



Pocket Guide to South Africa: 2008/09

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Department of Foreign Affairs formulates, coordinates, implements and manages South Africa's foreign-policy and international relations programmes throughout the world.



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These programmes are guided by a commitment to promoting human rights, democracy, justice and international law; international peace and internationally agreed-upon mechanisms for resolving conflicts; Africa in world affairs; and economic development through regional and international co-operation.

South Africa and Africa

South Africa's development is inextricably linked to the development of Africa and the southern African region. Africa faces the challenge of positioning itself to address the marginalisation of the continent by engaging global role-players on socio-economic development and facilitating a fair and just global order.

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:

- Assembly
- Executive Council
- specialised technical committees
- financial institutions
- Permanent Representatives Committee
- Peace and Security Council (PSC)
- Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
- 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.

Through active interventions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan, South Africa supports peace and security efforts in Africa.



The PAP will occupy its current temporary premises in Midrand, Johannesburg, until 2010. Preparations are underway to identify a suitable site and construct the permanent headquarters of the PAP in South Africa.

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 the resolution of conflicts, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction in conjunction with the United Nations (UN)
- a common defence policy has been adopted, which includes a 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.

Mission operations

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Africa	28	29	33	37	39	42	45
Latin America							10
Asia/ Australasia							31
North America							8
Europe							27
All Missions	92	98	105	110	115	118	121

Diplomats trained

	2004	2005	2006	2007
Foreign Service/Diplomatic training: Foreign Affairs	47	59	69	93
Heads of Mission training	17	20	8	15
Foreign Language training	44	95	82	258

Source: *Development Indicators, 2008*

New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad)

South Africa, in collaboration with key African countries, has been at the forefront in developing Nepad as Africa's premier development programme, in mobilising African and international support for Nepad and in supporting Nepad structures and processes.

Nepad is a holistic, integrated, sustainable-development initiative, primarily established as an African rejuvenation plan that



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focuses on creating the conditions for sustainable development, namely:

- peace, security, democracy and political governance
- economic and corporate governance
- regional integration.

The primary objective of Nepad is 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 (MDGs).

Nepad has introduced the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), accepted by member states of the AU as an African self-monitoring mechanism. The peer review process is aimed at addressing corruption, poor governance and inefficient delivery of public goods and services to the citizens of African countries. The APRM 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. It is important to the sustainability of Nepad.

The APRM has received international acclaim. There has been a positive response to the APRM. Twenty-nine of a possible 53 countries have voluntarily signed up for comprehensive APRM scrutiny. Seven, including South Africa, have gone through their review processes and eight have received a country support mission. South Africa's review was largely smooth and thorough. South Africa was commended for 18 best practices, which other nations could emulate, including co-operative governance, participatory governance practices, a consultative budget process and provision of basic needs. The report also raised critical issues for South Africa to consider, among them: inequality, poverty eradication, unemployment, crime, models of democracy, accountability of elected officials, race relations and corruption. These issues are addressed in South Africa's comprehensive APRM Programme of Action.



South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The SADC is a critical vehicle for southern African regional development.

It provides for regional peace and security, sectoral co-operation and an integrated regional economy. The SADC member states are Angola, Botswana, the DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The SADC is South Africa's major trading partner after the European Union (EU).

The Cabinet Lekgotla, held in July 2008, decided that South Africa should focus on the following priorities:

- enhancing regional political cohesion
- advancing SADC regional economic integration (focusing on the Southern African Customs Union [Sacu])
- intensifying efforts towards infrastructure development
- advancing the undersea cable initiative to expedite the continent's access to the information highway
- advancing food-security issues in the region
- identifying opportunities for the region that are created by the 2010 World Cup
- strengthening the capacity of the SADC Secretariat.

The Summit of the SADC Heads of State and Government was held in August 2008. South Africa took over the chair of the SADC at the summit. The launch of the Free Trade Area (FTA) and the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development were some of the highlights of the summit. The launch of the FTA will lay a firm foundation for regional economic integration. The FTA Agreement 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, referred to as the "Southern African Customs Union", by 2010. Other agreements signed at the summit included the Protocol on Science and Technology (S&T) and the agreement amending Article 20 of the Protocol on Trade.



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The Seychelles was welcomed back as a member of the SADC. The 2009 Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government will be held in 2009 in the DRC.

Asia and Australasia

South Africa and Indonesia were instrumental in the launch of the New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (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.

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 co-operation in the S&T 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 (FDI) 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.

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

In October 2008, President Kgalema Motlanthe, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and a large delegation of government officials and businesspeople visited India for the third India-Brazil-South Africa Summit in New Delhi. The South African delegation attended the summit within the context of advancing South Africa's economic interests within the framework of advancing South-South co-operation.



The year 2008 was significant as it marked the 10th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Africa and the People's Republic of China. The celebratory programme commemorating this historic landmark was launched with an exchange of congratulatory messages between the two presidents and their foreign ministers on 1 January 2008. The two countries agreed to sponsor or co-sponsor a series of events during the course of the year. A series of South African weeks celebrating the 10th anniversary were held in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong.



The Middle East

The Department of Foreign Affairs distinguishes between two clearly identifiable subregions in the Middle East. There is the Levant, which comprises Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria, and, on the other hand, the Arabian/Persian Gulf Region, consisting of the member states of the Gulf Co-operation 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.

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.

South Africa has embassies in 10 of the 14 countries in the regions: Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and UAE. There are also two subordinate consular missions in the region, namely in Dubai (UAE) and Jeddah (Saudi Arabia).

Of the 14 Middle East countries, 13 have embassies in South Africa – only Bahrain is not represented in this country.



The Americas

The overall bilateral relationship with the United States of America (USA) remains strong, with co-operation expanding on matters of common interest and mutual benefit. Since 1999, business, civilian and governmental links with the USA have expanded. The bilateral relationship has been reviewed on an annual basis within the South Africa-USA Annual Bilateral Forum.

The reviews focus on the achievements and challenges that have arisen and consider the way forward in various identified categories of interaction, namely:

- peace-building and security
- expansion of democracy and freedom
- spreading economic growth and well-being.

The annual consultations between South Africa and Canada, first launched in 2003 as a result of a Declaration of Intent signed between the two countries, remains an effective vehicle for managing relations in all spheres. The year 2008 heralded the fifth consecutive annual consultations in Pretoria. The agenda has expanded in scope and now includes ODA, trade and investment and co-operation in the fields of sport, arts and culture, S&T, safety and security, minerals and energy, agriculture, transport, Africa and multilateral issues.

Bilateral relations with Latin America and the Caribbean will continue advancing the development agenda of the South and the strengthening of co-operation among developing countries through active participation in groupings of the South at regional, interregional and multilateral levels. A number of important visits from Latin America during 2008 provided a platform for closer co-operation.

The Caribbean

South Africa enjoys cordial relations with the countries of the Caribbean. The South African Embassy in Cuba is accredited to the Dominican Republic, while the South African High Commission in Kingston, Jamaica, is accredited to 15 Caricom countries. A high commission, headed by a *chargé d'affaires*, was established in Trinidad and Tobago in 2006.



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 endeavour, in conjunction with the AU, to strengthen co-operation between Africa and the African Diaspora in the Caribbean, has given added impetus to bilateral and multilateral relations.

Europe

The EU is a unique international organisation comprising 27 member states. Developed primarily as a single market, it is the largest economy in the world, with a combined nominal gross domestic product of almost €12 trillion in 2006. The EU has a common trade policy, a common agricultural and fisheries policy and a regional policy (to assist its underdeveloped regions). Thirteen member states have also adopted a single currency, the Euro. The EU has also developed the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy.

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 Co-operation Agreement (TDCA). The TDCA, which was signed in 1999, provisionally came into force in January 2000, and, fully ratified on 1 May 2004, governs South Africa's relations with the EU.

Through this agreement, a partnership has been built, which rests on five pillars: trade, political dialogue, development co-operation, economic co-operation and co-operation in other areas.

In June 2008, South Africa and the governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden signed a Declaration of Intent concerning partnerships in Africa. The Declaration of Intent means that they will work together, based on the principles of:

- ownership
- alignment
- harmonisation
- managing for results
- mutual accountability.





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The TDCA provides for an FTA by 2012. The Trade Chapter of the agreement provisionally came into force in January 2000. The TDCA also provides the legal basis for continued EU support for development co-operation activities in South Africa. This support is channelled through the European Programme for Reconstruction and Development, which is the largest single development programme in South Africa that is financed by foreign donors. Further assistance from the EU comes in the form of soft loans from the European Investment Bank.

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

The United Kingdom (UK) consistently occupies the third position in terms of South African exports. With the number of tourists from the UK per year approaching half a million, the UK is one of South Africa's most important overseas tourism markets.

President Nicolas Sarkozy of France paid a state visit to South Africa in February 2008. During the visit, he addressed Parliament.

The European Union (EU)-South Africa Summit was held in July 2008 in Bordeaux, France. In a joint statement by the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, and President of the EU Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, the presidents welcomed that, since the establishment of a strategic partnership between South Africa and the EU in May 2007, bilateral relations had developed into an enhanced mutually beneficial partnership, based on strengthened political dialogue and co-operation in a wide range of economic and other areas. The partnership is a reflection of the shared values and interests of South Africa and the EU and an instrument to jointly pursue both sides' commitment to promote liberty, peace, security and stability in the world and Africa in particular. The presidents identified the following possible areas for enhanced bilateral co-operation in future: energy, space, transport, health, information and communications technology, migration and social dialogue. They also welcomed the adoption by the EU of the EU Agenda for Action on the Millennium Development Goals.





Both countries' presidents attended the South Africa-France Business Forum to enhance economic ties at the highest level.

South Africa and France co-operate in various multilateral forums, particularly to improve peace and security on the African continent and support the advancement of global governance.

The strategic nature of South African-Russian relations was significantly consolidated over the past year through continued high-level political dialogue with the Russian Federation. The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation between the two countries was held in May 2008 in Moscow.

United Nations (UN)

South Africa remains an active participant in ongoing discussions on the reform of the UN and believes that the multilateral system should be fully engaged in the endeavour for human development and poverty eradication, starting with the achievement of the MDGs; the common struggle to address environmental degradation; the pursuit of an overarching human-rights agenda; the promotion of democracy and good governance; and all efforts to combat terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and small arms.

As a party to the UN conventions on climate change, desertification and biodiversity, South Africa is committed to reducing poverty and the loss of biodiversity. South Africa is also firmly committed to the protection of the oceans and the sustainable management of its marine resources.

South Africa continues to reinforce its role as an active and substantive role-player on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control issues at national, regional and international levels.

It actively participated in the various nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation forums, including the 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.



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 co-ordinator 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 Co-operation, 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.

In September 2008, Minister Dlamini Zuma led a South African delegation to a Commonwealth Foreign Ministers meeting in New York.