

## THE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, POLITICAL MAP, AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF AFRICA

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**Abstract.** Africa is one of the largest continents in the world, characterized by its vast territory, rich natural resources and complex political structure. The continent is of great importance for the world with its different natural conditions, climatic zones and ethnic diversity.

**Keywords:** Africa, Geographical Location, Political Map, Natural Resources, Mineral Reserves, Oil and Gas, Gold and Diamonds, Sahara, Congo Basin, Agriculture, Colonialism, Ethnic Diversity, Nile River, West Africa, North Africa, Ecosystems.

### INTRODUCTION

The African continent is one of the most ancient and rich natural resource regions of the world and is distinguished by its geographical location, diverse climatic conditions and complex political structure. This continent covers one third of the globe and is located in an important strategic area connecting the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. While Africa's geographic location has made it a hub of international trade routes, its political map reflects the complex legacy of colonialism. At the same time, the African continent has the richest reserves of mineral and natural resources in the world, and these resources occupy a special place in the global economy. This article provides a detailed analysis of Africa's geographic location, political structure, and natural resources.

### MAIN PART

#### *Geographical location*

The continent of Africa covers 30% of the earth's surface and is the second largest continent after Asia. Its total area is about 30.3 million square kilometers, which describes the continent equally spread over the Southern and Northern Hemispheres.

The borders of the continent:

- The Mediterranean Sea in the north;
- Red Sea and Indian Ocean in the east;
- Atlantic Ocean in the west;
- It borders the Antarctic Ocean in the south.

The African continent has several straits of strategic importance in the world economy and transport system, for example, the south of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. Important parts of international trade routes pass through these channels.

#### *Political map*

Africa is a politically very complicated continent. It is made up of 54 independent countries, which act as member states of the United Nations. Most of the countries in Africa were freed from colonialism in the 19th and 20th centuries. Because of this, the borders of many countries have been artificially defined, which has led to ethnic conflicts and internal political problems today.

African countries are divided into regions as follows:

1. North Africa: includes countries such as Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco. This area is mainly connected with Arab countries and most of it is covered by desert.
2. West Africa: countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Senegal are located in this area. This region is known for its agricultural and export products.
3. Central Africa: includes the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and others. This area is famous for its rich forest resources.
4. East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and other countries are located. This area is famous for tourism and energy resources.
5. South Africa: The region includes the Republic of South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia. The mining industry is developed in this area.

#### *Natural resources*

Africa is a continent rich in natural resources. Its underground and surface resources are of great importance for the world economy.

#### *Mineral resources*

Africa is rich in underground resources and is the main supplier of many strategic minerals to the world.

- Gold: The Republic of South Africa, Ghana and Mali are the world's largest gold producers.
- Oil and gas: Countries like Libya, Nigeria, Algeria are major oil producing countries in Africa. Nigeria is the largest oil exporter on the continent.
- Diamonds: DR Congo, Botswana and Republic of South Africa are the leading producers of diamonds.

#### *Natural ecosystems*

The African continent is famous for its tropical forests, deserts and savannas.

- Sahara Kabir: It is the largest desert in the world and is located in the north of the continent.
- Congo Basin Forests: One of the largest rainforests in the world, this area is known for its biodiversity.

- Niger and Nile Rivers: These rivers are important for agriculture, drinking water and transportation.

#### *Agriculture*

Africa is an important continent in the production of agricultural products.

- Cocoa: Ivory Coast and Ghana in West Africa are the largest cocoa producing countries in the world.
- Coffee: Ethiopia and Uganda are one of the main producers.
- Tea and sugarcane: Widely grown in Kenya.

### **CONCLUSION**

The African continent is of global importance due to its rich natural resources, geographical location and multi-ethnic political system. However, the continent is facing many economic and social problems on the way to development. Effective management of the natural resources of this continent and ensuring political stability remain an urgent task for the international community.

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