



According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, the President is ultimately responsible for the country's foreign policy and international relations. It is the President's prerogative to appoint heads of mission, receive foreign heads of mission, conduct state-to-state relations, and negotiate and sign all international agreements.

International agreements that are not of a technical, administrative or executive nature will only bind the country after being approved by Parliament. Parliament also approves the country's ratification of or accession to multilateral agreements. All international agreements must be tabled in Parliament for information purposes.

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation is entrusted with the formulation, promotion, execution and daily conduct of South Africa's foreign policy.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation's (DIRCO) overall mandate is to work for the realisation of South Africa's foreign policy objectives. This is done by:

- coordinating and aligning South Africa's international relations abroad;
- monitoring developments in the international environment;
- communicating government's policy positions;
- developing and advising government on policy options, creating mechanisms and avenues for achieving objectives;
- protecting South Africa's sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- contributing to the creation of an enabling international environment for South African business;
- sourcing developmental assistance; and
- assisting South African citizens abroad.

The DIRCO's strategic objectives are to:

- protect and promote South African national interests and values through bilateral and multilateral interactions
- conduct and coordinate South Africa's international relations and promote its foreign policy objectives
- monitor international developments and advise government on foreign policy and related domestic matters
- contribute to the formulation of international law and enhance respect for its provisions
- promote multilateralism to secure a rules-based international system
- maintain a modern, effective department driven to pursue excellence
- provide a world-class and uniquely South African state protocol service.

The National Development Plan (NDP) is the overarching apex policy framework that guides the work of the fifth administration. In the area of international relations, the NDP states:

"... in order for South Africa to achieve its national goals of eradicating poverty, lowering inequality, creating jobs and making the transition to a resilient carbon economy, foreign relations must be driven by the country's domestic economic, political and social demands, as well as our regional, continental and global obligations."

In pursuance of this injunction, the DIRCO has translated the NDP goals into a strategic programme that seeks to:

- sustain political, economic and social relations;

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- strengthen political and economic integration and development of the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- consolidate the African Agenda;
- strengthen and consolidate South-South relations;
- leverage relations with the North in advancement of national and continental priorities and the agenda of the South; and
- advocate for the reform and strengthening of the global system of governance.

South Africa maintains diplomatic relations with countries and international organisations through 124 missions in 107 countries abroad, and through the accreditation of more than 160 countries and international organisations resident in South Africa.

South Africa's diplomatic and consular missions implement the country's foreign policy to enhance its international profile and serve as strategic mechanisms for the achievement of national interest.

In addition, training and policy analysis remain of strategic importance for the execution of the DIRCO's mandate.

Legislation

The DIRCO derives its mandate from the following legislation:

- The Foreign States Immunities Act, 1981 (Act 87 of 1981), regulates the extent of the immunity of foreign states from the jurisdiction of the South African courts and provides for matters connected therewith.
- The Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001 (Act 37 of 2001) provides for the immunities and privileges of diplomatic missions and consular posts and their members, heads of state, special envoys and certain representatives of the United Nations (UN) and its specialised agencies, and other international organisations and certain people.
- The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF) Act, 2001 (Act 51 of 2001), establishes an ARF to enhance cooperation between South Africa and other countries, in particular African countries, through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development.
- International agreements (multilateral and bilateral): International agreements concluded by South Africa in terms of sections 231(2) and 231(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Service Bill of 2016 has been tabled in Parliament and referred to the Portfolio Committee on International Relations.

The Bill is aimed at, among others, the establishment of a single foreign service for South Africa; for the administration and functioning of the Foreign Service; and for the establishment of mechanisms that enhance the execution of international relations. The Bill was expected to be passed into law in 2017/18.

Enhancing economic diplomacy

In anticipation of growth in the African and Asian regions, South Africa took a conscious decision to expand and strengthen its diplomatic missions in the two regions.

Regarding Asia and the Middle East, South Africa's trade and investment in these regions have grown considerably and continue to do so. In 1994, trade with Asia and the Middle East combined was approximately R45 billion and has increased to approximately R760 billion for Asia and R116 billion with the Middle East. South Africa can achieve a trillion rand trade with this region by 2019.

There is a direct correlation between the growth of South Africa's diplomatic missions and the phenomenal expansion of its trade and investment relations on both the African continent and in Asia and the Middle East. The same applies to the Americas and Europe. With additional economic diplomacy efforts and enhanced national coordination, South African trade with the world can reach R2 trillion by 2019.

As South Africa explores new markets, it continues to maintain close economic ties with the industrialised economies of the North, which provide, among others, preferential market access to some of South Africa's exports. Enhancing the economic and political dialogue is an important part of South Africa's economic diplomacy strategy as they remain a primary source of foreign direct investment (FDI) and official development assistance (ODA) flows into South Africa.

Budget, funding and trade

The department was allocated R6,8 billion. Expenditure in the first six months of 2016/17 was R3,2 billion or 46,1% of the adjusted appropriation.

In the first six months of 2016/17, the department concluded 10 structured bilateral mechanisms to promote national priorities against the target of 34 planned for the year. The department also achieved 11 high level visits of the targeted 58 for 2016/17.

The DIRCO continued to advance national priorities through high level visits and structured bilateral engagements.

In July 2016, the department provided inputs when AU heads of state and ministers of finance convened in Rwanda to discuss alternative financing mechanisms, and adopted the decision to implement a 0,2% levy on eligible imports to finance the union. The decision directs all AU member states to implement a 0,2% levy on eligible imports to finance the AU.

Foreign policy

South Africa's foreign policy outlook is based on its commitment to the values and ideals of Pan-Africanism, solidarity with people of the South and the need to cooperate with all peace-loving people across the globe in pursuit of shared prosperity and a just, equitable and rules-based international order.

Thus, the country's diplomacy of Ubuntu continues to place cooperation with partners as the thrust of its foreign policy endeavours above all forms of competition.

South Africa therefore strive to address its domestic imperatives as enunciated in the NDP and national interest while taking into cognisance the needs and aspirations of others.

Global Governance and Continental Agenda

Global Governance

South Africa participates in a rules-based multilateral system to achieve global political and socio-economic stability and security.

Multilateralism, and by implication the commitment to a rules-based, just, and equitable international order, remains a focal point of South Africa's foreign policy. Consequently, South Africa will continue to engage the multilateral system, particularly the UN, through its agencies, funds, programmes and processes, to advance South Africa's foreign policy priorities.

These engagements take into account that the multilateral system still does not fully reflect global political and economic realities and is in need of reform. A key priority for South Africa is to regain lost momentum that would accelerate the reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC), as well as to advance the reform of the broader global governance architecture with a view to improving its representivity and focus its responsiveness to the needs of, and challenges faced by, developing states.

The current unpredictable global environment poses a number of risks to the UN and the global governance system, particularly as it relates to, among others, the dynamics within the UNSC on issues of peace and security (including the situation in the Middle East), promotion and protection of human rights, funding for multilateral processes and honouring commitments to enable national implementation of multilateral decisions such as the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Ensuring sustainable development in the current global environment will require concerted engagement in the UN system and other multilateral structures such as the Group of 20 (G20), on economic growth and the improvement of social well-being and infrastructure through increased trade and investment as well as the fair and equitable movement of goods and services.

The appointment of Mr António Guterres as the new UN Secretary-General and his pronounced commitment to focus on conflict prevention and sustainable development, present an opportunity to strengthen the UN system for the benefit of the African Agenda. Cooperation between the UN and the African Union (AU), however, needs to be enhanced.

Furthermore, in the wake of numerous terror attacks across the world, countering international terrorism remains a priority on the agenda of the UN, particularly with regard to the abuse of cyberplatforms for propaganda, recruitment and planning of attacks, radicalising of the youth and inciting extremism leading to terrorist attacks.

Development, human rights, security and international law are promoted through international forums such as the UN and its agencies:

United Nations

The UN occupies the central and indispensable role within the global system of governance. South Africa looks to the UN to advance the global peace and security and development

Introducing the Ubuntu brand

Ubuntu magazine

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) introduced its quarterly *Ubuntu* magazine – South Africa's Public Diplomacy in Action, in August 2012 to:

- communicate with and educate stakeholders on South Africa's foreign policy positions, achievements, objectives and goals
- give in-depth analysis and information on key departmental issues ranging from current affairs, bilateral and multilateral milestones, upcoming key events, as well as international work done by other government departments, business and parastatals.

The high-quality glossy magazine spreads South Africa's foreign policy message quarterly around the world. Its footprint extends across the globe. The magazine is also available online on www.dirco.gov.za.

Annual Ubuntu Awards

The Ubuntu Awards, introduced in 2015, are aimed at recognising South African industry leaders and eminent persons for their distinguished service and contribution towards promoting South Africa's national interests and values across the world.

Awards are given in various categories to organisations/individuals who have through excellence, innovation, creativity, inventiveness, social responsibility or patriotism distinguished themselves as true ambassadors of South Africa.

Ubuntu Radio

Ubuntu Radio was launched in October 2013 as an online, 24-hour radio station aimed at enhancing communication on South Africa's foreign policy.

The first of its kind on the African continent, it is accessible on the Internet at www.ubuntu-radio.com and on DSTv Audio Bouquet Channel 888. The objective of Ubuntu Radio is to create a platform to exchange views and opinions by various stakeholders.

agenda and address underdevelopment, social integration, full employment and decent work for all and the eradication of poverty globally.

Through its participation in multilateral forums, South Africa also upholds the belief that the resolution of international conflicts should be peaceful and in accordance with the centrality of the UN Charter and the principles of international law.

South Africa was one of the 51 founding member of the UN in 1945. Since then, UN membership has grown to 193 states. After being suspended in 1974, owing to international opposition to the policy of apartheid, South Africa was readmitted to the UN in 1994 following its transition to democracy.

UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the UN Security Council (UNSC)

President Jacob Zuma led the South African delegation to the 72nd Session of the UNGA 72, which took place in New York in the United States of America (USA) from 19 to 25 September 2017 under the theme: "Focusing on people – striving for peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet".

President Zuma hosted an event on 20 September at the UN in honour of the centenary anniversary of former African

National Congress president, Oliver Reginald Tambo. He also addressed the general assembly and signed an anti-nuclear weapons treaty, which allows nuclear to be used for purposes such as energy and medicine only.

President Zuma led the South African delegation to the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 71), which took place in New York in the United States of America (USA) from 19 to 25 September 2016 under the theme: "The Sustainable Development Goals: A Universal Push to Transform Our World".

The General Debate presented an opportunity for member states to take stock of the effectiveness of the UN and deliberations focused on UN reform, including on the revitalisation of the UNGA; improvement of the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); and most importantly, the substantive reform of the UNSC to expand its membership in both the permanent and non-permanent categories.

This was also the final General Debate of the former Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, whose term ended on 31 December 2016.

South Africa used the opportunity to communicate progress made towards achieving Africa's development, including industrialisation and regional integration drives, with the aim of achieving a better life for South Africans and all on the continent.

South Africa also continued to raise concerns regarding the strength of the institutions of global governance, including the UN, specifically the UNSC, and to advocate for the urgent reform of these institutions with the aim of correcting the historical injustice against Africa, reflected in their outdated structures.

Meanwhile, in October 2016, the General Assembly appointed by acclamation the former Prime Minister of Portugal, António Guterres, as the new UN Secretary-General.

Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

A primary goal of South Africa's policy on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control includes reinforcing and promoting the country as a responsible producer, possessor and trader of defence-related products and advanced technologies.

In this regard, the department continues to promote the benefits that disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control hold for international peace and security, particularly to countries in Africa.

Regarding conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, South Africa actively participates in UN efforts related to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention, the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Arms Trade Treaty.

UN Economic and Social Council

ECOSOC is a premier organ of the UN responsible for the economic and social development matters of the world.

South Africa is a council member for the 2016 to 2018 term. Having served at a strategic juncture during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from 2013 – 2015, South Africa was re-elected on 21 October 2015 to continue its role in the discourse on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

ECOSOC is also mandated to address the follow-up and review of financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all of which are crucial to the realisation of the SDGs.

South Africa further actively participates in the functional commissions of ECOSOC such as the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women as well as the Commission on Population and Development (of which it is a member for the term 2015 – 2018).

UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)

South Africa is an active participant in key UNESCO governance structures such as the General Conference and the World Heritage Committee, and is currently serving on the organisation's Executive Board (for the term 2015 to 2019). South Africa is also serving on the following UNESCO bodies until 2017:

- the International Bureau of Education
- the Intergovernmental Council on the Management of Social Transformation (MOST)
- the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS)
- the International Coordinating Council of the Programme on Man and Biosphere (MAB).

Since its return to UNESCO in 1994, South Africa has ratified a number of UNESCO conventions, including the:

- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (July 1997)
- Convention Against Discrimination in Education (March 2000)
- International Convention Against Doping in Sport (November 2006)
- Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (December 2006).

South Africa also acceded to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (December 2003) and the Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (May 2015).

Since South Africa ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1997, it has inscribed eight world heritage sites under the convention, namely the:

- Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa (1999)
- Robben Island Museum (1999)
- iSimangaliso Wetland Park (1999)
- Maloti-Drakensberg Park (2000)
- Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape (2003)
- Cape Floral Region Protected Areas (2004)
- Vredefort Dome (2005)
- Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape (2007).

National interaction with UNESCO's various areas of work is coordinated through the South African National Commission for UNESCO, whose secretariat is hosted by the Department of Basic Education.

UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

South Africa played a leadership role in several intergovernmental processes at the UN pertaining to human

rights and social development issues. It is also the current chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs), whose objectives are to elaborate a legally binding regulatory framework and ensure that PMSCs are held accountable for their activities.

South Africa is also the current chair of the Ad-hoc Committee on the Elaboration of Complementary Standards to the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination aimed at combating contemporary forms of racism.

South Africa, having served on the UNHRC from January 2014 until December 2016, was re-elected to serve a further term for the period 2017 to 2019. The re-election reaffirmed its commitment to the achievement of human rights for all its citizens, the citizens of Africa and the citizens of the world.

UN-South Africa Strategic Cooperation Framework (UNSCF)

The UNSCF 2013 – 17 is the overall framework for the work of the UN system in South Africa. The DIRCO and the UN Country Team developed the UNSCF in 2012 through a participatory and consultative process.

The UNSCF includes the presentation of the situation in South Africa overall, as reflected in the New Growth Path, the NDP: Vision for 2030, as well as the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Country Report. These informed the identification of the four pillars of UN cooperation:

- inclusive growth and decent work
- sustainable development
- human capabilities
- governance and participation.

The UNSCF also considers the role of South Africa on the continent and globally. The UNSCF has been extended to 31 March 2019 to align it with South Africa's MTSF and fiscal cycle.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

South Africa is one of the 194 member states that constitute the WHO. The country takes part in the annual World Health Assembly (WHA), which is the WHO's supreme decision-making body, as well as in its Executive Board meetings.

South Africa also participates in the WHO's Regional Committee for Africa, which convenes annually after the WHA to reflect on the decisions taken at the WHA (particularly those relevant to the continent) and plan for the following year's WHA.

Through its participation in these structures, South Africa contributes to setting international norms and standards on key issues regarding global and public health such as:

- the implementation of the International Health Regulations
- addressing antimicrobial resistance
- the fight against HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria
- building resilient healthcare systems in developing states
- ensuring access to medicines
- achieving Universal Health Coverage (National Health Insurance in South Africa)
- contributing to economic growth through health employment.

Group of 20

South Africa is a member country of the G20, which comprises 19 countries plus the European Union (EU) – the 20th member. G20 members have been meeting regularly since 1999 to discuss global economic policy coordination.

The G20 was conceptualised to stabilise and strengthen the global economy by bringing together the major advanced and emerging market economies. These economies together represent around 85% of global gross domestic product (GDP), 80% of global trade and two-thirds of the world's population.

The G20 membership includes systemically important advanced and emerging-market economies. These economies meet to discuss the global economy, the international financial architecture, financial regulatory reform and global economic governance. The G20's prominent membership provides a strong platform for influencing the global economic policy. It is widely credited with coordinating the response to the 2008 global financial crisis and, therefore, the subsequent global economic recovery.

South Africa's participation in the G20 is guided by its national interests, the primacy of the African Agenda, advancing South-South cooperation, and advancing the agenda of the South, through engagement with the North.

South Africa therefore seeks to use its participation in the G20 to promote and strengthen the interests of Africa and of the South, on the understanding that, if managed carefully, the G20 does present meaningful opportunities for advancing much-needed global governance reforms and orienting the international development agenda.

South Africa supports calls for the G20 to show international leadership in helping to achieve progress in multilateral institutions, on the understanding that the G20 is not a substitute for the UN system, but should support and add value to what is being done within the UN context. South Africa is also a co-chair of the G20's Development Working Group.

Germany assumed the Presidency of the G20 in December 2016 and unveiled its overarching theme for its Presidency of "Shaping an Interconnected World" with the subthemes of "Building Resilience", "Improving Sustainability" and "Assuming Responsibility".

President Zuma attended the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg, Germany on 7 and 8 July 2017. He was accompanied by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane, Finance Minister Malusi Gigaba and the then Energy Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane.

South Africa also works together closely with the following international bodies and organisations:

- World Trade Organisation (WTO)
- World Economic Forum (WEF)
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

South Africa continues to engage with key global economic institutions such as the WTO, the OECD, the ILO and WIPO to ensure that the developmental agenda remains part of the focus

for economic development and key in discussion at forums such as the WEF.

South Africa pursues a system that is sensitive to the needs of the poorest, while leaving policy space at national level to address the development challenges of the South and Africa.

Continental Agenda African Union

The AU emerged from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963 with a charter signed by 32 countries in Addis Ababa. The OAU, which was officially disbanded in July 2002, was replaced by the AU with 54 members who pledged to work for closer political integration and unity among African countries.

Africa will never again tolerate change of governments through undemocratic and unconstitutional means. Africa is on a growth trajectory, which must be maintained to ensure that the people of Africa are truly emancipated from the wrath of underdevelopment, poverty and hunger.

The strengthened AU Commission (AUC) is central in driving the African Agenda. South Africa contributed towards the goal of having a strong AUC and its structure. Resources were also contributed to hosting the Pan-African Parliament.

The continent is engaged in operationalising the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTY-IP) of Agenda 2063, under the theme "The Africa We Want". This vision spells out the aspirations of African people across all sectors and the pledges of leaders, which are translated into a "Call to Action" comprising a number of 10-year implementation plans that will contain flagship projects.

The heads of state and governments of the AU adopted Agenda 2063 at the 24th Ordinary Assembly External Link, held in Addis Ababa in January 2015.

Each AU member state, including South Africa, was expected to contribute to this vision through inclusive national consultations by October 2015. With the adoption of the vision, member states will have to align their national policies with it through a process of domestication, which, in South Africa's case, entails harmonising Agenda 2063 with the NDP.

In pursuit of the continental economic integration agenda, the SADC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (T-FTA) was launched in June 2015 in Egypt.

This FTA, which merges 26 countries into a free trade zone with 625 million people and a total GDP of US\$1,6 trillion, will contribute immensely towards increasing intra-African trade.

The T-FTA represents an important milestone towards the conclusion of negotiations for the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area.

In January 2017, President Zuma attended the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, held in Addis Ababa under the theme: "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in the Youth".

The Chadian Foreign Minister, Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat, was elected as the new AUC Chairperson, replacing South

Africa's Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, whose term came to an end in June 2016, but was extended by the AU leaders until the January 2017 Summit to enable them to elect her successor.

South Africa will work closely with the new leadership of the AUC to build on the achievements recorded under the previous chair, Dr Dlamini Zuma, which included the elevation of human rights issues particularly women's rights.

Significant policies have been put in place to work towards the sovereignty of the organisation as well as strengthening its institutions.

Peace and Security Council (AUPSC)

South Africa continues to promote peace and stability on the African continent through preventative diplomacy, peace-making, peace-building and peacekeeping efforts. In this context, the country's approach to peacekeeping resonates strongly with the AU's aspirational goal adopted by the AU Assembly African Heads of State and Government on 25 May 2013 in Addis Ababa of "Silencing the Guns by the year 2020".

The AU's flagship project on addressing peace and security issues in the context of the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), is built around structures, objectives, principles and values, as well as decision-making processes relating to the prevention, management and resolution of crises and conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) on the continent.

Furthermore, the AUPSC remains the main pillar of the APSA and is supported by various structures, including the AUC, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System, the African Standby Force and the Peace Fund.



The relationship between the AU and the regional economic communities/regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution (RECs/RMs) remains crucial for the success of the APSA.

South Africa will continue to use its membership of the AUPSC for the period 2016 to 2017 to strengthen the APSA and its structures, in particular the effective operationalisation of the pillars dealing with conflict prevention; crises and conflict management, post-conflict reconstruction and development; strategic security issues; and the coordination of partnerships.

AU regional economic communities (RECs)

The AU is the principal institution responsible for promoting sustainable development at economic, social and cultural level, as well as integrating African economies.

RECs are recognised as the building blocks of the AU, necessitating the need for their close involvement in formulating and implementing all AU programmes.

To this end, the AU must coordinate and take decisions on policies in areas of common interest to member states, as well as coordinate and harmonise policies between existing and future RECs, for the gradual attainment of the AU's objectives.

Seven specialised technical committees are responsible for the actual implementation of the continental socio-economic integration process, together with the Permanent Representatives Committee.

South Africa's development is intertwined with that of the southern Africa region and the African continent at large. The country's efforts at ramping up industrialisation should be viewed within the overall framework of the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap as approved by the SADC Extra-Ordinary Summit in April 2015. South Africa seeks to industrialise the regional and continental economies in order to develop its own manufacturing capacity.

In addition, the country seeks to radically alter the colonial/post-colonial pattern where Africa was a supplier of raw materials. Africa should produce value-added goods for exports into the global economy.

It is only in this way that Africa can address the paradox of a rich-resource continent inhabited by a poverty-stricken population, and make a decisive break with the past.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad)

Nepad, an AU strategic framework for pan-African socio-economic development, is both a vision and a policy framework for Africa in the 21st century. Nepad provides unique opportunities for African countries to take full control of their development agenda, to work more closely together, and to cooperate more effectively with international partners.

Nepad manages a number of programmes and projects in six theme areas namely:

- agriculture and food security
- climate change and national resource management
- regional integration and infrastructure
- human development
- economic and corporate governance

- cross-cutting issues, including gender, capacity development and information and communications technology (ICT).

South Africa, as one of the initiating countries, played a key role in the establishment of Nepad and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), and hosts the Nepad Agency and APRM Secretariat in Midrand, Gauteng.

The APRM process is aimed at addressing corruption, poor governance and inefficient delivery of public goods and services to the citizens of African countries. It encourages the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated regional and continental economic integration through the sharing of experiences and best practices, and is important to the sustainability of Nepad.

Nepad remains the main programme of reference for intra-African socio-economic and developmental relations and Africa's partnerships with international partners such as the:

- EU-AU Strategic Partnership
- Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)
- Group of Seven Most Industrialised Nations plus Russia (G8)
- Tokyo International Conference on African Development
- New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP)
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Through Nepad, Africa has expanded its development priorities. Development and funding in agriculture, ICT, science and technology, infrastructure and education have improved the quality of life for millions of Africans.

Southern African Development Community

The SADC developed from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was established in 1980. It adopted its current name during a summit held in Windhoek, Namibia, in August 1992.

Before 1992, the aim of the SADCC was to forge close economic cooperation with southern African countries, excluding South Africa, to bolster their economies and reduce their dependence on the South African economy.

From 1992, when the organisation became SADC, its mandate changed to the following:

- establishing an open economy based on equality, mutual benefit and balanced development
- breaking down tariff barriers
- promoting trade exchanges and mutual investment
- realising the free movement of goods, personnel and labour services
- achieving the unification of tariffs and currencies
- establishing a free trade zone.

The initial member states were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. South Africa became a member after 1994.

South Africa has consistently sought to nurture regional integration at three levels: the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu), SADC and the T-FTA between the SADC, COMESA and EAC. In particular, South Africa has championed a "developmental regionalism" approach that combines market

integration, cross-border infrastructure development as well as policy coordination to diversify production and boost intra-African trade. South Africa contributed to the development of Sacu's Five-Point Plan, which aims to transform the customs union from a tariffs and a revenue-sharing agreement to an integrated institution capable of promoting true regional economic development.

Work in SADC continues to focus on consolidating the SADC FTA launched in 2008, before considering deeper forms of integration in the region. The ongoing negotiations to establish the T-FTA will combine the three major RECs of 600 million people and a combined GDP of USD\$1 trillion, as building blocks towards continental integration.

Once established, the T-FTA will contribute to economies of scale, the building of new distribution channels, value addition and manufacturing in Africa.

One of the key areas to stimulate regional economic development has been the finalisation of the SADC Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan, which will focus on the following six priority sectors: energy, transport, ICT/communications, water, tourism and meteorology.

In 2014, South Africa was elected to chair the SADC. South Africa led the SADC election observer missions to Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia.

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, led a South African government delegation at the meeting of the SADC Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee, which took place in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania, from 20 to 24 February 2017.

Among other things, the meeting considered the situations in the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the consolidation of democracy in the region and the request from the Union of Comoros and the Republic of Burundi to join SADC.

Development partners

South Africa has key partnerships such as FOCAC, Africa's comprehensive partnership with India, and the Korea-Africa Forum. South Africa's Government spares no effort in strengthening the progressive forums of the South such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), G77+China, Africa-South America Summit and the NAASP. These forums have demonstrated that they are trusted allies and partners in South Africa's aim for a better Africa in a better world.

Relations with countries of the South remain strong and South Africa's Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) membership has yielded benefits for the country and is expected to do so for the rest of the continent. Efforts continue within BRICS on common objectives, including addressing challenges in respective regions and the world at large. BRICS also continues to provide alternative market access as well as strategic political support in pursuit of a just and equitable world.

In the same vein, South Africa continues to support the consolidation of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. IBSA serves as an intimate platform from which to

coordinate matters of common interest and concern, and to promote development through the IBSA Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger.

The Indian Ocean region is of vital importance and of growing geostrategic significance. South Africa views the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as the pre-eminent regional organisation linking Africa, the Middle East and Asia via the Indian Ocean. The association is growing in stature and prominence and South Africa will chair IORA in its 20th year of existence from October 2017 to 2019.

Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa trade alliance (BRICS)

The BRICS intergovernmental forum/grouping has incrementally evolved since the first meetings were held in 2006 to become an amplified voice for projecting the shared interests of emerging markets and developing countries, notably in respect of calls for reforms of global governance institutions.

BRICS solidarity and cooperation are based on common interests and key priorities to further strengthen its strategic partnership in the spirit of openness, solidarity, equality, mutual understanding, inclusiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Salient outcomes of recent summits held, include, among others, the following milestones:

- The establishment of the BRICS Business Council and BRICS Think-Tanks Council and the Outreach Dialogue with other Emerging Markets and Developing Countries (2013).
- The establishment of the first financial institutions, namely the New Development Bank (NDB) and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (2014). These institutions signal a historic and seminal moment since the creation of the Bretton Woods international financial architecture.
- The adoption of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership (2015).
- The establishment of the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform (2016).

These milestones clearly illustrate that BRICS has significantly strengthened its agenda of institution-building and has achieved positive progress in the operationalisation of the NDB based in Shanghai, China, as well as its first regional office, namely the Africa Regional Centre (ARC), based in Johannesburg, South Africa. The ARC will play a pivotal role in addressing the infrastructure backlog in South Africa and Africa through the provision of funds for infrastructure and sustainable development projects.

The implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership is being vigorously pursued and encourages measures that support greater participation, value addition and upward mobility in the global value chains of BRICS firms, including through the preservation of policy space to promote industrial development. South Africa remains committed to the enhancement of intra-BRICS trade, investment and financial cooperation.

People-to-people engagements have also flourished and various forums for business people, academics, civil society,

youth as well as for parliamentarians have been established. Initiatives such as the BRICS Film Festival, Cultural Festival and Sports Games are exciting highlights of the annual calendar of events.

The Seventh BRICS Summit was hosted by President Vladimir Putin from 8 to 9 July 2015 in Ufa, the Russian Federation, and the Eighth BRICS Summit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from 15 to 16 October 2016 in Goa, India. China will host the Ninth BRICS Summit under the theme "BRICS: Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future" in Xiamen. South Africa will host the 10th BRICS Summit in 2018 that will seek to further build on the success of the first decade of BRICS summits. India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) trade alliance.

The IBSA Dialogue Forum brings together three large pluralistic, multicultural and multiracial societies from three continents as a purely South-South grouping of like-minded countries committed to inclusive sustainable development, in pursuit of the well-being of their peoples and those of the developing world.

The principles, norms and values underpinning the IBSA Dialogue Forum are participatory democracy, respect for human rights, the Rule of Law and the strengthening of multilateralism.

The realisation of the trilateral alliance between IBSA stems from three commonalities between the three countries, namely: all three countries are vibrant democracies, they share common views on various global issues and are substantial emerging economies within their subregions.

The engagement process of the IBSA countries takes place on a number of levels, namely: Summit (heads of state and government), the IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Committee – ITMC (ministers), Senior Officials (sherpas), and Technical (through various working groups).

President Zuma and Indian Prime Minister Modi reaffirmed "their strong commitment to further consolidate the IBSA process" in July 2016, and India committed to hosting the sixth IBSA Summit in 2017.

Intra-IBSA trade is a clear indication of the potential and success of IBSA as the initial trade target of US\$25 billion by 2015 was almost reached, and amounted to US\$23,9 billion in 2015. This was reached in spite of the difficult global economic circumstances the developing world faced following the global financial and economic slowdown and its impact on trade and investment levels.

IBSA has also continued to actively promote the sustainable development of the developing world through the unique structure of the IBSA Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger (IBSA Fund). The fund continues to serve as a uniquely South-South development fund for countries of the South and seeks to improve the sustainable development and quality of life for the citizens of the global South.

In 2016/17, the IBSA Fund approved some US\$3 million for projects in Cambodia, the Comoros and Fiji. The fund continues to evaluate new proposals that meet the guidelines of ensuring sustainability, replicability and scalability, among others.

IBSA continues to play its unique role as a body bringing together three democracies of the South from three continents

as well as representing the interests of the continents in which they reside, in issues such as the reform of the UNSC, as well as the global financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Indian Ocean Rim Association

IORA is a charter-based regional multilateral organisation that is collegial in nature and driven by consensus. The association is essentially an economic cooperative community of 21 littoral and island states around the Indian Ocean and seven dialogue partners.

IORA seeks to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial economic cooperation through a consensus-based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach.

South Africa views the IORA as the pre-eminent regional organisation linking Africa, the Middle East and Asia via the Indian Ocean. The association is growing in stature and prominence, with South Africa serving as the association's Vice Chair in 2016, and will assume the Chair position from October 2017 to October 2019.

The Second Ministerial Economic and Business Conference of IORA was held at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), from 11 to 13 April 2016. It was hosted by the Ministry of Economy of the UAE with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the IORA Secretariat.

Under the theme of "SMEs and Innovation: Investing in a Sustainable Future", the conference brought together trade and industry ministers of IORA with opportunities for interaction with leading international organisation and private-sector representatives. It facilitated business networking and created a forum to foster a sustainable and inclusive future by creating enabling and conducive environments for business in the Indian Ocean Rim.

The South African delegation was led by the former Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Mzwandile Masina; the Director-General of the Department of Small Business Development, Dr Edith Vries; along with senior government officials. Deputy Minister Masina chaired the High-Level Panel on Innovation and the Ministerial Retreat, and delivered the Country Statement during the Ministerial Plenary Session.

The Deputy Minister also collected the prizes on behalf of Investment SA for third place for best Investment Agency in IORA, and for second place at the Annual Investment Meeting for best project facilitated by an investment agency.

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Nomaindiya Mfeketo, led the South African delegation to the 16th Council of Ministers (COM) Meeting of IORA in Bali, Indonesia, on 27 October 2016. The meeting included foreign ministers from IORA member states, including representatives from IORA dialogue partners. The purpose of the 16th Meeting of the COM was to deliberate on important matters and developments within IORA.

The Ministers welcomed the signing of the IORA Charter by Somalia and the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Search and Rescue by Sri Lanka and Tanzania.

The Ministers also noted the significant progress made towards the finalisation of the IORA Concord and its Action Plan, and looked forward to the adoption and signing of the IORA Concord at the IORA Commemorative Leaders' Summit and its related meetings to be held in Jakarta, Indonesia on 7 March 2017. It was also agreed to hold the IORA Business Forum in Jakarta during the Commemorative Leaders' Summit in 2017 aiming at enhancing partnership with the private sector to ensure sustainable growth and development of the region.

In March 2017, President Zuma attended the Summit of the IORA Business Forum and Leaders' Summit in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The IORA Summit was convened under the theme, "Strengthening Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Indian Ocean", to commemorate 20 years of the association's existence.

The leaders of IORA have adopted the Blue or Ocean Economy as a top priority for generating employment and ensuring sustainability in business and economic models. South Africa has actively promoted economic development of the oceans since 2014.

Operation Phakisa Ocean Economy is a fast-results delivery programme, which brings together business, labour, academia and government to intensively work together to develop a national programme to further develop and expand the country's ocean economy.

It is estimated that the Blue Economy in South Africa could contribute around US\$13 billion to the country's GDP and create a million jobs by 2033.

Commonwealth

The modern Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 52 independent member countries. Membership is diverse and includes developed and developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Caribbean, Europe and the South Pacific.

Since rejoining the Commonwealth in 1994, South Africa has interacted closely with the work of the Commonwealth, contributing politically, financially and in terms of capacity and expertise to the work of the organisation.

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is chairing the NAM until 2019. The NAM consists of 120 member states. It is the largest political grouping of countries outside the UN, making it an important lobby group of developing countries in global affairs.

Group of 77 (G77) and China

The G77 was established on 15 June 1964 by 77 developing countries, signatories of the "Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Developing Countries" issued at the end of the first session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development, held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Although the members of the G77 have increased to 134 countries, including China as the associate member, the original name was retained due to its historic significance.

The G77 and China is the largest intergovernmental organisation of developing countries in the UN system, provides the means for countries of the South to promote their collective economic interests, enhances its joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the UN system and promotes South-South cooperation.

As a member of the G77 and China, South Africa participates in the work of the group to ensure its strength, unity and cohesion in pursuance of the vision of a fair and equitable multilateral system.

West Africa Senegal

Senegal and South Africa are bound by their historic ties of friendship that were established during the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. Full diplomatic relations were established on 6 May 1994.

Senegal is a bastion of stability in Francophone West Africa. It is a strong constitutional democracy and one of the only African countries that have never experienced a coup d'état or any type of violent transition since its independence from France in 1960.

In May 2017, the DIRCO hosted the 30th anniversary celebration of the Dakar Conference. The purpose of the event was to commemorate the historic conference held in Dakar in 1987 to discuss strategies for bringing change in South Africa.

Mali

South Africa and Mali established bilateral relations in May 1994. The bilateral relations between the two countries are organised through the Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) signed in December 2000.

South Africa contributed to the preservation of the Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Learning and Islamic Research in Timbuktu.

Peace, security and stability remain a challenge in Northern and Central Mali. South Africa supports the current peace process in Mali and encourages all the parties involved to remain committed to the implementation of the Peace Agreement in an effort to ensuring lasting peace.

The Gambia

The South African Government congratulated President Adama Barrow following his election as the new President of The Gambia after the Presidential Elections held on 1 December 2016.

South Africa looks forward to working closely with The Gambia to strengthen bilateral relations.

Guinea-Bissau

South Africa and Guinea Bissau established formal diplomatic relations on 11 October 1994. Following a Working Visit by the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau to South Africa in August 2007, South Africa opened an embassy in Guinea-Bissau in March 2008.

South Africa is promoting trilateral cooperation in Guinea-Bissau in collaboration with its partners, Brazil and India,

with key IBSA projects currently being implemented in the agricultural field with a view to increase food security, as well as in renewable energy.

Cabo Verde

South Africa and Cabo Verde exchanged diplomatic notes to establish diplomatic relations in 1994 followed by the signing of the Agreement on the Establishment of a Mechanism for Bilateral Consultation during an AU Summit in June 2015. It is expected that this agreement will strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

Guinea-Conakry

South Africa, in response to its African Agenda objectives, through a Nepad project on agriculture and food security, signed a tripartite project with the Republic of Guinea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to improve rice and vegetable production in the Republic of Guinea in 2008. The project will be officially handed over to the Guinean authorities in 2017 after its successful execution.

A Trilateral Agreement for the implementation of a South-South cooperation project with the Republic of Guinea and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to improve food security in Guinea by increasing the production, quality and value of rice and vegetable products bore positive results for the people of Guinea.

The objective of the project was to address food insecurity in Guinea, reduce the country's dependence on imports and increase the income of small producers through the improvement of rice and vegetable production.

South Africa, through the African Renaissance Fund (ARF), allocated an amount of R45 million to the project and the Vietnamese provided technical expertise and transfer of skills to the Guinean nationals to enable the latter to continue with the project independently afterwards.

Having reached its sustainable stage, the project was handed over to the Guinean authorities during March 2017, and has left a rich legacy with 4 433 producers across six regions of Guinea benefiting from technical training in rice and vegetable cultivation.

The overall project has had an impact on the political, economic and social relations between South Africa and Guinea and further reinforces SSC and the consolidation of the African Agenda.

Liberia

The formal diplomatic relations between South Africa and Liberia were established in 1997. The Liberian Government opened its Embassy in Pretoria in October 1997 while South Africa opened a resident diplomatic mission in Monrovia in October 2010.

The two countries continue to work together through multilateral institutions such as the UN and the AU on the promotion of peace, security and post-conflict resolution on the African continent.

Recently, the two countries signed the General Cooperation Agreement and the Economic and Technical Agreement, which

will present trade and economic opportunities that will be mutually beneficial to the peoples of both nations.

Sierra Leone

The diplomatic relations between South Africa and Sierra Leone were established in 1998 through the exchange of diplomatic notes. To promote and strengthen the Continental Agenda, South Africa signed a Technical Cooperation Agreement with Sierra Leone and Vietnam for the funding of the Medical Cuban Medical Brigade in 2010.

A draft framework for bilateral cooperation is being negotiated which will further strengthen relations between the two countries. The agreement will present the two countries an opportunity to cooperate in different sectors.

Niger

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane undertook a Working Visit to the Republic of Niger at the end of August 2015.

She met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, African Integration and Nigerians Living Abroad of the Republic of Niger, Ms Aïchatou Boulama Kane. The two ministers evaluated progress made in bilateral cooperation between the two countries and discussed various multilateral and regional issues of mutual interest.

The Minister of Mining of Niger attended the Mining Indaba, which is held annually by South Africa in Cape Town. Niger has extremely large uranium deposits.

Côte d'Ivoire

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire were established in May 1992. The relations are cordial with ample room for improvement in the foreseeable future through the inauguration of the JCC.

A MoU on Technical and Economic Cooperation between South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire and a number of bilateral agreements in the areas of agriculture, health, education and culture are being negotiated.

There are a number of South African companies doing business in Côte d'Ivoire, including MTN, South African Airways, Standard Bank and Randgold.

Nigeria

Nigeria is considered one of South Africa's strategic partners in pursuing the vision of African renewal. As two of the strongest economies in Africa, cooperation between the two countries is pivotal to the growth of the continent.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane visited Nigeria in June 2017, where she took part in the 16th Africa-Nordic Dialogue of Foreign Ministers, which took place in the capital, Abuja. The Dialogue took place under the theme: "Ensuring sustainable development through trade and investment".

South Africa made a presentation in the meeting under the sub-theme: "Promoting trade and investment as tools for sustainable development", co-presented with Finland. The first Africa-Nordic Meeting took place in Sweden in December 2000, and in total 15 meetings have taken place from 2000 to 2016.

In March 2016, President Zuma undertook a two-day State Visit to Nigeria. The aim of the visit was to strengthen the existing bilateral political, economic and social ties between the two countries.

Subsequent to the successful State Visit by President Zuma to Nigeria in March 2016, the Binational Commission (BNC) between South Africa and Nigeria was elevated to be presided over at a head of state level. To this effect, the BNC has since become a strategic fulcrum for cordial bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries.

Consequently, President Zuma's visit also contributed towards the amicable resolution of challenges facing some of the South African companies operating in Nigeria, including MTN.

South Africa has more than 120 companies doing business in Nigeria, with an increasing number of companies showing interest in various sectors such as agriculture and infrastructure development.

Ghana

South Africa and Ghana established formal diplomatic relations on 25 May 1994.

In May 2016, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane led a delegation of senior officials to the Fourth Session of the Joint Permanent Commission for Cooperation (JPCC) to Accra, Ghana.

The JPCC was aimed at strengthening bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries in the fields of trade; transport; tourism; agriculture; customs/revenue services; mining; energy; environment; science and technology; communications; arts and culture; health; youth and sport; education; public works; immigration; justice; and defence.

The Ministers also discussed regional, continental and multilateral issues of mutual interest. Ghana is a strategic partner for South Africa and the country's second-largest trading partner in the West African region.

It presents a key growth market for South African goods and services, as well as an investment destination for South African companies.

Benin

South Africa and Benin have a cordial relationship and the Inaugural Session of the JCC is in the pipeline. A Joint Trade and Investment Cooperation was expected to be held in Benin in 2017. There were possible areas of cooperation in infrastructure and the public health sector.

Burkina Faso

South Africa and Burkina Faso enjoy cordial diplomatic relations, which were established in May 1995, and have had embassies in Pretoria and Ouagadougou since February and June 2007, respectively.

A Bilateral Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Arts and Culture has been concluded, while discussions on the eventual conclusion of similar agreements in the fields of economic and technical cooperation, bilateral trade, higher education, research and innovation, health, transport, mines and energy, defence and agriculture have taken place.

South Africa and Burkina Faso are working on a draft MoU on economic and technical cooperation, and a draft agreement between the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Burkina Faso and Business Unity South Africa.

One dynamic area of people-to-people exchange so far has been South Africa's participation in two major events hosted by Burkina Faso every two years, namely the Pan-African Film and Television Festival and the International Arts and Craft Trade Show in Ouagadougou.

Togo

Relations between South Africa and Togo were established in 1997. South Africa does not have an embassy in Togo, however the South African Ambassador in Benin is also accredited to Togo.

In South Africa, Togo is represented by a chargé d'affaires. An Agreement on a Framework for Cooperation between Togo and South Africa has been initiated. In December 2015, President Faure Gnassingbe paid a visit to South Africa during which he also attended FOCAC.

East Africa Burundi

South Africa's relations with Burundi are sound and cordial. South Africa participated as the mediator in the AU-led Burundi Peace Process, which was first led by former President Nelson Mandela, followed by former President Thabo Mbeki and then by then Deputy President Zuma.

The process led to the Arusha Peace Accords in 2000 – 2005 that brought an end to the long civil war. South Africa has invested significantly in Burundi's peace and stability and it closely follows developments in Burundi, a small but key role player in the Great Lakes Region.

Peace and stability in Burundi are seen as crucial factors to the achievement of peace in the entire region. South Africa continues to stand by the people of Burundi in their search for sustainable peace, security and development.

South Africa and Burundi interact closely also in multilateral forums, for example the AU, where Burundi is one of the major troop-contributing countries in AMISOM (the AU-led and UNSC-supported peacekeeping mission in Somalia) and participates in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) processes, especially with regard to the Eastern DRC.

Djibouti

South Africa and Djibouti enjoy excellent relations. Current infrastructure development programmes, including the free development zones, provide fertile ground for active investment by South African companies.

Eritrea

Eritrea serves as one of the fastest-growing economies in the Horn of Africa with a GDP growth rate of 8,5%. The country is rich in mineral resources, including copper, gold, granite, marble, oil and gas reserves. The promotion of trade and investment between South Africa and Eritrea is important, especially in the fields of tourism and infrastructure development. The potential

trade and investment cooperation is, however, constrained by the prevailing economic sanctions against Eritrea.

Ethiopia

Bilateral economic relations with Ethiopia, which were revived in 1995 when South Africa opened an embassy in Addis Ababa, remains strong.

The two countries have a number of bilateral agreements in place that establish a regulatory framework to facilitate political, economic and social interaction such as an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation.

The umbrella agreement provides for the establishment of a Joint Ministerial Commission that will meet every two years.

Indian Ocean Islands

South Africa's political, economic and diplomatic relations with the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles remain strong. The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mr Luwellyn Landers, continues to be engaged in the strengthening of relations with Madagascar with which an MoU on Regular Diplomatic Consultations is envisaged.

The Union of Comoros has applied to become a member of SADC, which is under consideration.

Greater emphasis is being placed, in terms of South Africa's Operation Phakisa, on building partnerships with the islands in respect of the Ocean Economy to enhance trade and investment in areas such as, among others, marine manufacturing and transport; aquaculture; offshore oil and gas exploration; and marine protection and governance.

Further emphasis on South Africa's relations with the islands is being provided through the IORA of which South Africa will take over the chairpersonship in 2017.

Kenya

South Africa and Kenya occupy key roles in their respective regions on the continent. Relations between the two countries were upgraded to full diplomatic status on 12 April 1994.

President Zuma undertook a historic first State Visit to Kenya in October 2016, generating a number of positive outcomes and resulting in strengthened political and economic cooperation. Kenyan Deputy President William Ruto visited South Africa in January 2017 to discuss, among other things, Kenya's candidature for the chairship of the AU Commission, as well as the withdrawal of Kenyan defence personnel from peacekeeping in South Sudan.

In March 2017, the Kenyan Ministry of Transport announced funding to the amount of KES60 billion (US\$350 million) received from the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) for a 580-km bitumen road from Lamu to Isiolo.

This is a direct outcome of the signed Lamu Port, South Sudan, Ethiopia Transport Corridor (LAPSSET Corridor) Agreement during the historic State visit to Kenya, through which the DBSA forms part of the consortium of South African companies operating under said agreement.

One of the conditions of the DBSA's loan ensures higher South African content in the development of the Port of Lamu.

Rwanda

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1995 between South Africa and Rwanda, the two countries have enjoyed close contact at a high political level. Rwanda has been an important partner in the advancement and championing of the African Agenda by being among the first countries to volunteer for the APRM and by actively contributing troops to African peacekeeping missions. South Africa and Rwanda have signed over 20 agreements in various fields.

Somalia

In January 2013, South Africa pledged its support for Somalia's new government and the country on its road towards a prosperous and stable democracy.

On 8 February 2017, President Mohamed Adullahi Mohamed was elected as President of Somalia, which is expected to pave a new path towards political stability in the country and further strengthen relations between South Africa and that country.

Sudan

The relations between South Africa and Sudan remain cordial. South Africa is also playing a key role in the resolution of conflicts and the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in that country. Moreover, Sudan serves among key African countries with the potential for increased trade and investment.

South Sudan

South Africa has, since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, been actively supportive of AU PCRD projects in South Sudan.

South Africa continues to play a key role in supporting the peace process in South Sudan through the mediation efforts of President Zuma's Special Envoy, Deputy President Ramaphosa, as part of the ongoing efforts to support the peace-building processes underway in that country.

Uganda

South Africa and Uganda have enjoyed good political and economic relations since 1994. The relations were cemented when the South Africa-Uganda JCC was inaugurated in Pretoria during November 2012.

Both former presidents Mandela and Mbeki visited Uganda and the relations were strengthened when President Zuma and President Yoweri Museveni paid successful reciprocal state visits in March 2010 and January 2011, respectively.

Since then, there have been regular high-level engagements, emphasising the importance of enhanced cooperation to further strengthen the economic ties that will address unemployment in both countries, as well as encourage the expansion of collaboration to strengthen the development and promotion of small and medium enterprises.

South Africa and Uganda continue to cooperate closely and coordinate their positions on issues in a number of regional and multilateral forums, such as the AU and the UN, and share similar perspectives, particularly on the political and economic integration processes on the African continent.

North and Central Africa

Egypt

South Africa and Egypt have a Joint Bilateral Commission (JBC), convened at ministerial level, for enhancing and strengthening bilateral relations. The Ninth JBC is still to be convened in this regard, with Egypt expected to be the host. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and her Egyptian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, continue to engage at various levels to find suitable dates for the convening of the JBC.

Libya

South Africa is deeply concerned over the prevailing political and security situation in Libya, which has gravely affected peace and security in the region.

At the same time, South Africa has also noted, with satisfaction, the positive developments regarding the UN Political Agreement to establish a Government of National Accord in Libya.

In this regard, South Africa urges the Libyan people and its leaders to set aside their differences and unite in the interest of peace, stability and prosperity in Libya. Further, South Africa is ready to assist the Libyan people by sharing her experiences on democratic transition and reconciliation.

Algeria

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Algeria were established in May 1994. South Africa enjoys historic and cordial relations with Algeria and regards it as a strategic partner in the region and continent. Since the establishment of the Presidential Bi-national Commission (BNC) in 2000, bilateral political trade and economic links have been growing steadily.

Algeria's relations with countries of the Maghreb, the Mediterranean, the Arab Peninsular and the Sahel regions could serve as a platform to promote joint Algeria-South Africa partnerships/ventures in the mutual interest of all parties.

Western Sahara

Formal diplomatic relations were established at ambassador level in 2004. South Africa continues to render political support and humanitarian assistance to the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic. Under the ARF, South Africa coordinates several projects that aim to benefit the Saharawi population.

These include a contribution to a landmine clearance project in the east of the territory and construction of a sport development complex in the territory.

South Africa's international solidarity and support for the self-determination of Western Sahara is based on the following:

- the principles of multilateralism and international legality in seeking a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara
- the centrality of the AU and UN in the resolution of the conflict
- the Constitutive Act of the AU, in particular the principle of the sanctity of inherited colonial borders in Africa and the right of peoples of former colonial territories to self-determination and independence

- respect for international human rights law in the occupied territories, notably the right to freedom of association, assembly, movement and expression
- respect for international humanitarian law and support for the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Saharawi refugees in a way that is predictable, sustainable and timely
- an end to the illegal exploration and exploitation of the natural resources of Western Sahara in the illegally occupied territory and the discouragement of the involvement of foreign companies in such activities
- support for the integration and stability of the Maghreb Union as a building block of the AU.

In January 2017, President Zuma hosted President Brahim Ghali of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic on a Working Visit to South Africa.

The two presidents discussed bilateral cooperation and also exchanged views on regional and international developments. President Zuma applauded the courage of the people of Western Sahara in their fearless struggle for freedom and reassured them of South Africa's continued commitment to their right to self-determination.

Gabon

Bilateral relations between South Africa and the Republic of Gabon are on a relatively sound footing since diplomatic relations were established in 1992, which included a number of high-profile visits. Gabon provided support and solidarity to South Africa during the struggle for liberation and the two countries continue with their commitment to strengthen mutually beneficial relations.

The January 2014 Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), hosted by South Africa, provided an opportunity for the two countries to take stock of the state and scope of bilateral relations since the 2007 meeting. Gabon is to host the next SOM.

Bilateral trade between South Africa and Gabon has shown a steady increase over the years. In 2010, South African exports to Gabon was just over R300 million and increased to over R500 million in 2016. The trade balance is generally in favour of South Africa.

Mauritania

South Africa made a constructive contribution in Mauritania in support of the implementation of the democratic road map undertaken by the military transitional government following the coup d'état of August 2005.

These efforts contributed to the restoration of constitutional order and stability in Mauritania, leading to South Africa's support for the lifting of the AU suspension of the country on 10 April 2007.

In terms of economic relations, progress has been recorded between the two countries in the areas of fisheries and mining. In addition, the Economic Cooperation Agreement will facilitate the opening of trade and investment opportunities for the two countries.

Tunisia

The South African Embassy in Tunisia was officially opened in 1994. South Africa and Tunisia enjoy a very healthy and mutually beneficial political and economic relationship.

Chad

South Africa and Chad established diplomatic relations in 1994, but it was only in 2013 that both countries appointed resident ambassadors.

Chad is a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC), the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, the Grouping G5 of the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, member and host of the Multi-National Joint Task Force (in the fight against Boko Haram) and is the designated Chair of the CEMAC. On 25 January 2017, South Africa signed a Bilateral Air Services Agreement with Chad. South Africa and Chad are currently engaged in finalising an Economic Cooperation Agreement.

Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe

Following its independence in 1975, the Government of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe expanded its diplomatic relationships. Since the establishment of full diplomatic relations with South Africa in 1994, the relations between the two countries have grown significantly.

At the end of August 2013, the President of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, Dr Pinto da Costa, undertook a State Visit to South Africa. São Tomé and Príncipe, once a leading cocoa producer, is poised to profit from the potential commercial exploitation of large reserves of oil. The country is also a popular ecotourism destination.

Republic of the Congo

South Africa and the Republic of Congo established formal diplomatic relations in 1993. Bilateral cooperation between the two countries takes place within the framework of the Global Political Agreement, signed in 2003 and which establishes a JCC. The inaugural session of the JCC took place in Cape Town in October 2010 and the second session in July 2015 in Brazzaville.

There has been a noticeable deepening of bilateral relations with the two countries having signed a number of agreements. There has been regular high-level contact between the two countries, including visits by President Zuma to Congo and President Denis Sassou-Nguesso undertook a State Visit to South Africa in 2010.

In addition, President Sassou-Nguesso has, after the State Visit to South Africa in 2010, been to South Africa many times to attend AU and other international conferences.

Bilateral trade has been increasing organically since 1993 and total trade is currently just over R1 billion. The Joint Trade Committee (JTC) is playing an important role in facilitating the trade and investment relationship. The last JTC was held in South Africa from 23 to 25 November 2016.

Equatorial Guinea

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Equatorial Guinea were established on 5 May 1993.

Cameroon

Cameroon is the economic hub of the Central African Region and exports commodities to most countries of the zone. The seaport of Doualla in Cameroon is used to import goods to landlocked countries in the region such as Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR). Several South African companies are operating in Cameroon.

South Africa hosted the Second Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) with the Republic of Cameroon in September 2016. This auspicious occasion was used to reaffirm the strategic importance of the Republic of Cameroon for South Africa.

South Africa reassured Cameroon of its commitment to strengthen the relationship to benefit both countries and the African continent.

In turn, Cameroon underscored the strategic positions held by both countries in their respective regions in the pursuit of regional integration and the unity of the African continent. Among the key outcomes of the meeting was the invitation of South African companies to take advantage of the favourable business environment to invest in Cameroon and the announcement that the Joint Cooperation Agreement had been ratified by both countries and, is now operational.

Central African Republic

The CAR held presidential and parliamentary elections on 30 December 2015 and 14 February 2016. The elections had to be organised twice as Messrs Anicert Dologuele and Festus Archange Touadera emerged as frontrunners out of a total number of 27 presidential candidates.

During the second round, Mr Touadera emerged as an outright winner and was inaugurated as President of the CAR on 30 March 2016. The Minister of State Security, Mr David Mahlobo, represented President Zuma during inauguration ceremony of President Touadera. In October 2016, the CAR, together with the EU, organised the Brussels Donor Conference.

The aim of the conference was to further bring to the attention of the international community, the CAR's continued development plight and solicit assistance. Owing to the need to further intensify bilateral political and economic interactions between South Africa and the CAR, the Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources, Mr Godfrey Oliphant, visited Bangui in October 2016. South Africa has finalised internal processes for the establishment of a diplomatic presence in the CAR.

Southern Africa

Angola

South Africa and Angola continue to work together in maintaining peace, stability and regional integration and promoting the SADC Agenda.

Angola is one of South Africa's major trading partners in Africa with almost 90% of Angolan exports to South Africa being petroleum-related products.

South Africa and the UAE enjoy strong bond of friendship and strategic bilateral relations characterised by the exchange of several high level visits, a high level of trade and economic interaction, multiple daily flights between the UAE and three South African cities and a large South African expatriate community in the UAE.

Total trade between the two countries increased from R13 billion in 2011 to R27 billion in 2015. By 2015, a total of 14 foreign direct investment (FDI) projects from the UAE were recorded representing almost R3 billion. Between January 2003 and June 2015, a total of 27 FDI projects from South Africa to UAE were recorded, representing a total capital investment of R5,06 billion ranging from construction, financial, IT services, hospitality and retail.

South Africa and Angola are both signatories to the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement (PSCF), signed in February 2013. The PSCF seeks to address the recurring cycles of conflict and violence in the eastern DRC.

President Zuma participated in the Seventh Ordinary Summit of the ICGLR that took place on 26 October 2016 in Luanda, Angola.

Namibia

South Africa and Namibia enjoy strong and fraternal relations that are characterised by regular and increasing interaction at all levels. The economies of South Africa and Namibia are interlinked with South Africa being one of Namibia's major trading partners.

Namibia imports 80% of its consumables from South Africa. South African companies have a large presence in Namibia and are involved in various sectors such as housing, food and beverages, construction, hotels and leisure, banking and medical services.

In October 2016, President Dr Hage Geingob Geingob visited South Africa, attending the South Africa-Namibia BNC, which is the highest level of interaction between the two countries.

Lesotho

South Africa's bilateral relations with the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho remain strong and are based on a shared language, history and culture.

Lesotho is landlocked in South Africa, creating a unique dependence. South Africa supplies nearly 90% of Lesotho's total imports and it is critical to the economic growth and success of the Kingdom.

The strong cooperation that exists between the two countries cover a wide range of areas such as the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, the Metolong Dam Project and the revamping and upgrading of the Mokhotlong road and the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier.

Swaziland

Bilateral relations between the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland, reflected in the Joint Bilateral Commission for Cooperation (JBCC) Agreement, are amiable and informed essentially by historical and cultural affinities, including the geographical proximity between the peoples of the two countries.

Swaziland has from 2015 experienced devastating droughts from the El Niño effects, which resulted in the loss of thousands of livestock, crops and the ability to feed the vulnerable in the country. South Africa, through the World Food Programme Project in Swaziland, has offered assistance in the form of food aid for the vulnerable children.

Zambia

South Africa and Zambia maintain solid economic cooperation as evidenced by the presence of several South African companies in Zambia. Improved cooperation in a variety of areas such as air services and infrastructural development present economic opportunities to the South African private sector and parastatals.

President Zuma visited the Republic of Zambia on 12 to 13 October 2017. Interactions between President Zuma and Zambia's President Edgar Lungu were aimed at deepening and strengthening the already existing good political, economic and cultural relations underpinned by strong historical ties that date back from the years of the liberation Struggle.

Economic cooperation between South Africa and Zambia is steadily growing, with South African exports to Zambia amounting to approximately R30 billion in 2016. Zambia remains one of South Africa's top trading partners in the region and the continent.

The two countries cooperate in a variety of areas, including trade and investment, science and technology, defence, agriculture, environment, energy and health. There are over 120 South African companies doing business in Zambia in various sectors, including telecommunications, aviation, tourism, banking, property, retail, entertainment and fast foods.

During the visit, the two Heads of State officially opened the OR Tambo National Heritage site in Zambia on 13 October 2017.

In an effort to enhance the already existing relations, President Lungu paid a State Visit to South Africa from 7 to 9 December 2016.

The State Visit was preceded by the inauguration of the JCC, which was held on 7 December 2016. President Lungu was accompanied by a number of Cabinet ministers as well as a business delegation. By 2017, some 21 agreements and MoUs had been signed.

Democratic Republic of Congo

South Africa and the DRC maintain good diplomatic and political relations. The highest expression of the quality and significance of these diplomatic relations is the annual BNC, co-chaired by the heads of state.

South Africa and the Republic of Congo held a successful Third Joint Trade Committee meeting in November 2016 in Pretoria. During this meeting, a MoU was signed between the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and the Congo Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Jobs.

The signing of the MoU has opened interaction between the two chambers, which will increase cooperation and trade between the two countries.

Zimbabwe

South Africa and Zimbabwe have a common and long history of regional affiliation and cultural ties. Zimbabwe is one of South Africa's main trade partners in Africa and several South African companies operate in Zimbabwe in sectors such as mining, tourism, agriculture, banking, manufacturing and retail.

In October 2017, South Africa signed five strategic agreement and MoUs with the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, which aim to strengthen bilateral relations between the neighbouring countries, in Pretoria.

The agreement and MoUs, which were signed at the Second Session of South Africa-Zimbabwe BNC chaired by President Zuma and Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, focus on areas of energy, environment, information communication technologies as well as sports and recreation. The following agreement and MoUs:

- Agreement between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Zimbabwe on Cooperation on Cross-Border Coordination on Frequency Spectrum.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Zimbabwe on Cooperation in the Field of Information and Communications Technologies.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Zimbabwe on Cooperation in the Field of Energy.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Zimbabwe on Cooperation in the Field of Environment and Conservation.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Zimbabwe on Cooperation in the Field of Sport and Recreations.

Malawi

South Africa and Malawi enjoy cordial and fraternal bilateral relations inclusive of political, economic and cultural relations and within the context of regional integration and intra-Africa trade. These bilateral relations are conducted under the framework of the JCC.

Since its inception in May 2007, three sessions of the JCC were held in June 2008, September 2012 and April 2016, respectively. The fourth Session of the JCC will be held in South Africa in 2018.

Both countries are members of the SADC and collaborate in bringing peace and stability to the region and continent. To this end, South Africa and Malawi along with Tanzania deployed troops in the DRC to be part of MONUSCO Force Intervention Brigade.

Mozambique

In August 2017, Mozambique organised a briefing session for the South African business delegation. More than 30 South African companies that are funded by the Department of Trade and Industry and those supported by the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency participated in the trade fair which runs until 3 September 2017.

President Zuma and his Mozambican counterpart, Felipe Nyusi, attended the meeting and emphasised the need for increased economic cooperation and invited business people from both countries to take advantage of the opportunities that exist in South Africa and Mozambique to invest and expand the existing business.

A mid-term review meeting was held on 17 November 2016 in Maputo, Mozambique, to assess and monitor the progress made in the bilateral relationship since the inaugural BNC held in October 2015.

South Africa was also invited by the Government of Mozambique to participate in the International Facilitators Group (IFG), which was convened to establish the groundwork for the talks between Frelimo and Renamo.

The IFG concluded its participation with the announcement of an initial truce between the two parties in December 2016.

Tanzania

The bilateral relations have been characterised by high-level interaction between the two countries aimed at consolidating and strengthening political, economic and social cooperation.

South Africa is one of the top 10 major investors in Tanzania and accounts for approximately 10% of total investment in Tanzania. South Africa is also a major player in the Tanzania economy through the presence of over 170 South African companies.

South African exports are concentrated predominantly in the areas of manufacturing, including machinery, mechanical appliances, paper, rubber products, vehicles, iron and steel, services and technology.

Economic relations between South Africa and Tanzania have since 1994 grown significantly and continue to expand. The two countries have elevated their bilateral relations by signing a BNC Agreement in 2011, thus increasing the scope of areas of cooperation between the two countries.

Botswana

South Africa and Botswana cooperate in a wide range of areas, including transport, trade and investment, health, education, environmental affairs, water, science and technology, agriculture, justice, immigration, energy, finance, culture, security and sport.

In November 2016, the South Africa and Botswana held the Third Session of the BNC in Pretoria. The commission was co-chaired by President Zuma Lieutenant General Dr Seretse Khama Ian Khama, President of Botswana. During the BNC Summit, the two presidents reaffirmed the strategic cooperation and partnership between South Africa and Botswana.

The two leaders agreed that the BNC had assisted greatly in solidifying the bilateral political, economic and social relations between the two countries and would continue to serve as a mechanism to further enhance and strengthen relations.

The commission reaffirmed its commitment to the deepening of cooperation and partnership for the mutual benefit of the two countries and its people.

Relations with Asia and the Middle East The People's Republic of China

This year marks the 19th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Africa and the People's Republic of China.

South Africa is China's largest trading partner in Africa and the bilateral trade volume accounts for more than a quarter of China-Africa trade.

China is also South Africa's largest trading partner. As per the Beijing Declaration on the establishment of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, South Africa and China work together to improve the structure of bilateral trade by encouraging the trade of high value-added manufactured goods and increasing China's investment in South Africa.

The two sides continue to deepen their cooperation in infrastructure development, including the construction of roads, railways, ports, power plants, airports and housing.

South Africa-China bilateral relations have enjoyed phenomenal progress in the space of 18 years and have grown from a partnership to a strategic partnership and subsequently to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

South Africa and China have committed to building, developing and strengthening relations based on shared principles of friendship and mutual trust; equality and mutual benefit; coordination; mutual learning; and working together for development.

South Africa and China's bilateral relations are managed through structured mechanisms, including the BNC, the Joint Working Group and the Strategic Dialogue. These mechanisms are chaired at the Deputy President, Ministerial and Deputy Ministerial level respectively.

The overall aim of South Africa's approach is to use these mechanisms to address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality through enhancing bilateral economic relations. The BNC is the overarching mechanism servicing the bilateral relations between the two countries.

The last BNC was held in Cape Town in November 2016 and some of the key outcomes included a commitment to implement South Africa's priority projects such as the Mzimvubu Water Project, Moloto Rail Development Corridor and the Ocean Economy projects.

In addition, the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate on six job drivers, namely: infrastructure development, agriculture, mining and beneficiation, manufacturing, green economy and tourism.

In 2016, China's Beijing Automotive International Corporation committed to build an R11-billion (US\$759-million) auto plant in South Africa, the biggest investment in a vehicle-production facility in the country in four decades. The project will commence in 2018.

On 24 February 2017, South Africa and China signed an MoU and a Protocol which allow South Africa to export frozen beef to China. This development is envisaged to further strengthen South Africa-China trade and economic relations.

South Africa currently co-chairs, on behalf of Africa, FOCAC with China. The forum is one of the most strategic partnerships between Africa and its development partners.

South Africa hosted the Johannesburg Summit and the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC from 3 to 5 December 2015 under the theme “China-Africa Progressing Together: Win-Win Cooperation for Common Development”. South Africa is currently in the process of implementing outcomes of the FOCAC Summit.

The establishment of the BRICS Development Bank in 2014, headquartered in Shanghai, and the decision to locate its ARC in South Africa not only raised the level of cooperation between China and South Africa in addressing global challenges, but it was another clear indicator of South Africa’s growing significance in driving the African Agenda, renamed Agenda 2063.

China regards South Africa as a key partner in advancing its relations with Africa. While the two countries are strikingly different in their cultural, political and socio-economic orientation, they are very close in the positions they take on key issues affecting mankind.

Both appreciate the importance of strengthening cooperation based on respect for each other’s core values and interests. South Africa and China continue to cooperate at a multilateral level, including the need for the reform of institutions of global political and economic governance, namely the UN and its subsidiary organisations, the UNSC, as well as the Bretton Woods Institutions.

The two countries also cooperate on major global issues, including climate change, cybersecurity, counter-terrorism and counter-transnational organised crimes, as well as human rights.

China is increasingly becoming an important market of inbound tourism to South Africa. In 2016, China was the fourth top ranked contributor of tourists to South Africa, and is the fastest-growing tourist market to South Africa.

Japan

South Africa and Japan, the third-largest global economy, enjoy diplomatic relations spanning over a period of more than 100 years.

Since the democratisation of South Africa in 1994, bilateral relations with Japan excelled in many areas, especially in the fields of trade and investment; science and technology cooperation; and skills development support.

There are currently approximately 140 Japanese companies, in South Africa, sustaining over 150 000 local job opportunities to the benefit of many locals in terms of both income and skills transfer.

Total bilateral trade between the two countries in 2016 totalled R88,3 billion (in South Africa’s favour), with exports to Japan of R50,7 billion and imports from Japan of R37,5 billion.

As a direct outcome of Deputy President Ramaphosa’s visit to Japan in August 2015, Japan’s most influential business federation, Keidanren – which represents top Japanese multinational companies with the highest volumes of global business – paid a visit to South Africa early in 2016 to explore further trade and investment opportunities.

At least 16 new Japanese business representative offices of multinational companies were established in South Africa as an

outcome of this visit thus far, in addition to major new Japanese investments into the automotive, energy, water supply, mineral beneficiation and electronic sectors.

This visit contributed substantially to key government objectives such as job creation, industrial development, human resource development and innovation as part of implementing South Africa’s NDP.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is a strategic partnership between Africa and Japan that was launched in 1993, with a view to serve as a consultative forum for development assistance to Africa.

The Sixth TICAD Summit was held in Kenya from 27 to 28 August 2016, which was attended by President Zuma. Under one of its programmes, the Africa Business Education initiative, 80 South African students are currently benefitting by studying for Master’s degrees in highly technical fields in Japan, which will be followed by internships at Japanese companies.

Republic of Korea (ROK)

Formal diplomatic relations between South Africa and the ROK were established in December 1992. Increasingly, the focus of the bilateral relationship is on trade and investment links. The ROK, which is the world’s 11th-largest economy, is South Africa’s fourth-largest trading partner in Asia, while South Africa is the ROK’s largest trading partner in Africa.

Trade between the two countries totals R34 billion and encompasses a wide variety of products, ranging from minerals to sophisticated high-technology electronic products. The trade balance is in South Africa’s favour to an amount of R4,5 billion. The ROK also provides technical assistance to South Africa by building human resources capacity through rural development and teaching projects.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

South Africa established diplomatic relations with the DPRK in August 1998. The two countries enjoy cordial relations. The South African Ambassador to China is also accredited to the DPRK’s capital, Pyongyang.

Trade relations remain limited due to the imposition of various UNSC sanctions in retaliation of the DPRK’s nuclear weapons and missile programmes, which adversely affect the security of the North-East Asian region.

Mongolia

Mongolia’s vast coal reserves offer an opportunity for collaboration on clean coal technologies. South Africa’s coal-to-liquid technology would mitigate and possibly reduce the country’s contribution to greenhouse gases.

South and Central Asia

The South African Ambassador to Kazakhstan is accredited to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, while the South African Ambassador in Turkey is accredited to Uzbekistan, both on a non-residential basis.

Both Tajikistan’s Ambassador to Egypt and Kyrgyzstan’s Ambassador in Saudi Arabia are accredited on a non-residential basis to South Africa.

In November 2016, Deputy Minister Mfeketo paid a visit to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. It was the first such visit to Turkmenistan. The visit served to strengthen and expand South Africa’s relations with that country.

Key areas for future cooperation that were identified are in the oil and gas, mineral beneficiation, science and technology, agro-processing and health sectors.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan and South Africa established diplomatic relations in March 1992. The South African Embassy in Kazakhstan was opened in December 2003 in Almaty, and relocated to Astana in February 2008. Bilateral relations are managed through annual political consultations at deputy ministerial level.

South Africa and Kazakhstan have substantial economic interests, which overlap in several important areas such as trade, the production and collaborative marketing of strategic minerals, technology exchange, machine production, as well as oil procurement for South Africa.

During her visit to Kazakhstan in November 2016, Deputy Minister Mfeketo reiterated the importance of the South Africa-Kazakhstan relationship.

The Deputy Minister co-chaired, with her Kazakh counterpart, the Fifth Round of South Africa-Kazakhstan bilateral Political Consultations and emphasised the significance of promoting academic cooperation; skills exchange; and cooperation in the fields of science and technology, defence, energy and mining (skills and equipment).

South Asia

South Africa’s economic strategy in South Asia is strongly focused on deepening trade and investment linkages, particularly with countries that offer potential for future growth and where synergies and complementarities in products and technologies exist.

In South Asia, South Africa enjoys cordial relations with India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Afghanistan and the Maldives.

India

South Africa and India enjoy strong historical relations that have been formalised through various bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. The two countries share membership of multilateral groupings such as BRICS, IBSA, IORA and the G20.

Bilateral relations are formally structured via a Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) and Foreign Office Consultations (FOC), which take place at a senior officials’ level.

Prime Minister Modi of India paid an Official Visit to South Africa, on the invitation of President Zuma, on 8 July 2016. He was accompanied by a delegation of business people. A number of bilateral instruments were signed during the visit, which served not only to strengthen the bilateral relationship between India and South Africa, but also the commercial

relationship, with an emphasis on trade, investment and tourism.

The value of trade conducted in 2016 between India and South Africa was worth R92 billion. Priority areas identified include the mining sector, agro-processing, infrastructure development, the defence sector, pharmaceuticals and financial services.

Pakistan

Pakistan and South Africa enjoy cordial bilateral relations and a strong historical bond. Bilateral relations are structured via a Joint Commission (JC).

The Fifth South Africa-Pakistan JC was scheduled in Pakistan in 2017. Bilateral trade is close to R7 billion annually and the trade balance is in South Africa's favour.

Sri Lanka

Bilateral trade between Sri Lanka and South Africa has seen a steady increase in growth in both exports and imports. Total bilateral trade grew more than sixfold, from R184 million in 1994 to R2,1 billion in 2016 and potential in the following sectors have been identified: blue economy, agro-processing and renewable energy.

In 2016, South Africa hosted a number of delegations from Sri Lanka to further share experiences in reconciliation and nation-building.

Sri Lanka is considered an important partner to jointly advance the development agenda of countries of the South and the two countries share membership in a number of multilateral organisations including IORA, the G77+China and the Commonwealth.

The Sixth Session of the Senior Officials' Meeting of the Partnership Forum between Sri Lanka and South Africa was held in Pretoria in April 2017.

The Partnership Forum between Sri Lanka and South Africa was established in 2003 with an objective to advance and strengthen close cooperation between the two countries in the political, trade, economic, culture, scientific and technological fields.

The Senior Officials reviewed the progress made in the identified areas of cooperation and deliberated on further expanding the existing cooperation to cover the subjects of education, development of skills, science and technology, technology transfer, blue economy, transport and connectivity, police services, wildlife, water and agriculture.

The forum decided to meet in Colombo in November 2017 to review and advance implementation of decisions made in all areas for the mutual benefit of both countries.

The meeting also reflected on South Africa assuming the chair of the IORA in October 2017 and noted the importance of the Indian Ocean in the advancement of the developmental agenda in the IORA member countries.

Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives

The South African High Commissioner in Colombo, Sri Lanka, is accredited to Bangladesh, Nepal and Maldives on a non-residential basis.

Both Bangladesh and Nepal have significant multilateral profiles, being major troop contributors to UN peacekeeping operations. Nepal is host to the Secretariat for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and Bangladesh hosts the permanent Secretariat of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

Bangladesh has the potential of becoming a significant trading partner for South Africa. Bilateral trade and economic relations between South Africa and Bangladesh have sharply increased in recent years. In 2016, South African exports to Bangladesh totalled R1,7 billion, up from R1,2 billion in 2015. Bangladesh imports into South Africa reached R1,1 million in 2016.

The visit to Nepal underscored the continued commitment of the South African Government towards supporting their internal reconciliation and nation-building endeavours. South Africa will be hosting a number of delegations from Nepal in 2017, on various issues, including transitional justice.

South Africa and the Maldives established diplomatic relations through an exchange of notes on 27 July 1994. Bilateral relations between South Africa and the Maldives are cordial. No bilateral mechanism to advance bilateral relations exists between the two countries. Potential to expand economic relations has been identified in the infrastructure and agro-processing sectors.

South-East Asia

Strengthening South-South relations remains an important pillar of South Africa's foreign policy, especially in Asia, a region that has surpassed the EU as the country's biggest trading partner.

In December 2015, the South-East Asian countries formed the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) as a way of integrating the economies of the 10 member countries into one.

The goal is to transform ASEAN into a single market and production base and to facilitate the movement of business persons, skilled labour and talents; and strengthen the institutional mechanisms of ASEAN.

ASEAN boasts a population of over 600 million people and with a combined GDP growth of 4,9% in 2016 and a GDP of US\$2,6 trillion in 2016, the AEC could be the fourth-largest economy by 2050.

Thailand

Thailand continues to be South Africa's biggest trading partner in South-East Asia, and South Africa continues to be Thailand's biggest trading partner on the continent. Thailand also continues to be an important destination for South African tourists.

The South African Embassy in Thailand is also accredited to Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia.

Malaysia

Malaysia remains the largest investor in South Africa from the South-East Asian region. Since 1994, Malaysia has assisted more than 300 South Africans in their studies that range from short courses to full scholarships for degrees in Engineering and Information Technology, among others. A number of South African universities have signed MoUs with their Malaysian counterparts.

Malaysia is the fourth-largest new investor into the African continent. Malaysia continues to remain an important partner to South Africa and is instrumental in working together with South Africa on the latter's Operation Phakisa initiatives.

Singapore

Relations between South Africa and Singapore are cordial, and Singapore is South Africa's second-largest trading partner within ASEAN. Deputy President Ramaphosa undertook an Official Visit to the Republic of Singapore in October 2016 to strengthen bilateral, trade and economic relations.

As a country, world-renowned as a centre of excellence, Singapore has been particularly involved in providing South Africans with skills development opportunities under the Singapore Cooperation Programme sponsored by the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Many South African public servants have attended training courses, including the Economic Diplomacy Leadership course in Singapore over the years, thereby improving skills levels in South Africa.

In August 2016, the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Pamela Tshwete, visited Singapore to attend the Singapore Sub-Saharan High-Level Ministerial Exchange Meeting, as well as the Singapore Africa Business Forum.

The fourth round of FOC between South Africa and Singapore was held in Singapore in January 2017, and served to refocus attention on the importance both sides attach to bilateral relations and to redefine the priority areas of cooperation.

Indonesia

Indonesia remains South Africa's only strategic partner in South-East Asia and South Africa remains the only strategic partner to Indonesia on the African continent. In August 2016, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane attended the 12th World Islamic Economic Forum in Jakarta, on behalf of President Zuma.

President Zuma, supported by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and other ministers, attended the First IORA Leaders' Summit that was held in Jakarta in March 2017. The summit was followed by a State Visit. During this visit, the following documents were signed which will further elevate and strengthen relations between South Africa and Indonesia.

- Agreement on Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic, Official and Service Passports
- MoU between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and the DIRCO of South Africa on Diplomatic Training and Education
- Plan of Action 2017 – 2021 for the Implementation of the Joint Declaration on a Strategic Partnership for a Peaceful and Prosperous Future between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of South Africa.

Vietnam

The relationship between South Africa and Vietnam has grown into a multifaceted one with growing cooperation in many fields, rapid growth in people-to-people links and strong state-to-state and government-to-government relations, which include cooperation on bilateral and multilateral levels.

South Africa-Vietnam relations are cordial, with a substantial exchange of high-level visits between the two countries over the past few years. Deputy President Ramaphosa undertook an Official Visit to the Communist Republic of Vietnam in October 2016, to strengthen bilateral, trade and economic relations.

Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), and Timor-Leste

South Africa's relations with Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, the PDR and Timor-Leste are cordial. The South African Mission in Thailand is accredited on a non-residential basis to Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar; the Mission in Malaysia is accredited on a non-residential basis to Brunei-Darussalam; and the Mission in Indonesia is accredited on a non-residential basis to Timor-Leste.

Philippines

South Africa-Philippines relations are cordial. Both countries are influential in organisations of the South, including the NAM and the G77+China.

Australasia and the Pacific Islands Australia

South Africa and Australia enjoy cordial relations and interact biennially through an SOM, the next one being scheduled to take place in 2017. Through the SOM, South Africa and Australia cooperate across a range of sectors and issues, including law enforcement, sport, tourism, education, defence relations, and science and technology cooperation.

Australia is South Africa's 23rd-largest trading partner, while South Africa is by far Australia's largest and most dynamic market in Africa. The majority of exports from South Africa to Australia are finished goods. Exports of high-quality passenger motor vehicles head the list. Total trade between South Africa and Australia amounted to more than R19 billion in 2016.

In January 2017, Australia's Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Ms Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, undertook her first visit to South Africa and paid a courtesy call on Deputy Minister Landers, with a view to discuss the status of bilateral relations between South Africa and Australia.

With its focus on Africa, Australia has committed to work together with the African continent to address development challenges in areas such as human resource development, mining and resources management and infrastructure development.

South Africa and Australia work closely as development partners for the benefit of third-party countries through joint delivery of training and capacity-building. In this regard, South Africa and Australia work together through trilateral arrangements involving other countries, such as Zimbabwe, where Australia offers assistance for improved tax administration support.

Furthermore, South Africa and Australia work closely at a multilateral level in organisations and institutions such as the Commonwealth, the WTO, UN and the Cairns Group, particularly on issues that affect Africa.

New Zealand

At a bilateral level, South Africa and New Zealand enjoy close cooperation in business, tourism, agriculture, disarmament, fisheries, environmental protection, indigenous people and human rights issues. Relations are coordinated through a biennial SOM, the next one being scheduled to take place in 2017.

New Zealand is South Africa's 33rd-largest trading partner. Total trade between South Africa and New Zealand amounted to more than R3 billion in 2016. A significant feature of the South Africa-New Zealand relationship is its sporting ties, in particular, rugby, cricket, netball and in recent years, soccer.

The two countries enjoy productive cooperation at a multilateral level. Both countries are members of the Valdivia Group (Group of Temperate Southern Hemisphere Countries on Environment), which aims to promote the southern hemisphere's views at international environmental meetings and enhance scientific cooperation.

They also work closely together within the context of the Antarctic Treaty and Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement, and interact regularly within the context of the WTO and the Cairns Group.

South Africa and New Zealand work together as development partners in Africa. New Zealand has expertise in agriculture to share with Africa.

Relations with the Middle East

South Africa's relationship with the Arab States remains cordial, with ongoing engagements at various political and economic levels that are anchored by the strategic objective of strengthening South-South relations.

Palestine

South Africa and Palestine have enjoyed warm relations since the inception of democracy, and official diplomatic relations between a democratic South Africa and Palestine were established in 1995.

Bilateral relations between Palestine and South Africa are facilitated through a JCC that was established in 1995 and renewed in 2014. Progress in consolidating bilateral cooperation agreements remain afoot and was demonstrated by the three agreements signed during President Mahmoud Abbas' November 2014 visit, namely:

- Agreement for the establishment of a JCC
- MoU on Political Consultations
- Agreement on Higher Education and Training.

In addition, South Africa supports international efforts aimed at the establishment of a viable Palestinian State, existing side by side in peace with Israel within internationally recognised borders, based on those existing on 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

South Africa remains committed to the aspirations of the Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve freedom and independence.

South Africa continues to promote the peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict utilising all international forums

available, such as the SADC, AU, NAM, UN and other international forums, including BRICS.

South Africa is also working to reconcile the different Palestinian groups. Towards that objective, a group of Palestinians, from different political persuasions, participated in a Palestinian discussion forum that South Africa organised outside Cape Town in 2016.

South Africa maintains an Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel, and a Representative Office in Ramallah, Palestine, while both the Palestinians and Israelis have embassies in Pretoria. It is partly through these channels that South Africa interacts directly with the two parties in the conflict.

Furthermore, President Zuma in July 2014, appointed former Minister, Dr Zola Skweyiya, and former Deputy Minister, Mr Aziz Pahad, as his special envoys to the Middle East Peace Process. The envoys visited Palestine and Israel and other neighbouring countries in the region (Algeria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, Turkey and Syria) to exchange views on a possible way forward.

The envoys have also met with different embassies accredited to South Africa and different interest groups in pursuance of their mandate. The envoys' mandate expired at the end of 2016.

Syria

Diplomatic relations between Syria and South Africa were established on 1 June 1994 and Syria opened its Embassy in South Africa in 1998. Both countries maintain resident diplomatic missions in each other's country.

Bilateral relations were maintained at a normal level until the breakout of the current conflict in Syria that forced Damascus to focus more on the domestic front and less on external relations.

Prior to the outbreak of the conflict, the countries had concluded a number of bilateral agreements:

- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Higher Education
- MOU on JCC
- Agreement on Economic and Trade Cooperation.

Almost all the bilateral agreements between South Africa and Syria took a backseat after the outbreak of the conflict. Nevertheless, South Africa retained its diplomatic Mission in Damascus even when other Western and Arab countries were closing down their missions.

In 2015, political interaction was resumed. In August 2015, Deputy Foreign Minister Dr Faisal Mekdad met Deputy Minister Mfeketo in Cape Town to discuss bilateral relations and Deputy Minister Mfeketo returned the visit in May 2016.

The two countries are currently discussing South Africa's possible role in the reconstruction of Syria.

Iraq

Diplomatic relations with Iraq were concluded in November 1998. Iraq opened its Embassy in Pretoria in December 1999 and an Iraqi Ambassador was accredited to South Africa in 2001. South Africa's intention to open a Mission in Baghdad in April 2003 was delayed because of the outbreak of the United States (US)-led war.

South Africa will resuscitate those plans once the security situation normalises in Iraq. The South African Ambassador to Jordan is accredited to Iraq on a non-residential basis.

In March 2016, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes hosted a high-level delegation of visiting parliamentarians from Iraq who were on a study tour of South Africa. The tour was arranged by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq and the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, which is based in Cape Town. The tour included meetings in Cape Town, Durban and Gauteng.

The precarious security environment has largely impacted on foreign investment in the country. Nevertheless, foreign investors view Iraq with increasing interest. Broader economic improvement, long-term fiscal health and sustained increases in the standard of living still depend on the Government passing major policy reforms and on continued development of Iraq's massive oil reserves.

Iraq has established a National Investment Commission to facilitate foreign investment in Iraq, and licences granted by the commission carry significant tax benefits as well as other benefits, including the right to repatriate capital and profits, customs exemptions on imported capital goods and long-term leases.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

South Africa is committed to maintaining cordial diplomatic and trade relations with the UAE. South African companies have made a major contribution to the development of the UAE economy, with over 200 of them having representative offices in the UAE.

The potential for greater interaction between the two countries is enhanced through the 56 weekly flights between South Africa and the UAE. South Africa and the UAE have signed five bilateral agreements, which provide the framework for cooperation.

President Zuma led a high-level delegation on a Working Visit to the UAE on 28 March 2016, which renewed commitment and provided further momentum towards the consolidation and elevation of bilateral relations, particularly in the trade, investment and economic sectors, aimed at a substantive strategic partnership.

Two-way trade has recorded progressive levels of growth and at present amounts to an estimated R27 billion. The UAE remains South Africa's main destination for South African commodities within the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Iran

South Africa and Iran established a JCC in 1995 to allow for a high-level review of existing bilateral relations and to consider ways in which these could be expanded. This is the longest-running JCC despite the slight interruption experienced when Iran was under a range of sanctions between 2009 and 2013.

The last JCC was the 12th Session, which was held in Tehran in May 2015. The JCC is supported by the bi-annual meetings of the Deputy Ministerial Working Group (DMWG) that monitor and evaluate the implementation of JCC decisions.

The last DMWG (seventh session) took place in Pretoria on 29 September 2016. South Africa has maintained cordial

relations with Iran and was among the nations that insisted on that country's right to develop and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Sanctions, however, impacted negatively on bilateral trade

She was accompanied by the deputy ministers of trade and industry and energy, as well as senior officials from the departments of trade and industry; energy; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; as well as National Treasury.

In November 2015, Deputy President Ramaphosa concluded an Official Visit to Iran to lay the groundwork for the State Visit which President Zuma undertook in 2016. President Zuma led a high-level delegation on a State Visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran from 24 to 25 April 2016.

During his visit, President Zuma met with his Iranian counterpart, President Hasan Rouhani, and was also afforded the opportunity to meet Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The visit was an important structural catalyst in elevating bilateral and economic relations into a substantive strategic partnership.

During President Zuma's visit to Iran, eight MoUs were signed, including, among others:

- MoU on the Establishment of a Joint Investment Committee
- MoU on Cooperation in Trade and Industry
- MoU on Bilateral Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture
- MoU on Cooperation between PetroSA and RIPI.

Additionally, in 2017, several South African companies were involved in major projects in Iran. The intention is to ensure that trading figures return to their pre-sanctions levels. It is worth noting that at the end of 2011, South Africa imported one third of its domestic oil requirements from Iran, however by June 2012, South Africa was importing no crude oil from Iran. In addition, South African exports to Iran declined from R1,27 billion in 2008 to R585 million in 2016.

There are, however, positive developments with a number of South African and Iranian businesses utilising the high potential that exists to conduct mutually beneficial trade and commercial relations in the targeted priority sectors such as petrochemical, gas exploration and alternative energy sectors; agricultural products; agro-processed goods; automotive industries and manufacturing; mining; tourism; and the ocean economy.

Saudi Arabia

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Saudi Arabia were formalised during a visit by former President Mandela in November 1994.

Two missions were established in the kingdom during March 1995: an embassy in the capital, Riyadh, and a consulate-general in the commercial capital of Jeddah.

The Consulate-General is also responsible for looking after the needs of South African pilgrims performing Hajj and Umrah duties in the holy cities of Makkah al Mukarramah and Medina al Munawarra.

Saudi Arabia is a fellow G20 member state and remains South Africa's largest supplier of crude oil and related products since 2012. Underscoring the importance of the bilateral economic

diplomacy initiatives, South Africa has seen a steady increase in inward trade and tourism over the past few years.

South Africa and Saudi Arabia's economic and political relations received a significant boost following a successful State Visit by President Zuma on 27 March 2016. President Zuma met with Saudi King Salman bin Abdul Aziz and he was given the First Order, the highest award the King bestows on a foreign national.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are managed through the Joint Economic Commission (JEC), which held its Seventh Session in March 2016 in Cape Town. The follow-up Saudi-South Africa Seventh JEC Review Session was held on 7 December 2016 in Riyadh.

The purpose of the review session, headed by the Department of Trade and Industry and Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Investment, was to review the previous recommendations of the Seventh Saudi-South Africa JEC to assess development and progress on the implementation of current projects between the two countries.

These projects and programmes of bilateral cooperation which are covered in the draft Road Map, currently under negotiation by the two sides before formal adoption, encompass the following fields: trade and investment; banking and finance; oil and minerals; industrial cooperation; technical cooperation on standardisation; ICT; science and technology; and agriculture.

Cooperation in investment on renewable energy has seen a Saudi company, Acwa Power, investing R11,5 billion towards the construction of a solar plant in the Northern Cape, while in defence cooperation, Denel is partnering with Germany's Rheinmetall Waffe Munition GmbH in the ammunition producing plant, Rheinmetall Denel Munition (RDM), situated in Riyadh.



Some of the ammunition components like shell bodies and metal components are still being manufactured in a Boksburg plant.

Qatar

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and the State of Qatar were established in 1994, strengthened by official visits to Qatar by former presidents Mandela and Mbeki, as well as by visits of several Cabinet ministers.

In terms of trade relations, Qatar has traditionally enjoyed a healthy trade surplus, primarily owing to its export of crude oil and petrochemicals to South Africa.

In May 2016, President Zuma undertook a State Visit to Qatar, at the invitation of the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani. During discussions, the two leaders agreed to elevate the structured bilateral consultation from deputy ministerial level to ministerial level.

The visit also provided an opportunity to further explore various target areas of cooperation through an agreement to set up a Joint Technical Committee (JTC), comprising technical experts in the fields of agriculture, trade and industry, defence industry, police services, transport, forestry and fisheries, arts and culture, infrastructure development, and tourism; in order to advance the implementation of the outcomes of the visit and specific programmes of action in this respect.

The two countries also agreed to explore possibilities of cooperation in the promotion of reconciliation between Palestinian groups. Qatar hosts the external head office of Hamas.

President Zuma, during his stay, also paid a courtesy call on the Father Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. South Africa's political and economic relations with Qatar have grown significantly over recent years and have become more diverse.

Trade between South Africa and Qatar has increased significantly since 1994 as a result of the many targeted high-level interactions and cooperation between the countries' respective leaders as well as the existence of the structured mechanism for bilateral consultations.

Trade between the two countries increased from R4 billion in 2012 to R6,7 billion in 2016.

Kuwait

Kuwait has become an increasingly important market for South African exports and several Kuwaiti companies have made major multimillion-rand investments in the construction and development of hotels and real estate in South Africa, as well as investments on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Kuwait is the largest source of FDI from the Middle East.

Yemen

Relations between South Africa and Yemen are cordial, and the two countries share membership of the UN, IORA and the NAM. The South African Ambassador to Saudi Arabia is accredited on a non-residential basis to Yemen.

The outbreak of the civil war in Yemen has further undermined the nascent bilateral relations. The last Official Visit to Yemen

took place when former Deputy Minister Ebrahim Ebrahim went to Sa'ana in 2014 to negotiate for the release of a South African hostage, the late Mr Pierre Korkie.

Relations with the Americas United States of America (USA)

Formal relations between South Africa and the USA go back as far as 1789, when the USA opened a consulate in Cape Town. South Africa continues to place a high premium on high-level political exchanges.

The USA is a major economic partner for South Africa and continues to feature high on the list of trade and investment partners. There are about 600 companies from the USA trading in South Africa, which provide over 120 000 local jobs. These companies contribute about 30% of all corporate social investment for corporate social projects.

The USA is South Africa's third-largest trading partner and 98% of South Africa's exports enter the USA market duty-free and quota-free under the current dispensation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the Generalised System of Preferences.

While the USA is a significant market for South Africa, South Africa is the USA's biggest market in Africa. South Africa is also an important investor in the USA, with the announcement of an investment by Sasol in Louisiana, which could prove to be one of the biggest investments in the history of the USA.

The USA is an important supporter of South Africa's domestic priorities and has made an effort to align its assistance programmes and projects with these. The USA is a major source of ODA to South Africa, contributing approximately US\$541 million in ODA per year. The major area of focus is health and AIDS in particular. Under the USA President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Pepfar), South Africa is the 15th-largest recipient of foreign aid from the USA.

South Africa has been very successful in using Pepfar funding to address HIV and AIDS.

The USA will reduce its annual assistance from US\$484 to US\$250 by year 2017. The transition plan has a five-year timeline.

The USA regards South Africa as a global model because it is the first country to go from a development assistance-led effort to a country-led approach.

Both countries committed that there would be no interruption of treatment and care services during the transition of direct service provision to the South African Government. The USA understands the importance of the African Agenda to South Africa, particularly regional economic integration, which is the cornerstone of continental integration.

Initiatives such as USA trilateral cooperation between the USA and the SADC region and the rest of the continent in the area of food security have been pivotal to this relationship.

Canada

Canada has a long-standing and wide-ranging track record of constructive engagement, at bilateral and multilateral levels, in Africa, ranging from peacekeeping and development aid to FDI.

About two-thirds of South African exports to Canada relate to minerals and mining equipment, with agricultural and chemical products making up the rest. Canada views South Africa as a gateway into the SADC and the rest of Africa.

Canada's involvement in South Africa focuses on strengthening service delivery, HIV and AIDS and rural development.

In 2014, it was announced that the Canadian trade finance agency, Export Development Canada (ECD), would open its first African office in Johannesburg as in 2015.

Canada chose Johannesburg as the location for its first ECD office because of the city's economic position as the financial gateway to southern Africa.

The ECD, through its Johannesburg-based team, would focus on connecting more Canadian businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to the growing supply chains within intra-African trade.

South Africa is Canada's most important commercial and political partner in Africa and is the only country in Africa – and one of only 20 around the world – to be identified by the Canadian Government's recent Global Markets Action Plan as an emerging market with broad Canadian interests.

On-the-ground support in southern Africa would help Canadian SMEs to boost their exports and create jobs and opportunities at home.

Mexico

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Mexico are good and the two countries work closely together in multilateral forums on issues such as South-South cooperation and nuclear disarmament. South Africa is Mexico's biggest trading partner in Africa.

Latin America and the Caribbean

South Africa's bilateral relations with Latin America and the Caribbean continue to advance the development agenda of the South, and strengthen cooperation among developing countries through active participation in groupings of the South at regional, inter-regional and multilateral levels.

In this regard, the need to build stronger and balanced relationships with Latin American and Caribbean countries is of particular importance. South Africa has observer status in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom) and acts as the region's voice in the G20.

Latin America

The developing countries in Latin America continue to play an important role in international political bodies and formations such as the NAM, the G20 (Brazil and Mexico), BRICS (Brazil), IBSA and the UN. South Africa's business sector has extensive interests in the region, including SAB Miller, AngloGold Ashanti, Naspers, Denel, Sasol and PetroSA.

These relate to exports of capital equipment, intermediary goods and investments as well as a growing presence of South African companies in the service sector.

Brazil

The presidents of South Africa and Brazil meet regularly to discuss issues of mutual interest. South Africa maintains the view that the Rio+20 Conference, which took place in Brazil, helped to ensure that the issue of sustainable development remained a top priority on the agenda of the UN and the international community.

Argentina

Argentina is South Africa's third-largest trading partner in the Latin American and Caribbean region after Brazil and Mexico. Regular ministerial meetings ensure continuous improvement in bilateral ties.

The Caribbean

South Africa enjoys cordial relations with the countries of the Caribbean. The majority of inhabitants of the Caribbean are of African descent and have strong historical and cultural links to the continent.

South Africa's endeavour in conjunction with the AU and Caricom to strengthen cooperation between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean has given added impetus to bilateral and multilateral relations.

South Africa attaches importance to strengthening its relations with the Caribbean and developing common positions on global issues such as access to the markets of the industrial North, reform of international institutions and promoting the development agenda and protection of small island states.

Uruguay, Chile and Colombia

Deputy Minister Landers visited Uruguay, Chile and Colombia in March 2015.

While in Montevideo, Uruguay, Deputy Minister Landers held bilateral meetings with his counterpart, Deputy Minister Jose-Luis Cancela, and signed an MOU on the establishment of bilateral relations between the two countries.

In Chile, Deputy Minister Landers co-chaired the Fifth Joint Consultative Mechanism (JCM) between South Africa and Chile with his Chilean counterpart. South Africa and Chile enjoy sound bilateral relations, which are conducted through the JCM at deputy ministerial level. The JCM continues to serve a constructive purpose in the ongoing political dialogue between the two countries at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels.

South Africa is Chile's largest trading partner in Africa and South Africa is the biggest investor in Chile's mining sector. The biggest area of trade between South Africa and Chile is capital goods for mining.

Deputy Minister Landers' visit to Colombia saw him hold bilateral meetings with his counterpart, Deputy Minister Patti Londono Jaramillo. Relations between South Africa and Colombia were established in 1994 and Colombia opened a resident embassy in Pretoria in 1995.

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Colombia are cordial and growing. Colombia served with South Africa as non-permanent members of the UNSC from 2011 to 2012.

Peru

South Africa is one of the largest investors in Peru, with SABMiller and Anglo American operating in that country.

The main South African exports to Peru are mining equipment, paper and carton, metal sheeting and specialised structural steel.

Venezuela

South Africa and Venezuela have an MoU regarding bilateral consultations. Three MoUs were also signed by PetroSA and Petr6leos de Venezuela, which granted PetroSA a block to explore Venezuela's oil reserves.

South African exports to Venezuela consist mainly of ferro-vanadium and related products, followed by liqueurs. South African imports from Venezuela consist mainly of oil.

Cuba

Cuba remains a strategic partner of South Africa and the region.

South Africa continues to be a beneficiary of Cuba's ongoing assistance in support of the five priorities of the South African Government, through joint programmes in health, labour, social development, housing and infrastructure. One of the success stories is the extensive cooperation between South Africa and Cuba regarding skills development and training.

Under the auspices of the South Africa Health Agreement, almost 3 000 South African students are currently receiving training in Cuba. In addition, the deployment of Cuban doctors, engineers and technical experts across South African provinces is a further demonstration of strong bilateral relations between the two countries. Deputy Minister Landers co-chaired the 12th JCM with his Cuban counterpart, Mr Rogelio Sierra Diaz, in Havana in October 2015.

The JCM convenes annually and is co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa and the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba.

United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland

United Kingdom

Bilateral relations between South Africa and the UK cover a wide spectrum and have a far-reaching impact.

Cooperation between the two countries is broad and includes health, education, science and technology, energy, the environment, defence, police, arts and culture, and sports and recreation.

There is a healthy flow of investment in both directions.

The UK is recognised as the foremost source of FDI into South Africa, while South African companies equally have made large investments in the UK.

South Africa and the UK have important trade and economic relations, which continue to strengthen, although the global economic crisis has had a significant impact on bilateral trade.

The UK is by far South Africa's most significant source of long-haul tourists, a position it has not relinquished for the past 15 years.

In October 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane arrived in the UK to co-chair the 11th Session of the South Africa-UK Bilateral

Forum with the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Right Philip Hammond. The forum was held in London on 19 October 2015.

The bilateral forum seeks to enhance and strengthen political, global and economic relations between South Africa and the UK in various spheres. During the forum, working groups met to discuss progress on the implementation of the South Africa-UK Strategy, which was signed in 2013.

Ireland

The Republic of Ireland was the only EU member country that did not have full diplomatic relations with South Africa until the dawn of democratic South Africa.

Ireland continues to be a valued source of FDI in the following sectors: business services, alternative/renewable energy, software and information technology services, and plastics.

Deputy Minister Landers undertook a Working Visit to Ireland in November 2015, where he co-chaired the Fourth South Africa-Ireland Partnership Forum held in Dublin.

The partnership forum is a structured mechanism to manage and monitor bilateral relations between South Africa and Ireland. It was established in 2004 through the signing of a Declaration of Intent aimed at placing bilateral relations on a coherent and structured footing. The forum is conducted at deputy minister level and takes place every two years.

Relations with Europe

European Union

Since 1994, building on shared values and mutual interests, South Africa and the EU have developed a comprehensive partnership based on the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement.

The South Africa-EU relationship is guided by the principle that the EU should support South Africa's national, regional and African priorities and programmes to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment.

The EU is South Africa's main development assistance partner.

Benelux countries

The Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) remain important trade and investment partners of South Africa, and major providers of tourism. The Netherlands is the second-most important source of FDI into South Africa.

There has been important trilateral cooperation with the Netherlands and Belgium in the past in support of peace and security in Africa, including, among others, capacity-building in the Great Lakes Region. Such trilateral cooperation can be further expanded in the future.

There is a regular exchange of views between South Africa and Belgium, as well as with the Netherlands, on the issues and complicated processes necessary to find durable solutions to the conflicts in the region.



Belgium

Relations between South Africa and Belgium are strong and dynamic, covering a number of areas that are important to South Africa's national development objectives. Belgium is South Africa's 12th-largest export destination globally and ranks sixth in the world in terms of FDI in South Africa, among other things focusing on mining, green energy, ports, logistics and agriculture.

Belgium has allocated substantial resources to South Africa in the form of ODA since 1994. This support has covered such areas as health, ports management and logistics, education, rural development and further education and training.

The Netherlands

Apart from being the second-most important source of FDI into South Africa, the Netherlands is South Africa's seventh-largest trading partner in the world.

The Dutch Government has consistently supported South Africa in terms of bilateral and multilateral relations. A large number of bilateral agreements have been signed and high-level bilateral ministerial meetings are held regularly.

In November 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane led a South African delegation to the 14th Session of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court, held in The Hague.

Luxembourg

Bilateral and economic relations, especially in the financial services and funds sectors, remain strong between Luxembourg and South Africa.

German-speaking countries

Bilateral relations between South Africa and the German-speaking countries cover various issues, including investment and trade, science and technology, defence, culture, the environment, tourism, sport, development cooperation and energy, but also entail multilateral and trilateral engagements.

Germany

South Africa and Germany have a strategic relationship, with regular structured dialogue and cooperation covering a broad range of areas, including political dialogue, trade and investment, science and technology, the environment, development cooperation, energy, defence, labour and social affairs, vocational education and training, as well as arts and culture.

South Africa and Germany also enjoy very strong, long-standing and growing trade and investment relations. In 2014, Germany ranked as South Africa's second-largest global trading partner, fourth-largest global export market for South African goods and as the second-largest importer into South Africa, while South Africa also remains in the top 30 of Germany's global trading partners.

There are over 600 German companies invested in South Africa, providing over 100 000 employment opportunities mainly in the automotive industry, chemical industry and mechanical and electrical engineering sectors.

President Zuma undertook an Official Visit to Germany in November 2015.

President Zuma and Chancellor Angela Merkel reviewed a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues. President Zuma also paid a courtesy call on Federal President Joachim Gauck, addressed South African and German business leaders in Berlin, and provided the closing statement at a Symposium on Youth Skills Development and Employment.

Switzerland

Relations between South Africa and Switzerland are based on equal partnership. There are some 200 Swiss companies in South Africa, employing around 36 000 South Africans.

Consultations take place at the level of deputy minister of international relations and a Joint Economic Commission at the level of ministers of trade occurs annually.

Switzerland has granted South Africa special status on the Swiss foreign-policy agenda as one of the focus areas for Swiss interests outside Europe.

Switzerland actively contributes to numerous development assistance programmes in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa. Switzerland remains South Africa's major trading and investment partner in the European Free Trade Association.

President Zuma led a South African delegation of Cabinet ministers and business leaders to the WEF in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2016. The theme for WEF 2016 was "Mastering the Fourth Industrial Revolution".

Austria

South Africa continues to enjoy cordial bilateral relations with Austria, focused primarily on economic exchanges. South Africa ranks sixth among Austria's overseas trading partners, and is by

far Austria's major trading partner in Africa. Some 400 Austrian companies are engaged in trade relations with South African companies. More than 50 Austrian companies have direct investments in South Africa.

Nordic countries

South Africa enjoys good relations with all the Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Flowing from the strong grassroots support in these countries for democratisation in South Africa, relations have been established in virtually every field at both public and official levels. The scope of Nordic development cooperation is broad and has benefited civil society and government.

Relations in the international arena have seen close cooperation on multilateral issues. The Nordic countries are strong supporters of Nepad and are directly involved in conflict resolution and reconstruction projects in Africa. This was reinforced by the signing of the Declaration of Intent on Partnerships in Africa in June 2008, which laid a framework for future trilateral cooperation.

Denmark

Denmark was a very strong supporter of the anti-apartheid struggle and a major force in sanctions and disinvestment. The Danish Government is focusing on renewable energy development in South Africa.

This programme has been developed in response to the commitments made in the MoU of October 2011 between Denmark and South Africa and the Declaration of Intent on the South African Renewable Initiative to which Denmark is a co-signatory.

The programme has been designed with the intention of assisting South Africa in implementing its policy of developing a low-carbon economy with special focus on electricity supply.

In October 2015, Deputy Minister Mfeketo delivered an address as part of an outreach programme co-hosted by the Afrika Kontakt solidarity movement and the South African Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark. Afrika Kontakt with its roots in the anti-apartheid movement, was founded in 1978, against colonialism and suppression in southern Africa.

Norway

During November 2015, Deputy Minister Landers undertook a Working Visit to Norway. The visit took place within the context of the South Africa-Norway High-Level Consultations (HLC). During the visit, Deputy Minister Landers and his Norwegian counterpart, Ms Tone Skogen, co-chaired the Third Session of the HLC between the two countries.

South Africa and Norway have a history of working together in the promotion of democracy; good governance; human rights; and social, environmental and climate change and have supported and worked with each other in bilateral and multilateral relations.

The two countries discussed cooperation related to the maritime sector, in light of South Africa's fast-tracking of the blue economy.

Finland

South Africa attaches great importance to its Nordic partners, and this visit provided a platform to further consolidate and strengthen the already cordial relations between South Africa and Finland.

The meeting also served to deepen Africa-Nordic cooperation.

Sweden

Deputy President Ramaphosa visited Sweden for the Ninth Session of the BNC between South Africa and Sweden in October 2015 in Stockholm. He also met with the Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, Ms Åsa Romson, to hold discussions on issues of mutual interest at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

At bilateral level, discussions focused on trade and investment, skills development and training as well as job creation. At multilateral level, discussions included cooperation in the implementation of the SDGs, reform of global governance institutions, UN and AU peace-building efforts and social cohesion.

Mediterranean Europe

France

France is a significant trade, investment, tourism and development cooperation partner for South Africa. About 250 French companies have invested in South Africa and employ around 300 000 people.

In June 2015, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies, visited France to attend an informal WTO Ministers' Meeting on the sidelines of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Ministers' Meeting. The WTO meeting was co-chaired by Australia and Kenya. The WTO Ministers' Meeting discussed the post-Bali work programme and the 10th WTO Ministerial Council Meeting that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2015.

Minister Davies also met with the South African and US delegations who discussed the "AGOA Poultry Dispute" in June 2015 in Paris. The two-day meeting was facilitated by the two governments with their respective industry associations, resulting in a breakthrough after several months of industry-to-industry negotiations.

Italy

In November 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane paid a Working Visit to Italy where she held bilateral talks with her counterpart, Mr Paolo Gentiloni, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, with a view to renewing political and economic relations between the two countries.

Spain

The Kingdom of Spain remains South Africa's strategic partner by continuing cooperation to promote trade and investment, and preserve peace and prosperity in Africa and the world.

In April 2015, Deputy Minister Landers led a South African delegation to Madrid, Spain, to co-chair the 10th South Africa-Spain Annual Consultations with the Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr Ignacio Ybáñez Rubio.

The yearly event provides an opportunity for South Africa and Spain to strengthen relations on a wide range of issues in bilateral, political and economic relations. The engagements between the two principals included bilateral discussions, which was preceded by a Senior Officials' Working Group Meeting.

Internationally, the two countries will continue to exchange views and strengthen cooperation on issues of global concern. The meeting also reviewed a number of bilateral agreements that had been signed as well as agreements that were being negotiated at the time.

Trade between South Africa and Spain increased substantially from R15,6 billion in 2009 to R29 billion in 2014. Spain has become a major investor in South African economy, especially in the renewable energy sector.

Greece

South Africa and Greece enjoy traditional and close ties of friendship and cooperation as well as a convergence of views and cooperation on various regional and international issues in general.

Bilateral relations between the two countries continue to grow in a number of strategic and mutually beneficial areas.

Cyprus

South Africa has excellent and long-standing bilateral relations with Cyprus. It has maintained strong ties with that country, partly because of the large and influential Cypriot community in South Africa, of about 60 000 people.

Portugal

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Portugal are cordial and cover many areas, underpinned by the High-level Political Consultative Forum, which provides a platform for the two countries to explore the deepening of relations across the spectrum of South Africa's national priorities, political cooperation, the strengthening of trade and investment and development cooperation.

Bilateral relations between both countries have not reached their full potential, especially considering the historical and current political and cultural links between the two countries.

Eastern Europe

The Eastern Europe region is of crucial importance to South Africa's strategic objectives, straddling a wide spectrum of political and economic interests.

The region is well endowed with strategic commodities and minerals that are of vital significance to South Africa's economy.

Cooperation in gas and oil and the peaceful use of nuclear energy can go a long way towards alleviating South Africa's energy needs.

Poland

Polish-South African relations entered a new phase after the fall of apartheid. Poland is regarded as one of the countries in central Europe with great strategic importance to South Africa.

Poland is not only one of the strongest role players in the political and economic arenas in central Europe, but also an emerging power in the EU.

Hungary

In November 2015, Deputy Minister Landers hosted his Hungarian counterpart, Dr László Szabó, in Pretoria.

The objective of the visit was to enhance and strengthen bilateral cooperation between South Africa and Hungary, to deepen understanding on regional and multilateral issues of mutual concern and to encourage further trade and investment in key drivers of South Africa's economy to create jobs, specifically in terms of promoting the export of value-added products to the Hungarian market.

The two deputy ministers discussed the possibility of forming a JCC between South Africa and Hungary.

Russian Federation

South Africa regards the Russian Federation as an important strategic partner and close bilateral and multilateral ties exist between the two countries.

With the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, South Africa became the first African state to recognise the independence of the Russian Federation. Full diplomatic relations were established between South Africa and the Russian Federation in February 1992.

In November 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane undertook a Working Visit to Moscow, Russia, to co-chair the 13th Session of the annual South Africa-Russia Joint Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation with the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, Mr Sergey Donskoy.

While in Moscow, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane also held bilateral talks with her counterpart, Mr Sergey Lavrov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.