

JOINT PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ

SOUTH AFRICA AND ARGENTINA BINATIONAL COMMISSION PRETORIA, 1- 2 NOVEMBER 2012

The Third meeting of the South Africa/Argentina Binational Commission (BNC) took place in Pretoria on 2 November 2012, co-chaired by South African Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Honourable Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Honourable Héctor Timerman of the Argentine Republic. The meeting constituted the third meeting of the Binational Commission that was established in accordance with a Bilateral Agreement signed between South Africa and Argentina in New York during September 2005.

The Ministerial meeting was preceded by a Senior Officials' meeting on 1 November 2012, which served to evaluate progress made in the implementation of key bilateral agreements in fields such as Human Rights, Trade and Investment, Defence Cooperation, Science & Technology, Transport, Arts and Culture, Sports as well as progress in the negotiations of Agreements related to Agriculture and Tourism in order to provide a report to the Principals.

The discussions were held in a cordial and cooperative atmosphere. The following issues were discussed:

- Recent developments in Argentina and in South Africa;
- Regional developments in Latin America and Caribbean and Africa;
- Inter-regional issues;
- Multilateral issues; and
- An in-depth analysis of the bilateral relationship and its potential.

South Africa and Argentina enjoy many mutually rewarding commonalities, for example our positions on international issues of climate change; human rights; the response to the global recession; and the challenges of economic and social development.

During the discussions, the two delegations expressed satisfaction with the current state of bilateral relations and agreed that the relationship between the two countries could be described as one based on strategic co-operation through higher diplomatic convergence.

Both delegations noted with appreciation the broad scope of their bilateral relations which include trade and investment, agriculture, science and technology, defence, tourism, transport, environment and arts and culture.

South Africa would like to thank the Government of Argentina for supporting and assisting South Africa in its bid to host the 14th World Forestry Congress in 2015.

With Argentina's assistance, South Africa was approved by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) as the host of the Congress in 2015, which will be the first time this congress is hosted on an African soil. It is estimated that about 10 000 participants will attend the congress in September 2015, in Durban, KZN.

The Ministers reiterated their commitment to strengthening political and economic relations through continued cooperation in the various sectors, and through collaboration and strategic partnerships in their respective areas of strength.

Both countries acknowledged the importance and called for the implementation of United Nations Resolutions, including, specifically, the UN General Assembly Resolution 2065 (XX).

The Ministers exchanged views on ways to address the negative impact of the vulture funds' activities on debt restructuring schemes and development strategies, particularly in Africa and Latin America.

On regional issues, the two delegations exchanged views on the prevailing political, economic and security situation in their respective regions.

The two delegations expressed their commitment to the African agenda and reiterated the need to reform the multilateral institutions including the United Nations Security Council and the Bretton Woods institutions to better represent the interests of developing countries.

South Africa and Argentina both seek to expand their value chains and increase employment, thus profiting from the economies of scale that enlarged markets offer. In view of this, bilateral relations are key to creating new trade and investment opportunities. Both countries decided to look at the limitations that developing countries face in the context of the current global economic situation and explore possibilities for financing development activities.

In 2011, Argentine exports to South Africa amounted to US\$1.08 billion, representing a 23% growth in comparison to 2010. In turn, imports from South Africa totalled US\$205 million, a 45% increase in the same period.

The next Session of the Binational Commission will be hosted in Argentina on a date to be convened through diplomatic channels.

Done in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

2 November 2012