

LOOKING EAST: UGANDA'S EMERGING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this Article is on how, over the decade, Uganda, one of the East African countries, has related with the nations of the Asia-Pacific Region. The bilateral relations have been premised on economic diplomacy rather than on the traditional political diplomacy. It is argued that the bilateral economic relations should be characterized by a symbiosis whereby both Uganda and the nations of Asia-Pacific Region gain from their economic interaction on equal basis. This is a significant departure from Uganda's economic relations with the imperialist powers of the West which economic relations, especially during the Cold-War period, while based on exploitation of Uganda's resources by the West. The cardinal reason why Uganda decided to "Look East" both before and after the Cold-War period was to diversify its economic relations for its benefit. The Article is guided by two theories, namely (1) The Theory of Comparative Advantage; and (2) Classical Trade Theory. Methodologically, the Article largely relied on secondary resources to navigate the historical and contemporary dimensions of economic diplomacy between Uganda and the nations of the Asia-Pacific Region. The Article concludes that Uganda and other developing countries of Africa and the Global South stand to benefit from their economic diplomacy as the result of changes that have been brought about by the demise of the Cold-War at the beginning of the 21st Century and the subsequent Post-Cold War World Order, a major transformation in international relations and diplomacy.

Keywords: Cold War, Diplomacy, Economic Diplomacy, International Relations, Political Diplomacy, Trade Policy, World Order.