

Press Release Press Release Press Release

South Africa's SEZs can be gateway to African economy, says Ms. Kuhn



Photo Caption: (From left to right) Mr. Dean Hoff, Consul Economic, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa, Dr. Vijay Kalantri, President All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Center Mumbai ,Ms. Andrea Kuhn, Consul General, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa, Mumbai and Mr Kevin Mehta, Vice President (West), Indian Chamber of International Business (ICIB),

“India and South Africa cherish trade ties since ancient civilization and we are at the cusp of historic transformation in our modern relations; Next year, both the countries will celebrate 30 years of re-establishment of diplomatic ties and this year we expect fruitful outcome from the ministerial level meetings of both the countries. This month of May is significant for Africa as we celebrate 20 years of establishment of African Union. India can play an important role in realizing Africa’s Agenda 2063, which envisions African Renaissance with common prosperity and an integrated continent,” said Ms. Andrea Kuhn, Consul General, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa, Mumbai at an interactive session organized by All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and WTC Mumbai .

Ms. Kuhn emphasized that India and Africa need to build on their ancient civilization link and form modern partnership to address common challenges of poverty, environment sustainability, under-development and other global issues.

Ms. Kuhn also positioned South Africa as a gateway to Africa by pointing out that Indian companies can reduce the lead time to access African market from eight days to three days by investing in Special Economic Zones in South Africa. She informed, "There are more than 13 Special Economic Zones in South Africa, where Indian companies can invest and export to entire Africa, USA and European Union, with which we have trade agreements. We assure visa to Indian businessmen and tourists in five working days. Already, there are around 150 Indian companies in South Africa providing job to 20,000 people there."

The middle class population in Africa is estimated to grow to 660 million by 2030, with a purchasing power of USD 2.6 trillion, she pointed out.

Inviting Indian companies to invest in South Africa, Ms. Kuhn remarked, "South Africa has the largest container port harbor in Africa. It is one of the top producers of gold, platinum, chrome, iron ore, manganese etc. It is among the top three countries in the world in growth of tourism sector, it ranks 15th globally in investor protection, 6th in Africa in infrastructure development and it has the best international airport in Africa."

Speaking on this occasion, Mr. Dean Hoff, Consul Economic, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa invited Indian companies to participate in the South African government's Economic Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Program. Under this program, the government promotes Made in South Africa, massive infrastructure investment, employment stimulus grant, agriculture & food security and gender equality.

Sharing information about potential areas of mutual partnership, Mr. Hoff informed, "Agriculture, non-edible oil processing, automobile, advanced manufacturing, green economy and renewable energy are the potential areas of cooperation between India and South Africa. In agro processing, we are negotiating with Indian government to export avocado, table grapes and litchis. Indian companies can invest in agriculture value chain in South Africa as we are a major producer of citrus fruits, maize, corn, soyabean, sugar and dairy products. In the energy sector, Indian companies can invest in solar and wind power as South Africa wants to reduce dependence on thermal power plants, which currently contributes 90% of electricity."

Mr. Hoff concluded his presentation by emphasizing that South Africa has the largest presence of MNCs in Africa, it has the most progressive constitution, independent judiciary and fair legal framework for foreign investors.

Earlier in his welcome remarks, Dr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries and Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Center Mumbai pointed out, "South Africa can be a gateway for Indian companies to enter the 55-country African continent. South Africa is the second largest trade partner of India in Africa and it has the largest Indian diaspora in the African continent. But still bilateral trade volume is around USD 15 billion, which can be enhanced with the dynamic initiatives of the South African Consul General in Mumbai. In order to stimulate trade and investment with South Africa and the entire African continent, WTC Mumbai and AIAI propose to organize an Africa Conclave in association with all the trade missions of African countries in India in future."

Speaking about mutual cooperation in tourism and culture, Dr. Kalantri remarked that annually 6 lakh Indian tourists visit South Africa. "In future, we need to promote tourist arrivals from South Africa to India as well."

The session was followed by networking reception with delegates from trade & industry, financial institutions, consular corps, academia and consultancy organizations. The networking reception generated several B2B meetings, which will lead to mutually beneficial collaboration in terms of joint ventures, technology exchange.

Indian Chamber of International Business (ICIB) partnered with WTC Mumbai and the South African Consulate General in organising this event. Mr Kevin Mehta, Vice President (West), Indian Chamber of International Business (ICIB) also addressed the session. Mr. Rajan Thaokar, Vice President (Central), ICIB delivered vote of thanks for the event.



Ms. Andrea Kuhn, Consul General, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa, Mumbai addressing the Interactive Meeting on "Doing Business with South Africa" organized by AIAI and WTC Mumbai for promoting Trade and Business opportunities between India and South Africa , Seen in the picture from (L-R) Mr. Dean Hoff, Consul Economic, Consulate General of the Rep. of South Africa, Dr. Vijay Kalantri, President, All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman, MVIRDC World Trade Center Mumbai and Mr Kevin Mehta, Vice President (West), Indian Chamber of International Business (ICIB)

Regards,
Sangeeta Jain
Senior Director
All India Association of Industries (AIAI)

All India Association of Industries
New Excelsior Building, 6th Floor, A.K. Nayak Marg, Fort, Mumbai - 400 001
Phone: +91 - 22 - 2201 9265 Fax: +91-22- 2201 9764 info@aiaindia.com
Website: www.aiaindia.com