

South Africa Argentine Bilateral Relations

South African representation in Argentina:

Ambassador Phumelele Gwala (Since February 2017) (*also accredited to Uruguay and Paraguay*)

Argentine representation in South Africa:

Ambassador Alberto Pedro D'Alotto (Since January 2019) (*also accredited to Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, eSwatini, Lesotho, Malawi and Mauritius*)

Diplomatic relations between the Argentine Republic and South Africa were first established on 10 September 1947. Since the return of an elected civilian government in Argentina in December 1983, in opposition to the apartheid policies, direct flights between Buenos Aires and Johannesburg were suspended in 1985 and the level of diplomatic relations reduced to below ambassadorial level. Between 1986 and 1991, Argentina's diplomatic relations with South Africa were suspended by the Argentine Government.

Full diplomatic relations were re-established in August 1991. Since the establishment of democracy in South Africa in 1994, the level of co-operation and interaction between the two countries has increased significantly. Argentina has an embassy in Pretoria and the former Argentinian Consulate-General in Johannesburg was closed in December 2018..

Bilateral relations between South Africa and Argentina remain sound and the various common ideals and objectives of the two Governments provide a potential basis for enhanced bilateral relations as well as for cooperation at the multilateral level. Both countries view each other as strategic partners at bilateral as well as multilateral levels as they share some common positions on various global issues and also resemble similarities at many levels of development.

The establishment of a Joint Bi-national Commission (BNC) between Minister Dlamini-Zuma and her Argentine counterpart on 18 September 2005 in New York facilitated the expansion and consolidation of South African-Argentine relations. The First Meeting of the BNC took place in South Africa from 26 to 28 February 2007 under the chairpersonship of former South African Foreign Minister Dlamini-Zuma and former Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana. The Second Meeting of the BNC was held in Buenos Aires from 2 to 3 December 2008 co-chaired by the same former Ministers. The 3rd BNC took place in Pretoria, 1-2 November 2012, co-Chaired by Minister Nkoana-Mashabane and former Argentine Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman who also co-chaired the 4th session of the SA Argentine BNC 1 August 2013. On that occasion the Agreements/MoUs on Cooperation between the Customs Administrations of the two countries and the Cooperation on the Exchange of Tax Information was signed.

In July 2018, former President Mauricio Macri attended the 10th BRICS+ Summit meeting in Johannesburg while various South African Ministers and senior Government officials visited Argentina for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Meeting and the G20 process including amongst others the Ministers of Trade and Industry, Tourism and International Relations and Cooperation.

President Ramaphosa accompanied by the Ministers of Finance and of International Relations and Cooperation attended the G20 Leaders' Summit in Buenos Aires at the end of November 2018. Former Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mr Luwellyn Landers led the SA delegation to the BAPA+40 Conference in Buenos Aires in March 2019 during which he also met his Argentine counterpart.

During 2013, Argentina, for the first time, adopted 18 July as International Nelson Mandela Day, in a ceremony marked by the exchange of personal anecdotes of the former President, at which former Ambassador Zenani Dlamini delivered the keynote address. Since then, the South African Embassy in Buenos Aires has annually celebrated International Mandela Day with various outreach projects.

A Joint ESMA-Robben Island Museum Exhibition was opened on 28 March 2019 in Cape Town by the former Argentine Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Dr German Garavano. A MoU of cooperation between the Robben Island Museum and the ESMA Memory Centre was also signed on this occasion.

Within the field of people-to-people relations there are regular exchanges between rugby teams of the two countries at national level. Previous exchanges at school level have slowed down but interactions at other levels continue e.g. academic, science and technology cooperation.

The biggest South African export items in 2019 were machinery, vehicles, iron and steel products, chemicals and mineral products while South Africa mainly imported prepared foodstuffs, vegetables, animal and vegetable fats, vehicles, and live animals from Argentina.

Argentine figures indicate that South Africa in 2018 was Argentina's 30st biggest export destination and 38th biggest import provider (representing 0.8% of exports from Argentina in 2018) and 0.3% of Argentine imports).

Bilateral Agreements/ MoUs concluded

A number of bilateral agreements have been concluded during the past number of years:

Date signed	Title of agreement	Date (yyymmdd)
18250202	Amity, Commerce and Navigation	Entry into force: 19020531
19470910	Establishment of Diplomatic Relations	Entry into force: 19470910
19940909	Interinstitutional Agreement on Veterinary matters between the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Republic of Argentina and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of South Africa	Entry into force: 19940909

19971006	Agreement concerning Peacetime Co-operation between their respective Navies	Entry into force: Not in force
19980723	Agreement on Co-operation and Mutual Assistance in the Field of Combating the Production of and Traffic in Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, the Improper use of Drugs and Related Matters	Entry into force: Not in force
19980723	Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments	Entry into force: 20010101 Terminated on 31 March 2017 Investments in effect for further 15 years
20050918	Agreement on the Establishment of a Bi-national Commission	Entry into force: Not in force
20060516	Agreement for Scientific and Technological Co-operation	Entry into force: 20090407
20060908	Agreement for the Co-ordination of their Maritime and Aeronautical Search and Rescue Services	Entry into force: 20060908
20070228	Agreement on Bilateral Co-operation in the Field Sport and Recreation	Entry into force: 20070228
20070228	Extradition Treaty	Entry into force: 20151016
20070228	Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters	Entry into force: 20151016
20081203	Agreement on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy	Entry into force: Not in force
20101120	Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Argentine Republic concerning Defence Cooperation plus Additional Protocol on the Protection of Classified Information Exchanged between the Parties within the Framework of Defence Cooperation	Entry into force: 20101120
20111201	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Argentine Republic on Co-operation in the Fields of Arts and Culture	Entry into force: Not in force Under review
20130606	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Argentine Republic on Co-operation in the Field of Agriculture	Entry into force: 20130606
20130802	Agreement between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Argentine Republic for the Exchange of Information relating to Tax Matters	Entry into force: 20141128
20130802	Agreement between the Republic of South Africa and Argentine Republic regarding Mutual Assistance between their Customs Administrations	Entry into force: 20131201

Source: DIRCO OCSLA Treaty Database

Others include

2008/05/14	Cooperation Agreement between the International Relations Institute (CARI) and the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA).
2008/06/30	Joint Communiqué issued at the Conclusion of the SACU-MERCOSUR Preferential Trade Agreement Negotiations.
2008/08/07	MOU between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of the Republic of South Africa and the National Commission on Space Activities (CONAE) of the Argentine Republic on Cooperation in the area of Space Activities.
2008/11/10	Memorandum of Understanding between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the National Institute of Industrial Research (INTI).
2008/12/03	Memorandum of Understanding between the Administración de Parques Nacionales (APN) of Argentina and the South African National Parks (SANPARKS)
2014/11/17	Technical Agreement between Grain SA (South Africa), CAFMA, CIDITER and INTA in order to improve crop productivity in South Africa through the mutual use of Argentinian and South African technology
2010/06/15	Agreement of cooperation between Asociación Abuelas Plaza de Mayo and Foundation for Human Rights
2009/07/16	Memorandum of Cooperation between the University of Pretoria and the Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria of the Argentine Republic
2009/07/10	Agreement between the Africa Institute of South Africa and the Universidad Nacional de Rosario, Argentina
2007/11/27	Memorandum of Understanding between the Agricultural research council (ARC) South Africa and the Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTI) Argentina
2007/09/18	Memorandum of Cooperation between the University of Pretoria (South Africa) and the National University of Tres de Febrero (Argentina)
2005/04/25	Memorandum of Understanding between Stellenbosch University and Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria
1999/03/16	Memorandum of Understanding concerning air services between the aeronautical authorities of the Governments of the Republic of Argentina and the Republic of South Africa
1998/07/23	Memorandum of Understanding on consultations on matters of mutual interest
2008/09/01	Memorandum of Agreement between Universidad Nacional de Córdoba and the Department of Architecture of Tshwane University of Technology. Memorandum of Agreement between Facultad de Arquitectura, Urbanismo y Diseño de la Universidad de Córdoba and the School for the Built Environment of the University of Pretoria. Memorandum of Agreement between Universidad Nacional de Córdoba and the School of Architecture and Planning of the University of the Witwatersrand
2014/11/17	Technical Agreement between Grain SA, CAFMA, CIDITER and INTA to improve crop productivity in South Africa through the mutual use of Argentinian and South African Technology
2019/03/29	Twinning agreement between the Robben Island Museum and the ESMA Memorial Site of the Argentine Republic