

E-10 2nd TERM COUNTRY PROFILES

SOUTH AFRICA

General Information

<i>Official Name:</i>	<i>Republic of South Africa</i>
<i>Capital:</i>	<i>Pretoria (executive) Bloemfontein (judicial) Cape Town (legislative)</i>
<i>Population:</i>	47.9 million
<i>Major Languages:</i>	Isi Zulu, Isi Xhosa, Afrikaans, Sepedi, English, Setswana, Sesotho, and Xitsonga
<i>Major Religions:</i>	Zion Christian, Pentecostal/Charismatic, Catholic, Methodist, Dutch Reformed Anglican, Muslim, and Christian
<i>Regional/Economic Organizational Membership:</i>	ACP, AFDB, AU, FAO, G-24, G-77, IAEA, ICC, ICCT, IFAD, IFRC, IHO, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOM, ITUC, MONUC, NAM, ONUB, OPCW, SACU, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNMEE, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WTO, and ZC, etc.

Governmental System

The Republic of South Africa is a constitutional democracy with a three-tier system of government and an independent judiciary. The national, provincial and local levels of government all have legislative and executive authorities in their own spheres, and are defined in the South African Constitution as ‘distinctive, interdependent, and interrelated’. Operating at both national and provincial levels are advisory bodies drawn from South Africa’s traditional leaders.

The Government is undertaken by three inter-connected arms of government:

Legislature: The National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces

Executive: The President, who is both Head of State, and Head of Government

Judiciary: The Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court of Appeal, and the High Court

Legislative authority is vested in Parliament, which consists of two houses: National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. The National Assembly consists of no fewer than 350 and no more than 400 members elected for a five-year term on the basis of a common voters’ roll. It is presided over by a Speaker, assisted by a Deputy Speaker. The number of National Assembly seats awarded to each political party is in proportion to the outcome of the national election, which is held every five years. Also Participating in the Legislative process is the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), a body created to achieve co-operative governance and participatory democracy. It is through this body that national and provincial interests are aligned

in national legislation that affects the provinces. The NCOP consists of 54 permanent members and 36 special delegates, and elects its own chairperson. Each of South Africa's nine provinces sends 10 representatives to the NCOP-six permanent members, and four special delegates headed by the provincial premier. In addition, local (municipal) government representatives may participate in the NCOP but not vote-10 part-time members represent different categories of Municipalities.

The President, elected by the National Assembly from among its members, is the executive Head of State and leads the Cabinet. The President may not serve more than two five-year terms in office. The Cabinet consists of the President, the Deputy President and 25 Ministers. The President appoints the Deputy President and Ministers, assigns their powers and functions, and may dismiss them; All but two Ministers must be selected from among the members of the National Assembly. The members of the Cabinet are accountable individually and collectively to Parliament. Deputy Ministers are also appointed by the President from among the members of the National Assembly.

Legislation may be introduced in the National Assembly committee. Any Cabinet members, Deputy Ministers, or a member of a National Assembly committee. Any Bill may be introduced in the National Assembly. In the NCOP, legislation may be introduced only by a member or committee, and it must fall within certain constitutionally defined areas. Bills passed in the National Assembly must be referred to the NCOP for consideration. The NCOP may pass, propose amendments to or reject a Bill. The National Assembly must reconsider a Bill in cases of amendments to or reject a bill. The National Assembly must reconsider a Bill in cases of amendments or rejections, and pass it again with or without amendments. This process is simple with regard to Bills affecting national functions such as defense, foreign affairs and justice, when each NCOP delegate has one vote. However, when the NCOP considers a Bill that affects the provinces-on functions such as security, welfare, education and health-each province has one vote. This is to ensure that provinces first reach consensus individually on the Bill. Such Bills may be introduced in either the National Assembly or the NCOP. Bills first passed by the NCOP must be referred to the National Assembly, and a mediation committee exists to resolve any disagreements between the two houses. It consists of nine members elected from and by the National Assembly, and nine-one representing each province-from the NCOP. Ultimately, the National Assembly as well as a supporting vote of six of the nine provinces represented in the NCOP. However, preceding that is the requirement that a Bill amending section 1 of the Constitution, which sets out the state's founding values requires a 75% majority in the National Assembly.

The Judiciary interprets the laws, using as a basis the laws enacted and explanatory statements made in the Legislature during the enactment. The legal system is based on Roman-Dutch law and English common law and accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations. The constitution's bill of rights provides for due process including the right to a fair, public trial within a reasonable time of being charged and the right to appeal to a higher court. The Magistrate court is where civil cases involving less than R100 000(Rand, South Africa currency), and cases involving minor crimes, are heard. The High court is for appeals for cases from the magistrate's courts, as well as the court where major civil and criminal cases are first heard. The Supreme Court is the final court of appeal for matters not pertaining to the constitution. The

Constitutional court is the final court of appeal for matters related to the constitution.

Foreign Policy

South Africa respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations. South Africa strives to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation. South Africa believes in ending conflict, especially in the African continent, and it also believes in promoting democracy since being freed from apartheid. South Africa takes a strong stance on human rights and protecting the environment.

Issues Summary

Issue 1: Human Rights → South Africa will take a strong stance on anything concerning human rights.

Issue 2: Middle East → South Africa welcomes various accords between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as a step towards the creation of a Palestinian state and a lasting peace.

Issue 3: Democratic Republic of the Congo → South Africa will be a major player in trying to achieve peace in the region. They supported the elections that took place in July 2006. South Africa will not condone violence unless it is absolutely necessary for self-defense. Many refugees are located in South Africa.

Issue 4: HIV/AIDS → Being an African nation highly infected with this disease, South Africa is very concerned with the growing pandemic. They will support any aid to infected countries.

Issue 5: Human Trafficking → South Africa is a main source of human trafficking. South Africa was placed on the Tier 2 watch list for its failure to show increasing efforts to address trafficking in 2005.

Relationship with the United Nations

South Africa was a founding member of the United Nations. The United Nations General Assembly decided on November 12, 1974 to suspend South Africa from participating in its work, due to international opposition to the policy of apartheid. During the late seventies and early eighties UN Security Council Sanctions were instituted against South Africa and it was barred from officially participating in almost all United Nations related bodies, Financial support was also given by the UN to national liberation movements. Both the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the African National Congress (ANC) obtained Observer Missions at the UN with UN financial support. The democratic elections in South Africa in April 1994 paved the way for the complete normalization of South Africa's relations with the UN. Since then South Africa has participated actively in all aspects of the work of the Organization. Its global status has increased significantly through participation in UN bodies, agencies, and General Assembly Sessions. South Africa is a strong supporter of multilateralism and the current system of governance based

if the UN and its various bodies. These institutions serve to combine the international community's strength to maintain the economic and social well-being and advancement of all peoples. South Africa is also of the view that this is the optimal system through which other major global issues such as food security, disasters, refugees, international crime and disarmament could be effectively addressed in a collective manner.

In October 2006, South Africa was elected by the members of the General Assembly to serve for the first time in its history as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2007-2008.

Relationships with other United Nations Security Council Members

China: South Africa and China have built on the foundation set by Pres. Jiang Lemin, and Pres. Mandela, with both countries developing complementary positions in multilateral forums and expanding their relationship across all fronts to the extent China is now South Africa's most important trading partner and an ally in tackling many of the challenges faced in the developing world.

Viet Nam: South Africa supported Viet Nam's bid to become a member of the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member. Both nations are hoping to expand political and economic relations in the future and are both members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Indonesia: Indonesia was for many years a staunch supporter of the Anti-Apartheid movement. It now regards South Africa as a model of successful transition and reconciliation. In addition to historical and cultural links between the two countries, South Africa and Indonesia remain key allies on issues affecting developing nations. This co-operation is especially evident in International organizations such as the UN and the NAM.

France: On Feb 29, 2008 France and South Africa signed three economic deals resulting in a relationship between the countries, France also plans in upcoming years to help South Africa in the areas of defense, democracy, and human rights. The President of France stresses the relationship between France and South Africa should serve as a model for the west's new relationship with African countries.

United Kingdom: Both South Africa and the United Kingdom share a bond through the Commonwealth of Nations. The United Kingdom is one of South Africa's largest trading partners with over 7 billion pounds in two-way trade in goods and services.

Italy: Italy and South Africa have the same position in the international arena around issues such as migration, under-development, and other issues. A memorandum agreement was signed between South Africa and Italy in 2003.

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya: Thus far, not much of a relationship as blossomed between the two nations, though a date for the Inaugural Joint Commission with Libya is in the process of being finalized.

Burkina Faso: South Africa and Burkina Faso established non-resident diplomatic relations in may 1995. The Burkina Faso non-resident Ambassador for South Africa is based in Addis

Ababa, South Africa

Russian Federation: Full diplomatic relations were established between South Africa and Russia on Feb 28, 1992.

Belgium: Since the collapse of the apartheid system in South Africa, a warm relationship has occurred between the two nations. They participate in regular dialogue and cooperate on such issues as the World conference against racism. Belgium is also South Africa's sixth largest trading partner, and 8th fastest growing export destination.

Croatia: On November 9, 1992 South Africa and Croatia signed an agreement establishing full diplomatic relations.

United States: Currently both countries are committed to international promotion of human rights, international trade, and prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. They also share the value of democracy, the rule of law, good governance, and peaceful resolution of Africa conflicts. The US is one of South Africa's key trading partners and a large investor in South Africa. US assistance to South Africa currently totals 60 million US dollars a year.

Panama: The two countries established full diplomatic relations on Jan, 10 1995, and the Government of Panama opened an embassy in Pretoria in August 2000.

Costa Rica: The two countries established relations in 1994, and South Africa maintains good bilateral relations with Costa Rica.