

# Special relations with other countries and political structure

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## Profile of South Africa

South Africa is a country on the southern tip of the African continent that is known for its diversity. This is with regards to the people, the cultures present, and even the languages used in the country. I particularly chose this country due to the diverse aspect of the citizens' lives, and the rich autonomy they bring in terms of their livelihood. One thing that people talk about South Africa for is its political past, which was marred by violence during the white regime that ruled the country then. The enforcement of apartheid in the country and the struggle by most freedom fighters was something that I was familiar with. The country is known for Nelson Mandela, one of the most celebrated heroes the world has ever known, after his role in the ending of the apartheid and white minority rule in South Africa (Mwakikagile, 2008). He is well known for the unification of the African country and peace among the races.

## Political Structure

The country's current political system is a parliamentary republic. The ruling party is the African National Congress (ANC), which championed for the equal rights of all South African citizens from the white minority rule back in the 1950's. Prior to that, the Dutch and the British were trying to lay claim to most parts of South Africa, which led to countless wars among the Boers, the British, and some of the African communities that existed, for example; the Zulu. South Africa became a republic in 1961 after a referendum to ensure that South Africa was a self-governed state (Mwakikagile, 2008).

## Demographic Make-Up

The diversity of the country is well-known throughout the world. That is

probably why it is referred to as the “Rainbow Nation” due to the multicultural and multiethnic diversity. It has over 11 languages that are officially recognized. Christianity is the religion that most South Africans subscribe to, which constitutes over 70 percent of the total population. Rugby, cricket, and soccer are among the popular sports in South Africa (Mwakikagile, 2008).

### Geography

Located at the southernmost region of the African continent, South Africa is ranked 25th in terms of size in the whole world. There is temperate climate in the region as the country is partly surrounded by the Atlantic and Indian oceans (Mwakikagile, 2008). The region boasts of a number of animals including an endangered species known as the Riverine Rabbit.

### Economy

There is a mixed economy in South Africa. It has a higher GDP per capita as compared to most countries in the continent. However, a high rate of unemployment and poverty among most of its inhabitants still exists (Mwakikagile, 2008).

### Culture

The black majority, especially in most impoverished areas, still hold on to their traditions. Westernization has brought with it a decline in most African traditions (Mwakikagile, 2008). The art found in the country can be dated back 75, 000 years ago, which was found in caves. Their art continues to evolve with the coming of European influence, especially from the Dutch.

### Special Relations with other Countries

South Africa is a member of the BRICS countries, and shares special relations

with China as it attained higher level of comprehensive partnership with the economic powerhouse (Mwakikagile, 2008).

#### References

Mwakikagile, G. (2008). South Africa and its people. Oxford: Oxford University Press.