



**LOOK AFRICA:
EXPLORING NEW
HORIZONS FOR
BANGLADESH**



Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)

LOOK AFRICA

**EXPLORING NEW HORIZONS FOR
BANGLADESH**



**Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)
Publication**

Look Africa

Exploring New Horizons for Bangladesh

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A Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) Book

Look Africa

Exploring New Horizons for Bangladesh

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First Published: February 2025

Published in Bangladesh by
Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS)
1/46, Old Elephant Road (West of Ramna Police Station)
Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.
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Cover Photograph
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Printed by Graphnet Limited
95, Naya Paltan, Dhaka
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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| ACFTA | African Continental Free Trade Area Framework |
| A2I | Access to Information |
| AI | Artificial Intelligence |
| ADB | African Development Bank |
| ADG | Additional Director General |
| AfCFTA | American Continental Free Trade Area |
| AFMC | Armed Forces Medical College |
| AGN | Africa Group of Negotiators |
| AGOA | African Growth and Opportunity Act |
| AIT | Asian Institute of Technology |
| AMCEN | African Ministerial Conference on the Environment |
| AOFA | Association of Former Ambassadors |
| APPO | African Petroleum Producers Organization |
| afwc | Armed Forces War Course |
| AIUB | American International University-Bangladesh |
| AU | African Union |
| BSC | Bachelor of Science |
| BANBATT | Bangladesh Battalion |
| BANFMU | Bangladesh Formed Marine Unit |
| BASIS | Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services |
| BBS | Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics |
| BEXIMCO | Bangladesh Export Import Company Limited |
| BIDA | Bangladesh Investment Development Authority |
| BIPSOT | Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training |
| BLAs | Bilateral Agreements |
| BMA | Bangladesh Military Academy |
| BMTF | Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory |
| BPO | Business Process Outsourcing |
| BPSC | Bangladesh Public Service Commission |

| | |
|---------|--|
| BRAC | Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee |
| BSc | Bachelor of Sciences |
| BTI | Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation |
| BUET | Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology |
| BUP | Bangladesh University of Professionals |
| CAHOSCC | Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change |
| CAR | Central African Republic |
| CBGA | Center for Bangladesh and Global Affairs |
| CEGIS | Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CGS | Centre for Genocide Studies |
| CIMIC | Civil Military Cooperation |
| COMESA | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| CAGR | Compound Annual Growth Rate |
| CVF | Climate Vulnerable Forum |
| DDR | Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration |
| DSCSC | Defence Services Command and Staff College |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| DG | Director General |
| DPI | Digital Public Infrastructure |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of the Congo |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| EPAs | Economic Partnership Agreements |
| EPB | Export Promotion Bureau |
| EUTM | European Union Training Mission in Mali |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| FBCCI | Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries |
| FCOs | Foreign Office Consultations |
| FES | Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung |
| FY | Fiscal Year |
| FYP | Five Year Plan |

| | |
|------|---|
| FPU | Formed Police Unit |
| FSA | Foreign Service Academy |
| FTAs | Free Trade Agreements |
| 4IR | Fourth Industrial Revolution |
| G7 | Group of 7 |
| G8 | Group of Eight |
| GCF | Green Climate Fund |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GED | General Economics Division |
| GEF | Global Economy Forum |
| GHED | Global Health Expenditure Database |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gas |
| GMP | Good Manufacturing Practices |
| G7 | Group of Seven |
| G8 | Group of Eight |
| GoB | Government of Bangladesh |
| GSMA | Global System for Mobile Communications Association |
| IBRD | International Bank for Reconstruction and Development |
| IBM | International Business Machines Corporation |
| ICJ | International Court of Justice |
| ICRC | International Committee of the Red Cross |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| IDA | International Development Association |
| IEB | Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh |
| IED | Improvised Explosive Device |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| IoT | Internet of Things |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INGO | International non-governmental organization |
| IITA | International Institute of Tropical Agriculture |
| IOFS | Islamic Organisation for Food Security. |
| IORA | Indian Ocean Rim Association |
| IT | Information Technology |

| | |
|----------|--|
| ITES | Information Technology Enabled Service |
| IUJ | International University of Japan |
| IUT | Islamic University of Technology |
| KIIs | Key Informant Interviews |
| KRP | Kuwait Reconstruction Operation |
| LoCs | Line of Credit |
| LUCCC | Least Developed Nations Universities Consortium on Climate Change |
| MSc | Master of Social Science |
| M-ATV | Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicles |
| MBA | Masters in Business Administration |
| MDC | More Developed Country |
| MDS | Master's in Defense Studies |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MENA | Middle East and North Africa |
| MHEWS | Multi-hazard Early Warning System |
| MINURSO | United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara |
| MINUSCA | United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic |
| MINUSMA | United Nations Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in Mali |
| MIPP | Masters of International Policy and Practice |
| MIS | Migration Information System |
| MISAHHEL | African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel |
| MIST | Military Institute of Science and Technology |
| MNCs | Multinational Company |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| MoEFCC | Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change |
| MoFA | Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| MoHA | Ministry of Home Affairs |
| MoSS | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Sudan |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MRAP | Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles |
| MSS | Master's in Social Sciences |
| MSS | Masters in Strategic Studies |

| | |
|---------|--|
| MIST | Military Institute of Science and Technology |
| NAM | Non-Aligned Movement |
| NDC | National Defence College |
| NDCs | Nationally Determined Contributions |
| NGOs | Non-governmental Organisation |
| OEC | Observatory of Economic Complexity |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OIC | Organization of the Islamic Conference |
| PMIRD | Professional Masters in International Relations and Diplomacy |
| ONUC | UN Operation in the Congo |
| PRA | Participatory Rural Appraisal |
| PEng | Professional Engineer |
| PKF | Peace Keeping Forces |
| PKO | Peace Keeping Operations |
| PKSF | Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation |
| PTAs | Preferential Trade Agreements |
| R-ARCSS | Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan |
| RCCs | Regional Collaboration Centres |
| RMG | Ready-Made Garments |
| RSC | Refugee Studies Centre |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| SACU | South African Customs Union |
| SANEM | South Asian Network on Economic Modeling |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SDTC | Specialised Diplomatic Training Course |
| SKS | Sena Kallayn Sangstha |
| SME | Small and Medium-sized Enterprise |
| SOM | Senior Officers' Meeting |
| SP | Superintendent of Police |
| SPLM | Sudan People's Liberation Movement |
| SSC | South-South Cooperation |
| SSPDF | South Sudan's National Army |

| | |
|---------|--|
| SUHII | Surface Urban Heat Island Intensity |
| TCC | Troop Contributing Countries |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| UAE | United Arab Emirates |
| UGC | University Grants Commission |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UP | Union Parishad |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCTAD | The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNECA | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa |
| UNFCCC | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNIIMOG | UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group |
| UNISFA | United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei |
| UNITAMS | UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan |
| USA | United States of America |
| UNMISS | United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan |
| UNOAU | United Nations Office to the African Union |
| UNSC | UN Security Council |
| UNSMIL | UN Support Mission in Libya |
| UNTAG | UN Transition Assistance Group |
| UNTAG | UN Transition Assistance Group |
| UP | Upazila Parishad |
| USA | United States of America |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| VAT | Value Added Tax |
| WCO | World Customs Organization |
| WEF | World Economic Forum |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |
| YOUNGO | Youth NGOs |

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Iftekhar Anis has been the Director General of BIISS since September 2024. Before joining this Institute, he served as Engineer in Chief at Army Headquarters. He was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers on 21 December 1990 from Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA). He has commanded a Division Engineer Battalion at home and an Engineer Contingent in Ivory Coast under the UN Mandate. He served as the Additional Director General (ADG) and Director General of Special Works Organization (West). He was the pioneer Commander of an Engineer Construction Brigade. His notable military service experience includes serving as Platoon Commander in the Kuwait Reconstruction Operation (OKP), Deputy Assistant Military Secretary in the Military Secretary's Branch and Staff Officer Grade-1 in a Division Headquarters. He also served as Director of Works & Chief Engineer of both Army and Navy Headquarters. As general, he was the Chairman of Sena Kalyan Sangstha (SKS) and later became the Engineer in Chief of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The General was awarded the 'Distinguished Service Medal (BSP)' for his outstanding contribution in planning and implementing national projects. General Anis graduated from the Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) and completed Armed Forces War Course (afwc) from the National Defence College (NDC), Bangladesh. He obtained a Master's in Defense Studies (MDS) from National University and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB). He completed his Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Engineering (Civil) from the Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) and achieved Professional Engineering (PEng) from the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB). Major General Iftekhar Anis is a graduate of the prestigious US Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania and obtained a Masters in Strategic Studies (MSS) degree.

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Delwar Hossain started his research career at BISS in 1994. Currently, he is a Professor of International Relations, at the University of Dhaka, and has more than thirty years of teaching and research experience. He is formerly the Chair of the Department of IR of the same university, the founder Director of the East Asia Center and the Director of Centre for Genocide Studies (CGS), University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. He did his second Master's degree in Asia Pacific International Relations from the International University of Japan (IUJ), Japan as an Asian Development Bank Scholar in 2001. Dr Hossain earned his PhD in Global and Intercultural Studies from Ferris University in Yokohama, Japan as a Monbukagakusho scholar in 2007. Dr Hossain received a Dean's Award from IUJ during his study for Master's programme. He was a Visiting Professor at Yamaguchi University, Yamaguchi, Japan during 2017-2023. Dr Hossain has authored more than one hundred articles, chapters, and books. One of his recent publications is a chapter entitled "Globalization, Governance, and New Institutionalism: Exploring a New Developing World" by Springer Nature, 2022

FOREWORD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The book titled “Look Africa: Exploring New Horizons for Bangladesh” is the culmination of a seminar organised by BISS on 13 November 2022. The overarching aim of this book is to provide an inclusive overview of the African region which covers a wide range of issues pertinent to the continent. The book is anticipated to serve as a comprehensive basis for fostering the exchange of ideas and experiences from scholars who will pave the way for enhanced cooperation between Bangladesh and Africa. BISS extends its profound gratitude to the esteemed authors across various disciplines who contributed immensely by writing their respective chapters and highlighting various issues. Special acknowledgment is due to Ambassador Mashfee Binte Shams, Dr Niloy Ranjan Biswas, Dr M Masrur Reaz, Mr Shams Mahmud, Dr Kazi Maruful Islam, Dr Syeda Rozana Rashid, Dr Md Touhidul Islam, Brigadier General Shamim Kamal and Nahian Reza Sabriet who gave their valuable time in writing the chapters despite having their other commitments. Without their extraordinary support, it was rather a difficult task to give a proper shape to this endeavour. In addition to the external authors, BISS also sincerely appreciates the internal authors from this Institute namely Dr Sufia Khanom, Rafid Abrar Miah, and Nahiyah Shajid Kahan whose enthusiastic participation enriched the content of the book.

BISS also expresses its sincere appreciation to the Director General of BISS who gave his valuable guidance as well as unwavering support in carrying out the study. His introductory insights set the tone of the book and helped to anchor the rest of the chapters. Special recognition is also extended to the Chairman of BISS whose substantive contribution including the authorship of a chapter has greatly enriched the depth of the publication. BISS also extends its heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed members and contributors from MoFA who have fostered our commitment to work on

further research in the African region. In addition, BIISS wishes to express its profound appreciation for the substantial contributions of the editorial board members. Their diligent efforts spanning over one year have resulted in the realisation of the book and their active engagement from the very beginning of the study is pivotal to its fruition. Their relentless hard work, undoubtedly, helped to see the light of the book and without their collective efforts, such a comprehensive outcome would not have been attainable. Last but not least, appreciation should extend to the publishing company whose collaboration assisted in surfacing this book and ensured its timely dissemination.

There are fewer academic works on African regions, therefore, this meticulously crafted book confirms the literary contribution which works as a significant value addition. Comprehensive in scope, the book is an effort that intricately explores various facets of the African landscape ranging from trade dynamics to environmental considerations. Needless to say, the expansion of this academic work affirms the scholarly rigour and depth. It is expected that the thorough examination of the book will provide valuable insights to the policymakers and offer them a robust framework to formulate new policies and strategies tailored to the region's unique challenges and opportunities. Hence, a cordial invitation is extended to each of you to engage with this esteemed publication.

Razia Sultana
Editor

Dedication
Bangladeshi Peacekeepers who served in Africa

PREFACE

Bangladesh—a nation of aspirations—actively looks for various avenues to advance its growth, prosperity and development. Africa is a promising destination for fostering progress and building strategic partnerships. The book titled “Look Africa: Exploring New Horizons for Bangladesh”, a significant initiative by BISS, is a testament to promoting the country’s national visions.

The book, I believe, will foster new areas of cooperation with African nations amidst the changing dynamics of Bangladesh, which aims to achieve remarkable economic progress and realise development goals through collaborative approaches. Africa, with its untapped markets and land of diverse opportunities, can serve as a lucrative partner in this endeavour. Both Bangladesh and African nations face common challenges, such as addressing climate change, enhancing agricultural productivity, and expanding cultural and educational spheres. These shared challenges create ample scope for collaboration and joint efforts in fostering mutual growth and progress.

It is essential to recognise the reality of the interconnected world in contemporary times where economic opportunities are expanded through effective diplomatic channels. Africa, in this regard, represents a vital destination for Bangladesh to broaden its economic horizons. With its vast resources, burgeoning middle class and a growing market of over a billion people, Africa has become a focus for global investors. The book aptly identifies Africa’s significance in ensuring Bangladesh’s socio-economic development and aligning with the country’s foreign policy principles of equity, fairness, and creating win-win scenarios. By analysing Africa’s potential in diverse sectors such as trade, investment, agriculture, mineral resources, and climate change, this book offers a strategic roadmap for building stronger ties between Bangladesh and the African continent.

The contents of this book are thoughtfully structured to delve into key themes such as culture, diplomacy, trade and investment, digital economy, agriculture and contract farming, climate change, peacekeeping, and other critical areas. Each chapter combines theoretical frameworks with practical insights, making the book an invaluable resource for policymakers, researchers and practitioners. By leveraging the different ideas and models, the book sheds light on the strategies Bangladeshi stakeholders (*e.g.* firms, industries etc.) can adopt for market entry and product adaptation.

The book also effectively provides a roadmap for achieving this, covering opportunities for economic diplomacy, market research, and bilateral trade instruments that can reduce trade barriers and create favourable conditions for business growth. Additionally, the book underscores the need for robust risk management and adaptability in overcoming challenges such as regulatory hurdles, logistical barriers, and cultural differences in African markets. The recommendations offered, such as investing in local production facilities and forming alliances with local partners, align with global best practices and provide actionable steps for Bangladeshi enterprises as well as future entrepreneurs. By following these strategies, Bangladesh can enhance its competitiveness and create a vibrant and sustainable presence in Africa. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will play a crucial role here by prioritising Africa in its diplomatic agenda and supporting initiatives like trade missions and business matchmaking programs.

Finally, I must commend BIISS for undertaking such a timely initiative. The publication of the Book is a manifestation of a forward-looking vision of the institute and its contributors. By bridging the gap in knowledge and offering a comprehensive analysis of Africa's opportunities and challenges, the publication is poised to be a guideline for future Bangladesh-Africa relations. Hence, I extend my sincere gratitude to the authors for their meticulous research and invaluable insights into this relatively unexplored continent. Their effort in highlighting Africa's strategic importance to Bangladesh's development journey is both inspiring and enlightening.