

Dear Reader,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Website of the South African Embassy in Madrid.

For those of you who are looking for useful information on South Africa we have endeavoured to supply you with some of the most relevant links which hopefully will provide the answers that you are looking for whether they are of a political, economic or social nature. For those of you who don't know South Africa at all, I would like to welcome you to browse through our website and I trust that you will find this journey of great interest.

For our Spanish visitors to this site, you will remember that South Africa successfully hosted the 2010 FIFA World Cup where your national senior men's football team, "La Roja" won for the first time the prestigious FIFA Trophy. You may also know that South Africa was the first African country to host this FIFA Championship. With this tournament, South Africa again proved that we are a country that embraces excellence and that we have the capacity to organize and stage premium world events such as these.

South Africa and Spain continue to share a close and vibrant relationship that is premised on the strength of both countries' democratic systems. On the international front both countries are members of various global bodies, such as G-20, hence our strong-held belief on the power of multilateralism in resolving global challenges. The mutual respect of Human Rights also provides a strong bond for our vibrant relationship.

On 27th April 1994, 21 years ago, South Africa held its historic general elections when our beloved Former President Nelson Mandela became the first democratically elected President for our country. Since then, South Africa has managed to forge a constitutional democracy, thereby ushering a new form of governance in the country, which is anchored by the commitment to enhance the potential of all our people, while also integrating us into the community of the World as an equal partner. In celebrating our 20 Years of Freedom in 2014 we were able to acknowledge the areas where we still need to do better, while also recognizing that today, South Africa is a politically stable economy, which, unlike pre-1994 era, has an ever-growing role in Africa, the World and among the developing countries. As such, South Africa views Spain as a strategic partner that has continued to collaborate with us in this long journey. Noting the growing nature of our relationship, in 2000, both governments decided to establish an annual structured bilateral consultation mechanism chaired by two countries' Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs and currently comprising of five Working Groups, which are designed to enhance our engagement in an open and frank manner.

The current Administration in South Africa has identified five key priorities that all sectors of government and other key stakeholders in the country should focus on if we are to attain the better life for all. These priority areas are: education, housing, rural development, job creation and fighting crime. Guided by our National Development Plan 2030, in his State of the Nation Address on 12 February 2015, President Jacob Zuma outlined a nine-point plan to ignite growth and create jobs in South Africa. These are: (a) Resolving the energy challenge, (b) Revitalizing agriculture and the agro-processing value chain, (c) Advancing beneficiation or adding value to our mineral wealth, (d) More effective implementation of a higher impact Industrial Policy Action Plan, (e) Encouraging private sector investment, (f) Moderating workplace conflict, (g) Unlocking the potential of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), cooperatives, township and rural enterprises, (h) State reform and boosting the role of state owned companies, information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure or broadband roll-out, water, sanitation and transport infrastructure as well as, (i) Operation Phakisa aimed at growing the ocean economy and other sectors. These undertakings will require major capital investment from within South Africa, while also providing investment opportunities for our international partners such as Spain who already have extensive experience in these identified sectors.

South Africa continues to be an exciting and vibrant destination, not only for business purposes, but also for leisure tourism. As such, we pride ourselves of being the host of the most diverse cultures that remain united in the quest to consolidate our National Identity. In visiting South Africa as a tourist one will attest to welcoming nature of our people while also able to enjoy our modern infrastructure along with our naturally beautiful sites. As such, this website is but a small window into South Africa which we have on occasions referred to as a World in One Country. While learning about our beautiful country through this site, you will also find important links to other websites providing specific information on trade, investment opportunities, tourism information, and to our government in general. Perhaps we might interest you enough to consider paying a visit to our country and allowing us to welcome you to our shores.

For any suggestions that you may have about this website or any matters that you may wish us to take note of, please send your message to madrid.embassy@dirco.gov.za and we shall get back to you.

Thank you!

Ambassador L. S. Ngonyama