



**EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS  
TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Address by H.E. Alexander D. Sidoruk**



**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
of the Republic of Belarus  
to the Republic of South Africa and concurrently to the Republic of Angola,  
Republic of Mozambique, Republic of Namibia and Republic of Zimbabwe**

**on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus**

**3 July 2020**

## *Dear friends!*

Today we celebrate a great and important day of the Belarusian statehood – the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus.

Belarusian people have come a very long way to their independence.

Beginning their journey from the first state established on the territory of today's Belarus, mentioned in chronicles of the IX century – the Polatsk Principality – which dominated in the region up to the XIII century.

Through transformation into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Rus and Samogitia, a powerful state, which included the lands of today's Belarus, Lithuania, northern regions of the Ukraine, as well as western parts of Russia, expanding from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Since the XIII century the GDL had been a serious player in the European politics up to the end of the XVI century, but due to a series of destructive wars, had to unite together with the Kingdom of Poland in a federal state – The Commonwealth of Two Nations – to resist the external threats. This was one of the most turbulent times in the Belarusian history. Up to the end of the XVIII century the State was being torn apart by internal strife and endless wars and, as a result, ceased its existence as an independent entity.

To regaining a chance to restore its independence and proclaimed a Belarusian People's Republic after the end of the World War I. A Republic, which managed to exist less than a year though, to become later a part of the Soviet Union for the next seventy years.

In July, 1944 Belarus was liberated from Nazi invaders in the World War II. One third of our population, about three million people, was lost during that war. It's a sacred date for all Belarusians. And it is very symbolic that the 3rd of July had later become the National Independence Day.

The heroism, selflessness and sacrifice of the Belarusian people during the World War II were widely recognized. That is why Belarus became a co-founder of the United Nations in 1945. In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of this event on 26 June 2020 the Charter was first published in Belarusian language and was sent to all the founding countries of the UN and to the UN organizations all around the world.

Finally, 30 years ago, on 27 July 1990, the Parliament adopted a Declaration on the State Sovereignty, actually proclaiming Republic of Belarus an independent state.

Since that time, Belarus has significantly increased its engagement in Africa. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus in the Republic of South Africa.

Over 20 years of fruitful work between Belarus and Southern African countries, we have conducted a significant number of various projects, visit exchanges at all levels,

joint commissions' meetings, mutual participation in fairs and exhibitions, educational and cultural exchanges.

The region knows very well the quality of Belarusian products: our fertilizers are supplied to assist in development of agriculture in all countries of Southern Africa, as well as widely known in Africa heavy-duty dump trucks "BelAZ" and agricultural machinery, tractors and equipment, that are under active use in the quarries and on the fields of South Africa, Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

Our Honorary Consuls in Angola and Namibia have done much work on enhancing bilateral cooperation.

A lot has been done over these years and even more can be done in future. I am sure that together we will further expand the partner relations between Belarus and the Southern Africa region, which presents perfect and tremendous opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation.

We are interested in strengthening our relations in politics, economy, trade and investment, science and technologies, security and defence, education, culture, tourism and other spheres of mutual benefit.

***Dear friends!***

***On this day, please, accept my best wishes of sound health, peace and prosperity!***

