

Joint Communiqué of the Sixth Session of Bilateral Consultations between South Africa and Portugal

1. South Africa and Portugal concluded a *Memorandum of Understanding on Consultations* on 25 November 2002, which provides for regular meetings chaired by the Ministers or Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the two countries in order to discuss Bilateral Relations, Regional and Multilateral Issues.
2. Mr Alvin Botes, the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, hosted the Sixth Session of Bilateral Consultations in Pretoria on 2 August 2019. The Portuguese delegation to the Consultations was led by Ms Teresa Ribeiro, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. During her visit, Secretary of State Ribeiro also paid a courtesy visit to Dr Naledi Pandor, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa.
3. During their opening remarks at the Bilateral Consultations, both Deputy Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the progress that had been made with the development of relations since the Fifth Meeting of Bilateral Consultations was held in Lisbon in 2017. They also expressed their desire for these relations to grow in substance and diversity. The issues on the agenda included the following:

3.1. **Africa**

Deputy Minister Botes provided a briefing on developments in South Africa and the rest of the African continent, focusing specifically on peace and security, Africa's economic development, the African Union and its Agenda 2063. He also elaborated on the outcomes that South Africa expected to achieve when it chairs the African Union in 2020.

3.2. **The European Union**

Secretary of State Ribeiro provided a briefing on developments in Portugal and in the European Union, including the recent European Parliamentary elections. She also elaborated on the priorities of Portugal's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2021, with Africa at the forefront. It was agreed that South Africa and Portugal should promote closer collaboration between the African Union and the European Union.

3.3. **Multilateral Issues**

3.3.1. South Africa and Portugal emphasised their shared commitment to multilateralism, respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and acknowledged the high level of mutual understanding and coordination in multilateral affairs. South Africa and Portugal cooperate on multilateral issues and the importance Human Rights and a rules-based global governance system was highlighted.

3.3.2. South Africa and Portugal recalled their good record regarding the mutual support of candidatures in international elections and reiterated their desire to continue to do so, whenever possible.

3.4. **Agriculture**

South Africa and Portugal agreed that both sides would facilitate technical points of contact on sanitary and phytosanitary requirements to promote trade in agricultural products.

3.5. **Culture**

South Africa and Portugal expressed their intention to intensify their cultural cooperation as an integral part of mutual knowledge and understanding of their respective people.

3.6. **Defence**

South Africa and Portugal noted with appreciation the efforts being made to foster bilateral defence cooperation through the negotiation of a *Defence Cooperation Agreement* and emphasised their willingness to develop collaboration in areas such as maritime security, peacekeeping, military education and training, as well as in the defence industry.

3.7. **Education**

3.7.1. Portugal expressed an interest in continuing to support the Department of Basic Education to offer Portuguese as a Second or First Additional Language in South African schools (Grade R to 12) and as a Home Language (Grade 10 to 12). A Memorandum of Understanding on Education Cooperation has already been concluded with the Gauteng Department of Education, which provides for the inclusion of Portuguese language teaching in the Province's curricula. Portugal is already supporting nineteen Portuguese-language teachers, who teach 2,400 students and provide training for South African teachers wishing to become Portuguese language teachers. They are also involved in curricular development to comply with South African guidelines.

3.7.2. At the level of higher education, Portugal is currently present in five universities in South Africa, promoting an offer for Undergraduate, Honours and Masters Degrees in Portuguese language and culture, which it intends to develop further.

3.7.3. This offer was welcomed, particularly because Portuguese is referred to in the South African Constitution as one of the languages that must be promoted and respected. The Government of Portugal was requested to submit a formal proposal, through its Embassy in Pretoria, to the Department of Basic Education of South Africa.

3.8. **Ocean Economy**

3.8.1. South Africa and Portugal acknowledged the importance of the ocean economy and agreed to pursue collaboration in this field. Portugal has already submitted a draft *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Fisheries* to South Africa, which is currently being studied.

3.8.2. Portugal also thanked South Africa for its support in organising the second United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon in 2020.

3.9. **Science and Innovation**

3.9.1. South Africa and Portugal signed an agreement in the fields of science and technology in 2015 and it was noted that several joint initiatives had been launched since then. These include:

3.9.1.1. The National Research Foundation of South Africa and the Foundation for Science and Technology of Portugal are exploring the possibility of launching a Call for Research Proposals (CRP) in the future. The CRP will cover thematic research areas such as big data, renewable energy, sustainable development and the ocean economy.

3.9.1.2. The parties further discussed the possibility to host a joint researcher workshop in the thematic areas identified under the CRP. The time and place of the workshop will be communicated through diplomatic channel.

3.9.1.3. The two sides will explore the possibility of establishing trilateral cooperation with other African countries such as Angola and Mozambique.

3.9.1.4. South Africa and Portugal are among the founding signatories of the Convention establishing the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Observatory. It was noted that both countries were in the process of concluding the ratification process in order to become party to the Convention. The South

African side expressed greatly appreciation for the support that Portugal has provided to the SKA project.

3.9.1.5. South Africa and Portugal are both members of the Board of the Atlantic International Research Centre (AIR Centre), which is an international partnership aimed at promoting research and innovation cooperation on the sustainable management of the Atlantic Ocean and its resources. The Centre's research agenda focuses on space, atmosphere, climate-energy, oceans and data science and analytics. It was noted that South Africa was in the process of nominating a national focal point institution to represent South Africa in the AIR Centre. Portugal will be looking forward to an early indication from South Africa in this regard, welcoming the prospect of intensified South African participation in the AIR Centre.

3.9.1.6. The South African side has invited the Portuguese side to take part in the OR Tambo Research Call initiative, which is a strategic South African programme aimed at strengthening research and innovation capacities in public research-intensive universities in Africa, enhancing the training of a new generation of researchers and the further development of established researchers in all knowledge areas while responding to national priorities and strategies. The Portuguese side will consider the proposal and communicate the decision to the South African side.

3.9.1.7. The South African side extended an invitation to the Portuguese side to participate in the Science Forum South Africa event scheduled to take place in Pretoria on 4 and 5 December 2019.

3.10. **Tourism**

South Africa and Portugal are both popular tourism destinations and it was agreed to foster collaboration in this field, particularly as far as training and skills development, exchange programmes and the sharing of best practices are concerned. In view of this, Portugal has submitted a draft *Memorandum of*

Understanding on Cooperation in the field of Tourism, which is currently under consideration by the Government of South Africa.

3.11. **Trade and Investment**

Satisfaction was expressed with the growth in bilateral trade and investment, but it was agreed that the economic relationship between the two countries has not yet reached its full potential. It was agreed to explore closer collaboration in areas such as infrastructure development, as well as the promotion of small and medium enterprises. It was also agreed to foster economic relations between South African Provinces and the Portuguese Autonomous Regions.

4. It was agreed that the Seventh Session of Bilateral Consultations will be held in Portugal before the end of 2021.

The Joint Communiqué of the Sixth Session of the South Africa – Portugal Bilateral Consultations was signed in Pretoria on 2 August 2019.

Mr Alvin Botes

Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa

Ms Teresa Ribeiro

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal

2 August 2019