



Foreign policy

Until less than a decade ago South Africa was something of an international pariah, refused membership of many global bodies and denied diplomatic relations with several states.

Since the end of apartheid, however, South Africa has enjoyed a high profile on the world stage, and is forging deep and meaningful diplomatic and economic ties with many countries.

South Africa has assumed a number of international leadership roles in recent years. These include:

- chairing the Non-aligned Movement (NAM) from 1998 to 2001, the Commonwealth from 2000 to 2001 and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 2002
- hosting the United Nations (UN) World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002
- chairing the newly established African Union (AU)
- promoting peace and stability in countries such as Sierra Leone, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire and Burundi

- promoting the interests of developing countries with regard to poverty reduction, debt relief and the democratisation of international relations in high-level interactions with developed countries through its work at the G-20 of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), discussions with the Group of Eight Industrialised Countries (G-8) at their summits, and initiatives in various UN forums.

The AU and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

Declared in March 2001, the AU replaced the OAU, and committed itself to achieving greater stability, unity, democracy and economic progress on the continent. South Africa became the first country to chair the AU, has been intimately involved in its creation and is actively supporting the nascent organisation's development.

In July 2000, the OAU Summit in Togo mandated President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria to engage the North with a view to developing a constructive partnership for the regeneration of Africa.

Foreign representation

	Total South African representation abroad	Total Foreign representation in South Africa
Embassies/High Commissions	76	107
Consulates/Consulates General	12	53
Honorary Consuls/Consular Agency	54	7
Other (e.g. Liaison Office)	4	4
Non-resident Accreditations	101	15
International Organisations	7	23

Source: Department of Foreign Affairs website



The three presidents raised the issue of a partnership with leaders of the G-8 at their Summit in Japan during July 2000. Work on developing NEPAD (at that stage referred to as the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme [MAP]) then began in earnest. During the 5th

Extraordinary Summit of the OAU in March 2001, the work of the four presidents was endorsed and it was decided that every effort should be made to integrate all the initiatives being pursued for the recovery and development of Africa.

On 11 July 2001, NEPAD (or the New African Initiative [NAI] as it was temporarily known at the time), was endorsed by the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government in Lusaka, Zambia.

NEPAD contained a statement of the problems facing the continent and a Programme of Action to resolve these problems. Working within the institutional framework of the AU, NEPAD provides a holistic, comprehensive and integrated strategic framework for Africa's socio-economic development.

The expected outcomes are:

- economic growth and development and increased employment
- a reduction in poverty and inequality
- diversification of productive activities
- enhanced international competitiveness and increased exports
- increased African integration.

A major effort is ongoing to continuously factor NEPAD imperatives into the outcomes of international conferences such as the Conference on Financing for Development and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), to ensure the integration of NEPAD into the multilateral system. In a wider context, countries of the South subscribe to the priorities outlined in NEPAD and have generally welcomed it.







At the inaugural Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee meeting held in Abuja in October 2001, a 15-member Task Force was established for the implementation of NEPAD. As an initiating state, South Africa is represented on the Implementation Committee. A small full-time core Secretariat is based in Midrand, South Africa.

Five NEPAD task teams were established to urgently identify and prepare specific implementable projects and programmes. In terms of working arrangements, South Africa is to co-ordinate the Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Governance Initiative.

Relations with Africa

Good governance and sustainable socio-economic development in Africa are fundamental to South Africa's foreign policy.

The first South Africa-Angola Joint Commission meeting took place in Pretoria on 28 February 2003. An agreement establishing the Joint Commission for Economic, Technical, Scientific, Cultural, Social and Cultural Co-operation between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola was signed on 17 November 2000 in Luanda. Both sides emphasised the need to continuously strengthen co-operation in fields such as geology and mines, post and telecommunications, agriculture, oil, tourism and customs.

The second session of the Joint Bilateral Commission will be held in Luanda in 2005.

South Africa has played an active role in efforts to end conflict in the DRC, facilitating peace talks at Sun City between the various groups and parties. Its commitment to helping the DRC extends to sending a small number of soldiers as part of the UN peace-keeping effort.

Economic and developmental relations between South Africa and Mozambique have deepened significantly in recent years.

Upgrading road, sea and rail links that form part of the corridors between the countries is central to the economies of both. South Africa is investing billions in transport, an aluminium smelter and a 900-km gas pipeline.

There are close economic and bilateral relations between South Africa and Namibia. The Namibian economy is to a large extent integrated with that of South Africa, especially in the manufacturing and mercantile sectors.

South Africa is closely involved with the institutions and work of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This has included supporting the restructuring of SADC to place it in a better position to respond to the development challenges facing the region.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the ratification of the new Southern African Customs Union Agreement. Elsewhere in Africa, South Africa has been particularly involved in efforts to bring about lasting stability in Burundi. This includes the deployment of the South African Protection Service Detachment to that country, and on-going efforts by Deputy President Jacob Zuma to mediate a peace process.

The countries of north and west Africa are becoming increasingly important trading partners. In west Africa, residential diplomatic missions are maintained in Nigeria, Ghana, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire. During 2002/03 a new mission was opened in Bamako, Mali.

In recent years, relations with north African states have become much closer, with South Africa participating in bilateral commissions with several countries including Egypt, Tunisia and Libya.

Asia, Australasia and the Middle East

Asia is a priority area in South Africa's foreign relations. By mid-2002, South Africa had 13 residential missions

in Asia and many non-residential accreditations. From within the Asian region, 17 countries had residential missions in South Africa. In Asia, new missions were opened in Shanghai, Hanoi and Muscat during 2002/03.

Bilateral trade with Singapore amounted in 2000 to some R2,9 billion, with Thailand about R4,2 billion and with Malaysia R3,1 billion. Malaysian businesses have been particularly active investors in South Africa. Another important investor is Japan, with investment estimated to be worth more than R6 billion. Trade between the two countries is also substantial; some R23,5 billion in 2001.

Trade with the People's Republic of China reached R12 billion in 2001. Other important trading partners include New Zealand (imports and exports amounted to R9,7 billion in 2001, and South Korea (trade worth R7 billion in 2001).

In the Middle East, South Africa has diplomatic missions in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iran and Kuwait. Prior to 1994, South Africa had diplomatic links only with Israel.

Trade with the region amounted to R35 billion in 2001, the bulk of it being energy imports by South Africa.

United States of America and Europe

The economic relationship between the two countries has continued to flourish, with total two-way trade in 2001 exceeding US\$7,2 billion, making the US South Africa's biggest trading partner.

Since 1994, South Africa's bilateral relations with Europe have improved significantly, with South Africa maintaining 25 missions there, while European states have 50 embassies and consulates-general or trade missions in South Africa.

Collectively, the countries of Europe are South Africa's most important trading partner and also the biggest

sources of development assistance, foreign direct investment and tourists.

To enhance co-operation, a number of economic measures, including bi-national and economic commissions have been created with countries including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain and the Russian Federation.

In 2002, the presidents of Germany, Greece and Italy paid official visits to South Africa.

International organisations

South Africa is a particularly active member of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, being closely involved in several working groups appraising reforms of the UN. Its representatives have been elected to a number of UN bodies.

Relations with the European Union (EU) have been extremely close. The EU Council of Ministers voted a substantial package of measures to support South Africa's transition to democracy.

Trade with the EU has been progressively liberalised with both parties reducing or eliminating tariffs. The EU and South Africa co-operate in a number of non-trade areas including fighting drug smuggling, money-laundering and the protection of data.

Only rejoining the Commonwealth in 1994 after an absence of 33 years, South Africa has quickly become one of the body's most influential members. In 1999, South Africa hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

As chair of the NAM, South Africa campaigned hard to strengthen dialogue with the developed countries and to encourage multilateralism.