear friends, welcome again.

I would like to once again wholeheartedly welcome you to Russia. I hope you enjoyed yesterday evening. The performance we prepared for you was designed to demonstrate the soul of Russia and the Russian people. I believe that our performers have staged a talented and impressive demonstration of our respect for African culture and traditions.

Today we will hold several sessions. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to proceed, if I may.

First of all, I would like to address the President of Egypt and all the other heads of state and government and the leaders of executive bodies of regional organisations.

We welcome all of you to the summit in Sochi devoted to interaction between Russia and Africa. Gathered here are representatives from all 54 African states and the leading regional organisations. It is the first meeting of this scale, which is evidence of our mutual desire to promote ties in all spheres and to strengthen our multifaceted partnership.

I would like to point out straight away that the President of Egypt has played an important role in organising the Russia-Africa Summit, which is why I addressed him first. He, as the current Chairperson of the African Union, has been with us all through the preparatory work.

Our Egyptian partners have assisted us in resolving content issues as well as the organisation of our meetings. And today it is a great honour for me to host this meeting with President el-Sisi.

Friends,

Russia and Africa are bound by traditionally friendly ties. Our country has consistently supported the national liberation movements of the peoples of Africa, we have made a significant contribution to the formation of young states and the development of their economies, as well as building up combat-ready armed forces.

Our cooperation, rooted in the period of the joint fight against colonialism, is strategic and long-standing. Of course, there are significant opportunities for intensifying Russian-African cooperation in various fields.

I would like to emphasise that the development of relations with African countries and regional organisations is among our Russian foreign policy priorities.

African states are confidently gaining political and economic weight, affirming themselves as one of the important pillars of the multipolar world order, and are taking an increasingly important part in working out international community's decisions on key issues related to the regional and global agenda.

Our positions are close or coincide on many of those matters, which creates favourable conditions for constructive interaction at the UN and other international platforms.

We will certainly continue the practice of regular consultations at the UN General Assembly, we will strengthen contacts between our countries' representatives with this organisation, and coordination with non-permanent members of the Security Council from among African countries.

This will allow us to boost our efforts towards ensuring common and indivisible security, and the formation of a fairer model of the modern world.

We are grateful to our African partners for supporting the resolutions that are of priority for us, namely, to combat the glorification of Nazism, the non-deployment of weapons first in outer space, confidence-building measures in outer space, and international information security.

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Russia is determined to continue taking an active part in charting the strategic line of the international community and practical measures as regards strengthening peace and stability in Africa and maintaining regional security.

We call for increasing the role of African states in the resolution of local conflicts. At the same time, we invariably advocate the principle stipulating African solutions for African problems, and we discussed this at length with our African colleagues yesterday.

We consider it correct that African countries are raising the issue of financial support for their peacekeeping efforts from the accrued contributions to the UN budget.

We are concerned that, unfortunately for all of us, the situation in many African regions remains unstable. Interstate and ethnic conflicts remain unresolved, and acute political and socio-economic crises persist.

Terrorism, the spread of extremist ideology, transnational crime and piracy hamper the development of the African continent. Many countries face the consequences of the so-called Arab Spring, which has destabilised the situation in the whole of North Africa.

Numerous terrorist organisations, including ISIS, al-Qaeda, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, operate in this region, as well as in the Sahara-Sahel area, in the vicinity of Lake Chad and in the Horn of Africa.

In this connection, we consider it important to expand joint efforts for combating terrorism and extremism. We are planning to invigorate contacts between law enforcement agencies and security services of the Russian Federation and African countries, to coordinate efforts and exchange relevant information.

We are determined to continue training military personnel and law enforcement officers for African countries at specialised Russian institutions. Today, military personnel from 20 African countries are studying at higher education institutions of the Russian Defence Ministry.

Our military and military technical cooperation is aimed at strengthening African armed forces' combat capability. Russia has MTC agreements with over 30 countries, which we supply with a wide range of armaments and equipment. Part of these supplies are provided free of charge.

Our African partners participate actively in Russia's military forums and exercises, where they can see samples of up-to-date weapons and military equipment, and learn how it is used. Last year, 11 African countries took part in the 2019 International Army Games. The number of those who want to join is growing.

We believe that trade, economic and investment cooperation is an important element in Russia's relations with African countries. Last year, Russia's trade with Africa amounted to over \$20 billion. Moreover, it doubled over the past five years.

Russian exports are gradually becoming diversified, and their structure is changing towards non-resource deliveries. Russian companies have worked successfully in the region for a long time, mostly, of course, in such areas as geological exploration, mineral extraction, energy, oil and gas

At the same time, steps are taken to establish cooperation in high technology. Many of those present here took part in the Russia-Africa Economic Forum yesterday, where a lot of innovative ideas on the development of Russian-African trade and investment cooperation were voiced.

Let me repeat that education and training are also an important area of cooperation. At present, over 17,000 Africans are studying in Russia. The annual quota for state-financed openings at Russian universities is almost 2,000. We will think on how we can increase this number.

Prospects for interaction in medicine and healthcare are also good. The Republic of Guinea, for instance, has a successful research centre for epidemiology and the prevention of dangerous infectious diseases. We believe the creation of another such centre in Africa should be considered.

We also thought that it is beneficial to complement our bilateral interaction with the expansion of contacts with the leading African organisations. Yesterday, at a meeting with the heads of African regional associations and the chair of the Eurasian Economic Commission board, we discussed the prospects of mutually beneficial cooperation between Africa's integration structures and the Eurasian Economic Union. A memorandum of understanding between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the African Union Commission will be signed today.

Colleagues,

We all are interested in giving Russia-Africa interaction a true system-wide and complex nature. We have already discussed the idea of creating the Russia-Africa partnership forum, within which, as we spoke about with some of our colleagues during dinner, regular meetings at the level of heads of state could be held, say, once in three years.

I think this is a good idea and we will support it. In between the summits, we could plan annual political consultations between foreign ministers. I think you will support this initiative. We will continue to develop Russia-Africa relations in this format.

Colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank all of you. It is now my pleasure to give the floor to the President of Egypt, current Chairman of the African Union and Co-chairman of our Summit, Mr el-Sisi.

**President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, African Union Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Russia–Africa Summit Abdel Fattah el-Sisi (retranslated):** Thank you very much,

Your Excellency,

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Mr Putin, President of the Russian Federation,

Your Excellences, presidents and heads of government of African countries, Chairman of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank President Vladimir Putin and the friendly people of Russia for their warm welcome in Sochi and hospitality shown to all African delegations since the moment they arrived in Russia.

I would also like to thank the Organising Committee for their excellent preparation of the first Russia-Africa Summit, which starts today.

I am happy to speak at this important forum held in Russia, which is one of the main actors on the global stage and a sincere friend of the African nations.

Russian-African cooperation has come a long way since the middle of last century, when Russia stood by the African countries fighting against colonialism and made a significant material, logistic and spiritual contribution supporting the national freedom fight of the African people.

Russian-African relations continued to develop in the difficult international and regional situation in the 1990s, thus reaffirming that the African and Russian people were united by their cooperation and common interests in the fight against the challenges they face.

This only reaffirms the effectiveness of Russian-African cooperation, which reflects people's hopes in the conditions of our dynamically developing world.

Today we are holding the first Russia-Africa Summit, which is themed "For peace, security and development." We are meeting nearly three months after the [12th] Extraordinary Summit of the African Union (AU), which convened in Niamey on July 7 to discuss mechanisms for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement.

The agreement is one of the pillars of the Agenda 2063 development concept aimed at promoting regional integration, enhancing the African countries' international competitiveness and attracting foreign investments in the spheres of priority significance for Africa, such as the industry, energy, agriculture and ICT.

Over a period of the past decade, the AU countries formulated the goal of sustainable economic development and integration. African countries are doing their utmost to strengthen the role of the state in economic development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are aware of the problems that are hindering stabilisation in Africa. Our ambitious plans to end all the conflicts in Africa by 2020 could be one of our most important decisions. This will also be an operating priority for the African leaders next year.

In this context, I would like to note the importance of supporting the AU's framework policy for the economic reconstruction and development of the conflict-affected countries, as well as for supporting the Cairo-based Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Centre and its plans to strengthen the economy of the countries that are not involved in conflicts and to strengthen the role of government agencies in ensuring stability and peace.

We reaffirm our commitment to contributing to conflict mediation efforts. Our activities are based on the principles of international law and non-interference in the internal affairs of states. We call for a peaceful settlement of all the current conflicts.

We would like to note once again that the fight against terrorism as an evil that is spreading into our countries, which has affected both African nations and the friendly Russian people, is the main priority of our efforts to strengthen peace and security at the regional and international level.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The African continent is open to cooperation with all its partners. We hope that at this summit we will be able to lay a solid foundation for the future Russian-African cooperation for the next few years, while reaffirming the importance of expanding its scale in all areas, including politics, the economy, trade, culture and education, under the long-

term partnership principle and while retaining the national sovereignty of African countries over their resources.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As our summit focuses on the issues of peace, security and development, I would like to note that Egypt has decided to hold a forum on peace and sustainable development in Aswan on December 11–12, 2019.

This forum is called on to become a regional and continental venue that would bring together political leaders, representatives of civil society and partners in initiatives aiming to enhance peace and development.

Indicatively, Aswan, the symbol of Egypt's African identity, will host this forum. We will also discuss matters of enhancing peace and sustainable development on the continent.

I would like to use this opportunity to invite President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and my brothers, heads of African states, to take part in the work of this forum.

In conclusion, I would like to express hope and to reaffirm that our summit will pass decisions meeting the interests of the people in Africa and Russia and facilitating the future development of Russian-African cooperation.

Thank you for your attention. May the peace, mercy and blessing of Allah be upon you.

**Vladimir Putin:** Mr President,

Thank you very much for your speech and for preparing this forum, for your active participation and for your contribution to addressing the region's problems and to the entire international agenda.

And it is a very good idea to hold the forum that you have just mentioned. It goes without saying that we will support this important event.

<...>



## Publication status

Published in sections: News, Transcripts

Publication date: October 24, 2019, 17:00

Direct link: [en.kremlin.ru/d/61893](http://en.kremlin.ru/d/61893)

---