



Foreign relations

The Department of Foreign Affairs formulates, co-ordinates, implements and manages South Africa's foreign-policy and international relations programmes throughout the world. These are guided by a commitment to promoting:

- human rights and democracy
- justice and international law
- international peace and internationally agreed mechanisms for resolving conflicts
- Africa in world affairs
- economic development through regional and international co-operation.

The department continues to implement its strategic priorities in line with government's foreign-policy objectives, outlined in the programme of the International Relations, Peace and Security Cluster. The department's priorities are:

- consolidating the African agenda
- global governance
- South-South co-operation
- strengthening bilateral relations.

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 the promotion of 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 the establishment of the AU and its organs, namely the:

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



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

The 53-member AU was officially launched in Durban on 9 July 2002, following its inaugural summit. It replaced the Organisation of African Unity, which was established on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The AU's objectives include:

- achieving greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa
- defending the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its member states
- accelerating the political and socio-economic integration of the continent
- encouraging international co-operation
- promoting peace, security and stability on the continent
- promoting democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance
- promoting and protecting people's rights
- establishing the necessary conditions to enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations
- promoting sustainable development at economic, social and cultural level, as well as the integration of African economies
- promoting co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise living standards

- promoting research in all fields
- eradicating preventable diseases and promoting good health on the continent.

A challenge for the AU is to involve civil society in continental processes. In this regard, the Constitutive Act provides for the establishment of Ecosocc. The interim Ecosocc was launched on 29 March 2005 in Addis Ababa.

The South African Chapter was launched with nine civil-society organisations elected as a secretariat from the following sectors: women, youth, religious groups, organised labour, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), lawyers, cultural groups and people with disabilities.

On 16 September 2004, the PAP was inaugurated at Gallagher Estate in Midrand, South Africa.

The fifth session of the PAP took place in Johannesburg in May 2006. The PAP's current premises are temporary until 2010. Preparations are under way to identify a suitable site and construct the permanent headquarters of the PAP in South Africa.

The PAP is fully functional, although decisions emanating from sessions are not yet binding on member states. The current status quo of the PAP as an advisory body will continue until 2009 when it becomes a fully fledged legislative body.

South Africa has ratified the Protocol on the African Court of Human and People's Rights. The Transvaal Judge President, Justice Bernard Ngoepe, has been appointed to an 11-member judiciary to serve on the court.

Current debates in the AU revolve around the mechanisms for achieving harmony between regional economic communities (RECs) as building blocks towards achieving the long-term goal of an economically united Africa.

A committee of seven heads of state chaired by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo is working on a road map towards achieving the political and economic integration of Africa.

Promoting peace, security and stability on the continent

The AU is responsible for the peaceful resolution of conflict among member states, through such appropriate means as may be decided upon by the AU Assembly.

The PSC Protocol took effect in December 2003 and comprises 15 member states. The PSC was launched in Addis Ababa in May 2004. In mid-2006, the members were South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Ethiopia and Gabon, which will serve three-year terms; and Lesotho, Mozambique, Cameroon, Congo, Kenya, Sudan, Libya, Ghana, Senegal and Togo, which will each serve two-year terms.

As a collective security and early warning arrangement, the PSC allows for a timely and effective response to conflicts and crises in Africa.

In terms of PSC statutes, all African countries should establish their own early warning centres and there should be a continental early warning centre in place by 2008.

The AU PSC Protocol provides for the creation of the African Standby Force, to be operationalised over 10 years.

The second extraordinary session of the AU Assembly, held in Libya in February 2004, adopted the Common African Defence and Security Policy.

Socio-economic development and integration of the continent

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 the formulation and implementation of all AU programmes.

To this end, the AU must co-ordinate and take decisions on policies in areas of common interest to member states, as well as co-ordinate 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.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad)

The adoption of Nepad as the socio-economic development programme of the AU is considered one of the most important developments of recent times, placing Africa at the apex of the global agenda by:

- creating an instrument for advancing people-centred and sustainable development in Africa based on democratic values
- being premised on the recognition that Africa has an abundance of natural resources and people who have the capacity to be agents for change, thus holding the key to its own development
- providing the common African platform from which to engage the rest of the international community in a dynamic partnership that holds real prospects for creating a better life for all.

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 of the AU-mandated Nepad is to continuously factor Nepad imperatives into the outcomes of international conferences, to ensure its integration into the global multilateral system. In a wider context, countries of the South subscribe to the priorities outlined by Nepad and have pledged their solidarity and moral support, as well as an appreciation for South Africa's positive role in Nepad. To this end, the Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership was inaugurated in April 2005.

Structures

Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC)

The Nepad HSGIC reports annually to the summit of the AU. The chairperson of the AU Commission is an

ex-officio member of the Implementation Committee, and the AU Commission is expected to participate in steering committee meetings.

The Implementation Committee comprises 20 states (four per AU geographic region), including the five initiating states: South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Senegal and Egypt.

The main function of the Implementation Committee is to set policies, priorities and Nepad's programme of action.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee comprises representatives of the 20 HSGIC members, and is tasked with developing the Terms of Reference for identified programmes and projects, and overseeing the Secretariat.

Secretariat

The Nepad Secretariat co-ordinates implementation of projects and programmes approved by the HSGIC. The full-time core staff of the Secretariat, located at the Development Bank of Southern Africa in Midrand, provides liaison, co-ordination, and administrative and logistical functions for Nepad.

The AU's mechanisms for peer review and conflict resolution reflect commitment to human rights, democratisation, good governance, and peace and security.

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is the mutually agreed African instrument for self-monitoring by participating member states of the AU.

The APRM's primary purpose is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated subregional and continental economic integration, by sharing experience and reinforcing successful and best practice, including identifying deficiencies and assessing the need for capacity-building.

As a signatory to the APRM, South Africa began its self-assessment process in January 2006. The purpose is to ensure that its policies and practices conform to the agreed values, codes and standards contained in the Declaration of Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance.

Cabinet established the focal point (the Minister of Public Service and Administration,

Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi) and a ministerial committee to lead the APRM in South Africa.

In July 2006, Minister Fraser-Moleketi presented the APRM Country Self-Assessment Report and Programme of Action to the APRM Country Review Team. The handing-over ceremony saw the official launch of the Country Review Mission.

Southern Africa

Angola

The signing of the Luena Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 4 April 2002 between the Angolan Armed Forces and the Movement for the Popular Liberation of Angola ended 20 years of armed conflict in Angola. It marked the beginning of a difficult process of rebuilding the country's physical and social infrastructure (through post-conflict reconstruction projects and programmes), the reintegration of former combatants into society, the resettlement of returning refugees, and the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections, last held in September 1992.

South Africa committed itself to assisting Angola with its post-conflict reconstruction projects and programmes. On 20 November 2000, during an official visit to Angola, Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma signed the Agreement on the Creation of a Joint Commission of Co-operation (JCC) between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola. The first session of the commission was held in Pretoria on 28 February 2003. Subsequently, significant progress was made in identifying, negotiating and finalising numerous agreements.

Since the Angolan Government's announcement that it was committed to holding presidential and general elections, the South African Government has offered to provide technical assistance with the preparation of the elections, if and when needed.

In May 2006, South Africa and the United Nations (UN) launched the Voluntary Repatriation for Angolan Refugees Programme to assist South Africa-based Angolan refugees in returning home.

Lesotho

The most significant and visible beacon reflecting South Africa's bilateral relations with Lesotho is the Lesotho Highlands Water Project, which, in today's terms, qualifies as a Nepad project. It was started in 1986 as a joint venture to supply water to South

Africa, especially the rapidly growing urban population in Gauteng, and to meet Lesotho's electricity needs. The project delivers about 780 million cubic metres of water to South Africa a year.

South Africa and Lesotho have agreed to engage in a strategic partnership to assist Lesotho in accelerating economic development to raise its status from that of a least-developed country.

In June 2005, South Africa and Lesotho signed the Agreement on Scientific Co-operation aimed at sharing South Africa's successes in technologies related to poverty reduction and wealth creation at community level.

Botswana

In October 2005, Botswana's President Festus Mogae visited South Africa. The following agreements were signed between Botswana and South Africa during the visit:

- Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Search and Rescue
- MoU on Sports and Recreational Development
- Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Arts and Culture
- Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Agriculture and Livestock
- MoU on Health Matters
- MoU on Co-operation between Local Government Authorities.

Malawi

Malawi is one of South Africa's main trading partners in the southern African region, with the trade balance being in favour of South Africa.

South Africa-based companies, increasingly interested in linking up with and establishing a presence in Malawi, range from the finance, telecommunications and the retail sector, to those in the construction industry.

Indian Ocean islands

South Africa's political, economic and diplomatic relations with countries in the Indian Ocean islands remain strong.

South Africa, chair of the AU at the time, played a pivotal role in ensuring that peace prevailed in Madagascar, following political instability as a result of disputed election results in 2000.

It also played a meaningful role in accepting Madagascar's candidature to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in August 2004.

South Africa, as co-ordinator of the countries of the region under the aegis of the AU, assisted in diffusing constitutional and political tension, resulting in the Fomboni Peace Agreement in 2000.

South Africa spearheaded the process of peace-building and reconciliation, as well as the return to constitutionalism. Successful elections were held in 2002. South Africa continues to play an important role in the post-conflict reconstruction and development processes. These include assistance in building institutions of governance, macro-economic planning and development, and capacity-building in the area of police training and public-service sectors.

South Africa is also involved in strengthening political and economic bilateral relations with Mauritius and the Seychelles. Sectoral relations with these countries include arts and culture, tourism and environmental management, and poverty-alleviation programmes.

On 14 January 2005, South Africa co-chaired the UN High-Level Segment of the International Meeting on the Comprehensive Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Sids), held in Port Louis, Mauritius.

As custodian of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), South Africa closely follows the plight of the Sids and their sustainable development.

Comores

The AU assisted the Comores in preparing for the elections on 14 May 2006 by ensuring enhanced electoral support, and the presence of additional observers and security. South Africa provided the largest number of troops (680) as part of the AU Force deployed in the Comores.

Mozambique

South Africa and Mozambique share co-operative and friendly political and economic relations, both in a bilateral and multilateral context.

South Africa and Mozambique's economic relationship is the strongest in the southern African region. Trade between the countries is increasing, with 57,2% of Mozambique's imports emanating from South Africa. About 26,2% of Mozambican exports are destined for the South African market.

Mozambique has been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of the SADC and an active member of the AU in the implementation of Nepad.

The Heads of State Economic Bilateral Forum and Joint Permanent Commission for Co-operation (JPCC) ensure the maintenance of sound political and economic relations between South Africa and Mozambique.

Twenty-five agreements cover various spheres of co-operation between the two countries. These include Maputo harbour, agricultural development, natural gas trade, de-mining, the Maputo Development Corridor, a joint water commission, promotion and reciprocal protection of investment, and custom administration.

In May 2006, the two countries signed an MoU aimed at enhancing bilateral co-operation on sporting and recreation programmes.

Namibia

Co-operation in various areas marks the relationship between South Africa and Namibia.

South Africa is the source of between 80% and 90% of Namibia's imports by value, including virtually all commodities. Bilateral trade between the two countries accounts for two-thirds of Namibia's total foreign trade.

The 7 000 km² Ai-Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park between South Africa and Namibia features the world's second-largest canyon in the Fish River, a hot-spring game park on the Namibian side, and spectacular arid and desert mountainous scenery on the South African side.

The former Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica, visited her Namibian counterpart, Dr Nickey Lyambo, in May 2006. They discussed matters concerning the Orange River, which the two countries share.

In June 2006, South Africa assisted the Namibian Government in dealing with a polio outbreak in that country, among other things, through the provision of laboratory test services and vaccine cooler boxes.

Swaziland

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Dlamini Zuma, and her former Swaziland counterpart, Senator Mabili Dlamini, established the Joint Bilateral Commission for Co-operation (JBCC) on 20 December 2004 in Swaziland, which formalised bilateral relations between the two countries.

Swaziland's new constitution came into effect on 8 February 2006.

Tanzania

Bilateral relations with Tanzania are cordial and progress is being made in a wide range of fields of mutual interest. Both countries have experienced similar constitutional developments and challenges, and they share similar views on multilateral issues. Trade between South Africa and Tanzania is steadily increasing and a number of exchanges have taken place at official level to enhance co-operation.

The Presidential Economic Commission provides the necessary co-operative framework to manage the development and implementation of bilateral projects.

On 7 April 2006, President Thabo Mbeki and the newly elected President of Tanzania, Mr Jakaya Kikwete, held bilateral political and economic talks during President Kikwete's working visit to South Africa.

South Africa needs to adopt trade and investment-promotion strategies that will facilitate the transfer of production technologies and technical capabilities through the export of high value products to and foreign direct investment (FDI) in Tanzania.

South Africa is Tanzania's fourth-largest investor. More than 150 South African companies are economically active in that country.

Zambia

South Africa has established a deep mutual bond with Zambia, as evidenced by existing bilateral agreements and an annual increase in trade and investment flow between the two countries.

In October 2005, Dr Dlamini Zuma and her Zambian counterpart, Lt Gen Ronnie Shikapwasha, held bilateral political and economic talks.

Trade between South Africa and Zambia has increased substantially since 1993, with both countries taking advantage of existing bilateral agreements to foster relations. Important South African investors in Zambia include Anglo Vaal, Shoprite/Checkers and South African Breweries.

South Africa hosted the Progressive Governance Summit in February 2006; the first such summit to be hosted in the developing world.

It brought together, among others, heads of state, organisations, experts and policy-makers.

Uganda

Official diplomatic relations between South Africa and Uganda were established on 24 June 1994.

On 12 May 2006, President Mbeki attended the inauguration of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in Kampala. President Mbeki paid a state visit to Uganda in December 2005 as part of South Africa's commitment to consolidating and strengthening political and economic relations between the countries.

Kenya

Kenya was expected to undergo the APRM process in 2006.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe celebrated 26 years of independence on 18 April 2006.

Besides their geographical proximity, South Africa and Zimbabwe also have a common and long history of regional affiliation and cultural ties. The people of Zimbabwe also played an important role in support of the liberation struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

Zimbabwe is experiencing political instability owing to the lack of progress in resolving political challenges between the Movement for Democratic Change and the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front. Continuous isolation from Western countries is consistently exacerbating the Zimbabwean political, economic and social challenges.

South Africa's engagement in Zimbabwe, within the AU and SADC context, is largely focused on encouraging an all-inclusive 'party-to-party' dialogue between the main political role-players and encouraging them to find a homegrown solution as a basis for the challenges facing the country.

The relationship at government to government level between South Africa and Zimbabwe is cordial.

Ethiopia

The Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Mandisi Mphahla, visited the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in June 2006 to strengthen bilateral economic relations with that country, which were revived in 1995 when South Africa opened an embassy in Addis Ababa.

South African exports to Ethiopia amounted to R165 million in 2005, whereas imports from Ethiopia, mainly vegetable products, totalled R9,2 million.

Development co-operation

South Africa is not a donor country, but development co-operation with countries in Africa is integral to the country's foreign policy. Assistance is wide-ranging and includes educational visits by agriculturists, the establishment of viable training centres, conservation of the environment, the rendering of medical assistance, and technology-exchange programmes. Technical and financial assistance, with a view to capacity-building, especially to SADC countries, is a major instrument for promoting economic development, peace and stability, democracy, and the African Renaissance on a regional basis.

South Africa and the Southern African Development Community

South Africa's vision for the southern African region involves the highest possible degree of economic co-operation, mutual assistance, and joint planning consistent with socio-economic, environmental and political realities. Within the region, the SADC is the primary vehicle for South African policy and action to achieve regional economic development.

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

The SADC is a critical vehicle for the development of the southern African region. South Africa has been engaged in restructuring the SADC to enable it to execute evolving AU mandates and to respond to changing development challenges. Considerable work has gone into setting up new institutions, and reviewing existing ones.

One of the organ's main functions is to ensure that regional peace and security arrangements are linked to continental arrangements.

Southern African Development Community Trade Protocol

The SADC Protocol on Trade entered into force on

25 January 2000. Its objectives are to further liberalise intraregional trade in goods and services, on the basis of fair, mutually equitable and beneficial trade arrangements; to ensure efficient production within the SADC, reflecting the current and dynamic comparative advantages of its members; to contribute to the improvement of a climate for domestic, cross-border and foreign investment; to enhance the economic development, diversification and industrialisation of the region; and to establish a free trade area (FTA) in the SADC region.

At the core of this agreement is the reduction and ultimate elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers and the setting up of rules of origin by 2008.

Relations with central Africa

Gabon

President Mbeki visited the Republic of Gabon in August 2005.

The Agreement on the Reciprocal Protection and Promotion of Investments; Merchant Shipping and the Agreement; Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Education, Training and Higher Education; and the Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture were signed, bringing to nine the number of agreements signed between South Africa and Gabon since 2003.

São Tomé and Príncipe

During Minister Dlamini Zuma's visit to the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe in April 2005, a co-operation agreement was signed.

Four officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Co-operation and Communities visited South Africa for training from October to December 2005. They received English language training as well as training in protocol and etiquette, conference organisation, and diplomatic immunities and privileges.

Republic of Congo

South Africa opened an embassy in Brazzaville in the Republic of Congo in 2005. South Africa's first ambassador resident in the Republic of Congo, Ambassador WG Makanda, presented his credentials to President Denis Sassou-Nguesso on 22 July 2005.

President Mbeki visited the Republic of Congo on 30 November and 1 December 2005. The two

heads of state witnessed the signature of the Protocol on Regular Diplomatic Consultations, a Trade Agreement, Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments, Agreement on Health Matters and an MoU on the implementation of cultural co-operation.

Equatorial Guinea

South Africa's first ambassador resident in Equatorial Guinea, Ambassador LD Ngakane, presented his credentials to President Teodoro Obiang Nguema M'basogo on 2 June 2005.

Cameroon

The newly established South African High Commission in Yaounde has played an active role in strengthening relations between the two countries, and especially in fostering increased economic activity. A successful South Africa Week was hosted in September 2005, featuring cultural events, South African cuisine and a commercial display.

A number of South African companies participated in the Promote 2005 trade exhibition held in Yaounde in December 2005, reaching a wide range of business people from the region.

There is substantial potential for trade between the two countries, with Cameroon having a diversified manufacturing base and being an important supplier of timber products. A number of South African companies are active in Cameroon.

Central African Republic (CAR)

Following elections in 2005, Mr Francois Bozize was inaugurated President of the CAR in June 2005. The South African High Commissioner in Cameroon is currently responsible for relations with the CAR.

The economy of the CAR is unstable after many years of internal political instability. The AU has appealed for assistance for the Multinational Force of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community in the CAR, and for the restructuring of the Central African Army. Financial and economic assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners are also necessary to ensure that stability is maintained.

President Bozize paid a working visit to South Africa in April 2006 and signed a co-operation agreement that sets the framework for future co-operation in the areas of defence and security,

transport, energy, mines, capacity-building in the Public Service, urban and rural development, health, education, housing, trade, and the environment.

Chad

During 2005, South Africa established its first resident diplomatic mission in N'djamena. The Chadian Government has expressed its intention of appointing an honorary consul in Pretoria.

There is an increasing flow of business people between the two countries, and a number of Chadian ministers have attended various conferences in South Africa. A South African construction company has signed an agreement with the Chadian Ministry of Housing to construct 1 000 housing units in Chad, to be partially financed by a South African banking institution.

There was also interaction between the two governments on the volatile situation in the east of Chad, where more than 200 000 refugees from the Darfur region of Sudan were being sheltered.

Rwanda

South Africa and Rwanda maintain good political relations. Co-operation between the two countries focuses on the post-conflict reconstruction of Rwanda and has extended to the co-ordination of Nepad on the continent.

To further strengthen this bilateral structure, the Implementation Monitoring Committee has been established at director-general level to provide the necessary co-ordinating, planning and monitoring framework to manage effective implementation of approved programmes, and to ensure the delivery of cross-cutting training and human resource capacity-building programmes.

In August 2006, Minister Dlamini Zuma and her Rwandan counterpart, Dr Charles Murigande, co-chaired the fourth session of the South African-Rwanda JCC in Kigali.

Burundi

South Africa's good relations with Burundi are demonstrated by the leading role the Government played in the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement signed by representatives of the main Hutu and Tutsi political parties, the Government of Burundi, and the National Assembly on 28 August 2000.

The agreement provided the foundation for the transition to democracy, peace and development in that country. South African diplomacy efforts, under the leadership of former President Nelson Mandela, were central in facilitating the Arusha Agreement. The pivotal point of the agreement was the political power-sharing between the Tutsis and the Hutus.

Burundi held its first democratic elections since 1993 on 4 July 2005. The 21-member South African observer mission concluded that the elections were executed in a transparent manner.

South Africa's contribution towards the establishment of peace and stability in Burundi included the deployment of South African National Defence Force (SANDF) troops, with an African peace mission in Burundi, now recapped as the UN Operation in Burundi (Onub). South Africa supported the election process financially by providing election material for the 2005 referendum and elections.

In March 2006, South Africa extended the deployment of 950 members of the SANDF as part of Onub to 31 March 2007.

Following a request from the leadership of the East African region of the AU for South Africa to continue with mediation efforts in Burundi, in May 2006 President Mbeki appointed the Minister of Safety and Security, Mr Charles Nqakula, as facilitator of the Burundi Peace Process.

South Africa has committed itself to working with the regional leadership, the Government and the people of Burundi, including the leadership of the Palepehutu-FNL, in finding a long-lasting solution to their current challenges.

In September 2006, President Mbeki attended the signing of a cease-fire agreement between the Government of Burundi and the Palepehutu-FNL. South Africa believes this agreement will herald a new dawn in Burundi's history.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The third session of the South African-DRC Binational Commission (BNC), co-chaired by President Mbeki and President Joseph Kabila, took place in Kinshasa in March 2006. The following agreements were signed:

- MoU on Co-operation in Education
- Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Maritime Transport
- Agreement on Decentralisation.

This brought to 26 the number of agreements signed between the two countries.

In March 2006, South Africa extended the existing deployment of 110 SANDF members and deployed 14 more members – bringing the total to 124 – in the DRC, until 31 March 2007, in support of the integration and military training of the armed forces of the DRC. This included assisting in the registration of demobilised troops and in the upgrading of military centres.

By May 2006, South Africa had contributed 1 409 troops to the UN Mission (Monuc) in the DRC.

President Mbeki, supported by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Aziz Pahad, and South Africa's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, witnessed the promulgation of the DRC's Constitution in Kinshasa on 18 February 2006.

This followed the successful referendum held in 2005 when the majority of the DRC people voted in favour of the new Constitution. The country also introduced new national symbols, including a flag and a national anthem.

South Africa, together with the facilitator, former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, played a major role in assisting the people of the DRC to find a common solution to the political challenges that have faced the country for decades.

The adoption of the Electoral Law by the Congolese National Assembly in February 2006, and its subsequent promulgation by President Kabila on 9 March 2006, paved the way for historic presidential and parliamentary elections in 2006. These were the first democratic elections in 45 years since the country gained independence from Belgium in June 1960.

A South African observer mission was deployed to observe the elections on 30 July 2006. It concluded that the elections were conducted in a climate conducive to the democratic expression of the views of the people. In September 2006, President Mbeki held bilateral discussions with President Kabila in Kinshasa.

The second round of presidential elections took place at the end of October 2006 and was won by President Kabila.

South Africa is also assisting in the economic development of the country. A number of major economic projects have been identified. These include the Bas-Congo Spatial Development Initiative (SDI), and the Inga Initiative.

Relations with North and West Africa and the Horn of Africa

The countries in North and West Africa and the Horn of Africa are becoming increasingly important trading partners for South Africa, as well as important partners within the context of the AU/African Economic Community.

Algeria

The South African Embassy was established in Algiers in November 1997. In March 2006, President Mbeki paid a one-day working visit to Algeria after concluding his state visit to Italy.

Côte d'Ivoire

South Africa established full diplomatic relations with Côte d'Ivoire in May 1992. Given its firm commitment to the African Renaissance and its attendant features of stability, democratisation and development on the continent, South Africa will continue to promote the restoration of peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire. In this regard, South Africa's mediation efforts, under the auspices of the AU, culminated in the signing of the Pretoria Agreement in April 2005.

In March 2006, South Africa extended the deployment of 46 members of the SANDF – in support of the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration and mediation processes in Côte d'Ivoire – to 31 March 2007.

Minister Dlamini Zuma led a delegation that attended the 10th session of the International Working Group in September 2006 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, which received reports on:

- the preparations for the elections
- progress regarding the national certification issue
- progress regarding the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process, including the integration of rebel forces into legitimate structures and the disarmament of militias.

South Africa's mediation efforts are expected to continue to promote the restoration of peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire, under the aegis of the AU, the UN and in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas). Côte d'Ivoire is South Africa's largest trading partner in Francophone West Africa. It is hoped that as the socio-political situation in Côte d'Ivoire is restored, its economy will also gradually improve.

Egypt

Bilateral political and economic relations between Egypt and South Africa have improved greatly in recent years and this was underlined in April 1996 with the convening of the first Joint Bilateral Commission (JBC) in Cairo.

Sudan

By May 2006, South Africa had 437 troops as part of the AU force in Sudan/Darfur.

On 5 May 2006, the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) signed the Darfur Peace Agreement in Abuja, despite reservations on both sides over power sharing and security. Two rebel groups (a smaller faction of the SLM and the smallest group, the Justice and Equality Movement) rejected the accord.

The accord was brokered under the auspices of the AU and is backed by the United States of America (USA), the European Union (EU) (notably the United Kingdom [UK]) and the Arab League.

In June 2006, as part of South Africa's commitment to consolidating Africa's Agenda by fostering peace, President Mbeki held discussions with Sudanese President Omar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir in Sudan, and also with Vice President Salva Kirr, about challenges that role-players are experiencing in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

South Africa is engaged in a capacity- and institution-building project to aid the development of southern Sudan, as outlined in the CPA.

Morocco

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and the Kingdom of Morocco were established in 1991 when the South African interest office opened in Rabat. The Moroccan interest office was opened in Pretoria in April 1992 and both offices were subsequently upgraded to full embassies.

The first JBC meeting with Morocco took place in Pretoria in 1998.

Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic

South Africa has officially established diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level and recognises the right of the Sahrawis to self-determination, which is an inalienable right contained in the Charter of the UN.

Mauritania

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Mauritania were established in January 1995.

Minister Dlamini Zuma visited Mauritania in January 2005.

Liberia

President Mbeki, accompanied by Dr Dlamini Zuma, attended the inauguration of Africa's first female head of state, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, in Monrovia on 16 January 2006.

Liberia's peaceful democratic elections in October 2005 and the holding of the run-off elections in November 2005 represented a significant political breakthrough for Liberia. About 1,3 million registered voters cast their votes in the run-off elections.

South Africa signed an agreement with the Liberian Government in 2005 to provide assistance with the election and demobilisation processes.

In February 2006, the Liberian Government launched the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the human-rights abuses and war crimes that occurred during the civil war. On 17 March 2006, the Liberian Government requested the extradition from Nigeria of former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

The humanitarian situation has improved although the economy still remains weak. South Africa continues to support initiatives towards promoting peace in the country.

Nigeria

In the area of bilateral relations, a number of intensive exchanges of technical visits between South Africa and Nigeria took place in 2005. Expertise was shared in, among other things, the following areas: trade and industry, defence, health, science and technology, tourism and legislature.

All these exchanges occurred within the context of the South Africa-Nigeria BNC.

In August 2006, the Nigerian high commission, the South Africa-Nigeria Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa co-hosted the Nigerian Business Investment Forum in Johannesburg.

Ghana

South Africa and Ghana enjoy strong bilateral relations. A number of exchanges took place

between these countries in 2005, including in the fields of defence, aviation and education. The South African National Heritage Council also visited its counterpart in Ghana. In 2005, students from South Africa attended the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra.

Burkina Faso

South Africa and Burkina Faso established non-resident diplomatic relations in May 1995. The Burkina Faso non-resident ambassador for South Africa is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, while the South African ambassador to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, is accredited to Burkina Faso on a non-residential basis.

On 13 November 2005, presidential elections were held in Burkina Faso. According to official results, President Blaise Compaoré won over 80% of the votes, returning him to the executive for a third term.

Though Burkina Faso has limited exploitable resources, opportunities exist for South African mining companies to mine gold, zinc and manganese. Since agriculture is the dominant industry, opportunities exist for the trade of various agricultural products. Spoorinet is one of the few large South African companies involved in Burkina Faso. Trade between South Africa and Burkina Faso is limited. In terms of total trade with South Africa, Burkina Faso is South Africa's 11th-largest partner in the West African region.

Republic of Benin

Diplomatic relations between Benin and South Africa were established in May 1994. The South African ambassador to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, is accredited to Benin on a non-residential basis, while Benin opened an embassy in Pretoria in 1999.

South Africa sent an advance team to Cotonou in October 2005 in preparation for the establishment of diplomatic representation. It was expected that a South African diplomatic mission would open in Cotonou, Benin, in 2006.

In March 2006, Mr Yayi Boni was elected president of Benin.

Republic of Togo

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Togo were established in 1997. The South African ambassador to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, is accredited on a non-residential basis to Togo.

After Mr Faure Gnassingbé was named Togo's President in April 2005, South Africa affirmed its commitment to building strong bilateral relations with that country.

Cape Verde

South Africa and Cape Verde established diplomatic relations in 4 April 1994. South Africa's ambassador to Senegal is also accredited as South Africa's non-resident ambassador to Cape Verde, while the Cape Verdean ambassador to Angola is accredited to South Africa as non-resident ambassador.

The Gambia

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and The Gambia were established in August 1998. While South Africa's ambassador to Senegal is accredited to The Gambia as non-resident ambassador, the Gambian ambassador to the AU in Addis Ababa is accredited to South Africa as this country's non-resident ambassador.

During President Yaya Jammeh's working visit to South Africa in September 2004, the two countries negotiated and signed an agreement on a framework for co-operation.

Guinea

Diplomatic relations were established with the Republic of Guinea in February 1995. South Africa opened a diplomatic mission in Conakry in November 2005. At the invitation of the Guinean Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms Sidibe Fatoumata Kaba, Dr Dlamini Zuma undertook a working visit to Guinea in November 2005.

In December 2005, ministers Dlamini Zuma and Kaba laid the basis for regulating political, economic and trade relations between their countries by signing a general co-operation agreement.

Guinea-Bissau

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Guinea-Bissau were established in October 1994. The South African ambassador to Senegal is accredited as South Africa's non-resident ambassador to Guinea-Bissau.

Mali

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Mali were established in May 1994. The latter established an embassy in Pretoria in December

1995. A South African embassy was established in Bamako in November 2002, and the first South African ambassador to Mali was appointed in November 2003.

Mali is a strong supporter of the African Renaissance initiative and Nepad.

In August 2002, the Agreement on the Preservation of the Ancient Manuscripts in the Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Learning and Islamic Research in Timbuktu was concluded between the two countries. South Africa is supporting a project aimed at improving the preservation of these ancient manuscripts. They vary in content from religious treatises and poems, to documentary letters dealing with legal and commercial matters, while others relate to slavery, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and history – all of them subjects of immense interest to scholars and the African population at large. Three major objectives of the project are to:

- implement a conservation programme to protect and improve environmental storage conditions for the manuscripts
- rebuild the Ahmed Baba Centre to one of international stature while ensuring its architectural harmony with ancient Timbuktu
- promote academic study and public awareness of the magnificent and ancient African and Islamic heritage at Timbuktu.

By February 2006, the construction of the new library and archive buildings for the Ahmed Baba Centre had entered a new phase. A successful exhibition of a selection of manuscripts from Timbuktu had been presented by the Department of Arts and Culture and the Standard Bank at the Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg. A more extensive exhibit, prepared by Iziko Museums in Cape Town, was scheduled to visit several major centres in South Africa during 2006 and 2007.

The two countries are committed to promoting democracy and good governance, and there is substantial South African involvement in the Malian gold-mining sector. Anglogold and Randgold run operations in Mali.

The first session of the South Africa-Mali JCC took place in Pretoria in August 2004.

Senegal

Full diplomatic relations between South Africa and Senegal were established in May 1994 and the two countries' representative offices were upgraded to embassy level.

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Senegal are based mainly on the Senegalese Government's strong support for the African Renaissance initiative and Nepad, and its strong commitment to promoting democracy and good governance.

Senegal is one of the 15 members of the Nepad HSIC and the AU PSC.

Tunisia

In May 2006, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Mandisi Mpahlwa, and Tunisia's Secretary of State for Trade and Handcrafts, Mr Slaheddine Makhlouf, hosted the fourth session of the Tunisia and South Africa Joint Business Forum.

They signed investment agreements to be ratified. The business forum aimed to strengthen trade ties between the two countries and encourage business in both countries to explore and identify opportunities. During the forum, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Handcrafts of Tunisia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry South Africa signed an MoU to create a JBC that would promote the development of bilateral relations through trade and investment.

The Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality and the Tunisian Embassy in Tshwane collaborated in a joint venture to promote African culture and fashion as an economic development project, which culminated in the Fashion in Africa Show in May 2006, in which established fashion designers from both countries participated.

Libya

The long-standing unofficial relations between South Africa and the Great People's Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (Libya) dates back to the days of the struggle against apartheid.

President Thabo Mbeki launched the African Leadership Group in July 2006. This initiative seeks to encourage effective African leadership in South Africa, and the rest of Africa.

Its objectives include supporting the resolve to make the 21st century an African century, entrenching democracy and encouraging dialogue on leadership issues.

The first session of the South Africa-Libya JBC was held in Tripoli in June 2002.

Sierra Leone

Peace and security in Sierra Leone have been sustained with the assistance of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone. The mission withdrew from the country on 31 December 2005. By June 2006, there was a 300-strong UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone to maintain a presence in the country for 12 months.

Although the country remains poor, various accomplishments towards promoting democracy and development have been achieved. South Africa's Eskom has assisted Sierra Leone's authorities in improving and managing their electrification system. The ceremonial switch-on of the power supply to Freetown took place in April 2006. National elections are scheduled for 2007.

Niger

Niger is one of the poorest countries in West Africa and relies solely on foreign aid for its development.

In March 2006, Minister Dlamini Zuma held bilateral discussions with her counterpart, Ms Achiatou Mindaoudou. The two ministers signed a general co-operation agreement. Talks focused on the consolidation of bilateral political and economic relations between the two countries, including the planned opening of a South African diplomatic mission in Niamey in 2007, a bilateral air services agreement and the promotion of South African investment in Niger's mining and agricultural sectors.

In July 2006, President Mbeki paid a state visit to Niger, the first by a South African president.

South Africa continues to support initiatives aimed at assisting Niger in its development.

Relations with Asia and the Middle East

Asia and Australasia

Since 1994, South Africa's political and economic interaction with Asia and Australasia has increased significantly.

Over the past two decades, rapid economic growth in the People's Republic of China, India and south-east Asian countries has made Asia one of the most economically dynamic regions in the world, generating tremendous business opportunities for South Africa.

While Japan, Malaysia and Taiwan already rank among the foremost sources of foreign investment to South Africa, the significance of China and India, as future sources of investment, is expected to grow. 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.

Greater Asia incorporates five central Asian states, which were formerly part of the Soviet Union. The five central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) offer economic opportunities in, among other things, the oil and mining sectors and related technology. Although this region offers a market for South African goods and services, the potential remains largely untapped. South Africa is also expanding and deepening its relations with the Pacific island states. These countries are natural friends of South Africa, sharing its colonial experience and development aims. Therefore, South Africa is expected to conclude diplomatic relations with all the independent and self-governing states of the Pacific, and has opened a micro-mission in Suva, Fiji, which hosts the Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Forum.

South African diplomatic representation in South Asia has similarly been increased with the establishment of a micro-mission in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The assertiveness of this region in both global politics and economics is becoming increasingly visible, as demonstrated by the high-profile role of key Asian countries in global affairs.

China is the only developing country that is a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC); Japan is an influential member of the G8; while India, Japan and Indonesia have publicly declared their intention to lobby for a permanent seat on the reformed UNSC.

South Africa and key Asian countries agree on important multilateral issues, such as the reform of the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the UN; international disarmament and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; small arms proliferation; and protection of the environment.

Several important Muslim countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Brunei, Afghanistan and Indonesia are members of the 52-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference.

Key Asian countries are also committed to contributing to the implementation of Nepad. The New Asia-Africa Strategic Partnership (NAASP) is expected to re-invigorate co-operation between these two continents, as it builds on the foundation of the historic 1955 Bandung Conference. South Africa and Indonesia are the co-chairs. India has also indicated its willingness to provide funds to electronically connect members of the AU by satellite and fibre-optic network.

South Africa hosted the first NAASP Senior Officials Meeting, the first step of the NAASP, in September 2006 in Durban.

With the intention of rekindling the 'Bandung Spirit' by enhancing co-operation between the countries in Asia and Africa, Indonesia and South Africa hosted the First Asian African Sub-Regional Organisations Conference (AASROC I) and the Second AASROC (AASROC II) respectively in Bandung, Indonesia, in July 2003 and in Durban, South Africa, in August 2004. These events prepared the way for the Asian African Summit in Indonesia in April 2005, held in conjunction with the Commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the 1955 Asian African Conference.

Several existing Africa-Asia co-operation fora, such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and the Forum on China-Africa Co-operation, are being synchronised with Nepad to serve as implementing institutions. TICAD is an initiative for African development, launched in 1993 through the joint efforts of the Japanese Government, the UN and the Global Coalition for Africa.

The Vietnam-Africa Forum provides an important venue for greater co-operation between Vietnam and Africa.

Several key Asian countries are leading role-players of the South. They share common membership with South Africa in international organisations such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), G77 and the Commonwealth. South Africa also plays a leading role in the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC).

The India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum, established in 2004, remains of strategic importance to all three countries as a powerful global forum to drive South-South co-operation, the agenda of the South, and to champion the needs of the developing world.

President Mbeki attended the strategic trilateral summit between India, Brazil and South Africa in Brazilia in September 2006.

In the context of IBSA, the summit brought together for the first time the three heads of state and government, President Mbeki and his Brazilian and Indian counterparts President Lula da Silva and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

President Mbeki's visit to Brazil aimed to strengthen political, economic and trade relations between the three countries with a view to advancing and consolidating South-South relations for increased market and trade access.

The proposed FTA to be negotiated with China, India and Singapore provides an important framework for closer co-operation between the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) and these countries in the quest for mutually beneficial trade links.

East Asia

Japan is by far South Africa's largest trading partner in this region, followed by Greater China and South Korea.

In July 2006, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Aziz Pahad, co-chaired, together with his Japanese counterpart Senior Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Yasuhisa Shiozaki, the eighth session of the South Africa-Japan Partnership Forum in Pretoria.

Exports to Japan increased from R4 billion in 1992 to approximately R33 billion at the end of 2005, while imports from Japan in the same period increased from R5 billion to R24 billion.

Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka visited Japan and Indonesia in April 2006 to strengthen North-South and South-South relations for greater market access, trade and investment, and to popularise South Africa's Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA) and Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (Jipsa).

Japan's investment in South Africa amounts to just 0,3 % of Japan's outward FDI.

China and South Africa are signatories to the NAASP. President Mbeki hosted Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in June 2006, during the latter's seven-nation African visit, the first by a Chinese premier in 50 years, aimed at strengthening and consolidating political and economic relations

between South Africa and China in particular, and Africa in general.

China's economic system is the world's third-largest. South Africa is its main trade partner in Africa, accounting for 20,8% of total China-Africa trade. More than 80 Chinese companies have entered South Africa since 1998, and Chinese FDI to South Africa came to some US\$199,3 million in 2004. South Africa's FDI to that country amounted to US\$700 million in 2004 (excluding offshore investments by SAB Miller, and Anglo American, among others).

Despite the absence of diplomatic relations, South Africa and Taiwan continue with trade, scientific, cultural and other relations. Taiwanese investors in South Africa continue to enjoy full protection under South African law, as well as all the other benefits extended to foreign investors.

In May 2006, South Africa hosted Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr BAN Ki-moon, who came to South Africa as part of a tri-nation visit that included Tanzania and Rwanda.

Korea intends to strengthen relations and co-operation with African countries via the framework of the NAASP. It was the first-ever visit to this country by a Korean foreign minister.

During his visit, Mr Ki-moon met with Minister Mpahlwa and the Commissioner of the Public Service Commission to discuss such matters as UN reform, bilateral relations and socio-economic development in Africa.

South Asia

South Africa and Afghanistan established diplomatic relations in September 1994. South Africa never recognised the former Taliban regime and has normalised relations with the current Government. The South Africa Liaison Office for Afghanistan was established in 2003, headed non-residentially by the South African high commissioner to Pakistan.

South Africa and Sri Lanka established diplomatic relations in 1994.

Total trade between South Africa and India increased from 2004 to 2005, with exports rising by 100% and imports rising by 55%, making India South Africa's 13th-largest trading partner in terms of exports and imports. India is among the top 10 investing countries in South Africa, with investment estimated at R10 billion.

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and Pakistan were established in April 1994. A letter of understanding, establishing a joint commission (JC) between the two countries, was signed in March 1999. The lifting of the Commonwealth suspensions that had been imposed on Pakistan paved the way for the normalisation of South Africa's relations with that country, and created the opportunity to engage on issues of mutual interest.

India is a key strategic partner for South Africa. In March 2006, Deputy Minister Pahad held bilateral political and economic talks with India's Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Anand Sharma, in South Africa.

Several South African and Indian businesses belong to the Indo-South Africa CEOs Business Forum that was established in 2004 to help stimulate trade and investment between the two countries.

The existence of opportunities for closer co-operation between South Africa and India have been identified in the capital equipment; agro-processed products; autos and components; services; information and communications technology (ICT), science and technology; health; and small, medium and micro enterprises sectors.

In September 2006, Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka visited India to, among other things, promote the aims of AsgiSA and Jipsa.

South-east Asia

The Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) has emerged as one of the most important groupings within the Asia Pacific region. South Africa maintains embassies and high commissions in six of the 10 member states of Asean – Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. These Asean states, as well as Myanmar (Burma), also maintain embassies and high commissions in South Africa.

Vietnam plays an increasingly important role in south-east Asia and has vast economic potential and opportunities for mining, infrastructure development, and agricultural and manufacturing companies.

During 2006/07, South Africa opened missions in Bucharest, Romania; Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; Ougoadougo, Burkina Faso; and Cotonou, Benin.

Economic relations with Malaysia and Indonesia remain important, due to Malaysian investment in South Africa and the size of the Indonesian market.

Malaysia has indicated its support for Nepad and has sought to promote the Malaysian-initiated Langkawi International Dialogue aimed at expanding co-operation among countries of the South, including those in southern Africa.

In April 2006, Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka visited Indonesia where she held bilateral political and economic talks with Vice President Jusuf Kalla in Jakarta, and visited Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the chairperson of Parliament, Mr Agung Laksono.

Central Asia

The economies of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are all at various stages of change and development. Furthermore, all five are developing states and, like South Africa, seek investment. Economic opportunities for South Africa in the Central Asian states include infrastructure development, mining technology, energy exploitation and related mining and engineering technology, agro-processing expertise and exports, water-management expertise and infrastructure for adventure and ecotourism.

Australasia and the Pacific islands

South Africa and Australia established diplomatic relations in 1947 and have enjoyed very close political and economic ties. As campaigns for international isolation of South Africa intensified in the 1970s and 1980s, successive Australian governments placed Australia firmly in the anti-apartheid camp, supporting UN resolutions against apartheid and implementing the oil, trade and arms embargo as well as a sport boycott against South Africa.

New Zealand maintains a high commission in Pretoria, while the high commission in Canberra represents South Africa in New Zealand. The establishment of a resident high commission in Wellington is imminent.

Since 1994, political, economic and social links between the two countries have improved significantly. In 1996, the Cape Town Communique was signed, seeking to strengthen co-operation between South Africa and New Zealand.

The political relationship has been further strengthened through visits by numerous high-level delegations to New Zealand to gain expertise in their different fields and to exchange knowledge to enhance capacity-building in central, provincial and local government structures.

South Africa and New Zealand enjoy wide-ranging multilateral relations. Both are members of the Valdivia Group, which aims to promote southern hemisphere views in international environmental meetings and enhance scientific co-operation.

They enjoy a close working relationship within the context of the Antarctic Treaty and Indian Ocean fisheries, and also interact within the context of the WTO and the Cairns Group. South Africa and New Zealand also work closely on Commonwealth issues, particularly those affecting Africa. President Mbeki met with New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark in February 2006, ahead of the Progressive Governance Summit held in February in Hammanskraal, near Pretoria.

The South African Government wants to strengthen relations with the Pacific islands. The roving ambassador to the Pacific islands has been accredited to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, the Fiji islands and the Solomon islands.

The high commissioner in Canberra, Australia, has been accredited to the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Republic of Vanuatu and the Independent State of Samoa.

The Middle East

In the Middle East, the Department of Foreign Affairs distinguishes between two clearly identifiable subregions. On the one hand, there is the Levant, which comprises Israel, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria; and on the other is the Arabian/Persian Gulf Region, comprising 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. It is the source of 67% of the world's petroleum reserves and commands two of the most strategically important waterways in the world, namely the Arabian/Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, giving access to the Asian hinterland via the Gulf of

Aqaba. South Africa places strong emphasis on the expansion of diplomatic representation and activities in this region, where it was formerly underrepresented, particularly in the area of trade, which has grown significantly since 1994.

The South African consulate general in Jeddah, in addition to performing important functions relating to the promotion of trade, also serves members of the South African Muslim community on their annual pilgrimage to Mecca. More than 7 000 South Africans embark on the Hajj pilgrimage each year.

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. Peace and security for the Israelis and the Palestinians cannot be achieved without the fulfilment of the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination within their own sovereign state.

South Africa has continued to call on all parties to the conflict in Israel and Palestine to avoid actions that could add to an already volatile situation. The country has been consistent in calling for the immediate implementation of the Road Map, without preconditions, to achieve comprehensive and lasting peace between Israel and Palestine.

From 31 March to 1 April 2006, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) paid a state visit to South Africa for bilateral political and economic discussions.

Minister Mpahlwa visited Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar in March 2006.

In March 2006, Minister Mpahlwa and Deputy Minister Pahad co-hosted the second meeting of the South Africa-Saudi Arabia Joint Economic Commission in Saudi Arabia.

Representatives from Saudi Arabia were expected to visit South Africa to identify potential areas of co-operation that could be included in a future MoU between the two countries. South Africa invited Saudi Arabia to participate in the third Assembly of the Global Environment Facility in Cape Town in August 2006.

The mission aimed to identify projects for South African companies in the Maa'den Project. The South African Government has involved all relevant export councils for this purpose and established the South African Arabian Gulf Group.

In March 2006, Minister Mpahlwa hosted an investment seminar in Qatar, to attract Qatari investment in South Africa.

Also in March 2006, in the Sultanate of Oman, the minister held meetings with his counterparts from the Ministry of Economy, Foreign Trade, Defence and Foreign Affairs. He also signed two agreements on the promotion and protection of trade and investment between the Sultanate of Oman and South Africa.

Turkish FDI in South Africa amounts to US\$60 million, mainly in the textile and tourism sectors. Six Turkish companies have set up plants in South Africa. There are also over 50 registered Turkish companies trading or providing services in the tourism and restaurant sectors in South Africa. Several South African companies have also set up business in Turkey.

Relations with the Americas

United States of America

Since 1994, business, civilian and governmental links with the USA have expanded exponentially and a strong, long-term working partnership has been established between the two countries.

The US Administration has identified Africa as a foreign-policy priority and has further identified South Africa as an anchor state in the region in terms of the US National Security Strategy.

The USA remains the largest single foreign investor in the South African economy since 1994, and the largest trading partner, taken as an individual country, as well as the largest donor of official development assistance.

Current economic priorities regarding the USA are two-fold: the conclusion of the Sacu-US FTA negotiations which, once completed, would have the potential of securing Africa Growth and Opportunity Act benefits for the long term; encouraging new investments in South Africa; and continuing to market South Africa as a desirable investment destination for US companies, with the emphasis on promoting economic empowerment for previously disadvantaged communities.

The Sacu-US FTA negotiations are considered important both in the context of encouraging US support for regional economic development and co-operation, as well as for the effective implementation of Nepad. The talks have the potential to improve trade flows significantly between the Sacu region and the USA, and to

contribute to regional economic growth, stability and prosperity.

Support for Nepad within the US Administration, US Congress and business sector, with particular focus on the implementation of infrastructure-development projects, is a high priority. Building local capacity for research and effective delivery is another area of co-operation with the USA in the continuing battle against communicable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV and AIDS.

The US Presidential Emergency Programme for AIDS committed US\$2,8 billion in 2005. US support for South Africa, the region and Africa's social and economic objectives is an important long-term priority.

Consultation between the South African Government, through the National Treasury and the US Agency for International Development (USAid), on the alignment of the USAid programmes with South Africa's domestic developmental priorities, is ongoing and reviewed yearly. USAid programmes in South Africa focus on strengthening the capacity of educational institutions; improving primary healthcare delivery; providing technical assistance and scholarships to improve economic capacity in the country; and enhancing the quality of, and access to, housing in South Africa.

Under the current co-operation agreement, R234 million will be directed towards South African government initiatives. This amount represents 56% of USAid's total annual budget of R546 million to South Africa, which in the past two years has been the top recipient of development assistance among the 27 African countries that USAid supports.

On behalf of South Africa, Dr Dlamini Zuma presented a R2-million cheque to victims of Hurricane Katrina and assumed the chair of the Group of 77 (G77) in January 2006.

Canada

A new minority conservative government is in power in Canada, following elections held on 23 January 2006. The new Prime Minister, Mr Stephen Harper, was sworn in on 6 February 2006. In a letter to President Mbeki he indicated that Canada wished to maintain close relations with South Africa.

In the multilateral sphere, South Africa and Canada share a like-minded approach to a number of issues such as human rights and the need for UN reform.

Canada remains a strong supporter of the African Agenda and Nepad, particularly in the G8 context. Canada is actively seeking closer co-operation with South Africa in peacekeeping on the continent.

Intensive interaction takes place between a number of South African government departments and their Canadian counterparts. Closer co-operation has been developing in the fields of minerals and energy, health, science and technology, agriculture, as well as arts and culture, with the emphasis on research, skills transfer and capacity-building.

These areas are particularly significant in the context of Jipsa. An initiative to foster closer co-operation between the Foreign Service Institute of South Africa and its Canadian counterpart has also been launched.

Canada remains the largest foreign investor in the South African mining sector and has indicated its intention of increasing investments in this sector, not only in South Africa, but also on the continent as a whole. Bilateral trade, which has been growing since 1994, marginally shifted in Canada's favour during 2005. The establishment of the South Africa consulate-general in Toronto in June 2005 is expected to boost bilateral trade further.

Canada reconfirmed its commitment to development co-operation with South Africa by making available R100 million a year over the next five years. Its technical assistance programme is aimed at social upliftment, policy development and HRD.

The finalisation of the Country Development Programme Framework between South Africa and Canada, one of the first of its kind for Canada, will ensure a focused approach to Canadian development assistance to South Africa.

Annual consultations between South Africa and Canada were instituted in 2004 in terms of the Declaration of Intent signed during President Mbeki's state visit to that country in November 2003. These have developed into an effective platform to review relations in all spheres and to identify priority areas for co-operation annually.

The Caribbean

South Africa's relations with the independent member states of the Caribbean community have been strengthened and expanded. In addition to Jamaica,

the high commission in Kingston also maintains responsibility for Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The mission in Havana, Cuba, is also responsible for relations with the Dominican Republic.

In formulating South Africa's policy in relation to the emerging markets of the Caribbean, it is important to strengthen relations and to develop common positions on global issues such as access to the markets of the industrial North, reform of international institutions, and the promotion of the development agenda.

In this regard, special emphasis is placed on how South Africa and the rest of the African continent engage these countries in promoting the ideals of the continent and the Diaspora. The South Africa, AU and Caribbean Diaspora Conference held in Kingston, Jamaica, during March 2005, provided specific guidelines on how to take South Africa's relationship with the Caribbean forward.

The South African Government will increase its focus on strengthening relations with the Caribbean region in future. Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic and Suriname have opened diplomatic missions in South Africa.

South Africa signed a bilateral co-operation agreement with the Bahamas in May 2005, and the first JBC met in September 2005. It focused on co-operation in agriculture, arts and culture, education and health. The next JBC was expected to be held in South Africa in 2006.

The fourth Joint Consultative Mechanism between Cuba and South Africa was held in the Western Cape in January 2006.

In May 2006, the Deputy Minister of Communications, Mr Radhakrishna Padayachie, visited Cuba, where he finalised and signed the South Africa-Cuba ICT Programme of Action.

Latin America

The South American Community of Nations covers 17 million square kilometres, with 361 million inhabitants, a gross domestic product of more than US\$973 billion, and exports of more than US\$180 billion. The developing countries in Central America and the Andean Community are playing an increasingly important role in international political bodies and formations such as the NAM and the UN.

Brazil remains a significant player in the multilateral context, particularly regarding the interests of the South. With its like-minded approach to a number of significant issues affecting the developing world, it is a strategic partner for South Africa.

In the bilateral sphere, a broad range of contacts and exchanges exist between Brazil and South Africa. The IBSA Dialogue Forum also provides a mechanism for institutionalised engagement.

South Africa attaches great importance to its relations with other like-minded countries of the Southern Cone of Latin America such as Chile, Uruguay and Argentina, and to pursuing increased co-operation in a number of fields.

A range of technical and commercial agreements are either in place or being negotiated with several of the countries in the region. In addition, the inaugural meeting of the South Africa-Argentine JC was expected to take place in 2006.

On 11 March 2006, President Mbeki led a South African government delegation to the inauguration of Chile's first female president, Dr Michelle Bachelet, in Santiago.

In June 2006, Colombia's former Foreign Minister, Ms Carolina Barco, visited South Africa for bilateral economic and political discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Dlamini Zuma.

Bilateral trade flow between Colombia and South Africa is constant with the balance in favour of South Africa.

SABMiller, Anglo American, Anglo Coal and AngloGold Ashanti are among the South African companies that have operations in Colombia.

There is also significant potential for co-operation with the Mercosur (Southern Common Market) trading bloc, which consists of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela as full members, and a steadily-increasing number of associate members in the Latin American region.

A partial preferential trade agreement with Mercosur was signed in December 2004. Negotiations towards a full FTA continue.

Relations with Europe

European Union

The advent of a new democratic political dispensation in South Africa in 1994 marked the dawn of a new era in South Africa-EU relations. The legal framework that governs South Africa's

relationship with the EU is the Trade, Development and Co-operation Agreement (TDCA), which is premised on political dialogue, trade and economic co-operation, and development co-operation.

The TDCA provides for regular, high-level structured political dialogue at ministerial level. At the highest strategic level, regular visits also take place.

The first South Africa-EU Ministerial JCC meeting was held on 23 November 2004. The JCC is a forum of the TDCA, established to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the agreement.

This enables the Minister of Foreign Affairs and her counterpart, the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, to discuss bilateral, African and global issues. These include poverty-eradication, Nepad, peace-building, conflict prevention, respect for human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law, and good governance. The second Ministerial JCC took place in Brussels, Belgium, in November 2005.

Through the process of the full implementation of the TDCA, efforts are being made to implement those areas of the TDCA that were left in abeyance since it fully entered into force. The TDCA is also undergoing its first five-year review, as stipulated in the agreement.

Regarding trade and economic co-operation, the TDCA provides for an FTA by 2012. The Trade Chapter of the agreement provisionally entered into force in January 2000. The reciprocal elimination of trade tariffs and the resultant access to the EU market improved two-way trade by close to 50%, reaching a total value of R200 billion. Since January 2002, South Africa has exported to the EU an annual average of R80,6 billion worth of goods and imported R120,2 billion worth of goods from the EU. The EU is the largest source of FDI to South Africa. It accounts for 44% of the total FDI flows to South Africa, and six out of the top 10 foreign investors in South Africa are member states of the EU.

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 (EPRD), which was funded directly from the EU Commission's budget at a cost of €127,5 million for the period 2003 to 2006.

The new EPRD (2007 to 2013) will see the budget remaining the same or being increased slightly. The EPRD is the largest single development programme in South Africa financed by foreign donors. Further assistance from the EU comes in the form of soft loans from the European Investment Bank.

A unique feature of the TDCA is that it has a regional development dimension. To this end, up to 10% of the EPRD can be used for regional development. This provision in the agreement created a legal basis for the decision of the first South Africa-EU Ministerial Troika Meeting, that 1,5% of the amount allocated to South Africa under the EPRD would be made available for the Africa Peace Facility.

EPRD funds also serve to strengthen South Africa's democratic institutions. The EU donated R80 million in January 2005 to South Africa's Parliament and the nine provincial legislatures to help strengthen democracy and the rule of law.

African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP)-European Union relations

South Africa assumed full membership of the ACP group of countries in 1996. It became a qualified member of the Lome Convention in 1997 and of its successor, the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA), signed in Cotonou in June 2000.

The CPA is a framework for co-operation between the 78 countries of the ACP group and the EU. The new EU members that acceded in May 2004 adopted the agreement as part of the EU's legislative infrastructure.

Qualified membership means that South Africa is excluded from the trade regime provided in the agreement and from the provisions on development assistance. South Africa can, however, tender for projects in all ACP countries and participate fully in all political instruments of the agreement. South Africa's economic relations with the EU are governed by the TDCA.

The CPA differs significantly from its predecessor in that its duration will be 20 years, with a revision clause every five years and a financial protocol for each five-year period. The agreement underscores the importance of regional economic co-operation.

The most far-reaching changes are to be introduced in the area of trade, through regional economic partnership agreements (EPAs), where non-reciprocal preferences will be gradually

abolished and regional integration processes encouraged. The present arrangements are to be maintained until December 2007 when the EPAs will have been finalised. South Africa initially participated in the EPA negotiations as an observer, but by mid-2006 its status was under review.

One of the key aspects of South Africa's membership of the ACP is its active participation in the three ACP-EU joint political organs, namely the Council of Ministers, the Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ambassadors.

South Africa takes part in dialogue on important issues such as peace-building, conflict resolution, respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. South Africa regularly participates in ACP summits, Council of Ministers' meetings, trade ministers' meetings and the ACP Forum on Science and Technology.

The interest and commitment shown by the EU regarding the African continent and its development is encouraging. Within that context, the European Commission (EC) and the Nepad Secretariat are closely co-operating through established structures and regular dialogue and information-sharing. They have also agreed to increase coherence between EU member states and the EC in support of Nepad projects, the AU and its institutions, and the RECs.

Benelux countries

The Belgian Government continues to take a keen interest in South and southern Africa and the Great Lakes Region, particularly the DRC. There is a regular exchange of views between South Africa and Belgium on the issues and the complicated processes necessary to reach a durable solution to the conflicts in the region.

In February 2006, Crown Prince Philippe of Belgium led a 200-strong business delegation to South Africa. Besides a number of trade agreements that were signed, the Belgian delegation also met with Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka for bilateral discussions.

Since 1994, 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 frequently.

In October 2005, Foreign Minister Bernard Bot of the Netherlands visited South Africa. He had bilateral discussions with Minister Dlamini Zuma and also met with Defence Minister Mosiuoa Lekota

and Finance Minister Trevor Manuel. During this visit, several agreements were signed, including an avoidance of double taxation agreement and two defence agreements.

In May 2006, the Royal Netherlands Embassy added a further R40 million to the R15 million it had already donated to the National Reading Programme, a programme aimed at providing schools across South Africa with books, and with access to mobile libraries in areas where there are no community or public libraries.

Luxembourg and South Africa enjoy dynamic bilateral relations. High-level visits between the two states take place regularly.

German-speaking countries

Relations with Germany have expanded considerably since the introduction of the South Africa-Germany BNC in 1996. The committees of the commission work continuously to enhance economic, scientific, cultural, environmental, defence and development co-operation.

South Africa is Germany's largest trading partner on the African continent. Germany ranks with the UK and USA among the three largest economic role-players in South Africa regarding trade, investment, finance and tourism. More than 370 German companies have invested in South Africa and they collectively employ more than 65 000 people.

Germany's policies towards South Africa and the continent, bilaterally and through the EU and G8, are positive. Germany has a strong commitment towards the SADC and its programmes, which has included financial assistance, both bilaterally and through the EU.

Germany provided direct financial support for the restructuring of the SADC.

Germany has offered to share with South Africa the experience it gained when it hosted the Fifa Soccer World Cup in 2006. President Mbeki, Minister Dlamini Zuma and the Minister of Sport and Recreation, Rev Makhenkesi Stofile, visited Germany in July 2006 to hold discussions with German President Horst Koehler and Chancellor Angela Merkel on, among other things, the implementation of the African Partnership Initiative, South Africa's preparations for the 2010 Fifa World Cup, and African conflict and peacekeeping and the EU's support in such initiatives.

Switzerland is actively involved in promoting peace dialogue and humanitarian issues on the African continent.

In January 2006, South Africa and Switzerland signed a R19-million agreement to support local government capacity-building in South Africa through knowledge-sharing in the water sector.

Austria prides itself on having built up many years of experience in international peacekeeping and conflict resolution, and offers internationally recognised training courses at the Diplomatic Academy in co-operation with New York-based NGOs for South Africans and other African governments.

Besides engaging the Austrian Government at national level in support of development programmes and increased economic involvement, provincial partnerships with key Austrian provinces have also resulted in development support.

Successful initiatives between South Africa and Europe's German-speaking countries include:

- 32 development co-operation agreements with Germany tabled in Parliament
- the successful Business and Investor Congress, focusing on World Cup 2010, held in Germany
- President Mbeki's attendance of the Partnership with Africa Initiative in Bonn, Germany, in November 2005
- successful participation in trade fairs, which resulted in concluded sales of close to R30 million and the possibility of mid-term sales of over R80 million
- four investment projects worth R748 million that were secured from the automotive and metals industry (resulting in over 500 new permanent jobs) in Germany
- training courses arranged for SANDF staff in Germany, including submarine training and UN observer training
- the Minister of Science and Technology's visit to Switzerland, resulting in closer co-operation
- a trilateral agreement negotiated between South Africa and Switzerland on operational commanders' training with the DRC.

Nordic countries

South Africa enjoys excellent 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 co-operation is broad and has

benefited civil society and the spheres of government.

Relations in the international arena have seen close co-operation on multilateral issues. The Nordic countries are strong supporters of Nepad. They are directly involved in conflict resolution and reconstruction projects in Africa, and have already entered into trilateral projects with South Africa, e.g. in the DRC.

In January 2006, Deputy Minister Pahad joined Nordic and African foreign ministers from Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Mozambique, Mali, Senegal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland and Denmark at the fifth session of the Nordic-African Informal Consultations in Cotonou, Benin, against the background of South Africa's commitment to promoting North-South co-operation in support of the African Agenda. Among others, they discussed the prevention of conflict in Africa, democracy, human rights and political governance, and children and armed conflicts in Africa.

The South African-Swedish BNC, co-chaired by Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka and Deputy Prime Minister Bosse Ringholm, was held in Pretoria in November 2005. They discussed the domestic political situation in each country, regional developments, gender issues, HIV and AIDS, trade and investment relations, the reform of the UN and the WTO.

The BNC consists of three committees dealing with political, economic, and social and development co-operation affairs.

Bilateral consultations between Finland and South Africa, held biannually, took place in Pretoria in April 2005.

United Kingdom and Ireland

Relations between the UK and South Africa are based on strong historical ties over the past two centuries. During 2005, the UK hosted the G8 Meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, where substantial decisions were reached on African debt relief and measures to support the implementation of Nepad.

In line with the recommendations of the Commission for Africa initiated by Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2005, it is anticipated that the UK will play a leading role in implementing the 2005 G8 decisions and assisting Africa in meeting the millennium development goals (MDGs).

The UK Department for International Development also launched a southern African regional plan in February 2006 aimed at ameliorating the underlying causes of poverty and responding to natural and man-made emergencies.

Prime Minister Blair visited South Africa in February 2006 to attend the Progressive Governance Summit. In May 2006, President Mbeki held discussions with Prime Minister Blair in London.

Minister Dlamini Zuma led the South African delegation to the seventh session of the UK-South Africa Bilateral Forum held in London in May 2006.

The Irish and South African governments agreed to set up the Ireland-South Africa Partnership Forum to boost co-operation between the two countries. The inaugural meeting of this structured, high-level and multisectoral engagement was scheduled for June 2006. Irish Deputy Prime Minister Mary Harney visited South Africa in March 2006 and held bilateral consultations with Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka. In November 2006, Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka paid an official visit to Ireland.

Mediterranean Europe

From 28 February to 1 March 2006, Minister Dlamini Zuma represented South Africa at the Innovative Financing for Development and Combating Pandemics Conference in Paris, convened by French President Jacques Chirac.

Countries that attended the conference, including India, Brazil, South Africa, Germany, UK and France, signed a declaration to advance the achievement of the MDGs.

Bilateral relations between South Africa and France are directed by institutionalised mechanisms such as the MoU on Political Dialogue, and joint commissions on trade and industry and education; arts, culture, science and technology; and sport. Economic relations between France and South Africa continue to strengthen. South African Airways recently procured Airbus aircraft as part of its comprehensive fleet-modernisation programme.

In September 2006, South Africa and France signed a partnership agreement setting out joint development projects worth R3,1 billion. The Framework Charter Partnership covers the fields of service delivery, small business, job creation and energy efficiency.

President Mbeki held bilateral political and economic discussions with Italian President Carlo

Azeglia Ciampi, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Mayor of Rome, Mr Walter Veltroni, during a state visit to that country in March 2006.

Deputy Minister Pahad paid an official visit to Athens, Greece, from 27 January to 1 February 2006, and held bilateral political and economic discussions with his counterpart, Mr Eviplidis Styliandis.

South Africa and Greece also have strong cultural ties through the Hellenic community in South Africa, which plays a positive and constructive role in the reconstruction and development of South Africa.

In March 2006, President Mbeki attended the inauguration of Prof. Cavaco Silva as Portugal's new president. In July 2006, Deputy Foreign Minister Pahad and his Spanish counterpart, Secretary of State Dr Bernardino Leon Gross, held discussions in South Africa on, among other things:

- bilateral political and economic matters
- the Spanish 'New Plan for Africa'
- proposed trilateral co-operation projects in Burundi
- the Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Equatorial Guinea and Western Sahara
- the Iranian nuclear issue
- the comprehensive reform of the UN.

In November 2006, Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka paid an official visit to Portugal.

Central Europe

On 20 February 2006, Deputy Minister Pahad held bilateral political and economic discussions with his Hungarian counterpart, Political State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr András Bársony, in Pretoria. The Republic of Hungary is a newly admitted member to the EU. Hungary is one of South Africa's most important trading partners in Central Europe.

In March 2006, President Mbeki congratulated Prime Minister Ferenc Gyursany on the election victory of the Socialist Party and its coalition partner, the Free Democrats.

In January 2006, the Republic of Croatia presented President Mbeki with its letter of credence.

In December 2004, the Bulgarian Vice President, Mr Angel Marin, paid an official visit to South Africa to strengthen political and economic ties. The two countries signed agreements on co-operation in the fields of culture, healthcare, health science and policing. Notes were exchanged on the ratification

by both parliaments of the Convention on Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.

On 16 March 2006, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms Sue van der Merwe, held political and economic discussions with her Romanian counterpart, State Secretary for Global Affairs Dr Teodor Bacorshi, in Pretoria. The discussion focused on aspects such as closer co-operation in the fields of defence and technology as well as bilateral trade.

Eastern Europe

The historical links between South Africa and the Russian Federation are strong. The former Union of Social Socialist Republics supported the struggle for liberation in South Africa.

In April 1999, the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation (ITEC), between the Russian Federation and South Africa was established. During the fifth ITEC session in October 2005 in Moscow, considerable progress was achieved in further strengthening mutually

beneficial co-operation. The Intergovernmental Agreement on Co-operation in the field of Maritime Transport and MoU in the Sphere of Astronomy and Nuclear Research was signed.

In order to strengthen existing and explore new opportunities for nuclear research collaboration between South Africa and the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR), the Department of Science and Technology hosted a senior Russian nuclear research delegation from the JINR in February 2006.

Multilateral diplomacy


The adoption of the UN World Summit Outcome document in New York by more than 150 heads of state and government marked one of the most prominent efforts during 2005 to protect and strengthen multilateralism.

A series of studies and reports informed the preparations for the summit, notably the Cardoso Report on the UN and Civil Society; the Report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change; the Jeffrey Sachs Millennium Project Report *Investing in Development*; and the *In Larger Freedom* Report of the UN secretary general. All these contributions held out the promise that large-scale reform of the UN was within the grasp of UN member states.

Expectations of wholesale change and reform of the UN, however, proved not to be realistically attainable. The 2005 Review Summit nonetheless agreed on a number of reforms to address events and issues that continue to undermine global peace and security and the multilateral system of governance.

South Africa remains an active participant in these ongoing efforts to implement the 2005 World Summit Outcome document to reform the UN, even more so in its current position as chair of the G77, where it leads negotiations on behalf of all 132 developing countries.

It also believes that the multilateral system should be fully engaged in 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, both of mass destruction and small arms.

 On 12 January 2006, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, visited the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York, United States of America, to assume the position of chairperson of the Group of 77 (G77) on behalf of South Africa.

The G77 is the largest coalition of developing countries in the UN, providing the means for the countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic and development issues in the UN system, promote South-South co-operation, and strengthen economic and technical co-operation among developing countries themselves.

During its tenure as chair of the G77, South Africa will be committed to enhancing the position of the group as a constructive and responsible partner in promoting North-South relations in support of the development agenda of the South.

Additionally, the importance of the developing countries' need to co-ordinate common positions among themselves on global issues is increasingly being recognised.

South Africa maintains that issues such as these pose major threats to world peace and security. Through participation in organisations and groups such as the UN, the AU, the NAM, the G77 and the Commonwealth, South Africa seeks to ensure that national interests and objectives, as well as those of the continent and developing countries generally, are taken on board in discussions in multilateral fora and reports.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

South Africa's priorities for participation in the UNGA, its main committees and organs, include:

- pursuing an overarching human-rights agenda, including the right to development
- promoting global peace and security
- protecting and promoting multilateralism, international law and the centrality of the UN Charter
- addressing human development, poverty eradication and environmental degradation
- advancing the active follow-up and implementation of the MDGs, international development goals and the outcomes of major UN conferences
- advancing South-South co-operation through active participation in the NAM and other South-South co-operation arrangements
- promoting the reform of the UNSC General Assembly, Ecosoc, and regional organisations, and generally revitalising the UN system
- promoting the Common Africa Position on the reform of the UN, including the equitable representation of Africa on the UNSC
- disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of both weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms
- implementing the Johannesburg Plan of Action of the WSSD
- humanitarian assistance
- promoting the AU and Nepad in the UN context
- promoting gender mainstreaming
- supporting the global campaign against terrorism.

President Mbeki led the South African delegation to the 2005 Millennium Review Summit held at the beginning of the 60th Session of the UNGA in September 2005. Its main purpose was to review the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and to make decisions on a comprehensive package of UN reform measures.

While the summit succeeded in some respects, it failed to take decisions on certain key issues (notably the reform/expansion of the UNSC and the absence of any reference to disarmament and non-proliferation). Particularly in the area of development, the outcome of the 2005 Millennium Review Summit was disappointing in that little progress was made with the promotion of the development agenda of the South. One significant positive outcome of the summit was the universal acceptance of the MDGs as benchmark measures of progress towards development.

President Mbeki attended the UNGA61 in September 2006.

United Nations reform

The adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome by more than 150 heads of state and government did, however, set in motion a number of reforms in the UN system that include establishing:

- a peace-building commission
- a human rights council

President Thabo Mbeki met his Russian counterpart, Mr Vladimir Putin in South Africa in September 2006 to discuss strengthening relations between South Africa and the Russian Federation.

It was the first-ever visit by a Russian head of state to South Africa.

The presidents discussed the status of political and economic relations between their countries, including efforts to promote economic relations through the Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation.

They also discussed the promotion of the African Agenda, regional developments in the Southern African Development Community, conflict resolution and peacekeeping in the Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Middle East and the reform of the United Nations.

The two governments signed co-operation agreements on friendship and partnership that set the framework for co-operation in most areas; one on co-operation in space; one on co-operation in health and medicine, and one protecting intellectual property rights in defence industry co-operation.

- implementing management reforms in the UN Secretariat
- reviewing the mandates of UN activities and programmes
- finalising the comprehensive convention against terrorism and developing a broader counter terrorism strategy
- maintaining and strengthening political momentum for development
- establishing new functions for Ecosoc.

Member states agreed on the establishment of the Peace-Building Commission before the deadline set by the World Summit of 31 December 2005. Progress was also made with implementing certain management reforms in the UN Secretariat. Other issues, however, required further attention during 2006.

South Africa supported and actively participated in all negotiations, during the main part of UNGA60, related to the implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. It will continue to do so to bring these reforms to a fruitful conclusion.

United Nations Security Council

The comprehensive reform of the UNSC remains work in progress.

The fifth extraordinary assembly of the AU convened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 31 October 2005 to consider a report from the Committee of Ten (C10) Heads of State and Government, that had been mandated to present and advocate for the Common African Position with other regions of the world.

The AU Assembly reaffirmed the Common African Position and stressed the importance of African unity.

The African resolution on UNSC reform was tabled in the UNGA in December 2005. The sixth ordinary session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Khartoum, Sudan, in January 2006, decided to maintain the resolution before the UNGA. All member states were asked to co-sponsor the resolution.

The AU Heads of State and Government further decided to renew the mandate of the C10 Heads of State and Government, and that the expanded follow-up mechanism should continue consultations to promote and support the Common African Position on UN reform, including the reform of the UNSC.

The assembly asked the C10 to submit a progress report on this issue to the next ordinary session of the Assembly in July 2006.

South Africa has been elected as a non-permanent member of the UNSC.

Human rights

A commitment to promoting human rights is one of the central considerations in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy. South Africa is a major player in the development of international human rights law at the UN, continually evaluating the effectiveness of existing human-rights treaties and proposing additional instruments.

South Africa is spearheading, in conjunction with members of the AU, a process which will initiate the elaboration of complementary standards to update and strengthen the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. This process is undertaken within the framework of the mechanisms established to follow up the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, hosted by South Africa in 2001.

South Africa plays a meaningful role in the process of deepening the core values of democracy, good governance and the rule of law, both at regional, national and international levels, through its membership of and active participation in the various democracy fora.

South Africa played a critical role in the UN Commission on Human Rights. It also participated in initiatives leading up to the UN Millennium Review Summit in New York on UN reform in the area of human rights and the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council.

South Africa is a bureau member of the UN Ad Hoc Committee on the draft International Integral Convention on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disability, and continues to play a leading role in the follow-up and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in 1995.

Humanitarian issues

South Africa plays an active role in supporting humanitarian causes globally, with a particular focus on the African continent. In 2005, the South African Government donated R140 million to the UN World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) to support sustainable food-security and livestock programmes in seven southern African countries. During the same period, R8,7 million was also transferred to various UN

humanitarian agencies in support of projects alleviating the plight of vulnerable groups such as women, children, internally displaced persons and refugees in Africa, Palestine and Iraq.

During 2005, South Africa rendered logistical, in-kind and monetary assistance to victims of natural disasters, including the famine in Niger, the earthquake in Pakistan and Hurricane Katrina in the USA.

Environment

The signing of a number of multilateral environmental agreements and the hosting of the WSSD in 2002 placed South Africa at the forefront of environmental diplomacy.

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 by 2010. South Africa is also firmly committed to the protection of the oceans and the sustainable management of its marine resources.

It has ratified all the major treaties dealing with marine, maritime, fisheries and Antarctic matters, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and its related instruments, the International Maritime Convention, the UN FAO Compliance Agreement and the Antarctic Treaty.

Disarmament

South Africa continued 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 fora, including the 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. The failure by some states to implement their obligations under the NPT (particularly on nuclear disarmament) and to roll back agreements made at previous conferences created a climate which made it difficult to make progress with key challenges facing the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Together with other role-players in the nuclear field, South Africa actively participated in the meetings of the policy-making organs of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Important issues considered by the IAEA Board of Governors included the implementation of NPT safeguards in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Relevant South African nuclear experts participated in various IAEA technical and expert meetings that hold potential benefits for not only the South African nuclear industry, but also for accelerated economic growth on the African continent. South Africa hosted various inspections undertaken by the IAEA in accordance with South Africa's Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol with the Agency.

South Africa actively participates in the structures of the Chemicals Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention (BWC), to which it is a state party. South Africa was elected chair of the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in March 2006. South Africa continues to emphasise the importance of the BWC and the need to strengthen it to adequately address the threat posed by the possible use of biological and toxic weapons by terrorists and other non-state actors.

As a follow-up to the 2001 UN Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons, South Africa was an active participant in negotiations to develop an international instrument to enable states to trace illicit small arms. Although the UN instrument that was adopted in December 2005 is not legally binding, its provisions on marking, record-keeping and co-operation in tracing nonetheless present a workable framework to assist states to trace illicit small arms and light weapons. South Africa actively participated in the development of the African Common Position for the UN Review Conference on the UNPoA as adopted in January 2006.

South Africa was admitted as the first African state to join the Wassenaar Arrangement (conventional arms and dual-use technology-control regime) in December 2005, and became a full participating state in the arrangement on 28 February 2006.

In the context of South Africa's participation in various international arms-control bodies, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and the Missile Technology Control Regime, South Africa continues to promote the principle of access to advanced technologies for peaceful purposes, thereby ensuring that non-proliferation controls do not become a means whereby developing countries are denied access to technologies required for their development.

Crime and crime prevention

Following its ratification of the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its three supplementary protocols: The Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea; The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; and the Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition, South Africa participated in the Conference of the Parties (CoP) of the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime in October 2005. The CoP will take place regularly to provide guidance to parties on how to implement the convention. Following its ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption, South Africa participated in the first CoP of the Convention against Corruption in 2006.

The Kimberly Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)

The KPCS is a voluntary tripartite international forum, intent on preventing the use of diamonds in the promotion of conflict while encouraging the contribution of diamonds to prosperity. The KPCS forum comprises all major diamond producing, trading and processing countries, the diamond industry and civil society.

The department participates actively in the standing bodies of the KPCS. One of the department's primary objectives in monitoring the KPCS and participating in the business of KPCS standing and ad hoc bodies is to support government's efforts to ensure that the collective interests of African diamond-producing countries are protected.

North-South dialogue

The Department of Foreign Affairs serves as the focal point for North-South dialogue, engaging key global economic institutions such as the WTO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Intellectual Property Organisation. To achieve this objective, South Africa ensures that the development agenda remains part of the focus of key economic fora, particularly the annual G8 (Group of Seven most-industrialised nations plus Russia) Summit and World Economic Forum meetings.

The most important developments during 2005/06 were the G8 Gleneagles Summit

outcomes, South Africa becoming a member of the OECD's Development Centre, and the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, which resulted in a compromise deal being arrived at that is regarded as a workable platform to keep the Doha Development Agenda afloat. South Africa's presence at and participation in North-South dialogue fora enhances its commitment to attaining the MDGs.

The 2006 G8 Summit in Saint Petersburg was the first to be hosted by the Russian Federation since joining the group. The summit focused on international energy security, health issues with a specific focus on communicable diseases and education development. South Africa attended and participated in the summit as a considered strategic outreach partner of the G8, along with India, China, Brazil and Mexico, as was the case in 2005.

South-South co-operation

In advancing the development agenda of the South and within the overall context of promoting multilateralism, South Africa participated in the second South Summit in June 2005 in Doha, Qatar.

Progressively, the importance of South-South co-operation is being acknowledged, especially in terms of global, regional and country-level efforts to achieve the MDGs. Rather than being a substitute for North-South co-operation, the modalities of South-South co-operation are complementary. South African foreign policy seeks, among other things, to persuade the international community to support the efforts of developing countries to expand such co-operation.

Through active participation in other co-operation arrangements such as IBSA, South Africa seeks to contribute to strengthening South-South co-operation and the development of innovative co-operation programmes.

Global finance

The Department of Foreign Affairs has in its engagements solicited the international community to fulfil its Monterrey commitments. It recognises the need for increased and more predictable resources for development. As such, it supports initiatives such as the Action Against Hunger and Poverty to implement innovative financing mechanisms for development on a public, private,

domestic or external basis, to complement official development assistance.

As one of the G20 countries within the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs), the department contributes to developing pragmatically the global partnership between developed and developing countries. Within this context, South Africa is committed to the continuous review of the representivity, operations and strategies of the BWIs and more effective participation by developing countries in these bodies.

Social development

South Africa chaired the 44th session of the UN Commission for Social Development in 2006, delivering the statement that focused on the important role of, among other things, indigenous knowledge systems in poverty eradication, on behalf of the G77.

Participation in UN budgetary and programmatic issues

Over the past five years, South Africa played a prominent role in the context of UN budgetary and programmatic issues.

South Africa's Auditor-General served on the UN Board of Auditors from 2000 until the end of 2006. The Auditor-General was also re-elected in 2005 as the External Auditor for the UN Industrial Development Organisation for the period 2006 to 2008.

The Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, was elected vice president of the second UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and Finance for the period 2006 to 2009. She was also a member of the first Committee of Experts on Public Administration that served the UN from 2002 to 2005. Another South African, Judge Mervyn King, who chaired the King Committee on Corporate Governance in South Africa, has been elected chairperson of a high-level steering panel to evaluate governance in the UN.

Active participation in administrative and budgetary issues is aimed at ensuring, to the fullest extent possible, that UN programmes as well as budgetary and administrative priorities adequately cater for development and poverty eradication. In this regard, priority areas for South Africa include the funding of UN structures and programmes that focus on Africa and Nepad, as well as sufficient funding for peacekeeping operations on the continent.

For the 2006 regular budget of the UN, South Africa's assessed contribution was US\$4,983 million. Its contribution to the UN peacekeeping budget was expected to be in the region of US\$2,5 million. It further contributed US\$460 076 to the international criminal tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia.

South Africa met its financial obligations to the UN for 2006 in full, on time and without pre-conditions, thus resulting in the country again being one of only a few UN member states to meet their membership obligations on time. As a result, South Africa was again honoured by being included on the secretary general's 'Roll of Honour' of countries that paid their dues in full and on time.

South African representation on United Nations bodies and organs

South Africa strives to be active in all bodies and functional committees of the UN dealing with its foreign-policy priorities or objectives, and thus serves on the following:

- Ecosocc (1995 to 1997, 2001 to 2003, 2005 to 2007)
- International Law Commission (2002 to 2006): Professor John Dugard
- International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (2005 to 2009): Judge J Moloto
- Human Rights Council (HRC), successor to the Commission on Human Rights (2006). The first election of the members of the HRC was held by the UNGA on 9 May 2006. South Africa was elected to the HRC by 179 votes from 191 countries.
- International Criminal Court (2003 to 2009): Judge M Pillay

On 13 March 2006, the former Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Mr Kofi Annan, and his wife, Nane, visited South Africa for three days.

This was Annan's first visit to South Africa since he took over the leadership of the UN in 1997.

He met with President Thabo Mbeki and visited former President Nelson Mandela.

He also visited the Hector Peterson Memorial in Soweto and delivered a speech to the National Assembly in Cape Town.

- International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (2005 to 2014): Judge A Hoffmann
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2005 to 2008): Ambassador P January-Bardill.

South Africa currently serves on the following subsidiary bodies of the Ecosocc:

- Commission for Social Development (2001 to 2005, 2006 to 2009)
- Statistical Commission (2002 to 2005, 2006 to 2009)
- Commission on the Status of Women (2002 to 2006)
- Committee for Programme Co-ordination (2003 to 2005, 2006 to 2008)
- Governing Council on Human Settlements (2004 to 2007)
- Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accountancy and Reporting (2003 to 2005, 2006 to 2008)
- Commission on International Trade Law (2005 to 2007)
- Commission on Sustainable Development (2002 to 2005, 2007 to 2010)
- Commission on Population and Development (1998 to 2001, 2007 to 2010)
- Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (2007 to 2010).

 In May 2006, South Africa signed an agreement with the United Nations' (UN) World Food Programme (WFP) to establish the WFP Regional Bureau for southern Africa in South Africa.

The WFP has been active in southern Africa for some time, after the Department of Foreign Affairs previously gave priority approval to the WFP to open up a regional logistics unit in Johannesburg to co-ordinate the UN inter-agency relief effort for the subregion.

Through the agreement, this office would become upgraded to a permanent regional office. The WFP is the premier international organisation for food-aid distribution and has been playing an important facilitation role as the major supplier of food and non-food assistance to victims of humanitarian crises in the southern African region.

United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in South Africa

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) seeks to implement programmes that are relevant to government's transformation and development imperatives.

South Africa's voluntary contribution to the UNDP for 2005/06 was R950 000, which went towards the operational costs of development programmes in South Africa.

The UNDP has a county office in Pretoria, which is headed by the resident representative, who is also the UN resident co-ordinator for all UN operational activities in South Africa.

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is a mechanism to establish an integrated framework for co-operation for development assistance between the UN system, represented through 16 UN funds, programmes and agencies present in South Africa and government. The UNDAF reflects the priorities conveyed to the UN by government and is based on the Common Country Assessment (CCA).

The previous UNDAF ended in December 2006. The department worked with the UNCT in South Africa and numerous other departments to prepare the new UNDAF, which will guide UN support in South Africa from 2007 to 2010. In this process, a CCA has been drafted by government and accepted by the UN and a new UNDAF.

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, 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, a common working language, and 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. These programmes are committed to the UN MDGs, Nepad and the plight of small and less-developed countries.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) takes place biennially. South Africa hosted the CHOGM in 1999 under the theme *People-Centred Development – Challenge of Globalisation*. Malta hosted the CHOGM in November 2005 under the theme *Networking the Commonwealth for Development*, also focusing on world trade, migration and terrorism.

Aside from the Final Communiqué, which addresses different issues of concern to the Commonwealth, heads of government also issued the Malta Declaration on Networking the Commonwealth for Development, the Valletta Statement on Multilateral Trade, and the Gozo Statement on Vulnerable Small States.

South Africa made numerous contributions to the Malta Communiqué, in particular on issues relating to the MDGs, the African Agenda and Nepad, and addressing health, education and debt relief. South Africa also supported strong positions on trade liberalisation, climate change and terrorism.

South Africa actively partakes in the various ministerial meetings and governing bodies of the Commonwealth. Meetings of ministers of finance have devoted resources in support of the Monterrey Consensus; justice ministers have drafted model anti-terrorism legislation and control over money laundering; and ministers of education and of health have adopted codes of conduct in the recruitment of health workers and teachers.

Non-Aligned Movement

The NAM with its 114 member states 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. The XII Summit of Heads of State or Government was hosted in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, in 1998, when South Africa, as is the practice, also took over the chair from Colombia.

South Africa chaired the NAM until 2003 when Malaysia assumed chairpersonship. In its capacity as immediate former chair, South Africa served on the NAM Troika until the XIV Summit in Havana, September 2006.

In 2002, Minister Dlamini Zuma initiated the so-called 'Zimbali Process', which was a series of discussions at ministerial level aimed at revitalising the movement. South Africa further hosted a joint ministerial meeting of the NAM Committee on Palestine, including the NAM Security Council Caucus in 2002, which was addressed by presidents Mbeki and Yasser Arafat.

While it was chair of the movement, South Africa set for itself the objective of strengthening South-South co-operation on the one hand and North-South dialogue on the other. Regular meetings with, among others, the G8 and EU followed, and relations with the G77 were strengthened in general.

One of the proposals made by the Zimbali Group to the XIII Summit was that the role of the Troika of past, present and future chairs of the NAM should be enhanced. In the spirit of this decision, several Troika meetings took place during Malaysia's incumbency as chair.

Such a meeting was held in January 2006 near Hermanus in the Western Cape. At this meeting, the Troika agreed on the necessity to find a concise, focused and action-oriented outcome document for the XIV NAM Summit, the need to revisit methodology issues, and the need to enhance existing co-ordination between the NAM and the G77.

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
4 February 2005	Cuba	Letter of Intent on Education.
17 February 2005	Angola	Agreement concerning Co-operation in the Field of Electricity.
17 February 2005	Angola	Agreement for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments.
17 February 2005	Angola	Agreement of Co-operation in the Field of Social Protection and Re-Integration. Entered into force: 17.2.2005.
17 February 2005	Angola	Protocol on Defence Co-operation.
28 February 2005	UK	Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Co-operation in the Field of Sport and Recreation.
3 March 2005	Turkey	Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.
3 March 2005	Turkey	Agreement regarding Mutual Assistance between their Customs Administrations.
8 March 2005	Namibia	Agreement regarding Scientific and Technological Co-operation. Entered into force: 8.3.2005.
9 March 2005	AU	Memorandum of Understanding contributing South African Police Service monitors to the Civilian Component of the AU Mission in Darfur Region of the Republic of Sudan. Entered into force: 9.3.2005.
18 March 2005	Russian Federation	Agreement concerning Protection of Classified Defence and Defence-Industrial related Information. Entered into force: 18.3.2005.
22 March 2005	Gabon	Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.
22 March 2005	Gabon	Protocol for Regular Diplomatic Consultations. Entered into force: 22.3.2005.
8 April 2005	São Tomé & Príncipe	Co-operation Agreement. Entered into force: 8.4.2005.
12 April 2005	Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	Agreement on Development Co-operation concerning Public Service Support. Entered into force: 12.4.2005.
15 April 2005	Mozambique	Agreement regarding the Waiver of Visa Requirements for Holders of Ordinary Passports. Entered into force: 29.4.2005.
15 April 2005	Mozambique	Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Co-operation.

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
29 April 2005	DRC	Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Agriculture. Entered into force: 29.4.2005.
29 April 2005	DRC	Agreement regarding Mutual Assistance between their Customs Administrations.
29 April 2005	DRC	Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.
29 April 2005	DRC	Memorandum of Understanding relating to Co-operation on Capacity-Building for the Congolese National Police. Entered into force: 29.4.2005.
29 April 2005	DRC	Statement of Intent on Promotion of Good Governance and Decentralisation.
29 April 2005	Multilateral	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in the area of Public Service and Administration. Entered into force: 29.4.2005.
2 May 2005	Mali	Agreement on Defence and Technical Co-operation.
6 May 2005	Tunisia	Memorandum of Understanding concerning Military Co-operation. Entered into force: 6.5.2005.
16 May 2005	AU	Agreement on the Material and Technical Organisation of the Meeting of African Ministers responsible for Air Transport, Sun City, 16 to 19 May 2005. Entered into force: 16.5.2005.
6 June 2005	Lesotho	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Co-operation. Entered into force: 6.6.2005.
9 June 2005	Norway	Declaration of Intent on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture.
25 June 2005	European Union	Additional Protocol to the Agreement on Trade, Development and Co-operation. Entered into force provisionally: 1.5.2004.
7 July 2005	United Nations	Memorandum of Understanding contributing Resources to 'United Nations Operation in Burundi'. Entered into force: 1.6.2005.
12 July 2005	Switzerland	Memorandum of Understanding on Air Services. Entered into force: 12.7.2005.
26 July 2005	Greece	Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture.
26 July 2005	Malaysia	Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
2 August 2005	Gabon	Agreement concerning Merchant Shipping.
2 August 2005	Gabon	Agreement of Co-operation in the Fields of Education, Training and Higher Education.
2 August 2005	Gabon	Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture.
19 August 2005	France	Declaration of Intent on Co-operation on French Language Training between the Department of Foreign Affairs of South Africa and the Embassy of the Republic of France in South Africa.
22 August 2005	Indonesia	Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific and Technological Co-operation. Entered into force: 22.8.2005.
13 September 2005	Brazil	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in the Field of Human Settlements.
18 September 2005	Argentine	Agreement on the Establishment of a Binational Commission.
22 September 2005	Tanzania	Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income.
22 September 2005	Tanzania	Agreement for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments.
22 September 2005	Tanzania	Agreement on the Establishment of a Presidential Economic Commission.
24 September 2005	United Arab Emirates	Bilateral Agreement on Economic, Trade and Technical Co-operation.
26 September 2005	Kuwait	Agreement on Economic and Technical Co-operation.
26 September 2005	Kuwait	Trade Agreement.
30 September 2005	Senegal	Agreement on Scientific and Technological Co-operation.
4 October 2005	Chile	Declaration of Intent concerning Defence Co-operation.
6 October 2005	Angola	Letter of Intent.
11 October 2005	Netherlands	Declaration of Intent on a Framework for Co-operation and a Bilateral Commission.
18 October 2005	Zambia	Agreement on the Establishment of a Commission for the Operation of the 1996 General Agreement on Co-operation in the Economic, Social, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Fields. Entered into force: 18.10.2005

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
25 October 2005	Botswana	Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture. Entered into force: 25.10.2005.
25 October 2005	Botswana	Agreement on Co-operation in the Fields of Agriculture and Livestock Farming. Entered into force: 25.10.2005.
25 October 2005	Botswana	Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Sport Development. Entered into force: 25.10.2005.
25 October 2005	Botswana	Agreement regarding the Co-ordination of Aeronautical Search and Rescue Services. Entered into force: 25.10.2005.
25 October 2005	Botswana	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in the Field of Health.
25 October 2005	Botswana	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation at Provincial and Local Government Level. Entered into force: 25.10.2005.
10 November 2005	Lesotho	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in the Field of Health.
11 November 2005	African Union	Memorandum of Understanding relating to Technical Assessment Mission and the Country Review Visit to the Republic of South Africa. Entered into force: 11.11.2005.
17 November 2005	Zimbabwe	Agreement for the Establishment of a Joint Commission on Defence and Security. Entered into Force: 17.11.2005.
17 November 2005	Zimbabwe	Memorandum of Understanding concerning the Secondment of the Air Force of Zimbabwe Personnel to the South African Department of Defence. Entered into force: 17.11.2005.
1 December 2005	Congo	Protocol on Regular Diplomatic Consultation. Entered into force: 1.12.2005.
4 December 2005	Guinea	Agreement on a Framework for Co-operation.
5 December 2005	Rwanda	Memorandum of Understanding on Police Co-operation.
8 December 2005	Mozambique	Agreement on Health Matters.
12 December 2005	Australia	Memorandum of Understanding on Sports Co-operation between Sport and Recreation South Africa and the Australian Sports Commission. Entered into force: 12.12.2005.

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
12 December 2005	Uganda	Agreement on Police Co-operation. Entered into force: 12.12.2005.
12 December 2005	Uganda	Agreement regarding the Establishment of a Joint Permanent Economic Commission. Entered into force: 12.12.2005.
12 December 2005	Uganda	Memorandum of Understanding concerning Defence Co-operation. Entered into force: 12.12.2005.
12 December 2005	Uganda	Memorandum of Understanding on Bilateral Co-operation in the Field of Sport and Recreation.
12 December 2005	Uganda	Memorandum of Understanding on Diplomatic Consultations.
23 February 2006	DRC	Memorandum of Understanding on Co-operation in the Field of Human Settlements.
16 March 2006	DRC	Agreement on Co-operation in the Field of Maritime Transport. Entered into force: 16.3.2006.
16 March 2006	DRC	Agreement on Decentralisation. Entered into force 16.3.2006.
16 March 2006	DRC	Memorandum of Understanding on Education Co-operation. Entered into force: 16.3.2006.
18 March 2006	DRC	Agreement on a Framework for Co-operation. Entered into force: 18.3.2006.

Agreements concluded between January 2005 and March 2006

Date signed	Country	Title
4 February 1985	Multilateral	Statute of the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and other Developing Countries. RSA acceded: 9.1.2006.
10 March 1988	Multilateral	Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation. (SUA Convention) RSA acceded: 8.7.2005. Entered into force: 6.10.2005.
10 March 1988	Multilateral	Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (SUA Protocol). RSA acceded: 8.7.2005. Entered into force: 6.10.2005.
6 October 1999	Multilateral	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. RSA acceded: 18.10.2005.
21 May 2003	Multilateral	World Health Organisation Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. RSA ratified: 19.4.2005.
11 July 2003	Multilateral	The African Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. RSA ratified: 11.11.2005

Acknowledgements

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