

Cooperation of the Republic of Belarus with the Republic of South Africa

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of South Africa were established on March 4, 1993. Since January 2000, the Embassy of the Republic of Belarus has been operating in the city of Pretoria.

In 2008 the office of the Embassy of South Africa in the Republic of Belarus was opened in Minsk.

The legal base between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of South Africa includes intergovernmental agreements on trade and economic cooperation, on avoiding double taxation, on scientific and technical cooperation, on military-technical cooperation, on visa-free travel through diplomatic and service passports, on cooperation in the field of culture and art, on the establishment of the Committee on Trade and Economic Cooperation.

The trade relations of the Republic of Belarus with the Republic of South Africa have the following dynamics:

(in millions of US dollars)

Period	Trade Volume	Export	Import	Balance
2014	57,973	40,608	17,365	23,242
2015	129,773	7,028	122,745	-115,717
2016	9,631	3,280	6,351	-3,071
2017	16,763	9,256	7,507	1,749
2018	24,906	17,174	7,732	9,442
2019	26,794	14,517	12,276	2,241
2019 year to 2018 year (%)	107,6	84,5	158,6	

South Africa holds a leading position for the Republic of Belarus what regards the level of economic relations among the South African region countries.

In bilateral trade Belarusian export prevails, as a rule. Its major product items over the past decade had become: machinery (mainly for mining) and spare parts, extra-large tires, potash fertilizers, some oil-refined products, linen fabrics, x-ray equipment, certain types of food products etc.

South Africa traditionally supplies vegetables and fruits (fresh and canned), wines and tobacco raw materials.

The direct distribution network of the Belarusian enterprises in South Africa includes the trading house of BelShina, the dealer and certified service center of BelAZ.

Visits at the highest level were not carried out.

In 2006 the Chairman of the National Assembly of South Africa B. Mbete visited Belarus, in 2007 - the Chairman of the National Council of the Provinces of South Africa M. Mahlangu. Belarus was also visited by the King of KwaZulu-

Natal Province (1999), the Head of the Presidential Administration of South Africa and the Minister of Arts, Science and Technology (2002), Minister of State Enterprises (2006), Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy (2007).

The regular dialogue is maintained between the foreign ministries of Belarus and South Africa. The Foreign Ministers of Belarus visited South Africa three times (in 2000, 2006 and 2014). In 2007 and 2008, the visits of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa N.Dlamini-Zuma to Belarus took place. In September 2013, the current Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, M. Nkoana-Mashabane, paid an official visit to Belarus.

As part of the development of regional cooperation in 2015-2016 the exchange of visits between the Minsk region and the Free State was held, the memorandum on regional cooperation was signed properly.