

GANDHINAGAR DECLARATION India to increase training, help African nations build defence capacity

Believe in True Partnerships, says Rajnath

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Gandhinagar: India has pledged to increase training activities and assist African nations with capacity building for their defence forces as part of the 'Gandhinagar Declaration' adopted during the flagship DefExpo military show on Tuesday.

The Declaration, which mentions increased training slots, more joint exercises and deputation of training teams, was adopted at a gathering of 50 African nations repre-



sented by their defence ministers or senior military officials.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh, who held several rounds of bilateral talks with his African counter-

parts, also invited the countries to explore Indian defence equipment and technologies and said that India believes in forging equal partnerships based on mutual respect.

"We do not believe in making or becoming a client or satellite state, and so, when we partner any nation, it is on the basis of sovereign equality and mutual respect. Forging relations comes naturally to India, as we work towards mutual economic development," the minister said.

He added that India has created a defence manufacturing ecosystem that can help African nations build capacity with the help of a trusted partner, without worrying about undue influence that weapons suppliers can yield.