

# Russia-Africa Summit Held Amid Worsening Global Security Situation

African Union member-states put forward their peace plan for ending the conflict in Ukraine and received a positive response from Moscow

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*Despite the tremendous pressure by the western imperialist governments placed upon the African Union (AU) member-states and the Russian Federation, the second Russia-Africa Summit was held on July 27-28 in St. Petersburg.*

Many of the African heads-of-state present came from the leading countries across the continent of 1.4 billion people.

Heads-of-state such as **Presidents Cyril Ramaphosa** of the Republic of South Africa, **Emmerson Mnangagwa** of Zimbabwe, **Adel-Fattah al-Sisi** of Egypt, **Felipe Nyusi** of Mozambique, **Macky Sall** of Senegal, **Denis Sassou Nguesso** of Congo-Brazzaville, among others, were present and intensely engaged in the proceedings. The Summit consisted of open plenary sessions along with one-on-one meetings between African leaders and **President Vladimir Putin**.

Media reports in the United States made much of the fact that 17 heads-of-state attended the Russia-Africa Summit compared to 43 at the previous meeting in 2019. However, there were 49 delegations which attended representing a majority of African governments on official ministerial levels as well as regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the New Development Bank (NDB), headed by **former Brazil President Dilma Rousseff**.

The Summit took place during an intensification of the military conflict in eastern and southern Ukraine as the United States and the European Union (EU) has pledged in excess of \$100 billion to continue its efforts to maintain the dominant status of imperialism throughout the globe. U.S. **President Joe Biden** has focused heavily on the foreign policy

imperatives of weakening the Russian Federation through sanctions and the recruitment of Eastern European states into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In Africa, the impact of the Ukraine war is resulting in high rates of inflation triggered by the shortages in agricultural products. Rising prices and a deteriorating security crisis in several West African states has prompted military interventions in political life and the attempted realignment of domestic and foreign policy away from France and the U.S. towards Russia and China.

This is the first full meeting of the Russia-Africa Summit since the inaugural gathering in 2019. Over the last four years the world underwent a global pandemic whose magnitude has not been experienced for a century. The commencement of the Russian special military operation in Ukraine in February 2022 grew out of the reemergent Cold War initiated by Washington and Wall Street against Russia and the People's Republic of China.

Over the last year-and-a-half since the beginning of the special military operation, the administration of President Joe Biden has sought to pressure AU member-states to support its position in Ukraine. U.S. Congressional figures drafted a bill designed to punish African states who maintain cordial political and economic relations with Moscow. The government in the Republic of South Africa led by the African National Congress (ANC) was accused by the U.S. ambassador of supplying arms to the Russian Federation to utilize in the Ukraine theater.

Russia has been subjected to widespread sanctions aimed at bringing about the collapse of its economy. During the Summit in St. Petersburg, Putin announced the cancellation of \$23 billion in debt owed by African countries.



Russia-Africa Summit delegates in front row (Source: Abayomi Azikiwe)

## **Outcomes of the Russia-Africa Summit**

Consequently, the proceeding of the recent gathering provided an opportunity for both Russia and the AU to present their views on a myriad of issues impacting the international situation. Both the host, President Vladimir Putin and the AU delegates emphasized their interests in building closer relations in the cultural, economic and political spheres.

[In a report](#) on the Summit published by Tass news agency it says:

“The global importance of the second Russia-Africa Summit, held in St. Petersburg on July 27-28, continued to reverberate over the weekend. On Saturday, Russian President Vladimir Putin held meetings with several counterparts from the continent. As well, St. Petersburg native Putin hosted four African leaders at his hometown’s annual Navy Day parade on July 30 along the Neva River, Vedomosti writes. Putin said at his final press conference on July 29 that, ‘in general, the African continent is friendly and positive towards Russia.’ A 74-point declaration was the principal document to come out of the summit, where the signatories spoke out in particular against ethnic and racial discrimination and announced plans to coordinate a range of joint political activities, including within the United Nations Security Council.”

Russia and its relationship with the African continent have been mutually cooperative since the era of imperialist conquest when the country under the monarchy provided military assistance to Ethiopia during its war against Italy in the late 19th century. During the period of the Soviet Union, the official foreign policy position of Moscow was to aid the national liberation movements struggling for freedom and independence. The post-colonial years in Africa were marked by solidarity with the newly independent states through the granting of educational opportunities, trading projects along with military training.

A continuing pledge of security assistance was made clear during the Summit. In addition, scholarships for education will be enhanced for African students in Russia. The Russian government acknowledged the legacy of colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism and pledged to stand in solidarity with the African people in their struggle for genuine independence and sovereignty.

Testimony by African leaders were recorded in a [Tass news report](#) saying that:

“Central African Republic President Faustin-Archange Touadera underscored that Russia’s support helped save democracy in his country. ‘Fearing no geopolitical problems, Russia provides aid to our country, our armed forces and security agencies in their fight against terrorist organizations,’ he said. Mali was able to reinforce its armed forces and ensure its security thanks to Russia’s aid, said Interim President Assimi Goita. ‘Mali has a military partnership with Russia, and we thank it for its support and friendship. [...] The Malian Armed Forces are currently on the offensive; we have significantly reduced the number of [terrorist] attacks on [our] military bases, we were able to ensure security in many places,’ he noted.”

## **AU Leaders Emphasize Peace Plan**

An underlying theme throughout the concluding phase of the Summit was the quest for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine. The withdrawal of Russia from the Black Sea Grain Deal was based on the failure of the imperialist states to lift their sanctions against Moscow.

The actual volume of grain produced and exported by Russia far exceeds that of Ukraine. Putin offered to supply grain to several African states free of charge in an effort to meet the current challenge of burgeoning food insecurity.

Tass summarized the discussions on the African Peace Initiative for Ukraine as follows:

“South African President Cyril Ramaphosa stated that ‘negotiations and dialogue, as well as commitment to the UN Charter are necessary for a peaceful and fair resolution of conflicts.’

‘The African initiative deserves the greatest attention, and it should not be underestimated,’ President of the Republic of Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso said, calling to ‘end the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. This conflict affected the entire world in a negative way, African Union Commission Chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat said. ‘Of course, we are concerned over the grain supply issue,’ he said, adding that it is ‘necessary to immediately and promptly resolve the problem of food shipments to countries in need.’” (<https://tass.com/politics/1653945>)

Putin reiterated to the African delegations that Russia has been willing to hold constructive negotiations with Ukraine. However, Moscow has been met with refusals by Kiev which is operating at the behest of Washington and the NATO states.

Overall, the Summit further revealed the escalating conflict between the proponents of western imperialist domination and those advocating for a multipolar world system. This ideological and material conflict could very well be resolved in a protracted global conflagration which would portend much for the long-term stability and sustainable development of the majority of peoples and nations of the globe.

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