

# POCKET GUIDE TO SOUTH AFRICA



## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

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In 2011, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation released the *White Paper on Building a Better World: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu*. South Africa is a multifaceted, multicultural and multiracial country that embraces the concept of Ubuntu to define who people are and how they relate to others. The philosophy of Ubuntu means “humanity” and is reflected in the idea that South Africans affirm their humanity when they affirm the humanity of others.

South Africa has risen to the challenge and plays a meaningful role in the region, on the continent and in the world.

South Africa’s unique approach to global issues has found expression in the concept of Ubuntu. These concepts inform the country’s particular approach to diplomacy.

This philosophy translates into an approach to international relations that respects all nations, peoples and cultures. It recognises that it is in South Africa’s national interest to promote and support the positive development of others.

South Africa therefore accords central importance to:

- its immediate African neighbourhood and continent
- working with countries of the South to address shared challenges of underdevelopment
- promoting global equity and social justice
- working with countries of the North to develop a true and effective partnership for a better world
- doing its part to strengthen the multilateral system, including its transformation, to reflect the diversity of nations, and ensure its centrality in global governance.

### **South Africa and Africa**

South Africa has always regarded Africa as the centrepiece of its foreign policy, and is mobilising a significant amount of resources towards the socio-economic awakening of the continent, peace-making and peace-building, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development.

### **African Union (AU)**

The AU is Africa’s premier institution and principal organisation for promoting the continent’s accelerated socio-economic integration, which will lead to greater unity and solidarity between African countries and peoples. South Africa was instrumental in establishing the AU and its organs, which are the:

In November and December 2011, the 17th Congress of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in Durban. The Department of International Relations and Cooperation hosted the event on behalf of the country, with the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, as president of the summit.



- Assembly
- Executive Council
- specialised technical committees
- financial institutions
- Permanent Representatives Committee
- Peace and Security Council (PSC)
- Pan-African Parliament
- Economic, Social and Cultural Council
- Court of Justice
- African Court on Human and People's Rights
- African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

The financial institutions, the African Central Bank and African Monetary Fund, and the African Court of Justice still have to be operationalised.

The AU has made notable progress towards the political and economic integration of the continent:

- the AU has developed the PSC, which is responsible for resolving conflicts, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction in conjunction with the United Nations (UN)
- a common defence policy has been adopted, which includes the Standby Force, with a nucleus of five brigades, one from each region
- the Human and Peoples' Rights Court has been established
- the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Declaration on Gender Equality is being implemented
- the Protocol on the Court of Justice is underway.

South Africa has been active in efforts to bring about peace and stability on the continent. The country has engaged in peacekeeping operations and peace-building measures in support of the African Agenda, and has played an important mediation and/or facilitation role in countries such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Zimbabwe.

South Africa has also helped some countries on the continent to set up institutions, such as the Independent Electoral Commission, while participating in election-observation

missions, establishing functional civil services and using South Africa's experience in post-conflict and reconstruction and development programmes.

## **New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad)**

South Africa played a role in the establishment of Nepad and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and hosted the secretariats of these two bodies. Nepad, as a blueprint for Africa's socio-economic development, represents the incarnation of the objectives of the AU at a practical level to intensify the struggle against poverty and underdevelopment.

Nepad remains the main frame of reference for intra-African relations and Africa's partnerships with international entities such as the European Union (EU)-AU Strategic Partnership, Forum for Africa China Partnership, the G8, New Africa Asia Strategic Partnership (NAASP) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The primary objectives of Nepad are to eradicate poverty, halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process, promote the empowerment and economic integration of women and achieve the millennium development goals.

The underlying principles of Nepad are:

- **Accountability:** Nepad recognises the importance of good political, economic and corporate governance in creating the conditions for development, with African governments embracing greater accountability to their constituents. Nepad also seeks to base Africa's partnership with the North on mutual accountability.
- **Ownership:** Nepad is a long-term vision that is African-led and -owned. Ownership should be promoted through broad and deep participation by all sectors of society, and by tapping into indigenous knowledge/expertise to define needs and solutions.
- **Partnership:** While Nepad is a partnership between and among Africans, it seeks to accelerate sustainable development in Africa through partnerships with the South, and to forge a new partnership with the developed North that changes the unequal relationship with Africa.

One of the outflows of Nepad was the introduction of the APRM, accepted by member states of the AU as an African self-monitoring mechanism in 2003.

By April 2011, 30 African countries had acceded to the APRM and 14 had been peer-reviewed.

## South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The SADC has been in existence since 1980, when it was formed as a loose alliance of nine majority-ruled states in southern Africa known as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, with the main aim of coordinating development projects to lessen economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa.

The founding member states are: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

As a community of nations, the SADC has had to work together in confronting various challenges of political and socio-economic nature.

The Free Trade Agreement, which was launched in 2008, is part of the SADC's ongoing efforts to create strong relations with southern African countries through trade. The SADC also aims to create a regional customs union.

In August 2011, President Jacob Zuma was elected as chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Troika.

## Asia and Australasia

South Africa and Indonesia were instrumental in the launch of the NAASP in Bandung in 2005 on the 50th anniversary of the Bandung Conference, which cemented Afro-Asian solidarity. NAASP represents a commitment by heads of state and government to help build closer economic ties between Africa and Asia.

The second Southern African Development Community-Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa-East African Community Tripartite Heads of State and Government Summit was held in South Africa at the end of June 2011.

The summit officially launched the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. The three pillars of the FTA are market integration, infrastructure development and industrial development.

The summit also resolved to address the challenges associated with facilitating the movement of businesspeople across regional economic communities, together with infrastructure development.



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South Africa continues to strengthen its relations with the region through increased two-way trade; personal exchanges between high-level dignitaries; and the finalisation of new instruments of cooperation in the science and technology fields, through technology transfer, investments and overseas development assistance (ODA) in capacity-building.

While Japan, Malaysia and Taiwan already rank among the foremost sources of foreign direct investment in South Africa, the significance of China and India as sources of investment, is growing. South Africa's multinational companies are finding attractive investment opportunities in Australia, China, Indonesia and Thailand in diverse fields such as mining, minerals processing, electronic media and the petrochemical industry.

December 2011 marked 14 years since the official establishment of diplomatic relations between South Africa and China. The South Africa-China bilateral relationship is one of the most dynamic partnerships of its kind. China is South Africa's largest trading partner.

South Africa also plays a leading role in the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, which creates an opportunity for countries of the South to serve their economic interests.

Apart from strengthening trilateral cooperation, India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) countries are committed to collective efforts to reform the UN Security Council, as well

Highlights on the international scene in 2011 included:

- election by acclamation to the United Nations (UN) Security Council
- admission to the most powerful bloc of emerging markets: Brazil, Russia, India and China
- leadership of the infrastructure-development initiative within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development
- assumption of the chairpersonship of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security
- hosting the SADC-East African Economic Community-Common Economic Community of East and Southern Africa
- hosting the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 17th Conference of the Parties and Seventh Session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol Summit in Durban
- hosting the India, Brazil, South Africa Summit.



In April 2011, President Jacob Zuma led a South African delegation to the third Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Leaders Meeting held in the Hainan Province of the People's Republic of China. The theme of the summit was *Broad Vision, Shared Prosperity*.



South Africa attended the meeting as the newest member of BRICS, with objectives to:

- consolidate South Africa's BRICS membership and commit to its processes and related mechanisms
- identify and leverage opportunities for South Africa's developmental agenda
- enhance the African Agenda and sustainable development
- promote broad cooperation in the multilateral arena
- work for cooperation with other emerging market economies.

At the end of the summit, a joint declaration was signed, which captures the central essence of what this evolving formation is committed to and seeks to achieve.

as the international financial architecture and to take joint steps to mitigate the effects of the global financial crisis. The three countries have also agreed to redouble their efforts to promote transport interconnectivity by adopting cooperative maritime and aviation frameworks that will assist in facilitating the new intra-IBSA trade target of US\$25 billion by 2015.

South Africa's trade with its IBSA partners has increased significantly since the forum's inception. South Africa's trade statistics for the period 2007 to 2010 showed an increase in overall trade from R36,92 billion in 2007 to R58,133 billion in 2010.

South Africa enjoys wide-ranging multilateral relations with Australia and New Zealand.

## The Middle East

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation distinguishes between two clearly identifiable subregions in the Middle East. There is the Levant, which comprises Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria, and the Arabian/Persian Gulf Region, consisting of the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, namely Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iran and Yemen.

The Middle East is an important economic region as it occupies a unique geopolitical position in the tricontinental hub of Europe, Asia and Africa.

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South Africa's leading trade partners in the region are Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Israel and the UAE.

South Africa supports a just, equitable and comprehensive peace process in the Middle East and an end to the illegal occupation of land that has led to conflict and violence between the peoples of the region.

### **The Americas**

The overall bilateral relationship with the United States of America (USA) remains strong, with cooperation expanding on matters of common interest and mutual benefit.

One of the highlights in South African-US relations is that the USA has identified with South Africa's strategic priorities and is making an effort to align its programmes and projects with these.

In June 2011, the First Lady of the USA, Mrs Michelle Obama, visited South Africa. During her stay, she, among other things, delivered a keynote address to the Young African Women Leaders Forum, and visited former President Nelson Mandela and Robben Island.

In September 2011, President Zuma concluded a working visit to the USA, where he led the South African delegation to the 66th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York, and also promoted economic and educational ties with the USA. He visited the New York Stock Exchange, and ended his stay with a stop-over in Houston, Texas, where he met with the business community to promote trade and investments, as well as education.

Relations between South Africa and Canada are conducted largely within the framework of the Annual Consultations (AC). This is the primary forum in which issues of mutual interest and concern receive specific focus.

The growth in regular high-level visits in both directions serves to cement and expand the mutually beneficial interaction in all spheres.

Canada's ODA to South Africa under the Country Development Programming Framework has three main programme themes, namely strengthening South Africa's service-delivery mechanism; regional cooperation; and mainstreaming (gender, HIV, AIDS and environment). For the period 2008 to 2013, the amount of Canadian ODA to South Africa amounts to R250 million.



Bilateral relations with Latin America and the Caribbean will continue advancing the development agenda of the South and strengthening cooperation among developing countries through active participation in groupings of the South at regional, interregional and multilateral levels.

## The Caribbean

South Africa enjoys cordial relations with the countries of the Caribbean and Latin America.

The majority of the people of the Caribbean are of African descent and thus have strong historical and cultural links with the continent of Africa. South Africa's endeavours, in conjunction with the AU, to strengthen cooperation between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean, have added impetus to bilateral and multilateral relations.

## Europe

South Africa's exports to the EU are growing and their composition is becoming more diverse. South Africa is gradually moving from mainly commodity-based products to a more diversified export profile that includes manufactured products.

The fifth South Africa-EU Summit will be held in Brussels in 2012. The fourth South Africa-EU Summit took place in September 2011 in the Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga. The summit reviewed the rapid expansion of the bilateral relationship between South Africa and the EU, manifested by a strengthened strategic partnership and growing cooperation in a number of areas. In its assessment of the implementation of the joint action plan, the summit welcomed positive developments such as the:

- effective implementation and increased ownership of the EU's development assistance programme for South Africa and the excellent relationship between the European Investment Bank and its South African partners
- launch in September 2011 of the Primary Healthcare Programme, worth €126 million, aimed at increasing life

China became South Africa's top export destination at the end of 2010. China's customs statistics show that trade between China and South Africa totalled US\$25,6 billion throughout 2010. Imports from South Africa reached US\$14,8 billion during the same period.



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expectancy, reducing maternal and child mortality and supporting the fight against HIV, AIDS and tuberculosis

- successful cooperation in the areas of science, technology and innovation, and supporting seminars on minerals, mining and climate-change research, as well as on the environment and sustainable development, including green growth, climate action and biodiversity
- consistent progress in space cooperation, also involving the South African National Space Agency and the European Space Agency, especially the advanced preparations for the extension to South Africa of the European Geographic Navigation Overlay System, which will significantly enhance global navigation satellite system services in South Africa.

Germany has made substantial new investments in the South African economy since 1994 and remains one of the country's most important trading partners.

In July 2011, President Zuma received the United Kingdom (UK) Prime Minister, Mr David Cameron, on a working visit, which took place within the context of deepening, strengthening and broadening further the strong relations between the two countries. The visit to South Africa followed a successful state visit by President Zuma to the UK in 2010; the subsequent South Africa-UK Bilateral Forum; and the eventual adoption of the strategy of cooperation between the two countries.

The Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, and the Duchess of Cornwall, Camilla Rosemary, visited South Africa in November 2011.

In October 2010, South Africa won a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the second time for 2011/12. The country served on the UNSC in 2007/08.



The United Nations General Assembly also elected Germany, India and Colombia to two-year seats on the council, commencing 1 January 2011.

Each non-permanent country sits on the council for two years alongside the permanent powers – Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States of America – which have the right to veto any council resolution.

South Africa will be guided by its commitment to multilateralism, advancement of the African Agenda and the peaceful resolution of conflict.

South Africa and France cooperate in various multilateral forums, particularly to improve peace and security on the African continent and support the advancement of global governance. President Zuma paid a state visit to France in March 2011.

In 2011, South Africa and Russia further strengthened bilateral political and economic relations. Delegations from the two countries met for the 10th session of the South Africa-Russian Federation Joint Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation in Pretoria in September 2011.

## 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 underdevelopment 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.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation continues engaging in the ongoing debates and negotiations to advance reform.

## United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The UNDP has an office in Pretoria, which is headed by the resident representative, who is also the resident UN coordinator for all UN operational activities for development in South Africa.

## Commonwealth

The Commonwealth comprises 53 member countries on every continent and major ocean, making up a quarter of the world's population and generating 20% of global trade.

Members range from micro-states in Polynesia to members of the G8, from the smallest and poorest to the richest and most populous, with cross-cutting affiliations straddling the North-South divide.

The Commonwealth is united by its shared ideals and common traditions manifested in similar structures of governance; public administration and law; and a common working

language, commercial and business practices, and understanding. It is an important multilateral institution, both uniting and serving its member countries and providing a lobby on global issues.

Its programmes of action, such as the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Commonwealth Youth Programme and the Commonwealth Foundation, are focused on capacity-building, economic and social development, the removal of disparities in living standards across the world and the alleviation of poverty and illiteracy.

### **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**

The 114-member strong NAM is the largest political grouping of countries outside of the UN, making it an important lobby group of developing countries in global affairs.

South Africa formally joined the movement in 1994 and has played a leading role ever since.