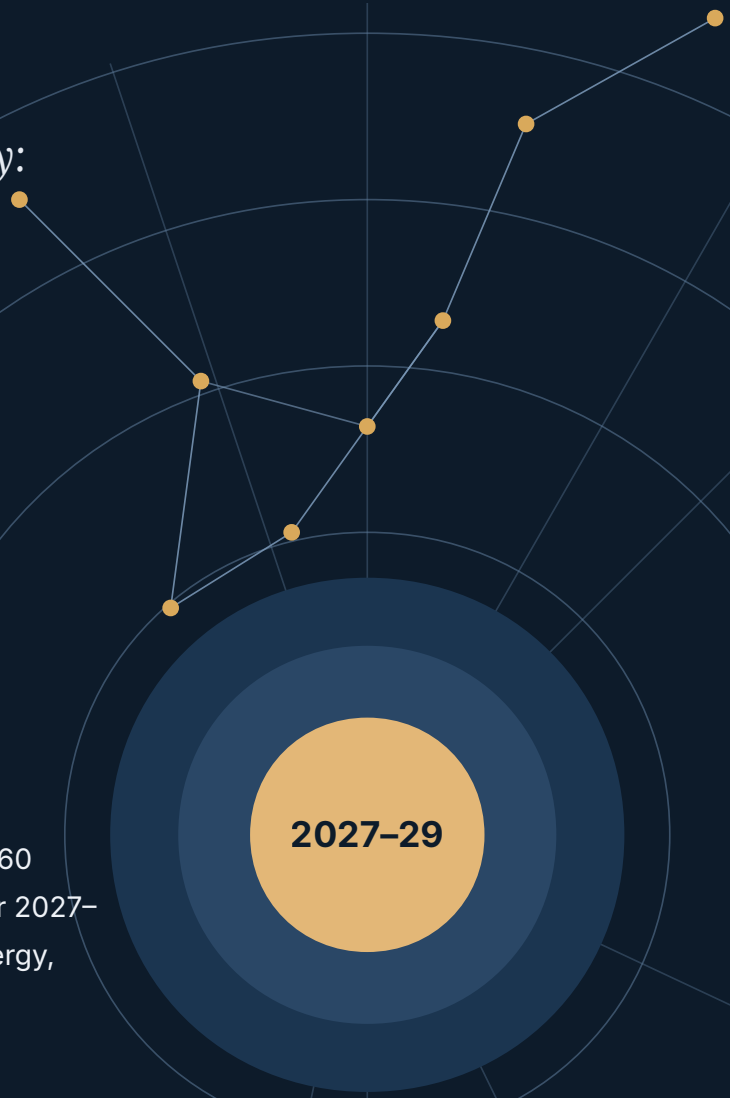
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FEATURE / DIPLOMACY & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RUSSIA – AFRICA THE MOSCOW SUMMIT

Agreements, trade, sovereignty: the results and their limits



48 African states represented. More than 60 agreements announced. An action plan for 2027–2029 and new priorities in agriculture, energy, health and digital.

29 OCTOBER 2026

Special feature · Moscow

Reporting and synthesis based on official African, Russian and international sources.

CONTENTS / STAKES AND RESULTS

A diplomatic offensive, commitments still to be measured

On 28 and 29 October 2026, Moscow hosted the third Russia–Africa summit, co-chaired by Vladimir Putin and Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of Burundi and current chair of the African Union. The organisers highlight the scale of attendance, the joint documents and more than 60 agreements. Beyond the display, the central question is their economic, legal and operational significance. [3][11]

48
African countries
represented

21
leaders
according to the Russian assessment

60+
agreements announced
by the organisers

$27bn
trade in 2025
according to Putin

WHAT IS CONFIRMED

Three multilateral texts were adopted: the summit's final declaration, a declaration on civilian uses of artificial intelligence and an action plan for 2027–2029. A separate plan between Russia and the African Union Commission covers 19 areas of cooperation; the Commission states explicitly that it creates no obligations under international law. [1][12]

WHAT REMAINS AN ANNOUNCEMENT

The target of more than $50 billion in trade, the rollout of new language centres, increased agricultural deliveries and the growth of industrial projects are ambitions or political commitments. Their realisation will depend on identifiable contracts, budgets, timetables and verifiable achievements. [4][5]

AT A GLANCE

PARTICIPATION
An important continental gathering, but with uneven levels of representation and below the first summit of 2019.

ECONOMY
$27 billion of trade in 2025; a target of at least $50 billion that still lacks a detailed trajectory.

SECURITY
A network of 45 military or military-technical agreements, whose scope varies widely from state to state.

AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE
Partners mainly seeking infrastructure, local processing, skills and a diversification of alliances.

01

The numbers game: who was in Moscow?

According to figures released before the opening, 48 of Africa's 54 countries had confirmed their attendance. The Kremlin had announced 22 delegations represented at a senior level; in his closing assessment, Putin spoke of 21 African leaders. The gap may stem from the way delegations were counted or from changes in delegations, but it cannot be settled without a complete, dated list of attendees. [11][5]

3,500+
participants from 74 countries

1,200+
business representatives, around 630 companies

40+
sessions of the economic and humanitarian forum

The organisers report more than 3,500 participants from 74 countries, 1,200 business representatives and about 630 companies, gathered notably across more than 40 sessions of the economic and humanitarian forum. These figures point to a genuine mobilisation; they remain organisers' statistics, with no independent validation of each category. [3]

Comparison with earlier editions calls for nuance. Sochi, in 2019, brought together more presidents and heads of government. In 2023, in Saint Petersburg, the number of African leaders present had fallen sharply. The Moscow summit therefore looks like a diplomatic consolidation rather than a return to the level of the inaugural edition. The figures for the three editions are not always compiled using uniform categories.

The significance of the meeting cannot be inferred from the number of flags alone. A head of state, a foreign minister and an ambassador do not have the same capacity for immediate decisions. Conversely, a ministerial delegation can conclude important technical agreements. The list of attendees must therefore be cross-checked against the signatures actually made.

Beyond the Sahel partners, there are actors with diversified international relations, including Egypt, Kenya and Ethiopia. Their participation does not imply automatic alignment with Russian positions, notably on Ukraine. [2][4]

02

The texts adopted: a framework, not yet a record

The first institutional outcome is the adoption of three documents: the final declaration of the summit, the declaration on cooperation in the civilian use of artificial intelligence and the action plan of the Russia–Africa Partnership Forum for 2027–2029. The Egyptian presidency confirmed the set on 29 October, providing validation distinct from Kremlin communications. [12]

A second document deserves particular attention: on 28 October, Sergey Lavrov and Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, signed an AU Commission–Russia action plan covering 19 areas. The continental organisation cites in particular peace, security, agriculture, energy, transport, research, space technologies, digital, health, education and financial exchanges. [1]

> **LEGAL SCOPE**
>
> The African Union nevertheless states unambiguously that the plan "does not create rights or obligations under international law". Its scope is therefore that of a political programming and institutional dialogue instrument, not that of an enforceable investment treaty. An action mentioned in the plan should not be presented as a project already launched or funded. [1]

One point warrants specific follow-up: implementation arrangements. Readers should be able to identify, for each strand, the responsible administrations, the funding mechanisms, the deadlines, the performance criteria and any follow-up reports. Without these elements, an ambitious declaration may remain essentially diplomatic.

03

Sixty agreements: what are they really worth?

Before the summit, Russian officials spoke of some thirty governmental, ministerial or commercial documents in preparation. At the close of proceedings, Anton Kobyakov, an adviser to the Russian president, announced more than 60 agreements, not counting documents covered by commercial secrecy. The two figures do not necessarily describe the same scope and are not contradictory in principle. [3]

Above all, one must distinguish a memorandum of understanding, a cooperation plan, an agreement between administrations, a bilateral convention and an industrial contract with amounts, down payments or penalties. Adding these categories together yields an indicator of diplomatic activity, not a measure of capital invested.

One concrete, narrow example is the Russian–Ugandan agreement on the mutual waiver of visas for holders of diplomatic and service passports. It eases conditions for official travel without opening a general free-movement regime for citizens of the two countries. [3]

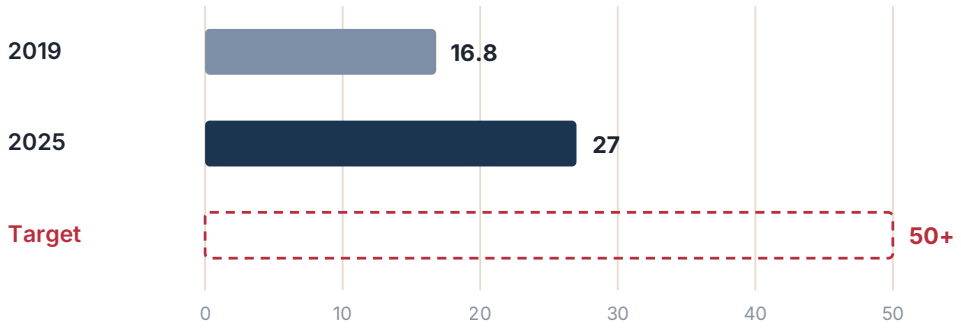
To assess the summit's significance, a verifiable inventory would need to set out each agreement's signatory, legal status, funding, timetable and deliverables. The public record available on 29 October does not make it possible to quantify the firm investments corresponding to all of the signatures.

04

Trade: doubling exchanges, but how?

Vladimir Putin announced Russia–Africa trade above $27 billion in 2025 and set the ambition of exceeding $50 billion in the medium term. Going from $27 billion to $50 billion would represent an increase of about 85%. This is a target, not an economic forecast backed by orders and logistics volumes already secured. [4][5]

RUSSIA – AFRICA TRADE · in billions of US dollars



Common scale. The 2019 and 2025 values are those published by the authorities; the $50bn target is a political ambition with no detailed timetable.

Russia sells mainly grain, fertilisers, energy and industrial equipment. African exports to Russia remain, on the whole, less diversified; to quantify the balance precisely, one would need consistent customs data broken down by origin, destination and product classification.

Trade growth requires insurance, suitable ports, maritime shipping, storage infrastructure and banks able to execute payments. Sanctions and restrictions on correspondent banking complicate some channels without blocking all trade. The benefit of decentralised payments lies in easing certain bottlenecks, but it also creates needs for liquidity and convertibility.

On the productive side, the decisive issue will be to distinguish growth in raw-material exports from the creation of African industrial capacity. A local agri-food processing or fertiliser manufacturing project can generate jobs and added value; it requires, however, far more investment than simply increasing shipments.

THE ROUBLE: “UP TO 85%”

According to Putin, the share of the rouble in Russia–Africa commercial transactions would reach “up to 85%”. Without a published methodology, this wording does not make it possible to establish whether it refers to the value of payments, their number or a subset of transactions. Invoicing currency, settlement currency and the banking channel used must also be kept apart. [8]

05

Grain and fertilisers: the most tangible partnership

Agriculture is an area where cooperation can already be read in physical volumes. Putin stated that Russia exported more than 18 million tonnes of grain to Africa in 2025, then about 13 million over the first nine months of 2026. These figures point to a significant trade relationship, even if they do not by themselves show the breakdown by country or the prices actually paid. [4]

18 Mt+
of grain exported to Africa in 2025

13 Mt
of grain over the first nine months of 2026

2.2 Mt+
of fertilisers since January 2026 (1.5 Mt in 2025)

Moscow promises to remain a grain supplier both on a contractual basis and, for some partners, free of charge. Donations have an observable precedent: after the 2023 summit, free shipments were announced for several states, notably in the Sahel and East Africa. A distinction must nevertheless be drawn between exceptional humanitarian aid, food diplomacy and ordinary commercial flows.

Fertiliser deliveries reportedly reached about 1.5 million tonnes in 2025 and exceeded 2.2 million tonnes since the start of 2026, according to presidential statements relayed by the Russian press. The jump is notable, but the 2026 figure is not yet a final annual total. [13][5]

The impact on African food systems will depend above all on producers' access to fertilisers, soil quality, rural finance, infrastructure and the cost of inland transport. Food security is not measured only by the tonnage landed in ports. Local processing and storage chains will be needed to sustain lasting effects.

06

Energy and industry: the Egyptian testing ground

In his official address of 29 October, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi cited two emblematic achievements of bilateral cooperation: the El Dabaa nuclear power plant and the planned Russian industrial zone in the Suez Canal Economic Zone. These projects pre-date the summit; it would therefore be inaccurate to present them as contracts created in Moscow on 28 and 29 October. [2]

Civil nuclear power illustrates the long-term commitments that a Russian presence can entail: engineering, construction, training, maintenance, fuel, safety and interaction with regulators. The value for the host country will depend on the quality of skills transfer, the full costs and how the facilities perform once commissioned.

The Suez industrial zone follows a different logic: attracting manufacturers close to port and logistics infrastructure in order to develop production and exports from Egypt. Its success depends on actual installations, factory activity and integration into regional supply chains.

THE FIVE AFRICAN PRIORITIES ACCORDING TO AL-SISI

Logistics corridors · intra-African trade · energy and power interconnections · water and food security · information technology and artificial intelligence. The Egyptian address puts Africa's productive capacities first, rather than the geopolitical rivalry between major powers alone. [2]

07

Health, medicines and epidemiological surveillance

The Russian government announced the extension to 2029 of its health cooperation programme with African countries, run by Rospotrebnadzor and devoted in particular to monitoring infectious diseases. It is one of the commitments with a precise deadline. [7]

The envisaged cooperation may cover laboratories, diagnostics, training of epidemiologists, health surveillance, equipment and alert systems. Putin also promised to increase deliveries of Russian medicines. The announced scope is therefore broad, but the documentation available on the evening of the summit does not provide a full list of new projects, beneficiaries or additional budgets.

Health has a structural dimension: building African laboratory and pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity has a different effect from one-off deliveries of medical products. To assess this strand, one will need to track operational infrastructure, staff trained and the campaigns or interventions funded.

08

Artificial intelligence: the new institutional priority

The adoption of a stand-alone declaration on the civilian use of artificial intelligence puts the subject at the heart of the Russia–Africa political framework. The plan signed with the African Union Commission extends this cooperation to digital, cybersecurity, space technologies and applied research. [1][12]

The African Union mentions, among possible avenues of cooperation, early-warning systems using AI to address conflict risks, public-health emergencies and natural disasters. These are proposed areas, not systems already deployed across the continent. [1]

Governance conditions will be decisive: data ownership, hosting location, interoperability, training of local engineers, cybersecurity audits and the contractual autonomy of administrations. A joint declaration on AI does not automatically settle these technical and legal issues.

09

Students, the Russian language and networks of influence

According to figures presented at the summit and reported by the Associated Press, nearly 40,000 African students are studying in Russia. This presence extends a training tradition dating back to the Soviet period. Putin mentioned several leaders' interest in opening new Russian-language teaching centres. [4][5]

University cooperation can have concrete spin-offs: doctors, engineers, scientists, teachers and administrative staff trained in Russia form lasting professional ties. It is also part of a strategy of cultural and institutional influence comparable to those of other partners on the continent.

At this stage, the public figures do not amount to an inventory of the new sites. To gauge the new effort, one will need to count additional scholarships, the institutions involved, degree agreements, languages of instruction and the resources allocated to the announced centres.

10

Defence: existing agreements and realities on the ground

Putin stated that Russia has intergovernmental military or military-technical cooperation agreements with 45 African countries. The figure is significant, but its interpretation must remain precise: having a framework agreement means neither a deployment of troops nor a recent supply of weapons in each of the 45 states. [6]

In the Sahel, security transitions have reshaped the mix of foreign partners. The Malian, Burkinabè and Nigerien authorities have strengthened their relations with Moscow in contexts where the French and Western presence has been reduced. The transformation of Wagner-linked structures into the Africa Corps illustrates an institutionalisation of some Russian commitments. [4][9]

The effectiveness of these partnerships remains disputed. Some national officials stress the support for sovereignty and military capabilities; observers and organisations at the same time document violence against civilians and persistent insecurity in several regions. Assessments must distinguish actors, periods, geographical scope and level of evidence. [9][10]

> **WHAT THE SOURCES DO NOT ESTABLISH**
>
> On the basis of the sources gathered here, the summit did not make it possible to establish the value or the full list of new arms contracts signed over these two days. Any automatic link between the "more than 60 agreements" and a large-scale programme of military deliveries would be unfounded.

11

The African voice: autonomy rather than alignment

The Egyptian address offers a useful counterpoint to an account centred strictly on Moscow. Al-Sisi stresses local processing of raw materials, industrialisation, corridors, energy, water resources and Africa's place in global governance. He recalls the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration on reform of the United Nations Security Council. [2]

Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sahel countries do not share the same economic structure or the same strategic partnerships. The diversity of delegations cannot be read as the formation of a uniform bloc. Many governments want to multiply their financial and diplomatic options with China, the United States, the European Union, Turkey, India, the Gulf monarchies and Russia.

Russia publicly supports greater African representation in some international institutions; this support can serve its own diplomatic goals while matching African demands that are much older. The two dimensions are not mutually exclusive. [4][9]

The real test of autonomy will be African states' ability to negotiate prices, contracts, technology transfers and oversight mechanisms consistent with their national priorities, regardless of the power that proposes them.

12

Fault lines and open questions

The summit does not erase the controversies surrounding the recruitment of African nationals for the war in Ukraine. Several states, notably Kenya, have raised the issue of citizens reportedly drawn in by promises of employment and then sent to fight. The figures circulating publicly come from varied sources, sometimes parties to the conflict; they should not be taken up as independent counts without documentary verification. [9]

Competition for mineral resources, energy, infrastructure and agricultural markets can also produce contractual asymmetries. Cooperation presented as sovereign does not rule out the risks of financial, technical or political dependence. These should be assessed project by project, rather than inferred from the partner's origin.

Banking constraints, secondary sanctions and difficulties with insurance or maritime transport remain important parameters. A lasting increase in trade requires solutions that are technically workable, economically viable and compatible with the rules applying to the various partners.

13

What to check between 2027 and 2029

The diplomatic results of the summit are identifiable; their translation into economic or social results remains open. The table below separates what is established, what is announced and what must still be documented.

AREA	ESTABLISHED AS OF 29/10	TO CHECK
Diplomacy	48 states represented; 21 leaders announced	Names of attendees and level of representation
Political framework	Three texts adopted; AU–Russia plan signed	Implementation timetable and public reports
Agreements	More than 60 documents announced	Inventory, status, amounts and signatories
Trade	$27bn of trade declared for 2025	Progress towards $50bn; breakdown by country and product
Agriculture	Grain and fertiliser flows announced	Contracts, delivery, prices, beneficiaries
Health	Programme extended to 2029	Budget, structures and health indicators
Digital	AI declaration adopted	Pilot projects, data governance
Security	45 military framework agreements announced	New contracts, deployments and results

Five indicators will give a credible reading of execution:

1. Investment actually disbursed
2. Production capacity built and brought into service
3. Volume and composition of trade
4. Scholarships, training and health infrastructure delivered
5. Independent assessments published

14

Conclusion: a relationship becoming institutionalised

The third Russia–Africa summit is more than a foreign-policy statement. Texts were adopted, a dialogue framework with the African Union Commission covers 19 areas and the organisers count more than 60 signatures. Russia already has agricultural flows, energy projects and training or security partnerships that give substance to its presence on the continent. [1][3][4]

That said, Russia's economic weight remains smaller than that of several other international partners on the continent, and the financial detail of the new agreements has not yet been consolidated. The AI declaration and the target of more than $50 billion in trade attest to ambition, not to a result already achieved.

The central question is therefore neither one of uniform African buy-in to Moscow nor one of a diplomacy without consequences. It is the shift from a network of political relations to productive, sustainable and verifiable projects. African states will judge these partnerships by the infrastructure, skills, jobs and room for sovereignty they actually allow them to develop.

> *The success of the Russia–Africa partnership will be measured by our ability to turn political and economic understandings into concrete achievements and lasting projects.*
>
> ABDEL FATTAH AL-SISI, PRESIDENT OF EGYPT
> Official address to the summit, rendering of the sense · Egyptian Presidency, 29 October 2026

15

Timeline and sources

CHRONOLOGY

2019	First Russia–Africa summit, in Sochi.
2023	Second summit, in Saint Petersburg; new agricultural commitments.
28 October 2026	Opening of the third summit and signing of the AU Commission–Russia plan for 2027–2029.
29 October 2026	Plenary sessions; adoption of the three joint documents; announcement of more than 60 agreements.
2027–2029	Reference period for the new action plans; follow-up of projects and funding expected.

DOCUMENTARY SOURCES AND DIRECT LINKS

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https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20261028/signature-au-commission-russian-federation-action-plan-2027-2029

02 **Egyptian Presidency — address by President al-Sisi, 29 October 2026**
https://sis.gov.eg/en/presidency/speeches-telegrams-posts/president-el-sisis-speech-at-plenary-session-of-3rd-russia-africa-summit/

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https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/articles/2026/10/29/1241089-glavnoe-iz-putina

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https://www.interfax.ru/russia/1125755

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https://www.interfax-russia.ru/rossiya-i-mir/rossiya-prodlit-programmu-sodeystviya-afrike-v-borbe-s-infekcionnymi-zabolevaniyami-putin

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https://www.vedomosti.ru/economics/news/2026/10/29/1241082-dolya-rublya

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https://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/1/581209/Egypt/ElSisi-rejects-moves-to-militarize-Red-Sea%2C-outlin.aspx

13 **PRIME / RIA Novosti — fertiliser deliveries, 29 October 2026**
https://1prime.ru/20261029/udobreniya-874753497.html

14 **SIS Egypt — file on the presidential visit to the summit, 28 October 2026**
https://sis.gov.eg/en/presidency/foreign-affairs/foreign-visits/president-el-sisi-participates-in-third-russia-africa-summit-in-moscow-2026/

15 **Kremlin — official website of the Russian presidency**
https://kremlin.ru/

METHODOLOGY AND TIME LIMIT

Report closed on 29 October 2026. Figures declared by governments and organisers are presented as such. The adoption of a text, the signing of a protocol, a financial commitment and the execution of a project are treated as distinct categories. Data that may change, notably the final number of participants, the inventory of signatures or the detail of credits, will require later updates. This document is a journalistic synthesis and not an accounting or legal certification.

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