



South Africa Yearbook 2015/16

International Relations



According to the South African Constitution, the President is ultimately responsible for the 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
- assisting South African citizens abroad.

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.

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 Act, 2001 (Act 51 of 2001), establishes an African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund 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.

Budget, funding and trade

DIRCO's national budget allocation for 2015/16 was R6,5 billion.

Medium-term expenditures, according to the National Budget 2015/16, was R5 698,6 million in 2015/16, R5 943,6 million in 2016/17 and R6 543,3 million in 2017/18.

President Jacob Zuma led the South African delegation to the 7th BRICS Summit held in Ufa, Russia from 8 to 9 July 2015. The theme for the 7th Summit was "BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development".

A number of meetings was held in the run-up to the summit. These included:

- The BRICS Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors met in Moscow prior to the summit on 7 July 2015.
- The first meeting of the BRICS Board of Governors of the New Development Bank took place in Moscow on 7 July 2015.
- The BRICS Ministers of Trade and Industry met in Moscow on 7 July 2015.
- The BRICS Business Council and its Working Groups met in Moscow on 6 July 2015 and then proceeded to Ufa for a meeting with the BRICS leaders on 9 July 2015.

Expenditure increased from R485,1 million in 2014/15 to R523,1 million in 2015/16 at a nominal growth rate of 8%. The increase in expenditure is mainly due to the depreciation of the rand against foreign currencies.

South Africa increased its presence on the continent from seven diplomatic and consular missions in 1994 to 47 in 2015. Consequently, the country's trade on the continent increased 39 times from R11,4 billion in 1994 to R385 billion in 2015. The target is half a trillion rand trade with Africa by 2019. As at the end of 2015, 20% of the country's trade was conducted within the African continent.

With regard to 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. Working together with other government departments, DIRCO can achieve a trillion rand trade with this region by 2019.

Foreign policy

By prioritising Africa and promoting its renewal, development and reconstruction, South Africa is contributing to building a better Africa, which is the central foreign policy goal of the South African Government.

After the democratic elections in 1994, South Africa ceased to be the pariah of the world; it regained its rightful place in Africa, in the UN and in the family of nations. South Africa emerged as a democratic country into a fundamentally transformed world with a visionary foreign policy that promotes relations with other countries.

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 efforts aimed at establishing an arms trade treaty.

Role players

South Africa has key partnerships such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, 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 New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP). These forums have demonstrated that they are trusted allies and partners in South Africa's aim for a better world and Africa.

African Union (AU)

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 African are truly emancipated from the wrath of underdevelopment, poverty and hunger. The strengthened African Union 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 extensive consultations on its vision known as 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" comprised of a 10-year action plan 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, Ethiopia, from 30 to 31 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 domesti-

cation, which, in South Africa's case, entails harmonising Agenda 2063 with the National Development Plan (NDP).

In pursuit of the continental economic integration agenda, the following actions have taken place: the launch of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the East African Community (EAC) Tripartite Free Trade Area (FTA) in June 2015 in Egypt. This FTA, which merges 26 countries into a free trade zone with 625 million people and a total gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$1,6 trillion, will contribute immensely towards increasing intra-African trade. The Tripartite FTA represents an important milestone towards the conclusion of negotiations for the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area.

President Jacob Zuma led the South African delegation to the 26th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly (AU Summit) held on 30 and 31 January 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The 2016 AU Summit was held under the theme "African Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women".

The theme was of extreme importance to South Africa as a country, as it marked 20 years since the adoption of the Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and the Bill of Rights as well as 60 years since the historic women's march to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956.

AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC)

South Africa plays an important role in efforts to bring about peace and stability on the continent.

The AUPSC is the organ of the AU in charge of enforcing union decisions. Members are elected by the AU Assembly to reflect regional balance within Africa, as well as a variety of other criteria, including capacity to contribute militarily and financially to the union, political will to do so, and effective diplomatic presence at Addis Ababa.

The AUPSC entered into force in December 2003, after being ratified by the required majority of AU member states. It is made up of 15 member states and is responsible for the resolution of conflict, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) in conjunction with the UN.

In 2015, the AU Assembly unanimously re-elected South Africa for a second consecutive two-year term to the AUPSC. This gives the country the opportunity to consolidate the work done in the past two years, including contributing to the implementation of Agenda 2063's goal of "Silencing the Guns by 2020".

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 we 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 communication 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 European Union (EU-AU) Strategic Partnership, Forum for Africa-China Partnership, the Group of Seven Most Industrialised Nations plus Russia (G8), the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, the NAASP and the 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 has 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 the 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 service

- 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 Tripartite FTA between the SADC, the COMESA and the EAC. In particular, South Africa has championed a "developmental regionalism" approach that combines market integration, cross-border infrastructure development, and 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 Tripartite FTA will combine the three major regional economic communities of 600 million people and 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 in Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia.

In February 2015, South Africa hosted an Extraordinary Summit of the SADC Double Troika in Pretoria. The Extraordinary Summit considered the political and security situation in Lesotho ahead of the February 2015 elections.

A South African Government delegation led by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, which also included Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies and Deputy Finance Minister Mcebisi Jonas, took part in a meeting of the

SADC Council of Ministers in Gaborone on 14 to 15 August 2015.

The meeting in Gaborone was in preparation for the 35th Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government held from 17 to 18 August 2015.

The theme for the summit was “Accelerating Industrialisation of SADC Economies through Transformation of Natural Endowment and Improved Human Capital”.

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 development agenda and address under-development, social integration, full employment and decent work for all and the eradication of poverty globally. Through 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

President Zuma, led the South African delegation to the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 70), which took place in New York in the United States of America (USA) from 28 September to 3 October.

The UNGA is the main deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the UN. Comprising all 193 members of the United Nations, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the UN.

UN Security Council (UNSC)

South Africa has served on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as non-permanent member for two terms. More than two-thirds of the UNSC's agenda focuses on African issues. During its second term, one of South Africa's biggest achievements was the adoption by the UNSC of resolution 2033 (2012), which South Africa initiated, to formalise, strengthen and promote the UNSC's cooperation with regional organisations, particularly the AUPSC. Close on 70 years of its existence, the UNSC still remains

undemocratic, unrepresentative and unfair to developing nations and small states, which cannot remain beholden indefinitely to the will of an unrepresentative minority on most important issues of international peace and security. Other notable achievements that South Africa championed are:

- setting the UN members the target to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the UN in 2015, with a reformed, more inclusive, democratic and representative UNSC
- witnessing the birth of the new State of South Sudan.

The issue of Western Sahara remains an important challenge for the AU and for peace and stability in the region.

UN Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc)

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

South Africa assumed membership of Ecosoc on 1 January 2013, giving the country an opportunity to be located at the centre of the debate on the global development agenda, including the acceleration of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The country's three-year membership term ended in 2015.

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 has previously served on the executive board.

Since its return to Unesco, South Africa has also 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), the International Convention Against Doping in Sport (November 2006) and the 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 with Regulations for the Execution of the Convention (December 2003). 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

South Africa played a leadership role in several inter-governmental 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), which objective is to elaborate a legally binding regulatory framework and to ensure that PMSCs are held accountable for their activities.

South Africa is also the current chair of the Adhoc 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 was one of 14 new member states elected to serve on the UN Human Rights Council from January 2014 until December 2016. The election coincided with the country's celebration of its 20th year of democracy and 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 UN-South Africa Strategic Cooperation Framework (UNSCF), 2013 – 17, is the overall framework for the work of the UN system in South Africa. DIRCO and the UN Country Team developed the SCF in 2012 through a participatory and consultative process. The SCF 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 and the *2010 MDGs Country Report*. These have informed the identification of four pillars of UN cooperation, which are: inclusive growth and decent work; sustainable development; human capabilities; and governance and participation. In addition, a brief analysis of past cooperation and lessons learned, including those identified in the 2009 Joint Evaluation of the Role and Contribution of the UN System in South Africa, and the planned results to be achieved by all partners in the South African context, with the UN contributions indicated at the outcomes level. The SCF also considers the role of South Africa on the continent and globally.

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.

South Africa also takes part in the WHO's Regional Committee for Africa, which convenes annually after the WHA to reflect on the decisions taken at the WHA and plan for the following year's WHA.

Through its participation in these structures, South Africa contributes to setting international norms and making decisions on key issues regarding global and public health.

Group of 20 (G20)

The 2015 G20 Antalya summit was the 10th annual meeting of the G20 heads of government or heads of state. It was held in Antalya, Turkey on 15 to 16 November 2015.

The main theme of the summit was to discuss the world's biggest political and security crises, including Syria and the mass migration of refugees.

The summit was mostly focused on political rather than economic issues due to the terrorist attacks in Paris, in which 132 people were killed. As an organisation dealing with global issues of financial and economic cooperation, the G20 decided to change the format of the session.

In addition to the pre-planned theme, the parties adopted a declaration on fighting terrorism. The heads of state expressed their readiness to fight terrorism in all its forms, including taking steps to resist economic terrorism.

Some other issues, such as how the world working together to boost the world economy were also discussed during the conference.

Delegates includes heads of state and representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Republic of Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America as well as two representatives of the European Union. Special invitees included representatives from Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Senegal, Singapore, Spain and Zimbabwe.

In Antalya, G20 leaders committed to undertake a number of concrete steps to boost growth and job creation, by channeling their efforts towards:

- bolstering counterterrorism efforts
- promoting international norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace
- achieving strong, sustainable and balanced global economic growth
- addressing the global refugee crisis
- promoting high-standard trade and investment
- strengthening the global financial system
- a modern, fair international tax system

- fighting corruption and promoting transparency
- advancing global health and the global health security agenda
- supporting sustainable development
- addressing climate change and boosting clean energy.

The Youth 20 Summit 2015 took place in Istanbul, Turkey from 15 to 21 August. The topics of the Y20 were:

- Youth Unemployment
- Youth and Education in the 21st Century
- Youth's Contribution to Peace

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

South Africa's BRICS membership will help the country and the continent to address its socio-economic challenges.

Some of the BRICS achievements include the following:

- BRICS Inter-Bank Cooperation Mechanism to which the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
- Master Agreement on Extending Credit Facility in Local Currency where the DBSA would have to consider providing the other Member Banks,
- Multilateral Letter of Credit Confirmation Facility Agreement, which will require the DBSA to either guarantee performance against the obligations to a South African exporter, or in the event of South African imports
- Multilateral Agreement on Infrastructure Co-Financing for Africa
- Multilateral Agreement on Green Economy Cooperation Co-Financing
- The establishment of the BRICS Business Council and BRICS Think Tanks Council.

The BRICS grouping achieved another strategic milestone in February 2014, when the science, technology and innovation ministers of the five countries met in South Africa to formalise and institutionalise cooperation in science, technology and innovation under the BRICS framework.

South Africa, as the previous Chair, successfully brought to fruition all the key outcomes adopted at the 5th BRICS Summit in Durban 2014. As such, in Brazil, the Agreement establishing the New Development Bank and the Treaty for the creation of the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement were signed. These agreements signal a historic and seminal moment since the creation of the Bretton Woods international financial architecture. The headquarters of the New Development Bank will be located in Shanghai,

China and its Africa Regional Centre will be established in South Africa concurrently. Further significant initiatives in respect of strengthening intra-BRICS economic cooperation, included the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation among BRICS Export Credit and Guarantees Agencies that will improve the support environment for increasing trade opportunities among the BRICS countries. In BRICS, the member states are equal in access, shareholding, and representation in leadership positions.

Russia hosted the group's seventh summit in July 2015.

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 for 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 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 likely to be overshoot given the 2014 intra-IBSA trade figure of US\$23 billion. IBSA also partnered with developing countries, especially least-developed

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Nomaindiya Mfeketo, led the South African delegation at the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Blue Economy Conference in Mauritius from 2 – 3 September 2015.

IORA was formally launched in 1997, and is a cooperative community of twenty (20) coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean, and six non-member Dialogue Partner States. South Africa served as Vice Chair of IORA in October 2015, and will chair the Association from October 2017 – 2019.

The inaugural Blue Economy Conference took place in the context of IORA having decided to make the Ocean Economy/Blue Economy a strategic priority. South Africa was one of the conference initiating member countries.

The conference was an opportune platform to conceptualise the Blue Economy and enable cooperation on exploiting the vast ocean resources. Key features of agenda entailed analysing the existing capacities of the member states in the following:

- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Renewable Ocean Energy
- Seaport and Shipping
- Seabed Exploration and Minerals.

countries and PCRD countries through the IBSA Facility for Hunger and Poverty Alleviation (IBSA Fund) in development projects that will benefit those countries.

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

The realisation of a 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.

Apart from promoting South-South dialogue, IBSA also fosters inter-regional cooperation.

The engagement process of the IBSA countries takes place on three levels, namely: heads of state and government, government-to-government and people-to-people cooperation.

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

South Africa is one of the founding member states of the IORA, which was launched in Mauritius in March 1997. There are 21 member states and seven dialogue partners; the Indian Ocean Tourism Organisation and the Indian Ocean Research Group has observer status.

IORA, formerly known as the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative and Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, consists of coastal states bordering the Indian Ocean.

The objectives of IORA are to:

- promote sustainable growth and balanced development of the region and member states
- focus on those areas of economic cooperation which provide maximum opportunities for development, shared interest and mutual benefits
- promote liberalisation, remove impediments and lower barriers towards a freer and enhanced flow of goods, services, investment, and technology within the Indian Ocean rim.

IORA members undertake projects for economic cooperation relating to trade facilitation and liberalisation, promotion of foreign investment, scientific and technological exchanges, tourism, movement of natural persons and service providers on a non-discriminatory basis; and the development of infrastructure and human resources, poverty alleviation, promotion of maritime transport and related matters, cooperation in the fields of fisheries trade, research and management, aquaculture, education and training, energy, IT, health, protection of the environment, agriculture, disaster management.

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Nomaindiya Mfeketo, led a South African delegation to the 15th Indian IORA Council of Ministers on 23 October 2015 in Padang, Indonesia.

At this meeting, Indonesia succeeded Australia as IORA Chair for the period 2015 – 2017. Significantly, South Africa became the Vice Chair and a member of the Association's Troika, along with Indonesia and Australia. South Africa will Chair IORA from 2017 – 2019.

Commonwealth

The modern Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 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 Islamic Republic of Iran is chairing the NAM from 2012 to 2015. 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.

G77 & China

The Group of 77 (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, and it provides the means for countries of the South to promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the UN system and promote 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.

International relations

South Africa and Africa

As South Africa undergoes its second transition, Africa also continues to rise. Africa's renaissance will in years ahead be defined by the Africa Agenda 2063.

Relations with southern Africa

Angola

South Africa and Angola continue to work together in maintaining peace, stability, regional integration and the promotion of the SADC Agenda. Both countries are still part of respectively the SADC Troika and the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Troika.

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.

President Zuma undertook an official visit to Angola in November 2015 to attend the 40th Anniversary of the Independence of Angola.

Botswana

South Africa and Botswana cooperate on 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 August 2015, President Zuma led the South African delegation at the 35th Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government in Gaborone, Botswana.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

On 16 October 2015, President Zuma undertook a working visit to The DRC, where he co-chaired a Bi-National Commission (BNC) with his counterpart President Joseph Kabila Kabange of The DRC.

During the BNC Summit, the two heads of state reviewed progress made on bilateral programmes during the first decade of the BNC. These included cooperation projects in the following fields: politics and governance; defence and security; economy, finance and infrastructure; and social and humanitarian affairs.

The 9th SA-DRC BNC was preceded by a ministerial meeting on 15 October 2015 and a senior officials' meeting from 13 to 14 October 2015.

Lesotho

Bilateral cooperation between South Africa and Lesotho includes trade and investment, security,

energy, transport, agriculture, tourism and water.

With South Africa being Lesotho's only neighbour, the economies of the two countries are interdependent. South African companies have a significant presence in Lesotho and are involved in various sectors such as housing, food and beverages, construction, retail, hotels and leisure, banking, and medical services.

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project has been in operation for over 20 years and supplies South Africa with about 780 million cubic meters of water a year. When fully operational, Phase 2 of the project will substantially increase the volume of water supplied to South Africa.

President Zuma attended the inauguration of the Prime Minister-elect Mr Pakalitha Mosisili of the Kingdom of Lesotho on 17 March 2015.

In September 2015, Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba announced measures to improve movement between the Kingdom of Lesotho and South Africa. This was after bilateral negotiations between the ministers of home affairs of the two countries and their senior officials in Lesotho, during the official visit of Minister Gigaba from 21 to 22 September.

Malawi

South Africa and Malawi share strong historical political, economic and cultural ties and warm relations in the context of regional integration and intra-Africa trade.

Mozambique

In May 2015, President Zuma visited Mozambique on a two-day state visit. President Zuma and Mozambique President Filipe Nyusi held successful talks and discussed issues of mutual interest; in particular, bilateral, regional and continental cooperation.

The issue of cooperation was high on the agenda and both presidents agreed to establish a binational commission which will enable continuous monitoring and implementation of decisions taken.

In June 2015, a South African business delegation visited Mozambique to seek trade and investment opportunities. The delegation was participating in an Outward Trade and Investment Mission to Mozambique, organised by the Department of Trade and Industry.

In July 2015, Mozambican delegates took part in a Forestry Trade and Investment mission hosted by the Department of Trade and Industry in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga.

In September 2015 President Zuma returned to Mozambique to unveil the Matola Monument and Interpretative Centre as part of the Heritage

Month programme, and also to pay homage to the sacrifices and contributions made by the Mozambicans towards a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

In October 2015, President Zuma welcomed President Nyusi to South Africa and announced the launch of the South Africa-Mozambique BNC.

Namibia

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.

South Africa and Namibia enjoy strong and fraternal relations that are characterised by regular and increasing interaction at all levels.

Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa attended the inauguration of President-elect, Dr Hage Geingob on 21 March 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia. The inauguration ceremony coincided with the 25th Independence Anniversary celebrations of Namibia.

In May 2015, Namibian President Geingob and First Lady Monica Geingos met with President Zuma as part of a working visit to South Africa.

The two leaders were expected to discuss bilateral cooperation between Namibia and South Africa and also to exchange views on regional and international developments.

As part of a working visit, President Zuma attended the official opening ceremony of the Sacu headquarters on 12 November 2015 in Windhoek, Namibia.

Swaziland

The Kingdom of Swaziland and South Africa share common borders and have very strong common cultural links. Since South Africa's re-entry to the Commonwealth, relations have been conducted at high-commissioner level.

Both countries are members of key sub-regional, regional and international organisations, including the Sacu, the SADC, the AU, the Commonwealth and the UN.

A bilateral agreement between Swaziland and South Africa provides a mechanism for the two countries to cooperate in areas of mutual benefit, ensuring that healthy relations are maintained and further developed.

Tanzania

South Africa established formal diplomatic relations with Tanzania in 1994, immediately after attaining its freedom. 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 African exports are concentrated predominantly in the areas of manufacturing, including machinery, mechanical appliances, paper, rubber products, vehicles, iron and steel, services and technology.

On 31 May 2015, President Zuma, accompanied by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane, participated in the EAC Heads of State Summit in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The summit discussed the political and security situation in Burundi.

Tanzanian President and current Chair of the EAC, President Jakaya Kikwete, extended an invitation to President Zuma to participate in the summit as special guest, in recognition of the pivotal role President Zuma had played in the negotiations that succeeded in bringing peace and stability to Burundi following the civil war in that country.

In October 2015, President Zuma hosted President Kikwete as part of a working visit to South Africa.

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.

On 24 February 2015, President Zuma received his counterpart, President Edgar Chagwa Lungu of the Republic of Zambia on a courtesy visit to South Africa, in the latter's capacity a Chairperson of SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. This was the first visit to South Africa by His Excellency President Lungu since his election on 20 January 2015.

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.

April 2015 marked the first state visit to South Africa by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe since 1994.

South Africa and Zimbabwe elevated bilateral relations with the signing of five agreements set to benefit both countries:

- a BNC Agreement to be led by the two heads of state.
- a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on diplomatic consultations, which would establish a mechanism for regular diplomatic talks on issues such as strengthening bilateral relations, security and cooperation in Africa and other issues of mutual interest
- an agreement on cooperation on water resources management, including the establishment of a joint water commission to enhance cooperation in water resources planning, development and management in the spirit of mutual understanding and benefit
- an agreement regarding mutual assistance between customs administrations between the two countries, which would further cooperation towards the establishment of a one-stop border post
- an MoU on trade cooperation.

Uganda

Relations between South Africa and Uganda date back to the time of the struggle against apartheid when Uganda provided support to and solidarity with the South African liberation movement.

Bilateral cooperation between the countries includes trade and investment, defence and security, agriculture, water and environmental affairs, social development, public works and science and technology.

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.

In June 2015, Deputy President Ramaphosa undertook a working visit to Kenya.

Ethiopia

Bilateral economic relations with Ethiopia were revived in 1995, when South Africa opened an

South Africa is the sixth-largest Commonwealth country by population, after India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh and the UK.

On 9 March 2015, Commonwealth countries celebrated Commonwealth Day under the theme "A Young Commonwealth".

embassy in Addis Ababa. 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.

In October 2015, Deputy Minister Luwellyn Landers concluded a successful visit to the Republic of Madagascar.

Relations with central Africa

Gabon

South Africa and Gabon have a legal framework through a cooperation agreement.

Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe

Diplomatic relations between São Tomé and Príncipe and South Africa were established in May 1994.

Republic of the Congo

Since the establishment of formal relations, South Africa and the Republic of Congo have enjoyed cordial bilateral relations that are structured through the South Africa-Congo Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) as a mechanism to monitor and guide the implementation of agreements.

Equatorial Guinea

In August 2015, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, Forestry and Agriculture of Bioko, Gregorio Boho Camo, accompanied by his deputies, received a South African business delegation on an official visit to Equatorial Guinea.

Cameroon

Cameroon is the economic hub of the Central African Region and exports commodities to most countries of the zone. The seaport of Doulla in Cameroon is used to export goods to landlocked countries in the region such as Chad and the Central Africa Republic (CAR). Many South African companies have already seized business opportunities there. Cameroon is a member of the AU, has adopted Nepad programmes and subscribes to the MDGs. In pursuit of South Africa's regional economic

integration and developmental agenda for the continent, Cameroon has been identified as a strategic partner.

Guinea

President Zuma undertook a working and friendly visit to the Republic of Guinea from 12 to 13 January 2015. During this visit, the two presidents exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of common interest.

At bilateral level, the two heads of state expressed satisfaction at the excellent relations of friendship and cooperation existing between the two countries and reaffirmed their commitment to reinforce and consolidate them by regular holding of the JCC.

Central African Republic

In April 2014, the AU welcomed the establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation in the CAR.

The UNSC adopted a resolution during the same month authorising the establishment of a nearly 12 000-strong UN peacekeeping operation – the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the CAR – to protect civilians and facilitate humanitarian access in the war-torn country.

The mission took over the responsibilities of the African-led International Support Mission from September 2014. The establishment of the new UN mission would mark a new step in the international community's efforts to assist the CAR overcome the challenges confronting it.

Burundi

President Zuma took over from President Nelson Mandela in 2000 as the mediator in the Burundi peace talks. Then Deputy President Zuma led the protracted but successful mediation process, which led to a resolution of the Burundi conflict and the ushering of a new government in 2005. The highlights of the mediation process led by President Zuma included a key achievement for the African continent, the deployment of South African peacekeeping troops in Burundi for seven years, 2003 to 2009.

Rwanda

In March 2014, the South African Government expelled four Rwandan diplomats and one from Burundi for violating their status. Investigations revealed direct links between these diplomats and criminal activities. The action targeted only those who violated the Vienna Convention, Article 41 and South Africa's own Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001. The

The United Kingdom (UK) is the largest source of foreign direct investment into South Africa, worth R772 billion. There are approximately 115 British companies active in South Africa and they have created close to 20 000 jobs in the period January 2008 to April 2014. The UK also remains the largest destination for South African exports in Europe, worth R37,6 billion. Imports from the UK into South Africa are stood at R35.5 billion in 2014. Total trade increased by 13,7% from 2013 to 2014.

Ambassador of Rwanda, the Military Attaché and other functionaries in the Rwanda Diplomatic Mission in Pretoria are in place and functioning normally.

Regrettably, the Rwandan Government reciprocated disproportionately by expelling all South African diplomats except the Ambassador thus making the work of the mission in Rwanda difficult as it cannot discharge its services that South Africans and Rwandans normally receive.

Relations with North and West Africa and the Horn of Africa

Algeria

South Africa and Algeria continue to work hand-in-hand in building a stronger AU and its structures. To this end, regional developments such as the Mali and CAR crises and the general security situation in the Sahel and Maghreb regions also featured prominently in the consultations with President Bouteflika.

In March 2015, the President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria hosted President Zuma for a three-day state visit.

South Africa and Algeria enjoy excellent bilateral cooperation through the framework of the South Africa-Algeria BNC. President Zuma and President Bouteflika convened the 6th Session of the BNC.

Saharawi

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 African Renaissance Fund, 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 principles:

- 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 of international human rights law in the occupied territories, notable the right to freedom of association, assembly, movement and expression.
- Respect of 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.

Mauritania

South Africa made a constructive contribution in Mauritania in support of the implementation of the democratic roadmap 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 that was ready for signature would facilitate the opening of trade and investment opportunities for the two countries.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane undertook a working visit to Mauritania in August 2015.

During the visit, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane met with President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz as well as Mr Yahya Ould Hademine, Prime Minister of Mauritania and Ms Khadijetou M'Bareck Fall, Minister-delegate for African and Maghreb Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

The ministers discussed the status of bilateral relations between South Africa and Mauritania and conducted the signing of agreement on the establishment of a JCC, as well as an MoU on regular bilateral consultations.

Niger

Following her visit to Mauritania, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane undertook a working visit to the Republic of Niger at the end of August 2015.

She met with Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, African Integration and Nigeriens 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.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane also paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister of Niger, Mr Brigi Rafini, during her visit.

It is expected that the 2nd Session of the JCC will be hosted by Niger during the course of 2016.

Egypt

South Africa and Egypt have created a political environment that is conducive to business.

In April 2015, President Zuma arrived in Cairo, Egypt, for a working visit to further strengthen and consolidate the strategic bilateral relations between the two countries and to reaffirm South Africa's commitment through the convening of the 9th Session of the JBC.

During June 2015, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies, led the South African delegation at the 3rd Summit of the Tripartite in Sharm el-Sheikh. The summit launched the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite FTA on 10 June 2015.

Libya

In January 2016, President Zuma received a delegation from the National Salvation Government of Libya, led by its Prime Minister, Mr Khalifa Ghwill. The meeting took place following a request of Prime Minister Ghwill to brief President Zuma on the latest developments in Libya in light of the signing of the agreement to establish a government of national accord, negotiated under the auspices of the UN.

Côte d'Ivoire

South Africa is committed to working with the government of Côte d'Ivoire in its quest for national unity and reconciliation.

South Sudan

South Sudan and South Africa upgraded the missions in their respective capitals to fully fledged embassies. By January 2014, South Africa had trained more than 1 600 government officials from South Sudan as part of a capacity-building programme within the context of the AU

PCRD initiative.

Various engagements with senior Sudanese and South Sudanese officials to discuss the negotiation process illustrated South Africa's ongoing support to the AU negotiations between Sudan and South Sudan over post-independence issues.

In January 2014, the South African Government welcomed the signing of Agreements on the Cessation of Hostilities and the Status of Detainees, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army. South Africa views the signing of the agreements as key developments in resolving the political differences in South Sudan and crucial moves to bring the country back onto the road to development and stability.

Deputy President Ramaphosa undertook a working visit to South Sudan in June 2015, during which he hailed steps taken to reunite the ruling party Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) South Sudan and to end the war in this country.

Deputy President Ramaphosa returned to South Sudan in January 2016, where he represented President Zuma at the Conference of the South Sudanese Liberation Movement.

During October 2015, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir undertook an extended official visit to South Africa for bilateral talks with President Zuma. According to presidential spokesperson, Ateny Wek Ateny, President Kiir visited South Africa to brief the President Zuma on the progress made in the implementation of the peace agreement and reunification of the three factions of the ruling SPLM, which split into three separate groups in 2013 after internal debates about democratic reforms turned violent.

Sudan

President Zuma undertook a working and friendly visit to the Republic of the Sudan at the end of January 2015. This visit was within the framework of the consolidation of solidarity, friendship and brotherly cooperation which has always existed between the Sudan and South Africa.

During this visit, the two presidents exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues of common interest.

Somalia

In January 2013, South Africa pledged its support for Somalia's new government and the

2015 was designated as the "Year of China in South Africa". The "Year of South Africa in China" coincided with South Africa's celebration of 20 years of freedom and democracy.

country on its road towards a prosperous and stable democracy.

Nigeria

Nigeria is considered one of South Africa's most important 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.

In May 2015, President Zuma attended the inauguration of the President-Elect, General Muhammadu Buhari in Abuja.

In October 2015, Nigerian Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, visited South Africa, where he met with President Zuma and Deputy President Ramaphosa to discuss issues of common interests to both Nigeria and South Africa.

In December 2015, President Buhari led a delegation to Johannesburg, South Africa, for the China-Africa Forum.

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

Ghana

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

In August 2015, the Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Mzwandile Masina led a delegation of South African businesspeople for the Outward Selling and Investment Mission taking place in Accra, Ghana.

The objective of the mission was to create market access of South African value-added products and services into Africa and also to increase trade and investment, as well as to strengthen bilateral relations between South Africa and Ghana.

Burkina Faso

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.

Cape Verde

Bilateral discussions on a General Cooperation Agreement, led to the signing of a JCC, early in 2013.

Senegal

South Africa and Senegal continue to play an important role in promoting peace and stability through participating in peacekeeping operations in their regions.

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.

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

This year marks the 18th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the 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.

As per to the Beijing Declaration, China and South Africa will 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 will 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 16 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.

The objectives of the Joint Working Group on Cooperation are to:

- achieve a more equitable trade balance
- encourage trade in manufactured value-added products
- increase inward-bound trade and investment missions
- finalise the working group on trade statistics
- increase investment in South Africa's manufacturing industry
- promote value-adding and beneficiation activities in close proximity to the source of raw materials
- cooperate and provide mutually beneficial technical support in the areas of the green economy, skills development and industrial financing

- pursue opportunities to cooperate in infrastructure construction projects such as roads, railways, ports, power generation, airports and housing.

The overall aim of South Africa's approach was to use this mechanism to address inequality, poverty and unemployment, through enhancing bilateral economic relations.

South Africa has taken over co-chairmanship of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) from Egypt, on behalf of Africa, for two more years, ending in 2018. The forum is one of the most strategic partnerships between Africa and its development partners.

The Minister of Tourism, Mr Derek Hanekom, visited China to engage with the country's travel and tourism business leaders as part of SA Tourism's roadshow in the country in April 2015. The visit to China was followed by a roadshow to India.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane hosted her counterpart, Mr Wang Yi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, for bilateral consultations in Pretoria in April 2015.

The consultations focused on the implementation of the 5 – 10 Year Strategic Framework on Cooperation signed in 2014 and preparations for the upcoming FOCAC event.

On 3 September 2015, President Zuma participated in a commemorative event in Beijing to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of the occupation of China and World War II during a working visit to China.

The President was accompanied by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and Ms Thembisile Majola-Embalo, Deputy Minister of Energy.

In October 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane also hosted Mr Yang Jiechi, State Councillor of the People's Republic of China, for bilateral consultations. State Councillor Yang was on an official visit to South Africa to discuss preparations for the upcoming 2nd Summit of the FOCAC.

The Johannesburg Summit and the 6th Ministerial Conference of the FOCAC was held in Johannesburg from 3 to 5 December 2015. Heads of State and government, heads of delegation, the chairperson of the AUC and ministers of foreign affairs and ministers in charge of economic cooperation from China and 50 African countries attended the Summit and Ministerial Conference, respectively.

The establishment of the BRICS Development Bank in 2014 to be headquartered in Shanghai and the decision to locate its African Regional Centre 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.

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.

Mongolia

South Africa and Mongolia could work together to meet that country's international commitments on climate change.

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.

East Asia

Japan

In 2015, Japan and South Africa celebrated 105 years of official relations. Japan is South Africa's third-largest trading partner with the two countries cooperating in various fields such as training and skills development.

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development 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.

In August 2015, Deputy President Ramaphosa visited Japan. The three-day working visit was aimed at promoting South Africa as a preferred investment destination and reassuring Japanese investors that South Africa was open for business.

The delegation included several Cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, senior government officials and the CEOs of South African companies.

In February 2016, Deputy President Ramaphosa met with the Japan business federation, Keidanren, in Cape Town. Keidanren (abbreviation of Keizai Dantai Rengōkai or the Federation of Economic Organisations in English) is Japan's most influential business federation, representing the top Japanese multinational companies with the highest volumes of global business.

The meeting explored how investment and trade between South Africa and Japan can contribute to key objectives such as job

Since the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in December 1993, a solid bilateral relationship has developed between South Africa and Vietnam, reflected among others, in the 13 bilateral legal instruments concluded between them.

According to official South African trade statistics, total trade between South Africa and Vietnam is growing year-on-year and amounted to R13,4 billion in 2014 (up from R11,2 billion in 2013) out of a total of just under R107 billion with the ten member states of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

creation, industrial development, human resource development and innovation as part of implementing South Africa's NDP.

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 economic and business links.

The ROK 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 encompasses a wide variety of products ranging from minerals to sophisticated high-technology electric products.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

South Africa established diplomatic relations with the DPRK in August 1998. The two countries enjoy cordial relations, which date back due to the historic support that the DPRK provided during the struggle against colonialism and apartheid. The South African ambassador to China is also accredited to the DPRK's capital, Pyongyang.

Economic relations between the two countries remain limited owing to the sanctions imposed by the UNSC because of the DPRK's nuclear programme, which affects the ongoing tension in the Korean Peninsula.

Central Asia

There is no South African representation in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, but the South African ambassador in Turkey is accredited to these countries on a non-resident basis.

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.

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.

Azerbaijan

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Azerbaijan were established in 1991.

The South African Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, is accredited on a non-residential basis to Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan opened a new embassy in South Africa in January 2012.

Turkey

South Africa's major exports to Turkey comprise mineral products, base metals, machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipment, chemical and allied products, vehicles, aircraft, iron and steel, organic chemicals, ores, slag and ash.

The Deputy Minister of Small Business Development, Ms Elizabeth Thabethe, led a business delegation of about 35 businesspeople to Turkey in July 2015.

The Outward Trade and Investment mission sought to encourage local manufactures to explore exports opportunities and create jobs locally whilst attracting investments into the country.

South Asia

South Africa's economic strategy is strongly focused on deepening trade and investment linkages with the south, 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 and the G20.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane hosted and co-chaired with the Indian Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs, Ms Sushma Swaraj, the ministerial engagement of the 9th session of the South Africa-India JMC in Durban in May 2015. The ministerial engagement follows the meetings of the sub-committees from March

to May 2015.

President Zuma attended the third India-Africa Summit Forum which took place in New Delhi in October 2015. The Delhi Declaration and the India-Africa Framework for the Strategic Cooperation was adopted by 41 heads of state and government from the African continent and others who attended the Third India-Africa Forum Summit.

These outcome documents cover areas such as economic development; trade and industry; agriculture; energy; the blue/ocean economy; infrastructure; education and skills development; health; and peace and security.

The value of trade conducted in 2015 between India and South Africa was worth R94 billion.

Pakistan

Pakistan and South Africa enjoy cordial, bilateral relations.

South Africa views Pakistan as an important role-player in the international arena and South Africa welcomes the strengthening of democracy in Pakistan. South Africa has identified additional avenues of cooperation regarding law enforcement issues, an Extradition Treaty, an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, an MoU on Cooperation in Combating the Illicit Trafficking in Narcotics, Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals.

Sri Lanka

Bilateral trade between Sri Lanka and South Africa has seen a steady increase in growth in both exports and imports.

In February 2015, Deputy Minister Mfeketo visited Sri Lanka, where representatives of the two countries signed agreements on tourism cooperation and cooperation between the South African and Sri Lankan Zoological Gardens.

At the same time, the Fifth Partnership Forum between South Africa and Sri Lanka took place in Colombo.

The visit was followed up with Deputy Minister Mfeketo's series of meetings with representatives of International Tamil Diaspora organisations from Sri Lanka, held in May 2015 in London, United Kingdom.

Bangladesh and Nepal

Deputy Minister Mfeketo paid a working visit to Bangladesh and Nepal in August 2015. It was the first ever visit by a South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation to both countries since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1994.

The Third Senior Officials Meeting between South Africa and Bangladesh took place on 19 August 2015 in Dhaka. This event was co-chaired by the Deputy Director-General for Asia and Middle East, Dr Anil Sooklal together with his Bangladeshi counterpart.

The visits to Bangladesh and Nepal highlighted the importance that South Africa holds in further developing and consolidating bilateral and multilateral relations with both countries.

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 2014, South African exports to Bangladesh almost doubled over the figure of 2013 to reach R852 million. Bangladesh imports into South Africa reached a new high of R745 million in 2014.

The visit to Nepal underscored the continued commitment of the South African Government towards supporting their internal reconciliation and nation-building endeavours. In Nepal, a courtesy call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs was foreseen as well as interaction with the Nepal Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Constituent Assembly, the Secretariat of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and the Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

South-East Asia

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

Thailand

During the past two decades, Thailand has become South Africa's biggest trading partner in Southeast Asia and South Africa has become Thailand's biggest trading partner on the continent.

Thailand is also the second most important destination for South African tourists.

Malaysia

Malaysia remains the largest investor in South Africa from the Southeast 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.

A number of South African universities have signed MoUs with their Malaysian counterparts.

In August 2015, Deputy Minister of Tourism Tokozile Xasa visited Malaysia for a series of tourism roadshows.

Malaysia is the fourth largest new investor into the African continent.

Singapore and Indonesia

In April 2015, Deputy President Ramaphosa attended the Africa-Asia Summit and the commemoration of the historic summit in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955, which brought together Africa and Asia to push forward the struggle for liberation and self-determination.

Vietnam

Over the past 20 years, the relationship between South Africa and Vietnam has grown into a multifaceted relationship with growing cooperation in many fields, rapid growth in people-to-people links and strong state-to-state and government-to-government relations, which includes cooperation at many levels – bilateral, as well as multilateral.

Political relations with Vietnam are strong, with a substantial exchange of high-level visits between the two countries over the past few years.

The protection of South Africa's wildlife, particularly the rhino, has been high on the agenda of discussions with Vietnam.

Regarding cooperation in the field of wildlife protection, the two countries shared concerns about the illegal trade in protected wildlife species and products, especially rhino, and agreed to work together to put an end to this issue.

In June 2015, Deputy Minister Mfeketo led a South African government delegation to Vietnam, where she co-chaired the 3rd meeting of the South Africa-Vietnam Partnership Forum in Hanoi with her Vietnamese counterpart, Mr Vu Hong Nam.

Deputy President Ramaphosa hosted Mr Hoang Trung Hai, Deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam in Cape Town on an official visit to South Africa in August 2015.

During his visit, Deputy Prime Minister Hoang paid a courtesy call on President Zuma and held discussions with Deputy President Ramaphosa to discuss bilateral and multilateral cooperation issues of mutual interest.

In August 2015, the Minister of Science and Technology, Ms Naledi Pandor, signed the first MoU on science, technology and innovation with Vietnam in Pretoria. The Vietnamese Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Tran Quoc Khanh, signed the MoU on behalf of Vietnam.

The MoU paves the way for a bilateral agreement on cooperation in science, technology and innovation between the two countries.

Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Timor-Leste

South Africa's political relations with Brunei-Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Timor-Leste are cordial and friendly.

Myanmar

Like the rest of the international community, South Africa has welcomed the political reform process underway in Myanmar and has supported all efforts aimed at opening up the political space for participation by all the people of Myanmar through the political parties of their choice.

Philippines

The South African government established formal diplomatic relations with the Philippines in November 1993. The Philippine Embassy in Pretoria was established in June 1994. South Africa, in turn, established an embassy in Manila in December 2004.

Relations between South Africa and the Philippines are strong both at bilateral and multilateral levels. Both countries are influential in organisations of the south, including the NAM and the G77+China.

On the economic front, both countries have undertaken efforts to enhance bilateral trade and commercial relations.

In May 2015, the Department of Trade and Industry led a number of business delegates on an Outward Selling and Investment Mission to Vietnam and the Philippines. Delegates included manufacturers and exporters in the agro-processing, chemicals, mining or minerals and capital equipment sectors.

Australasia and the Pacific islands

Australia

South Africa and Australia have a history of productive cooperation across a range of sectors and issues, including fisheries protection, mining, law enforcement, sport, tourism, education and training in fields such as ICT, public administration, mining and resources

management, defence relations and customs cooperation.

Australia is the sixth-largest export destination for South African goods. The majority of exports from South Africa to Australia are finished goods. Exports of high-quality passenger motor vehicles head the list.

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

South Africa and Australia work closely together for the benefit of third countries such as Zimbabwe in the areas of sanitation and revenue collection.

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

New Zealand

At bilateral level, South Africa and New Zealand enjoy close cooperation in business, tourism, agriculture, disarmament, fisheries, environmental protection, indigenous people and human rights issues.

In sport, South Africa and New Zealand have strong ties – especially in rugby and cricket, but in recent years also soccer.

The two countries enjoy productive cooperation at 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 in international environmental meetings and enhance scientific cooperation.

The two countries also enjoy a close working relationship within the context of the Antarctic Treaty and Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement, and interact regularly within the context of the World Trade Organisation and the Cairns Group.

In January, President Zuma held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr John Key, at the margins of the World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland.

The two leaders discussed a range of issues of common interest between South Africa including the need to strengthen economic relations and trade.

President Zuma congratulated the Prime Minister on New Zealand's election to the UNSC

and said that South Africa looked forward to working with New Zealand on peace and security as well as other issues.

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.

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.

At the end of August 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane concluded a successful visit to the UAE, where she led a government delegation at the inaugural South Africa-United Arab Emirates JCC.

President Zuma led a high-level delegation on a working visit to the UAE on 28 March 2016.

Iran

South Africa and Iran have established a Joint Bilateral Commission (JBC) to allow for a high-level review of existing bilateral relations and to consider ways in which these could be expanded.

The JBC, chaired by South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and Iran's Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, meets alternatively in South Africa and Iran biannually. The JBC is regarded as one of South Africa's most successful and longest-running bilateral mechanisms. Several South African companies are involved in major projects in Iran.

South Africa maintains a friendly relationship with Iran, even though the international sanctions imposed against the Islamic Republic have made trade increasingly difficult.

In May 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane, along with a South African delegation, undertook a visit to Iran for the 12th Meeting of the JCC between the countries.

Deputy Minister Mfeketo led a high-level delegation to Iran on a working visit in August 2015. She was accompanied by the deputy

ministers of Trade and Industry and Energy, as well as senior officials from Trade and Industry, Energy, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and National Treasury.

In November 2015, Deputy President Ramaphosa concluded an official visit to Iran.

Saudi Arabia

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Saudi Arabia were formalised during a visit by former President Nelson Mandela in November 1994. Two missions were established in the kingdom during March of 1995: an embassy with a chargé d'affaires in the capital Riyadh and a consulate-general in the commercial capital of Jeddah.

The consulate-general is 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 and remains South Africa's largest supplier of crude oil.

South Africa and Saudi Arabia's economic and political relations received a significant boost following a successful state visit by President Zuma in March 2015.

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.

On 27 March 2016, President Zuma again led a high-level delegation on a state visit to Saudi Arabia.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are managed through the Joint Economic Commission, which held its 7th session in March 2016 in Cape Town.

Qatar

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and the State of Qatar were established in 1994, strengthened by official visits to Qatar by former presidents Nelson Mandela and Thabo 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 to strengthen and elevate bilateral relations between the countries.

The President met with the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, for bilateral talks on trade and economic relations between the two countries and critical aspects

related to global and regional security and stability.

He also paid a courtesy call on 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 the two countries has increased from R4 billion in 2012 to R7 billion in 2015.

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.

In November 2015, the Department of Trade and Industry led a delegation of business-people on an Outward Trade and Investment Mission to Kuwait and Qatar. The business-people represented companies that operate in agro-processing, chemicals, metals fabrication and built environment.

Iraq

In March 2016, ACCORD (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 South African Foreign Ministry supported and facilitated the visit.

Yemen

Relations between South Africa and Yemen are cordial, and the two countries share membership of the IORA and the NAM.

Arab-Israel peace process

South Africa supports peace between Israel and the Arab world, which must involve an end to the illegal occupation by Israel of Arab land, namely in Palestine, Syria and Lebanon, which has led to conflict and violence between the peoples of the region over the last six decades.

South Africa does not have a policy aimed at boycotting Israel, but discourages people from visiting Israel because of the country's continued occupation of Palestinian land.

South Africa remains committed to the

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.

aspirations of the Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve freedom and independence.

The South African Government continues to play a role on its own, through the AU and with other partners internationally to advance peaceful negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis aimed at encouraging both sides to partake in direct talks that will lead to a permanent resolution of that conflict.

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 through these channels that South Africa interacts directly with the two parties in conflict.

Furthermore, President Zuma appointed Former Minister, Dr Zola Skweyiya and former Deputy Minister, Aziz Pahad as his Special Envoys to the Middle East Peace Process. The Envoys have visited Palestine and Israel including other neighbouring countries in the region to exchange views on a possible way forward. The envoys have also been meeting with different Embassies accredited to South Africa and different interest groups in pursuance of their mandate.

South Africa continues to promote the peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict in SADC, the AU, the Non-Aligned Movement, the UN and other international forums, including BRICS.

Palestine

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

Bilateral relations between Palestine and South Africa are facilitated through a JCC that was established in 1995. Progress in establishing bilateral cooperation agreements proceeded apace, resulting in the signing of nine bilateral cooperation agreements and during

President Abbas' State Visit, three agreements were signed, namely:

- an agreement for the establishment of a JCC
- an MoU on Political Consultations
- an 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.

Syria

Deputy Minister Mfeketo met with Dr Fayssal al Mekdad, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates for the Syrian Arab Republic for bilateral consultations in Cape Town in August 2015.

The discussions focused on bilateral relations and the renewing of the Protocol on Cooperation between South Africa and Syria for another five years. Diplomatic relations between Syria and South Africa were established in June 1994. Both countries maintain resident diplomatic missions in each other's country.

Relations with the Americas

United States of America

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 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 official development assistance (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 foreign direct investment (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 would open its first African office in Johannesburg in 2015.

Canada chose Johannesburg as the location for its first Export Development Canada (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 Caribbean Community and Common Market (Caricom) and acts as the region’s voice in the G20.

In June 2015, Deputy Minister Landers engaged with the heads of mission (ambassadors, high commissioners and/or their representatives) of the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) accredited to South Africa in a Discussion Forum. The discussions focused on opportunities for South Africa in Latin America and explored ways to expand relations between South Africa and GRULAC.

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 (Brazil) and the UN. South Africa’s business sector has extensive interests in the region, including SAB Miller, AngloGold Ashanti, Naspers, Denel, Sasol, 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 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.

Deputy Minister Landers undertook a high-level official visit to five Caribbean states in June 2015.

The visit underscored the cordial relations South Africa enjoys with the governments and people of Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Haiti.

The visit aimed to promote and sustain linkages between South Africa and the Caribbean in the important areas of trade and investment, science and technology, travel and tourism, communication and transportation infrastructure, energy, information and communication technology and cultural industries.

During the visit, high-level meetings were scheduled with senior members of government, business, academia and the youth. MoUs on Political Consultations were signed in Guyana and Suriname.

In September 2015, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane undertook a working visit to Jamaica, where she addressed the International Women’s Forum on 20 September 2015, under the theme: “Phenomenal Women”.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane also held bilateral consultations with her counterpart, Mr

Arnold J Nicholson, QC, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. The ministers signed an MoU on the Establishment of Political Consultations.

In November 2015, Deputy Minister Landers visited the Dominican Republic.

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 5th Joint Consultative Mechanism between South Africa and Chile with his Chilean counterpart. South Africa and Chile enjoy sound bilateral relations which are conducted through the JCM which is conducted 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

The two countries have a MoU regarding bilateral consultations. Three MoUs were also signed by PetroSA and Petróleos 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, HE 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 1st 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 – United Kingdom 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 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 IT services, and plastics.

Deputy Minister Landers undertook a working visit to Ireland in November 2015, where he co-chaired the 4th South Africa-Ireland Partnership Forum held in Dublin.

The partnership forum is the structured mechanism to manage and monitor bilateral relations between South Africa and Ireland. It was established in 2004 through 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 (EU)

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 SA-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, inter alia on 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 budget of the development cooperation programme, which will run up to 2016, is R66 million a year. The Belgian region of Flanders also has a long-standing development programme in South Africa, also with a budget of R66 million per year up to 2016.

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, the chemical industry, as well as in the 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 at the level of deputy ministers of international relations and a Joint Economic Commission at the level of Ministers of trade occur 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 2015.

The theme of 2015's WEF meeting was "The New Global Context", which reflected the period of profound political, economic, social and technological change that the world had entered that had the potential to end the era of economic integration and international partnership that began in 1989.

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 Nepal 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 to 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 Afrika Kontakt solidarity movement and the South African Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark. Afrika Kontakt is a solidarity movement with its roots in the anti-apartheid movement, 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 to Norway 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 3rd 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 and human rights, social, environmental and climate change and have supported and worked with each other in bilateral and multilateral relations.

The two countries will further discuss 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 9th session of the BNC between South Africa and Sweden in October 2015 in Stockholm. He also met with Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, Ms Åsa Romson, to hold discussions on issues of mutual interest at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

At a bilateral level, discussions focused on trade and investment, skills development and training as well as job creation. At a multilateral level, discussions included cooperation in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, 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.

South Africa will count on France's support in ensuring the effective implementation of the UN Resolution 2033, which provides for closer coordination between the UNSC and the AUPSC.

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 United States 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 resulted 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 Cyprus, 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 USSR, 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.

