
RUSSIA AND AFRICA: NEW OUTLINES OF COOPERATION

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Purpose: the author aims to determine the current level of development of economic cooperation between Russia and the states of the African continent and to give specific recommendations, primarily to enhance cooperation in the field of trade and investment. *Discussion:* the author analyzes trade and investment relations between Russia and African countries, the state of humanitarian cooperation. In particular, the capacity of the African market of goods, the volume of export-import operations, as well as trade barriers, implemented by the African partners. The assessment of Russian companies operating in Africa, countries and industries of their interest, the volume of accumulated Russian investments in the states of the continent is offered. The mechanisms of support of the Russian business are described. *Results:* the author determined the prospects for the enlargement of volumes of Russian exports of products and capital to African countries in the context of international competition. Specific recommendations in humanitarian sphere, that could be implemented on the continent, are offered. The importance of further political and diplomatic support that is provided to the Russian TNCs is highlighted.

Keywords: foreign economic relations, trade, export, import, investment, FDI, humanitarian cooperation, corporate social responsibility, CSR, summit, forum, TNC, Africa.

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1. Introduction

After a pause in cooperation between the Russian Federation and African countries, which was observed in the 90s and early 2000s, the interaction began to take on a new dimension. This is especially noticeable in the face of increasing international competition for promising markets.

Russia's policy toward Africa is based primarily on economic interests, which has been repeatedly emphasized by Russian officials [19, 21, 33, 37].

In our view, despite the obvious successes, the Russian Federation has the

opportunity and strives for more intensive, multifaceted and diverse cooperation with African partners.

2. Discussion

Over the past decade, the Russian Federation has been actively increasing both trade and investment interaction with the states of the African continent.

To date, an increase in trade is one of the positive results of cooperation between Russia and the states of the continent. Thus, if the trade turnover between our country and Africa in 1995 amounted to USD 0.98 billion, in 2000 it already increased to USD 1.6 billion, and in 2018 – to USD 20.4 billion [6, 8]. Consequently, over the past 23 years, the volume of export-import operations grew by 20 times.

However, it is obvious that Russia has a significant potential to increase the volume of trade operations and expand the range of supplied products. In the context it is important to note, that in 2018, the total imports of the African states reached USD 573.5 billion, an increase of nearly USD 70.0 billion compared to the previous year [13].

The main importers of products were: South Africa (USD 93.4 billion), Egypt (USD 81.0 billion), Morocco (USD 51.3 billion), Algeria (USD 48.8 billion), Nigeria (USD 36.5 billion) [14, 15, 16, 17, 18].

In general, in 2018, African imports fell on the following groups of goods: mineral fuel, oil, and products of their distillation (HS Code 27 – USD 96.4 billion); nuclear reactors, boilers, equipment and mechanical devices (HS Code 84 – USD 60.6 billion); electric machinery and equipment (HS Code 85 – USD 44.4 billion); means of land transport, other than railway or tram rolling stock (HS Code 87 – 41.7 billion); cereals (HS Code 10 – USD 21.9 billion); plastics and articles thereof (HS Code 39 – USD 21.7 billion); ferrous metals (HS Code 72 – USD 16.7 billion); pharmaceutical products (HS Code 30 – USD 15.4 billion); products from ferrous metals (HS Code 73 – USD 14.5 billion); ships, boats and floating structures (HS Code 89 – USD 12.0 billion) [13]. All these product groups, with the exception of cereals and ferrous metal products, showed growth during the reporting period.

Thus, Africa is a promising area for the development of Russian exports, primarily non-raw materials.

At the same time, it should be outlined, that the increase in trade volumes is hampered by the restrictive measures imposed on Russian goods. In particular, as of August 1, 2019, anti-dumping investigations, special protective investigations, special protective measures were in place, import bans were in effect, additional duties were imposed by Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, the South African Customs Union (Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa) [27].

Along with trade, there is a development of project and investment activities of Russian TNCs. The key factors determining the interest of domestic economic operators when running business in Africa are: a desire for international expansion, a focus on diversification of foreign business, a high rate of return on investment. Companies also seek to fill the deficit (shortage) of certain resources,

technologies required for business development. It should be noted that when entering the African market, the traditionally friendly relations that have developed between Russia and the African states are taken into account, and an increasing number of Russian business representatives, as part of their activities, seek to promote the sustainable development of national economies of «old» African friends, to solve acute social problems of the local population.

Currently, more than 20 companies – «captains» of Russian business are operating or planning their expansion in Africa. The industries of interest of the enterprises are: energy, mining, fuel and energy complex, infrastructure, transport engineering, banking, etc. Russian TNCs are actively working or designing their activities in more than 20 countries [11, 12, 19, 22, 29, 31, 36].

According to our estimates, the total volume of Russian investments in the states of the continent is estimated at USD 20 billion. The sum does not take into account the project of ROSATOM in Egypt (construction of nuclear power plant), investments in which are estimated at USD 30 billion [5]. In the near future, we expect both an increase in the number of companies represented in the region and a further expansion of the geography of business of the companies already operating in Africa. For example, in 2018, the Russian Federation signed a Memorandum with Zimbabwe on the establishment of a Special Economic Zone in this African country, which will allow, in particular, both representatives of large and medium-sized businesses from Russia to gain access to the African market [30]. There are other interesting and promising projects.

The development of our country's cooperation with African partners continues to be supported by Russian overseas diplomatic missions in Africa. Russia is represented in all corners of the continent, in some cases our ambassadors are accredited in several countries concurrently (for example, in Niger, Lesotho, Malawi, etc.) [31].

Support for the expansion of Russian-African trade and investment ties is provided along with embassies by Russian trade missions (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, South Africa), existing intergovernmental commissions on trade, economic, investment, scientific and technical cooperation (Algeria, Angola, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe) [34, 35].

In our opinion, it would be of a great importance to further deepen humanitarian ties. The systematic work is under way: to date, 17 thousand people are studying at Russian Universities, of which 4 thousand are being educated at the expense of the federal budget of Russia.

Russia implements interesting and fundamentally important initiatives for the African continent: funds are allocated to combat noncommunicable diseases, tuberculosis, and the consequences of natural disasters. Our country has «debt in exchange for development» Agreements with a number of African states – Madagascar, Mozambique and Tanzania. In particular, part of Mozambique's debt

to our country is planned to be directed to the humanitarian needs of the local population [28].

Russian companies are implementing corporate social responsibility initiatives on the continent. One of such projects is the Centre for Epidemic and Microbiological Research and Treatment (CEMRT), built and equipped by RUSAL in Guinea [28].

However, there are some problematic aspects of humanitarian cooperation. To the list we can include, firstly, the limited number of Rossotrudnichestvo representative offices on the continent (Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, the Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Tunisia, South Africa, Zambia), which are designed to coordinate work in this area, and secondly, the underdeveloped legal framework [25]. For instance, today Agreements (Protocols) on recognition and equivalence of diplomas are signed only with a narrow circle of states, in particular, Chad, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia. There is also a Protocol between our country and Cameroon, however, there is no information, whether it is in force or not [7].

However, the most powerful impetus to the development of trade and project-investment cooperation is given by the meetings at the highest and high political levels. Thus, this year the President of Russia held talks in Moscow with the Presidents of Zimbabwe E.Mnangagwa, Angola J.Lourenco, the Republic of Congo D.Sassou-Nguesso, Mozambique F.Nyusi, as well as with the leaders of South Africa C.Ramaphosa and Egypt A.F.El-Sisi in Osaka [3, 4, 23, 26, 32, 39].

In 2018, Russian President V.Putin met with the leaders of a number of African countries, including Angola, Gabon, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, CAR and South Africa. In turn, the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister S.Lavrov toured the states of the African continent, visiting Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Ethiopia. In addition, last year he held consultations with the leadership of Madagascar, Equatorial Guinea, South Africa and several other states. Both chambers of the Federal Assembly of Russia and other governmental institutions also maintained contacts [38].

In 2019, events aimed at enhancing economic cooperation were held, including the business dialogue Russia-Africa on the sidelines of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, the annual meeting of Afreximbank, the economic conference Russia-Africa, the parliamentary conference Russia-Africa, etc. However, despite such a rich agenda, 2019 will be remembered thanks to the first in the history of Russia (and the USSR) Russia-Africa summit and the business forum dedicated to it, designed to open a new chapter in Russian-African trade and investment relations [1, 9, 20, 24].

3. Conclusion

Obviously, the potential of Russian-African economic cooperation has not been exhausted, and in the future the scale of cooperation will increase, despite the intense international competition for the African market. Together with the need to take priority measures to improve the system of foreign economic

relations of Russia, in our opinion, the attention should be paid to the existing opportunities in a number of areas [2].

Thus, in the field of trade, it is proposed to develop and stimulate domestic exports, primarily of non-raw materials. The products of increased demand from consumers on the African continent include transport, agricultural, nuclear engineering; oil, chemical and metallurgical industries; agricultural sector, as well as medicines and medical devices. At the same time, it is fundamentally important to resolve issues related to restrictive measures applicable to Russian products.

As for the project-investment interaction, in our opinion, there are good prospects for increasing cooperation in various fields, in particular in the energy sector, the mining industry, the fuel and energy complex, ICT, and infrastructure.

Particular attention should be paid to the improvement of corporate social responsibility management of domestic TNCs not only in Russia, but also abroad – in Africa [10]. It is also imperative to develop humanitarian ties, in particular the legal framework: to increase the number of states with which agreements on the recognition of diplomas, on cooperation in the field of science and scientific and technical cooperation, on cooperation in the field of education should be signed. In addition, it is necessary to increase the number of Rossotrudnichestvo representative offices, the number and amount of scholarships to African citizens which would cover all the expenses of citizens of the continent arriving in Russia (including flights, accommodation, medical care), to organize a network of Russian schools, branches of domestic Universities, to establish a Russian-African Polytechnic University, to take a number of other measures.

Separately, it is necessary to dwell on the need to create a favorable image of African countries on the territory of the Russian Federation (by the Russian side). In our opinion, this will not require significant financial injections, but will stimulate the interest of Russian business representatives toward the African continent, which as a result will increase both the volume of Russian exports to new markets and the level of investment cooperation.

The accelerated development of the whole complex of relations, we can confidently say, could be further supported by the meeting on the highest and high levels. It is also advisable to proceed from the need for new major events in the Russia-Africa format.

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РОССИЯ И АФРИКА: НОВЫЕ КОНТУРЫ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА

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Цель: автор ставит цель определить текущий уровень развития экономического сотрудничества между Россией и государствами Африканского континента и дать конкретные рекомендации, прежде всего, по активизации взаимодействия в области торговли, инвестиций. *Обсуждение:* автором проведен анализ торговых и инвестиционных отношений России с африканскими странами, состояния гуманитарного сотрудничества. В частности, установлены емкость африканского рынка товаров, объемы экспортно-импортных операций, а также преграды на пути реализации отечественных товаров африканским партнерам. Предложена оценка числа российских компаний, действующих в Африке, стран и отраслей их интереса, объема накопленных российских инвестиций в государствах континента. Описаны механизмы поддержки российского бизнеса. *Результаты:* автор определил перспективы развития российского экспорта продукции и капитала в государства Африки в условиях международной конкуренции. Выработаны конкретные рекомендации и инициативы в гуманитарной сфере, которые следует реализовать на континенте. Выделена значимость политико-дипломатического сопровождения российских ТНК.

Ключевые слова: внешнеэкономические связи, торговые отношения, экспорт, импорт, инвестиции, ПИИ, саммит, форум, ТНК, корпоративная социальная ответственность, КСО, Африка.

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