

Development Cooperation Partnerships: *Forging an EU-India-Japan Trilateral in Africa*

Maaïke Okano-Heijmans, Senior Research Fellow, Clingendael Institute, The Hague

Jagannath P. Panda, Research Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi

Introduction

Competing Asian economies such as China, Japan and India have in recent years become progressively more active investors, traders and lenders in African nations. Africa as a continent has figured significantly in their foreign policy strategies. These Asian powers have employed more persuasive strategies to mark their presence, both as bilateral and multilateral partners, in this ever-demanding continent that is strategically vital to most powers in world politics today. While tapping into Africa's vibrant markets and energy resources continues to be their prime strategic intent, contributing to underdeveloped socio-economic conditions in the continent through attractive infrastructure development and human resource development allows these economies to maintain stronger political contacts to serve their respective national interests.

Likewise, the non-Asian communities have equally shown a renewed approach towards African nations. The United States has moved away from its traditional approach of viewing the African countries from a purely ideological prism. The European Union (EU) too increasingly views the African continent through a pragmatic prism, forging stronger economic and development cooperation. Yet, none of these actors' outreach in Africa has been as impressive as that of the Chinese. Japanese interests in Africa have been severely affected by rapid growth in China's presence over the last two decades. The Indian commercial interest too is somewhat constrained ahead of massive Chinese investment in the continent. The United States as a traditional actor and investor in Africa does not hold the same distinction that China is gaining as an investor in the continent at present. Much the same can be said of the EU and its member-states, where China's growing presence in its backyard has made it an uneasy actor looking to protect its traditional base. A significant number of African countries — albeit not all, as over dozen are have not endorsed completely Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)¹ — is welcoming of Chinese investment, its attractive packages and, more significantly, China's strategic advance as an economic actor.

China's growing presence on the African continent prompts the question of whether the EU and India would benefit from a more collaborative and development-oriented partnership with Africa, once identified as a strategic partner? And if yes, what should be the basis of such an envisioned partnership? Shall such a partnership be pursued in competition or in cooperation with Chinese presence?

This paper aims to explore a tripartite mode of cooperation in Africa by bringing together India, Japan and the EU as partners for economic development in the region. Such a partnership could be built drawing on the liberal values that the three actors hold in promoting development cooperation in the

¹ Abdi Latif Dahir, "These are the African countries not signed to China's Belt and Road project," *Quartz Africa*, September 30, 2019, at <https://qz.com/africa/1718826/the-african-countries-not-signed-to-chinas-belt-and-road-plan/> (accessed on February 15, 2020).

continent. Moreover, the partnership could be forged combining their national strategic ambitions, mainly commercial interests, in Africa. The new European Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen has prioritised relations with Africa as the EU's 'close neighbour and [our] most natural partner'² and is aiming for a comprehensive strategy on Africa. In realising these ambitions, the EU and its member-states stand to benefit from a trilateral mode of cooperation with India and Japan. Both Asian powerhouses are strategic partners of the EU, do not have a colonial legacy on the continent and have particular strengths of their own: a diaspora in specific countries (India) and financial capacity (Japan). Clearly, a trilateral may further the ambitions and objectives of all three parties, while leveraging their strengths – in presence, competitive edge and funds – towards the effective use of limited capabilities.

India and Japan have already started to act on their complementarities, and the EU would do well to acknowledge and build on this. The proposed "Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region"³ would thereby become the very basis of a trilateral strategic platform. What are the benefits of expanding such cooperation to also include the EU and its member-states? Also, the strategic necessity of such a trilateral becomes more significant when current Japanese and Indian strategies in Africa seem unable to match the weight of rising Chinese commercial presence in the continent. Can and should China be involved as a partner in this proposition?

The paper proposes the idea of a trilateral in full recognition of the fact that structural and institutional challenges to such cooperation exist — and may continue to exist for the foreseeable future.⁴ Yet, a trilateral mode of cooperation on and with African countries that will strengthen the cross-continental forte of developmental partnership is a vision worthy of serious consideration, as all three giants recalibrate long-held policies in a world of shifting power balances. Before getting to concrete suggestions for engagement, the paper starts with a short analysis of key changes in the field of development/economic cooperation in recent years due to the rise of new actors from Asia. Next follows a discussion of the EU, Indian and Japanese engagement with Africa as well as China's institutional, economic and political reach in the continent. Then, we highlight areas of strategic convergence and divergence and propose concrete policy suggestions for an EU-India-Japan trilateral vis-à-vis Africa. The paper focuses on the EU level, using data from the European Commission. While individual EU member states' engagement with the African continent is obviously of significance as well – including, in due time, for the actual implementation of the proposed EU-India-Japan trilateral – a detailed analysis of the 27 countries' activities is beyond the scope of this paper.

(Re)framing Development Cooperation

Development cooperation is an idea originally based on a North-South divided structure. However, the trends in forging a development cooperation have witnessed serious change in the recent past. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) states that "the shift in the geography of poverty, the rise in inequality, rapid globalization, the increased need for collective approaches to global challenges, and the emergence of new development actors and instruments- all have profound implications for development cooperation".⁵ It further states that key resources for strengthening development cooperation will be linked to 'technology transfer, knowledge sharing, and capacity

² Ursula von der Leyen, *A union that strives for more – My agenda for Europe: Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2019-2024*, at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guidelines-next-commission_en.pdf.

³ "India-Japan Vision Statement", *MEA India*, October 29, 2018, at https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/30543/IndiaJapan_Vision_Statement (accessed on December 2, 2019).

⁴ The pros and cons of such a trilateral are discussed in Maaiko Okano-Heijmans, *Reimagining Europe's partnerships with India and Japan: a new trilateral?* Clingendael Policy Brief, The Hague: Clingendael Institute, February 2018.

⁵ "Focus Area 1: Trends in Development Cooperation", United Nations Economic and Social Council, at <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/trends-in-development-cooperation> (accessed on December 9, 2019).



building' among many others.⁶ Such development cooperation is not outside the prism of the cooperation framework that the EU, Japan and India are proposing in their respective approaches towards Africa. In fact, the very discourse of *development* is different today from the conventional orientation that the West originally used to attach to it.⁷

China's approach towards Africa is more based on a "development finance" framework rather than just providing "development assistance" to the continent.⁸ In other words, the Chinese outreach in Africa is based on a "development cooperation" framework that is linked closer to its national interest of emerging as an influential actor in the region. Exploiting energy resources, forging greater continental connections as a bilateral and multilateral partner and capturing the African market base are some of the key objectives of Chinese outreach in Africa. The strategy is to be generous with loans and financial aid, fostering a 'Chinese economic model' through stronger trade and commercial contacts.⁹ Such an economic model is, however, not without scepticism. The Chinese project finances in Africa have germinated criticism, within and outside Africa, on whether such a model is truly 'developmental' in nature or develops a Chinese-ness that gradually increases Beijing's authority in the region.

Few recognize that China's approach to (domestic) development and economic cooperation (with other countries) is, in many ways, not entirely different from that of Japan and India. 'Non-Westerness', 'pro-South' identities, and a focus on basic human needs – rather than on basic human rights – have drawn convergences among the Chinese, Japanese and Indian interests,¹⁰ prompting an Asian context in Africa. China's approach today may be likened to the Japanese approach of several decades ago, which – under significant pressure from Western OECD countries – has since then evolved to include a greater emphasis on poverty reduction in rhetoric. Since 1993, Japan has accorded a special focus on the African continent through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) – a conference held regularly with the objective "to promote high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners. With a developmental focus attached to it, the Japanese government has invested in the deepening and strengthening of ties with African countries, emerging as a stronger economic actor and development cooperation partner in the continent. Yet, neither the Japanese nor the Indian approaches have been subjected to questions or objections in the continent as much as the Chinese approaches have. This may be explained by the fact that the Japanese approach has evolved – although not transformed – from an overly mercantilist approach, while Indian engagement with Africa has largely been through 'soft investments' of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme (training, capacity building) and centred on public-sector institutions.¹¹

As the first Asian country to emerge as a donor, Tokyo's approach to economic cooperation – as the Japanese prefer to call it – has been (and continues to be) shaped by its own experience as a recipient country in the aftermath of the devastation of the Pacific War. Hence, the emphasis has been on building trust and understanding with recipient countries and focusing on economic development through a request-based approach that promotes a win-win relationship. While Japan's approach has clearly

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, "Rising Powers, South-South Cooperation and Africa", *Policy Briefing: Global Powers and Africa Programme*, no. 47, March 2012, p. 2.

⁸ Yun Sun, "China's changing approach to Africa", *Brookings: Foresight Africa 2019*, February 4, 2019, at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/02/04/chinas-changing-approach-to-africa/> (accessed on December 9, 2019).

⁹ Jagannath P. Panda, "Institutionalizing the African Reach: Reviewing China's and India's Multilateral Drives", *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 52(6), 2017, pp. 853-872.

¹⁰ Scarlett Cornelissen and Ian Taylor, "The political economy of China and Japan's relationship with Africa: a comparative perspective," *The Pacific Review*, 13 (4), 2000, pp. 615–633, at <https://doi.org/10.1080/095127400455350> (Accessed on February 15, 2020).

¹¹ Subhash Agrawal, *Emerging Donors in International Development Assistance: The India Case*, IDRC/CRDI: summary of a research report, December 2007, pp. 9-10.



evolved in recent decades, as Japan engaged with Western countries included in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee, these underpinnings remain much the same. As such, Japan's approach offers recipient countries some of the attractions of China's approach – in particular, its focus on infrastructure – although without the sharp edges, as seen, for example, in Japan's emphasis on debt sustainability and local employment.

Against that perspective and considering India's emergence as a significant actor with 'Asian characteristics', European governments stand to benefit from further cooperation with Japan and India, especially in Africa. As key players in the field of development and with Africa as their backyard, much is at stake for European governments. This is reason to engage more deeply with Asian players – to improve their understanding of development cooperation 'with Asian characteristics' – and thereby develop a better understanding of how to best cooperate and resist practices as appropriate. Japan is by now a well-established and financially endowed actor, which is turning increasingly towards Africa in recent years. India is a relatively new actor with less financial leeway, but a strong diaspora in specific African countries and can build confidence with local communities in a way that European countries cannot. Furthermore, India offers niche expertise – especially in the digital field – that can be tapped. In other words, India has always had strong connections with the African continent on cultural, political and people-to-people levels from the days of Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), making it an accepted and attractive traditional actor in the region.

Development cooperation is a promising common basis of EU-India-Japan trilateral, as each of the three actors is trying to strengthen its presence in Africa for some time now. For one, India is fast emerging as an economic actor on the continent that Africa could benefit from. Through the establishment of a Pan-African network, India had provided access to lines of credit of around US\$ 8 billion for numerous projects in 44 African countries by April 2017.¹² Likewise, the EU and its member states have a strong presence in the continent, especially France and the United Kingdom – even after Brexit – because of their deep colonial legacy. By 2016 the total foreign direct investment stock from the EU into Africa amounted to €290 billion;¹³ and in 2017 the EU was the largest trading partner with the share of 36 per cent of total African trade.¹⁴ The EU has also taken a lead in helping millions of people to get access to basic education in Africa.¹⁵ The new European Commission is intent to deepen and broaden its partnership with Africa, and sent a strong political message towards this effect by choosing Africa as the destination of Von der Leyen's first visit outside of Europe in December 2019. Japan's presence in Africa has mostly based on official development assistance. It is now seriously considering to invest in new quality-based infrastructure to revive its traditional presence. The August 2019 Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) held in Yokohama in Japan points to such developments where Japan aims to bring about human resource development in Africa through fast-scale infrastructure and connectivity cooperation in the region.¹⁶ Such cooperative approaches for development in the region must bolster the three actors – the EU, India and Japan – to make more of their individual efforts by way of trilateral cooperation.

If an India-Japan-EU trilateral is forged in Africa, there is significant scope for achieving the shared (political) objectives, whereby all three countries potentially benefit. Being strong democracies, there

¹² "Reshaping India-Africa Trade: Dynamics and Export Potentiality of Indian Products in Africa", PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi, July 2017, p. 16.

¹³ "Strengthening the EU's partnership with Africa", European Commission, 2018, at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/factsheet-africaeuropeallianceprogress-18122018_en.pdf

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Did you Know?", The Africa-EU Partnership, at <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

¹⁶ "The 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7)", MOFA Japan, September 2019, at <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000521256.pdf> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



is a possibility of convergence on values as well as structures. The India-Japan collaboration is already premised on the objective of inclusive and rules-based order. So, what better option there can be than to partner with the EU which has always been the frontrunner in promoting those values? Financial assistance from several of the EU member-states like Germany has been conditional upon improving human rights conditions. India-Japan can join the EU to promote human rights conditions while providing financial aid to forge necessary development cooperation in Africa.

India's role as an emerging economy can come handy in convincing a lot of African countries. Agendas under platforms such as India-Africa Forum Summit (IASF), Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), the EU's Pan African Programme, the France-African Summit (FAS) and Germany's Compact with Africa among others must be aligned together and scaled multi-fold to help Africa become the global power envisioned under Agenda 2063. While the EU and Japan can bring in a larger share of finances in the short to medium term, India can join their level in a few years as its economy grows bigger. This will not only boost the scope for quality infrastructure projects such as ports, energy parks, highways, railways and more but also help achieve better environment to develop human resources, education, science, technology, institutional capacity building and affordable healthcare. Also, while the EU and Japan could provide necessary technology in some advanced value-added manufacturing areas, India can help Africa in producing generic pharmaceuticals and developing an ecosystem for information technology sector.

Such a trilateral could also be envisioned within a country-specific EU framework. As France and India have a strong strategic partnership, including strong naval cooperation in the Indian Ocean that touches the East coast of Africa, they must extend their partnership to other areas and leverage their combined diplomatic appeal. France has a strong expansive military presence across Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁷ Similarly, the EU as a bloc sends troops for peace operations in Africa. India also has decades of experience in dealing with insurgencies, radicalism and violence from non-state actors. Therefore, there is a strong case for India-EU security cooperation – which would be an extension of India-France cooperation – in providing support and stability to politically unstable regimes across the Sub-Saharan Africa that are marked with religious extremism, ethnic violence and military coups. Further, India-Japan-France can collaborate on joint naval operations along the east coast of Africa in the Indian Ocean to curb smuggling, piracy, especially from Somalian groups, and counter-terrorism operations, to support the spirit of the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR).

Forging a cooperation with democratic characteristics

Beyond such direct benefits of trilateral cooperation, stronger ties with these Asian actors may improve European understanding of the Asian approach to development cooperation, which generally focuses on basic human needs (economic development) rather than basic human rights (political freedoms). In the long term, this will help develop a more realistic understanding of possible changes in Chinese policies and discourse in the years ahead. This, in turn, should serve as a guide for Europe's future path in devising policies of resistance and engagement with China in Africa.

A brief look at Japan's history of development assistance reveals an interesting analogy with China's present dealings with African countries. Most of the Japanese assistance in the 1980s and 1990s went to Southeast Asian countries. These funds came to the advantage not only of the recipient countries but also of the Japanese private sector, which was granted with large infrastructure projects and benefited from cheap labour. Concurrently, the vast sums of money served as implicit reparations for Japanese wrongdoings during the war and the colonial period of the early 20th century. Now, consider China's practices in the field. Like Japan, the Chinese government tends to conflate trade, investment and assistance – the latter, particularly in the form of loans. Chinese state-owned enterprises have much to gain from the government's ties to African countries, and for the Chinese government, votes of African partners are valuable in various multilateral fora.¹⁸

¹⁷ Landry Signé, "France-Africa relations challenged by China and the European Union", Brookings, February 5, 2019, at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/02/05/france-africa-relations-challenged-by-china-and-the-european-union/> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

¹⁸ Chris Alden, *China in Africa*, London and New York: Zed Books, 2007.



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

The approach or underlying rationale of activities of Japan of late and China of today holds striking similarities with both merging trade, investment and loans. Development assistance explicitly aims at a win-win situation and serves the national interest of the donor country in economic and diplomatic terms. These basic similarities outweigh noticeable differences that also exist in the commercial arena and actual activities of the Japanese and the Chinese government and enterprises, including a geographical focus on Southeast Asia versus Africa, cheap overseas production versus resource extraction and investment versus development of operations.

From the late 1990s, as Japan somewhat adjusted its policies in response to Western criticism, Japanese aid also came to be used as a political tool. While its 1992 Charter centred around the request-based approach, emphasizing self-help efforts as the most important aspect of Japanese official development assistance (ODA), the revised 2003 Charter mentions promotion of human rights as an important principle of Japan's foreign aid policy.¹⁹ Furthermore, it states that 'the objectives of Japan's ODA are to contribute to the peace and development of the international community, and thereby to help ensure Japan's own security and prosperity'.²⁰ While Japan's assistance policies have developed through interaction with other donors, the natural evolution of its own policies may be more profound. In recent years, two trends are visible in this regard, both regionally and thematically: a greater emphasis on African development and more attention to climate change and promotion of sustainable development.

China's pragmatic goals of securing economic resources and diplomatic support – mostly on promoting China's Third Way, the Taiwan issue and UN motions critical of China's human rights record – raises concerns in the West about China's increasing competitive strength and influence and its reluctance to play by the same rules as the Western developed economies.²¹ That said, despite the potential pitfalls, China's investment in Africa has the potential to significantly change infrastructure on the continent. It has long been recognized that 'unprecedented improvements to infrastructure, increases in education and available technology, and an influx of investment capital could bring sustainable solutions to Africa's food troubles.'²²

More importantly, China's relationship with the developing world, including Africa, is becoming more secularised, commercial-oriented and pragmatic.²³ Linking the markets of Africa through its flagship Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) seems to be emerging as a chosen foreign policy approach of China towards the continent. Such a policy facilitates the emergence of China as a central player in Africa's "urbanization push" with the centrality of infrastructure investment initiatives.²⁴ The African response to this Chinese developmental approach, while generally welcoming it, is multi-dimensional, with many African leaders hailing the Chinese model of development as being more economically relevant to

¹⁹ "Revision of Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter", MOFA Japan, at <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/reform/revision0307.html> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Jing Gu, John Humphrey and Dirk Messner, "Global Governance and Developing Countries: The Implications of the Rise of China," *German Development Institute*, Discussion Paper 18, 2007, at <https://www.die-gdi.de/uploads/media/18.2007.pdf> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

²² Carl Rubinstein, 'China's Eye on African Agriculture', *Asia Times Online*, October 2, 2019, republished at [farmlandgrab.org](https://www.farmlandgrab.org), at <https://www.farmlandgrab.org/8049> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

²³ Lowell Dittmer, "China and the Developing World", in Dittmer, Lowell and Yu George T. (eds.), *China, the Developing World, and the New Global Dynamic*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2010, p. 9.

²⁴ Wade Shepard, "What China is Really Up To In Africa", *Forbes*, October 3, 2019, at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/wadeshepard/2019/10/03/what-china-is-really-up-to-in-africa/#1b93421f5930> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



Africa than the American model, and as “defying the conditionalities of the Bretton Woods institutions”.²⁵

Contrary to the Chinese model of development in Africa, the Indian approach to the continent is based on a spirit of protecting democracy, and aims to promote human resource development and expand soft-power outreach – an approach that many developing countries including some in Africa are finding consonance with.²⁶ The inter-continental dialogue forum mechanism comprising India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) is one such strategic forum that exhibits India’s outreach that is based on human resource development to promote stronger international cooperation. Forging people-to-people cooperation and addressing socio-economic objectives continues to be the fostering element of the IBSA. Such a dialogue forum remains key to India’s promotion of democratic ideals. Still, this trilateral dialogue forum lacks financial vigour, capital aid and commercial attraction that the China-Africa engagement currently holds. A trilateral cooperation bringing together the EU and Japan into a single platform will certainly address such weaknesses that India under the IBSA currently lacks.

The Africa Convergence: India, the EU and Japan

Consisting of 54 countries, Africa is the second largest continent of the world. After Asia, it is Africa that has for decades attracted many countries as a hub of resources.²⁷ Major countries in Asia have turned to Africa with the region’s three biggest economies – Japan, India and China – making Africa a core part of their foreign policy agendas. This can be seen by analysing their efforts in areas of development and connectivity initiatives. India and Japan in 2017 envisioned the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC), keeping in view their respective national interest ahead of China’s rising clouts, as a partnership focused on development that was sustainable and innovative. With four main aspects at its core such as Development and Cooperation, Quality Infrastructure and Institutional Connectivity, Enhancing Capacities and Skills and People-to-People partnership; the AAGC was aimed at addressing the continental gap that exists between Asia and Africa. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) was intended as the channel of such continental cooperation.²⁸ The EU and Japan in 2019 launched the EU-Japan Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure. Via this, both partners aim on improving ‘synergies and complementarity’ vis-à-vis third partner countries in terms of connectivity and infrastructural development, with Africa having been listed as one of the five sub-regions of focused interest.²⁹ The Japan-EU partnership also plans on focusing on their respective individual initiatives with Africa to maximize benefits, like TICAD and the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs.

EU: Being the fourth largest global donor, the EU has official development assistance (ODA) that totals US\$16.4 billion in 2018.³⁰ Net ODA decreased by 2 per cent between 2017 and 2018 due to a lower

²⁵ For an excellent analysis of this aspect, see Marcus Power and Mohan Giles, “Towards critical geopolitics of China’s engagement with African development”, *Geopolitics*, 15(3), p. 464.

²⁶ Suvi Dogra, "India in Africa: Summits and Beyond", *ISAS Insights*, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, no. 127, July 1, 2011, p. 2; Shyam Saran, "India and Africa: Development Partnership", *RIS Discussion Papers*, Paper No. 180, Research and Information System for Developing Countries, December 2012.

²⁷ “Africa”, *Britannica*, November 7, 2019, at <https://www.britannica.com/place/Africa> (accessed on December 9, 2019).

²⁸ “Asia Africa Growth Corridor”, Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, May 2017, at <http://www.eria.org/Asia-Africa-Growth-Corridor-Document.pdf> (accessed on December 9, 2019).

²⁹ “The Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between the European Union and Japan”, European Union External Action, September 27, 2019, at https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/68018/partnership-sustainable-connectivity-and-quality-infrastructure-between-european-union-and_en (accessed on December 9, 2019).

³⁰ “Get an Overview of Trends in Funding and Strategic Priorities”, Donor Tracker, <https://donortracker.org/country/eu> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

level of disbursements.³¹ The EU's policy is set out in the European Consensus on Development (ECD), renewed in 2017 and aiming to 'provide the framework for a common approach to development policy that will be applied by the EU institutions and the Member States while fully respecting each other's distinct roles and competences.'³²The ECD focuses on interlinking sectors (such as development, peace and humanitarian assistance), increasing effectiveness of ODA by increasing country ownership and combining traditional financing with private-sector and domestic resources.

Funding allocations are set within the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), with negotiations for the period 2021-2027 currently ongoing. The European Commission has proposed a new structure that would merge various separate instruments into one: the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). Under this proposal, the instrument would disburse funds both geographically (the majority: 68 of 89.2 billion euros) and thematically (7 of 89.2 billion euros).³³ Spending targets are discussed for cross-cutting priorities, including human development (20 per cent), climate change (25 per cent) and migration (10 per cent).

The EU, as per the ECD, recognizes the importance of targeting ODA to Africa, considering the challenges faced by developing countries on this continent. Thematically, three areas are highlighted. First among these is supporting Africa and the EU's neighbourhood in their energy transition as part of the enabling framework for the EU's Energy Union. Second is sustainable agriculture, which remains a key driver for poverty eradication and sustainable development and is indispensable to ending hunger and ensuring food security. The ECD notes, 'major public and private sector investment in sustainable agriculture and related infrastructure is required in many developing countries, notably in Africa.'³⁴ Third, digital connectivity, or lack thereof, is highlighted as a major obstacle to development in many (rural and remote areas in) developing countries, especially in Africa.

In the new Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen, Finnish Jutta Urpilainen serves as the European Commissioner for International Partnerships.³⁵ Over the next five years, her 'main objective will be to ensure the European model of development evolves in line with new global realities.'³⁶ Africa is set to feature large herein, as the new Commissioner was specifically tasked to work with the EU's high representative for foreign affairs on 'a new comprehensive strategy for Africa', creating a partnership of equals and mutual interest and building on the current EU-Africa Sustainable Alliance. Separately, conclusion of the negotiations for an ambitious post-Cotonou agreement with the countries from the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States is also a priority.

Taken together, the EU's more integrated approach, with an elevated role also for the private sector, brings EU ODA closer to the request-based Japanese approach that has long focused on 'basic human needs'. Moreover, the explicit geographical focus on Africa combined with a thematic focus on the SDGs – energy and agriculture – and digital match well with Japanese and Indian priorities/expertise.

³¹ Ibid.

³² "The New European Consensus on Development: 'Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future'", European Commission, at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/european-consensus-on-development-final-20170626_en.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

³³ "Get an Overview of Trends", note 30.

³⁴ "Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission", Official Journal of the European Union, 2017/C 210/01, June 30, 2017, at [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42017Y0630\(01\)&from=FI](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42017Y0630(01)&from=FI) (accessed on December 10, 2019).

³⁵ Ursula von der Leyen, "Jutta Urpilainen: Commissioner-designate for International Partnerships", European Commission, September 10, 2019, at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-jutta-urpilainen_en.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

³⁶ Ibid.



This suggests that opportunities for bilateral and trilateral cooperation on the African continent are set to grow in the years ahead.

Japan: Japan's Africa policy received a more constructive engagement in 1993 through the TICAD. Tokyo officially visualised the decline of assistance from the developed countries towards Africa as an opportunity for itself and factored the weight of Africa in its foreign policy.³⁷ Since then, Japan's economic interest in Africa has been growing constantly. TICAD has been instrumental in institutionalising Japan-Africa relations. Since the sixth TICAD, both have decided to hold the conference alternately in Africa and Japan. This reflected Japan's intentions to involve African countries more dynamically and highlights the reciprocal gesture from Africa. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Africa to attend the sixth TICAD in August 2016, which was held in Nairobi in Kenya (for the first-time outside Japan). The Seventh TICAD — the most recent one — took place in Yokohama city, Japan, on August 28-30, 2019.³⁸

Since 2008 two trends are particularly prevalent in the development of Japan's assistance policies; one geographical and the other thematic with greater emphasis on African development and more attention to climate change and promotion of sustainable development. TICAD has been a particularly important forum for Japan to engage with all African partners. Within TICAD, Japanese assistance to Africa span across areas such as private sector involvement in economy, diversification of industries, assistance in institutional capacity building, improving human resources, quality infrastructure investments with special focus on connectivity, debt risk management, human rights promotion, quality education, affordable healthcare and disaster management.³⁹ To fulfil economic commitments, Japan claims to have made over \$30 billion of investments in the continent during 2016-19 – both public and private investments combined – with just private sector investments around \$20 billion.⁴⁰ The Abe government during the seventh TICAD has made another \$20 billion of investment commitments from the private sector for the next three years.⁴¹ Further, at the 2019 TICAD, Japan has welcomed the commencement of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement and put strong emphasis on leveraging it to strongly link the private sectors from both regions.⁴²

Japan's actions must also be analysed from the context that it has been packaging most of its external engagements recently within the larger 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' agenda, which includes offsetting increasing Chinese influence. To this effect, Japan in collaboration with India proposed the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) in 2017 as a new flagship initiative, which is now rechristened as Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s financing for several ODAs and projects under the Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure (EPQI) programmes are also part of the Indo-Pacific agenda. Further, as a boost to Japanese foreign policy engagement in Africa, the term 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' found mention in the recent Yokohama declaration, a first in the history of all TICAD declarations.⁴³

³⁷ "Uniqueness of TICAD", MOFA Japan, April 13, 2016, at http://www.mofa.go.jp/af/af1/page22e_000767.html (accessed on 22 June 2017).

³⁸ "The 7th Tokyo International Conference", note 16.

³⁹ Ibid; "TICAD VI Nairobi Implementation Plan", MOFA Japan, August 28, 2016, at https://www.mofa.go.jp/af/af1/page3e_000549.html (accessed on December 9, 2019).

⁴⁰ Reiji Yoshida, "Abe pledges to push Japanese investment in Africa but steers clear of target at TICAD", *The Japan Times*, August 28, 2019, at https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/28/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-pledges-private-investment-africa-ticad/#.Xe8_zegzbiU (accessed on December 9, 2019).

⁴¹ Ibid; "The 7th Tokyo International Conference", note 16.

⁴² "Yokohama Declaration 2019: Advancing Africa's Development through People, Technology and Innovation", MOFA Japan, August 30, 2019, at https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/ticad/ticad7/pdf/yokohama_declaration_en.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁴³ Ibid; See "The 7th Tokyo International Conference", note 16.



Japan's main campaign lately has been focused on promoting and campaigning in favour of "high-quality infrastructure" in the continent to side-line and show in poor light the Chinese presence in Africa. Criticising the Chinese approach as "unethical", Japan generally alleges that China's outreach in Africa is based on offering cheap goods, providing ODA in an attractive and unaccountable manner and taking advantage of African resources without offering much in return by playing the role of a responsible actor.⁴⁴ Japan contends that China is offering attractive financial packages to the poor African countries that are not in accord with international norms to exploit Africa's resources to its benefit by signing deals and agreements that are not favourable for Africa's future development.

There are other reasons why Japan is concerned over China's increasing clout in Africa. Japan has been advocating for a reformed United Nations (UN) and UN Security Council (UNSC) for a long time, where the support of the 54 African countries is crucial. The reform of the Security Council also found mention in the last two TICAD declarations where Japan and African countries emphasized commitment to the cause.⁴⁵ India is Japan's partner under the G-4 grouping. China as a member of the permanent five (P-5) of the UNSC does not want to concede any advantage to Japan or to India. In brief, Africa's resource and strategic significance in global politics has encouraged China to pursue a robust policy.

Consequently, Beijing has invested heavily in diplomatic, economic and political fronts in Africa resulting in a serious China-Africa engagement. Politically, China has accorded the highest priority to Africa as not all African countries have endorsed the "One-China" policy. Jiang Zemin's visit to Africa in 1996 laid the foundation of the existing Sino-African engagement. Under Hu Jintao, China's Africa policy witnessed steady progress. China's first White Paper on the continent, *China's Africa Policy*, was released in January 2006 and established the seed for a multi-layered engagement between China and Africa.⁴⁶ China's relations with the African Union (AU) have been on a progressive path under Xi Jinping, which allows Beijing to reach the continent multilaterally. The Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), which started in year 2000, has been instrumental in institutionalising the larger Sino-Africa relations.

India: India-Africa ties, which are underpinned by a plethora of cultural, economic and historical linkages, have steadily improved over the years. The ties have seen renewed focus since 2014 with the advent of the Narendra Modi administration with the idea of Africa becoming a common ground for cooperation between India and the world gaining prominence. Modi's commitment to keeping Africa as one of the focus areas of his foreign policy agendas was highlighted when South Africa's Cyril Ramaphosa attended the 70th Republic Day celebrations of India as the chief guest.⁴⁷ Further,

⁴⁴ John Aglionby, "Tokyo takes on Beijing in Africa, claiming quality over speed", *Financial Times*, January 16, 2016, at <https://www.ft.com/content/564df09e-824a-11e5-a01c-8650859a4767?mhq5j=e2> (accessed on June 22, 2017); "Database reveals extent of China's aid to Africa", *The Japan Times*, May 1, 2013, at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/05/01/asia-pacific/database-reveals-extent-of-chinas-aid-to-africa/#.WUvwCyTldII> (accessed on June 22, 2017); Ayako Mie, "With TICAD, Japan pursues African growth and export markets", *The Japan Times*, August 9, 2016, at <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/09/reference/ticad-africa-initiative-sees-japan-pursue-bigger-slice-economic-pie/> (accessed on June 26, 2017).

⁴⁵ "Yokohama Declaration 2019", note 42; "TICAD VI Nairobi Declaration: Advancing Africa's sustainable development agenda TICAD partnership for prosperity", MOFA Japan, August 28, 2016, at https://www.mofa.go.jp/af/af1/page3e_000543.html (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁴⁶ "China's Africa Policy", *People's Daily Online*, January 2006, at http://en.people.cn/200601/12/eng20060112_234894.html (accessed on June 22, 2017).

⁴⁷ "India celebrates 70th R-Day in presence of SA President Cyril Ramaphosa", *The Economic Times*, January 26, 2019, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-celebrates-70th-r-day-in-presence-of-sa-president-cyril-ramaphosa/articleshow/67700486.cms?from=mdr> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



concluding his three-nation tour to Africa in 2018, Modi had announced that the continent features as a “top priority”⁴⁸ for India; the sentiment has been echoed in a 2019 two-nation tour of Africa by India’s Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu showing India’s continued commitment.⁴⁹ India’s investment in its ties with Africa has gathered momentum with political ties receiving unprecedented attention, even though India’s economic presence is yet to mark a difference in the African continent. Ever since the 1955 Bandung Conference, Africa-India partnership treads the line of South-South Cooperation (SSC). The Bandung Conference had brought together the recently independent countries of India and Africa for the first time; drawing from their shared history of colonialism, plans for a democratic future and aiming for equality in international platforms, the conference paved the path for the creation of NAM.⁵⁰ SSC has regained prominence in light of the pivot shift of global attention to Asia with Africa functioning as a major hub of competing foreign interests.

The present policies India is implementing vis-à-vis Africa offer an improved direction to Indian presence in the continent and development-oriented partnership between India and Africa. This new vigour in the India-Africa partnership was best highlighted in Modi’s 2018 address at the Ugandan Parliament where he announced that India’s engagement with Africa will espouse 10 guiding principles.⁵¹ This vision has outlined not just bilateral engagements India wishes to be a part of with various African nations but takes India-Africa ties to a multilateral level. India and Africa are looking at a “future of great promise” that has been furthered during the 25 plus visits to Africa that have been undertaken by India’s Prime Minister, President and Vice-President cumulatively since 2014.⁵²

India has started viewing Africa in a more comprehensive manner than it did a decade back; Africa was not viewed as a continent towards which a policy outlook needed to be designed. For the third India-Africa Forum Summit in 2015, all 54 African countries were invited by India.⁵³ Even though only 40 heads attended, the event was successfully able to put across India’s multilateral approach with Africa forward, stressing on the fact that India wishes to engage with Africa as a whole. The presence of 40 countries at the Forum gave India the opportunity to conduct a plethora of bilateral meetings on the side-lines with different African leaders, both collectively and individually furthering India’s ties with Africa. Originally, India used to follow the Banjul format⁵⁴ by inviting not over 15 countries selected by the African Union (AU) to the event. The decision to break away from the same and invite all countries of Africa sent a clear sign of Indian commitment to the region by enlarging the scope of engagement.

⁴⁸ “In Uganda, Modi Says Africa is Top Priority for India “, *VOA News*, July 25, 2018, at <https://www.voanews.com/africa/uganda-modi-says-africa-top-priority-india> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁴⁹ “India accords top priority to deepening ties with African nations: Vice President”, *United News of India*, October 11, 2019, at <http://www.uniindia.com/india-accords-top-priority-to-deepening-ties-with-african-nations-vice-president/india/news/1755420.html> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵⁰ “Non-Aligned Movement”, *Britannica*, April 26, 2015, at <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Non-Aligned-Movement> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵¹ “Prime Minister’s address at Parliament of Uganda during his State Visit to Uganda”, MEA India, July 25, 2018, at https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30152/Prime_Ministers_address_at_Parliament_of_Uganda_during_his_State_Visit_to_Uganda (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵² “Details of Foreign/Domestic Visits”, *PMINDIA*, at <https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/details-of-foreigndomestic-visits/> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵³ “India Africa Forum Summit”, *MEA India*, October 29, 2015, at http://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/25981_framework.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵⁴ Manish Chand, “India and Africa: Sharing interlinked dreams”, *MEA India*, January 28, 2015, at <https://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?24742/India+and+Africa+Sharing+interlinked+dreams> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



India is now trying to create a united policy posture with Africa that is focused on a multilateral level around a “common, but differentiated, negotiation framework”.⁵⁵ During the 2015 India-Africa Summit, India was a strong advocate of establishing a shared understanding between India and Africa in respect to multilateral institutions, focused on the United Nations Security Council.⁵⁶ In his inaugural address at the Summit, Modi spoke about how institutions cannot be “representative of the world” if they do not give Africa and India due importance, combining India’s demand for permanent representation at the UNSC with Africa.⁵⁷ Modi has also started including Africa in other vital multilateral fronts like climate change and trade structures. In 2015, Modi invited African nations to be a part of “solar rich countries” by joining the International Solar Alliance (ISA); in 2018, Modi inaugurated the first assembly of the ISA with over 10 African countries as members.⁵⁸

Improvement in trading relations also shows how India has upgraded its Africa outlook. India is at present Africa’s fourth-largest partner in trade and ranks third in Africa’s trade export lists.⁵⁹ Modi had highlighted in 2015 that India and Africa are looking for a global trading environment where “development goals and trade prospects” go hand in hand.⁶⁰ Earlier, India did not factor Africa in its multilateral trade plans in a crucial manner nor did India-Africa discussions on collaborating global trade regimes take place. Highlighting India and Africa as conglomerations of developing countries facing common problems especially in agriculture and food security, Modi had recalled the Doha Declaration of 2001 in his speech.⁶¹ Since then, India’s bilateral trade with Africa has reached new heights, standing at US\$62.66 billion during 2017-2018.⁶²

India’s Africa policy now focuses on not only enhancing developmental partnerships between India and Africa but also on offering better engagement. India’s view of looking at developmental challenges as international responsibility while rejecting ‘donor-recipient’ paradigms has now changed. 2005 onwards, India’s cooperation with Africa in respect to development has seen expansion with India becoming a full member of the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), observer participation in

⁵⁵ “Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC)”, Climate Nexus, at <https://climatenexus.org/climate-change-news/common-but-differentiated-responsibilities-and-respective-capabilities-cbdr-rc/> (accessed December 10, 2019).

⁵⁶ “India Africa Forum Summit”, *MEA India*, October 29, 2015, at http://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/25981_framework.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵⁷ “Speech by Prime Minister at the Inaugural Ceremony of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi”, *MEA India*, October 29, 2015, at <https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/25977/speech+by+prime+minister+at+the+inaugural+ceremony+of+the+third+indiaafrica+forum+summit+in+new+delhi+october+29+2015> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵⁸ “Five African Nations Join International Solar Alliance “, *MEA India*, May 22, 2017, at <https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/28476/Five+African+Nations+Join+International+Solar+Alliance> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁵⁹ “An Analysis of India and Africa’s Trade and Investment”, AFREXIM & EXIM Bank, 2018, at https://www.eximbankindia.in/Assets/Dynamic/PDF/Publication-Resources/SpecialPublications/Deepening-South-South-Collaboration_An-Analysis-of-Africa-and-Indias-Trade-and-Investment.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁶⁰ “Speech by Prime Minister at the Inaugural Ceremony of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi”, *MEA India*, October 29, 2015, at <https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/25977/speech+by+prime+minister+at+the+inaugural+ceremony+of+the+third+indiaafrica+forum+summit+in+new+delhi+october+29+2015> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² “Remarks by External Affairs Minister at the Africa Day Celebrations at Vibrant Gujarat 2019”, *MEA India*, January 19, 2019, at <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30924/Remarks+by+External+Affairs+Minister+at+the+Africa+Day+Celebrations+at+Vibrant+Gujarat+2019> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), South African Development Community (SADC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In the context of the 2015 Strategic Partnership Framework of India-Africa Forum Summit III, India had promised Africa a grant assistance package of US\$600 million; a target that was exceeded already in 2019, the time of its mid-term review. Also, by then, more than US\$ 6.4 billion of the overall commitment of US\$ 10 billion under the Indian Lines of Credit had been committed or ongoing, while more than 40,000 (of 50,000) slots for training, scholarship and capacity building had been completed.⁶³ Clearly, the Indo-African partnership is witnessing a deepening and strengthening of engagement in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

The Connectivity Cooperation Framework

Co-envisioned under their Indo-Pacific 2025 Vision, the AAGC was formally announced in May 2017 in Gandhinagar in India, to promote an intercontinental framework of cooperation between Asia and Africa led by India and Japan. Both the AAGC and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) emphasise on connectivity and infrastructure as the two main constituents in the Indo-Pacific/Asia-Pacific region. The AAGC seems to be seen as an integral aspect of Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" outlook at present and is being as a 'business cooperation platform', as the 2018 India-Japan Joint Statement points to,⁶⁴ than as a singular corridor. Such an inter-continental framework of cooperation cannot really overlook the EU as a partner. EU's participation within a 'business cooperation platform' framework is very much a practicable proposition, mainly under Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) framework.

To see objectively, the subject of the Asia-Europe cooperation is fairly an old one. In fact, as an inter-governmental mechanism, the ASEM was established in 1996 aiming to promote cooperation and dialogue between the two continents. Based on an intercontinental framework with the spirit of "Asia matters for Europe and vice-versa", the ASEM today consists of 21 Asian countries, 30 European countries, and two multilateral organisations – the European Union (EU) and the ASEAN Secretariat.⁶⁵ ASEM has been advocating multi-dimensional cooperation between Asia and Europe across all areas for some time, moving away from the customary aid-based relationship architecture that most Asian countries used to share with Europe. The 11th ASEM summit, held in Ulaanbaatar in July 2016, expressed the view to promote "mainstream connectivity" across all areas – "political, economic, digital, institutional, socio-cultural and people-to-people" cooperation.⁶⁶

The 12th ASEM summit, held on October 18-19, 2018 in Brussels, discussed a concrete plan on trade and economic cooperation, connectivity, sustainable development, climate change, and security

⁶³ "India-Africa Partnership in a Changing Global Order: Priorities, Prospects and Challenges - Remarks by Secretary (ER) at ICWA National Conference", *MEA India*, September 3, 2019, at [https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/31785/IndiaAfrica Partnership in a Changing Global Order Priorities Prospects and Challenges Remarks by Secretary ER at ICWA National Conference September](https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/31785/IndiaAfrica%20Partnership%20in%20a%20Changing%20Global%20Order%20Priorities%20Prospects%20and%20Challenges%20Remarks%20by%20Secretary%20ER%20at%20ICWA%20National%20Conference%20September) (accessed on December 10, 2019); "Joint Press Statement by India and the African Union on the Mid-Term Review Meeting of the Strategic Cooperation Framework of India-Africa Forum Summit IIP", *MEA India*, September 12, 2019, at <https://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/31819/Joint+Press+Statement+by+India+and+the+African+Union+on+the+MidTerm+Review+Meeting+of+the+Strategic+Cooperation+Framework+of+IndiaAfrica+Forum+Summit+IIP> (accessed on March 12, 2020).

⁶⁴ "India-Japan Vision Statement", note 3.

⁶⁵ "The Asia-Europe Meeting", ASEM InfoBoard, at <https://www.aseminfoboard.org/> (accessed on December 10).

⁶⁶ Chair's Statement, "11th ASEM Summit: '20 Years of ASEM: Partnership for the Future through Connectivity'", European Council of the European Union, July 16, 2016, at https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23633/chair_s-statement_adopted.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).



challenges under the theme of “Europe and Asia: Global Partners for Global Challenges”.⁶⁷ These stated issues greatly complement the spirit of inter-continental cooperation that the proposed “Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region” could offer. Hence, can the EU be factored in as a continental consultative partner with such a business platform? Three aspects encourage the establishment of such cooperation.

First, both India and Japan share a common platform with the EU – within and outside the ASEAN structure – to promote a “rule-based international order”, democratic, open and fair global economic order which the “Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region” could aspire for. Japan has been advocating Asia-Europe cooperation for a long time now, stressing how the ASEM could be a channel for cooperation between the two continents. On April 25, 2018, Japan concluded the negotiation for a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with the EU, complementing the spirit to promote economic cooperation and to address the common challenges that both Japan and EU face on climate change, protecting energy supply and threats arising from common security issues.⁶⁸ The SPA together with the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), signed on December 8, 2017, provide at present a formal and legal basis for Japan’s more purposeful economic and strategic engagement with EU.

While the EU-Japan EPA aims to address trade barriers and reject protectionism in global trade, the SPA equally promises to address disaster management, energy security, climate change, ageing population, and cyber-crime. Thrusting on democracy, rule of law and human rights, the SPA aims to align with multilateral forums or organisations in order to address bilateral problems. Forging a cooperation with the “Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region” in this context will add substance to Japan-EU cooperation. India’s relationship with EU also seems to be changing from a stereotyped aid donor-and-recipient one to a partnership of opportunities. EU has been a strong trade partner of India and the destination for foreign direct investment (FDI) for a long time.

Second, EU’s Asia strategy is moving away from its excessive China-focused character, with a fair part of the European community – policymakers as well as business representatives – today being rather sceptical of China’s BRI. Recognizing BRI’s potential to contribute to much-needed (infrastructure) development in developing countries, the EU and its member states do not oppose Xi Jinping’s flagship initiative as a matter of principle. They are, however, critical of some of its modalities and consequences, including (the lack of attention to) debt sustainability, commercial viability of projects, transparency and rules-based approach.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, this is an opportune time for the EU in Asia after the United States’ withdrawal from multilateral trading mechanisms, mainly from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), to emerge as a stronger economic and political partner. The EU could explore the opportunities to have Free Trade Agreement’s (FTA) with countries besides China in Asia. The EU at present prioritises its strategic partnership with Japan, India and the ASEAN. Besides, the EU seeks to contribute to Asian security and explore deeper cooperation at a greater continental level, thus forging greater engagements between Asia, Europe and Africa.

Third, Europe’s official approach to Africa embraces the norms and values that both India and Japan aim to attain with their envisioned ‘Business Cooperation’ platform. Officially, Africa-EU relations are based on the “principles of ownership, partnership and solidarity” that the 2007 Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) outlines within a spirit of mutual and complementary interests. Even though according to common perception, Africa’s relationship with Europe is not a partnership based on equal terms, the

⁶⁷ “12th ASEM Summit: To strengthen dialogue & cooperation between the 2 continents on a wide range of areas”, ASEM InfoBoard, at <https://www.aseminfoboard.org/events/12th-asem-summit-asem12> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁶⁸ “EU and Japan conclude negotiations for Strategic Partnership Agreement”, *European Union External Action*, April 26, 2018, at https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/sanctions-policy/43526/eu-and-japan-conclude-negotiations-strategic-partnership-agreement_en (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁶⁹ For more details, see ‘Connecting Europe and Asia – Building blocks for an EU strategy’, October 2018, at <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/10/15/connecting-europe-and-asia-council-adopts-conclusions/#>.



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

partnership still promises openness and dialogues on major issues. Within a people-centric partnership, the JAES strives to forge stronger economic cooperation between Europe and Africa to promote sustainable development within the liberal values of upholding peace, prosperity, solidarity and empowering democracy. Promoting a “people-centric” partnership between Africa and EU is a commonality that is equally echoed between India and Japan, especially through their “Platform for Japan-India Business Cooperation in Asia-Africa Region”. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan has now shown a renewed commitment to Africa and has tried to institutionalise Japan’s relations with Africa through the TICAD. Japan is stressing to invest on “quality infrastructure” there, considering business efficiency while protecting human resources by focusing on development. A newness is noticed in India’s current Africa policy too. In contrast to India’s earlier “Focus Africa” programme, India is now approaching Africa as a multilateral partner in a range of global issues such as climate change and trade regimes including the UNSC reforms. These overarching areas promote a context of cooperation among the three sides, taking the African concerns on-board, in particular on finance, trade, and science & technology issues.

Digital financial inclusion

One area standing out as potentially promising is ‘digital financial inclusion’ in Africa, and perhaps Africa’s Islamic populations in particular. Action in this field would likely be welcomed by countries there, since many are members of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI). Japan and the EU have the financial capabilities and political presence/fora to facilitate such cooperation, and both stand to benefit from the stimulus that such projects provide to economic development in Africa. Improved digital financial inclusion can contribute to greater stability, the creation of new markets and a stronger consumer base, and even (gender) equality through women’s economic empowerment. However, being a developing economy, it is India’s experience that could be more relatable and instrumental for Africa in achieving financial inclusion with limited resources. Moreover, its Islamic heritage makes India a natural partner for Muslim countries in Africa.

India has successfully achieved mass financial inclusion through a scheme called Jan Dhan Yojana, which leveraged the world’s largest unique identification numbering system called Aadhaar.⁷⁰ Now, India has generated Aadhaar numbers for over 1.2 billion people.⁷¹ The Indian government has connected this Aadhaar-based bank account with mobile phones, known as JAM trinity, and used it for efficient distribution of public goods to the poor by cutting out the middlemen.⁷² While making the public distribution system more efficient might have been the government’s reason behind it, the approach turned out to be an incentive for the poor to be part of the financial system. Therefore, India can assist Africa tremendously in achieving a similar cost-effective and incentive-based financial inclusion model. Further, Africa can also seek assistance from Indian companies and experts with regards to India’s integrated digital banking interface, known as Unified Payments Interface (UPI), which allows instant cross-banking digital financial transactions in a simple user-friendly way.⁷³

While it might be easy for African countries to emulate India’s financial experiences, there are concerns related to data protection and cybersecurity surrounding the mechanism. Here, the EU and Japan can

⁷⁰ "Major Initiatives: Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana", PMINDIA, at https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/major_initiatives/pradhan-mantri-jan-dhan-yojana/ (accessed on December 10, 2019); "About UIDAI: Aadhaar Ecosystem", Unique Identification Authority of India, at <https://uidai.gov.in/aadhaar-eco-system.html> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷¹ "Aadhaar Dashboard", Unique Identification Authority of India, at https://uidai.gov.in/aadhaar_dashboard/ (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷² "Leveraging the Power of JAM: Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile", PMINDIA, https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/government_tr_rec/leveraging-the-power-of-jam-jan-dhan-aadhar-and-mobile/ (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷³ "Unified Payments Interface", National Payments Corporation of India, at <https://www.npci.org.in/product-overview/upi-product-overview> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



help fill the gaps as both possess some of the world's best expertise in cybersecurity. Further, the EU – its General Data Protection Regulation⁷⁴ is being widely opined as the model regulation for the rest of the world – can help Africa in formulating solid data protection regime.

Intra-Africa economy and trade

The long-term economic vision for Africa was laid out in 2013 when the Africa Union with an objective of becoming a 'global powerhouse' adopted Agenda 2063.⁷⁵ The intra-Africa trade and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), now renamed as African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) is at the centre of this vision. While the absolute number is not available, the share of total intra-Africa trade to the total trade was 15.2 per cent during the period 2015-17.⁷⁶ This is much less when compared to other regions such as Asia, America and Europe whose share for similar metric stand at 61 per cent, 47 per cent and 67 per cent, respectively.⁷⁷ Therefore, with an objective to increase the trade potential of the continent within its borders, the member-states of the African Union agreed to enter into the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which came into force in May 2019.⁷⁸ This is a big economic structural shift and a scale up from numerous intra-Africa regional community trade areas such as the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, ECOWAS, COMESA, Arab Maghreb Union, East African Community, Intergovernmental Authority on Development and Economic Community of Central African States.

Similarly, the AUDA-NEPAD was formed in the early 2000s 'to regain leadership on the continent's development issue'.⁷⁹ While the initiative had grand plans for Africa, the groundwork did not work as envisioned. Hence, it had to be reformed into a grand development agency with the oversight of the 'AU Commission and AU summits'.⁸⁰ The current mandate of the agency is to "implement the continent's major projects for regional integration, with the close involvement of the private sector".⁸¹ The African Development Bank has the key role to play as far as financing the projects planned under the AUDA-NEPAD. Moreover, prior to these two reforms, the African Union has removed some non-tariff barriers by signing 'Single Air Transport Market and the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment' which allows smooth movement of 'goods, services and people within the continent'.⁸² It should be noted that this might be the most critical time for the

⁷⁴ "EU data protection rules", European Commission, at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules/eu-data-protection-rules_en#abouttheregulationanddataprotection (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷⁵ "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want", African Union, at <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷⁶ "Economic Development in Africa: Report 2019", United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2019, p. 20, at https://unctad.org/en/PublicationChapters/edar2019_en_ch1.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Tighisti Amare, "The African Continental Free Trade Area Could Boost African Agency in International Trade", *Chatham House*, December 10, 2019, at <https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/african-continental-free-trade-area-could-boost-african-agency-international-trade> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁷⁹ "NEPAD Officially Becomes the African Union Development Agency", NEPAD, at <https://www.nepad.org/nepad-officially-becomes-african-union-development-agency> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁰ Liesl Louw-Vaudran, "Nepad and the battle for the soul of the African Union", *Institute for Security Studies*, February 12, 2018, <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/nepad-and-the-battle-for-the-soul-of-the-african-union> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸¹ "NEPAD Officially Becomes", note 78.

⁸² Tighisti Amare, note 72.



African economy as major structural reforms pertaining to intra-African economy have been – and are being – undertaken.

Therefore, such a trilateral could make a timely intervention and help the African Union make better use of these reforms. The private sector from Japan, the EU and India can commit more capital than that already existing for domestic manufacturing and building strategic infrastructure in the continent to fill gaps related to any kind of brick and mortar infrastructure so that it can have a multiplier effect on intra-African trade. This has the scope to work in a better way if economic engagement between the trilateral and the African Union is institutionalized by forming a Quadrilateral summit grouping. Japan has already recognized the importance of AUDA-NEPAD and AfCFTA for the Africa Union along with Japanese investors.⁸³ The EU has also welcomed the commencement of AfCFTA.⁸⁴ It is likely that the EU and India will also do the same, that is, highlight the importance of AUDA-NEPAD and AfCFTA during the respective summit level meetings with the African Union in 2020. Therefore, it is practically conceivable to find the converging economic interests and form the economic Quadrilateral between the EU, India, Japan and Africa.

Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and International Solar Alliance (ISA)

In recent years, two promising new initiatives have been launched that can be valuable part of the EU-India-Japan trilateral on Africa: the ISA and CDRI. Both initiatives aim to promote multi-stakeholder cooperation and business-activities that also meet public needs – namely, sustainable development and climate resilience. In both, India plays a key role as a lead actor and convening power. To both Japan and the EU and its member states – which are member to both the ISA and CDRI – these initiatives are thus of strategic value also: first, as potential levers to elevate India's contribution and standing as a multilateral player, and second, as instruments to further sustainable development and resilience, also in African countries.

At the UN Climate Action Summit 2019, President Modi announced a global Coalition on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). This initiative aims to promote resilience of new and existing infrastructure systems to climate and disaster risks. The 12 founding members of CDRI are Australia, Bhutan, Fiji, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Rwanda, Sri Lanka and the UK. Although for now, African members are not many, the need for enhanced climate resilient infrastructure in Africa is evident. The fact that Japan and the UK are founding CDRI members – and other EU member states like the Netherlands have shown an interest to join – makes this a promising venue for synergies, coordination and perhaps even cooperation between the three partners on the African continent.

The ISA is very much a way to promote science and technology cooperation and business-to-business activities. Led by France and India, the alliance is a treaty-based international institution launched in 2015, with 121 prospective member countries, 62 of which have now ratified its framework agreement.⁸⁵ The organization's objective is to assist in renewable energy transition in countries that lie between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, also called the Torrid Zone.⁸⁶ Countries that do not fall

⁸³ "Yokohama Declaration 2019", note 45.

⁸⁴ "Africa-Europe Alliance: EU support to the African Continental Free Trade Area", The Africa-EU Partnership, May 29, 2019, at <https://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/stay-informed/news/africa-europe-alliance-eu-support-african-continental-free-trade-area> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁵ For the most up-to-date details on membership, see here: "ISA Prospective Member Countries", International Solar Alliance, at <http://isolaralliance.org/MemberCont.aspx> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁶ In order to achieve this objective, the ISA has set the goal of producing 1,000 gigawatts of solar photovoltaics (PV) by generating funds worth US\$ 1 trillion by 2030 and making solar energy account for 11 per cent of global electricity consumption by 2050. See "ISA Mission", International Solar Alliance, at <http://isolaralliance.org/ISAMission.aspx> (accessed on December 10, 2019); and "International Solar Alliance: Nurturing Possibilities", Export-Import Bank of India, March 2016, at <https://mnre.gov.in/file->



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

between the two tropics can join ISA as partner countries, but will not have voting rights in the organization.⁸⁷

As the guardian of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, France is a key partner and funder of the ISA.⁸⁸ With other EU member-states, including the Netherlands, Western countries are facilitating India into taking a leadership role in the endeavour. The Indian government is considering expanding ISA membership to countries beyond the inter-tropical zone,⁸⁹ thereby paving the way for other European countries to become part of the framework. In October 2018, in a boost to Prime Minister Modi's efforts, Japan announced that it would also join the ISA.⁹⁰ Japan's membership provides the opportunity for better and more coordination between the three sides on ISA projects.

A focus on Africa seems natural and can contribute to goals set by African countries themselves in the African Development Bank (AfDB). Both the AfDB and ISA recognize that affordable, reliable and sustainable solar energy is crucial for economic growth. More specifically, the AfDB's "New Deal on Energy for Africa" aspires for "universal access to energy in Africa by 2025", recognizing that it needs to work with governments, the private sector, and bilateral and multilateral energy sector initiatives to develop a Transformative Partnership on Energy for Africa.⁹¹ More than US\$ 1,000 billion in investment is needed by 2030 to meet ISA's goals for the massive deployment of affordable solar energy.⁹² European countries, Japan and India could contribute to this by putting their weight behind implementing the Joint Declaration that the AfDB and ISA reached in March 2018.⁹³

Reasons to invest in such cooperation with a focus on Africa include climate, economic, and political considerations. Clearly, it provides valuable opportunity to further global climate objectives that all three countries are committed to. Furthermore, it assists with collaboration in establishing research institutions and industries, including in third countries,⁹⁴ may to benefit European and Japanese

manager/UserFiles/International%20Solar%20Alliance_Nurturing%20Possibilities.pdf (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions on ISA", International Solar Alliance, at <http://isolaralliance.org/docs/ISA%20FAQs.pdf> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁸ Ibid; also see, "International Solar Alliance", France Diplomatie, at <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/climate-and-environment/international-solar-alliance/> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁸⁹ Nishtha Saluja, 'International Solar Alliance may extend its membership', The Economic Times, March 10, 2018, at <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/power/international-solar-alliance-may-extend-its-membership/articleshow/63241695.cms> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁹⁰ "Japan Enters Modi-initiated International Solar Alliance", *United News of India*, October 29, 2018, at <http://www.uniindia.com/japan-enters-modi-initiated-international-solar-alliance/world/news/1391849.html> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁹¹ "Joint Declaration Between the International Solar Alliance and the African Development Bank for the Promotion of Solar Energy in Africa", International Solar Alliance, March 10, 2018, at <http://isolaralliance.org/docs/AFDB.pdf> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁹² "International Solar Alliance Cell and World Bank Signs Declaration for Promoting Solar Energy", *Press Information Bureau*, June 30, 2016, at <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=146680> (accessed on December 10, 2019).

⁹³ "Joint Declaration Between", note 90.

⁹⁴ "India–Netherlands Joint Statement during visit of Prime Minister of Netherlands to India", MEA India, May 24, 2018, at <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/29917/IndiaNetherlands+Joint+Statement+during+visit+of+Prime+Minister+of+Netherlands+to+India+May+24+2018> (accessed on December 10, 2019).



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

companies, as providers of key technical components.⁹⁵ This will contribute to the polarization of knowledge and to furthering market opportunities in the solar field more broadly.

Policy recommendations

Non-Traditional Security (NTS): (i) While India-EU-Japan are involved in peace building in Africa through UN Peacekeeping Missions, they can contribute further outside the purview of UN missions. The existing India-France strategic partnership can be the base for India-EU-Japan NTS cooperation in Africa. There is a strong case to be made that this partnership can be further leveraged to the hinterlands of Africa. This is viable because of the large presence of French troops across Africa historically and India's experience in dealing with NTS issues like religious extremism and ethnic violence; (ii) African NTS experience can benefit from India, EU and Japan's rich history in successfully dealing with disaster management in response to repeated climate – and nuclear disasters. With regards to climate disaster management, the trilateral can conduct joint personnel training, engage in material resource contribution and help architect the integrated response mechanism for the necessary stakeholders such as security forces, technical experts and first responders. The same applies to nuclear disaster management. This is recommendable as several African countries are planning on installing nuclear plants for sourcing green energy.

Human development: (i) With India-EU-Japan increasing their focus on expanding their tourism industries and the African tourism industry the second fastest growing in the world, the trilateral along with Africa can build on their tourism industries for better people to people connectivity. Simplification of visa approval by making use of schemes like e-Visa and visa on arrival along with highlighting tourist friendly destinations can lead to mutual growth in tourist exchanges. As the EU is one of the world's major tourist destinations, its policies in dealing with both intra-bloc and foreign tourism can serve as a reference for African countries in formulating tourism guidelines; (ii) Student exchanges can also be furthered by proposing easier educational visa guidelines; India and EU can be cost-effective study destinations due to their geographical proximity to Africa. The increase in number of scholarships by the trilateral grouping for potential students from Africa must be a priority; (iii) Healthcare is a major gateway for ensuring a strong presence of the trilateral in Africa. Providing access to quick, affordable and quality healthcare while promoting development of medical skills of African practitioners can be a key source of human resource development; (iv) The trilateral can share the industry specific technical know-how with African countries in developing skills of people by training them to become employable. This is very crucial for labour-intensive manufacturing industries where skilled manpower is the backbone; (v) The trilateral should take the initiative in promoting ideas with Africa that were crucial for cost-effective and incentive-based financial inclusion in India with complementary assistance from the EU and Japan with regards to issues such as data protection and cybersecurity surrounding such a financial system.

Economic/Continental development cooperation: (i) Agendas under forums like India's IAFS, Japan's TICAD and EU's AU-EU can potentially collaborate in a purposive manner under this trilateral grouping; (ii) Streamlining the funding by the EU, Japan and India in a coherent way for infrastructure projects relating to connectivity, power plants, energy parks, digitalization, etc., will help in scaling up the plans to fill infra bottlenecks for Africa in cost-effective manner; (iii) While the EU and Japan can aid in highly technological and value-added industries for Africa, India's role becomes crucial in sharing its know-how in propelling sectors such as information technology and pharmaceuticals, especially to produce low-cost generic medicines that is crucial for affordable health in Africa.

Conclusion

In a world of shifting global power balances, the Asian century and global south reconfiguration will likely be the focal axes of the 21st century world order. Hence for the EU and its member states – which have revitalized their Asia Strategy beyond just China and aim for closer ties with India as well –

⁹⁵ Authors' interview with Henry Philippens, Netherlands MFA, April 12, 2018; and communication with Claire Hooft Graafland, Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), August 22, 2018.



improved cooperation with Africa will pave the way for furthering its goals of stability and prosperity. A trilateral cooperation with India and Japan may contribute to the EU's set objective of recalibrating relations with Africa. After all, India and Japan are strong regional powers in Asia that share liberal-democratic values with the EU, and the three have demonstrated complementarities – in terms of historical ties, presence, competitive edge and funds – that can be leveraged towards more effective use of limited capabilities. Here, the EU can benefit from concrete steps that India and Japan have already taken in this direction.

The proposed EU-India-Japan trilateral not only holds the potential to set the discourse for the African continent going forward but also it can contribute to economic and security needs of the respective countries in the trilateral. For example, the refugee influx from Africa in the last few years has posed a new challenge to the EU. Working together with like-minded countries like India and Japan may contribute to address such a situation. Similarly, Japan is looking at new sources of external economic engagements beyond Asia as it intends to invest in large infrastructure and connectivity projects and provide more development cooperation. Further, India is looking to expand its presence and influence beyond its immediate neighbourhood, which obviously is Africa. Its historical ties with the continent since the colonial era have always ensured the good diplomatic ambience for the South Asian country, even if it never was able to leverage it given the limited economic capacity. The three like-minded countries share the objective of balancing the growing Chinese presence on the continent, which they consider often not in line with liberal, democratic norms of transparency, rule of law and (financial) sustainability. As discussed in this paper, digital financial inclusion, intra-African economy and trade; and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and International Solar Alliance (ISA) seem particularly promising areas for trilateral action.

Set against this context, the EU, Japan and India would do well to combine their respective strengths. The EU's resources and (diplomatic and economic) presence, Japan's large infrastructure capabilities with a thrust on quality and budgetary leeway, and India's diplomatic legacies along with human resource capacity hold vast potential to be leveraged to strategic convergence, promoting synergies, coordination and cooperation in and with Africa, that benefits all. A first desirable step to proceed in this direction would be for the EU and India to begin consultation bilaterally, subsequently adding Japan to evaluate the various opportunities as well as the challenges of trilateral cooperation in Africa.

Authors Bio

Dr. Maaïke Okano-Heijmans, is a senior research fellow at the Netherlands Institute for International Relations 'Clingendael' in The Hague. She is Clingendael's key expert in the Asia-Pacific Research and Advisory Network (#APRAN) for the European Commission and the EU External Action Service, also a visiting lecturer at the University of Leiden. Her main research interests are in connectivity, economic diplomacy and international relations in EU-Asia relations.

Dr. Jagannath P. Panda is a Research Fellow and Centre Coordinator for East Asia at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA), New Delhi. He is the Series Editor for *Routledge Studies on Think Asia*. Dr. Panda's main research areas are Indo-Pacific security, with a focus on East Asia covering China, Japan and Korea.

The authors of this paper would like to thank Mr. Aditya Jakki and Ms. Eerishika Pankaj for their research assistantship provided to this paper.



This paper was written in the framework of the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative 2018-2019 – a public diplomacy project aimed at connecting research institutions in Europe and India funded by the EU. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.