

South africa's position in the african union committee



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Position Paper for the African Union Committee

The topics before the African Union Committee are: Food Security, Development and NGO Accountability, and China and India's role in facilitating economic development in Africa. South Africa is strongly committed to collaborating with the various members of the international community. We believe that it is necessary to undertake joint actions based on international law to ensure that lasting multilateral solutions can be applied. This will address and improve the living conditions of millions of people around the world.

I. Food Security Challenges

South Africa advocates its support towards the eradication of extreme hunger and poverty across the world as part of target No. 1 of the UN Millennium Task Project. The commitment of the South African government towards food Security is entrenched in section 27 of South Africa's Constitutional rights. Since 1994, South Africa has made constant efforts to make food security a priority policy, as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This program aimed for the redistribution of public funds in order to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people. In 2000, the South African Government decided to develop a national food security policy that would harmonize and integrate all the existing programs into a single and efficient body known as

the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS). The goal of this program is to guarantee universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times. The previous statement is also a definition of food security by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The main objective of the IFSS is to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity by 2015. This program targets public and private society by focusing on household food security without overlooking national food security. The first step is to create food security interventions in order to guarantee that food insecure population gain access to the necessary productive resources. In the second part of the program, people who are unable to produce food are helped to find jobs or activities that will produce adequate income so that they can purchase sufficient food. The third part of the program guarantees food insecure population access to nutritious and safe food. The fourth part of the project targets people that are unable to work or produce food due to disabilities or extreme poverty. The project will procure relief measures to ensure short-term to medium-term food supplies that will vary depending on each case. The last part of the project aims to monitor food security in the country with the aim of improving and developing efficient approaches that would culminate in the complete eradication of hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity. In addition, the South African government has also pressed to eradicate hunger and poverty at the international scale. In 2002, South Africa successfully managed to obtain the necessary support to enact the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. In this document, member states agreed that sustainable development and multilateralism were the most secure ways to guarantee food security at the world stage. We would also

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like to remind members of the African Union about the importance of collaborating with the current Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). This ambitious and innovative agricultural program is part of the New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD) which is in turn a program created by the African Union. The CAADP vision is to create an African led and owned collective agriculture, based on developing strategies that would successfully meet the needs of the different African societies. The CAADP has four major pillars: sustainable land and water management, market access, food supply and hunger and agricultural research. In 2004, the CAADP initiated a first mission in South Africa by providing knowledge and skill training to farmers. South Africa warmly welcomes the CAADP and wishes to propose its own program, the IFSS, as alternative model for fellow states that are currently experiencing a food predicament. South Africa urges members to abide by resolution A/58/485 known as "water for life" by which states recognized the importance of water as natural resource necessary for sustainable development. South Africa calls upon all states and NGOs to work multilaterally to create lasting, efficient and transparent solutions to address the needs of the most vulnerable people in the world. South Africa remains confident that the eradication of hunger can be achieved and will continue to work to reach its objective by creating means of sustainable development.

II. Development and NGO Accountability

The South African government wishes to acknowledge the important contribution of NGOs in the socio-economic development of Africa. The

United Nations considers non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil
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society organizations (CSOs) to be valuable partners in the building of global society. South Africa shares the United Nations' vision and wishes to endorse its support for transparent, efficient and open NGO participation within its territory. South Africa is home to nearly 76, 000 non-profit organizations which employ nearly a million people. The recent decision by the African Union to exclude NGOs from the 2063 conference emphasizes the need for NGOs and governments to work closely together on ways to regulate each other participation and impact on the lives of millions of people. South Africa wishes to highlight that there are major differences in terms of structure and objectives among the various types of NGOs, which might complicate the application of most known types of accountability. However, South Africa remains confident that the best way to work with NGOs and to promote development is to find a way to evaluate their work without limiting their freedom of speech, independence or ability to exist as alternative channels for citizens. For this reason, South Africa proposes the creation of an enquiry commission within the African Union that would evaluate NGOs on the principle of democratic accountability. Democratic accountability entails that NGOs should be accountable to those who they affect, especially people in vulnerable positions. This commission should be led by people who are familiar with the African continent and the needs of locals. South Africa suggests the commission publish reports every two years that will assess the locals' level of satisfaction with the different organizations, the impact of these organizations in the daily life of people and the calculated prediction on the final outcome of the program. We believe that if all people have access to a neutral and private way to evaluate NGO performance, this will lead to major improvements on multiple levels. The fact that NGOs know

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their work will be evaluated and openly assessed by published reports will push these organizations to pay close attention to the comments and suggestions of locals. By combining the expertise and resources of these organizations with the knowledge of the locals, South Africa hopes that NGOs will have an easier time reaching the poorest people and this will accelerate the delivery of their services. South Africa believes that the poorest people should be an essential part of the decision-making process. We will look favorably upon NGOs who allow these people to have a greater say in the decisions taken by the organization as well as those NGOs who produced satisfactory results over a five year period. South Africa urges members of the international community to abide by the 2002 Johannesburg Declaration in order to find multilateral lasting solutions for the many challenges that lie ahead, especially in areas such as food security, poverty and economic development.

III. China and India's role in facilitating economic development in Africa

South Africa remains confident that cooperation and negotiation are the best tools to promote friendly and profitably relations with India and China in order to obtain mutual economic development. South Africa maintains friendly and profitable relations with China and India as we share membership in multiple organizations such as: G20, BRICS, and IBSA. The recent decision by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) leadership to engage closely in Africa represents an important opportunity for African states. Under the leadership of South African President Jacob Zuma, South Africa aims to establish an African free trade area by 2015. This area would include 26 African states with a combined population of 600

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million and GDP of one trillion dollars. We believe Africa has great potential and we expect African output to expand by 50% in 2015. The expansion of African output will also increase spending power by 30%, which would greatly contribute to the development and expansion of the middle class in the continent. South Africa wishes to highlight the extraordinary African mineral and agricultural potential which motivated our nation to approve 1,000 investment plans in 36 different African countries. South Africa has a close and growing relationship with India as it remains our fifth most important trade partner. Trade with India has great potential and would greatly benefit the economic development of states who engage in practices based on international law. South Africa recognizes this potential as bilateral trade rose from R16.3 billion in 2007 to a R61.65 billion in 2012. South Africa's relationship with India is built on more than economic interests, as our nations continue to coordinate their political agenda to face many global issues. In the 2013 IBSA meeting, the leaders of India, Brazil and South Africa publicly reiterated their commitment towards inclusive social development, economic growth and democratic values as the guiding principles for peace, security and prosperity for the next years. South Africa is confident about the IBSA's capacity to promote prosperity through free trade agreement and sustainable development. South Africa recognizes China and India's efforts to deal with food security around the world and demands a halt on the uncontrolled speculation by developed nations on agricultural commodities and restrictive and distorting trade practices. We urge developed nations to honor their commitments in supporting developing nations and we welcome the L'Aquila Joint Statement on Food Security adopted in Rome in 2009.

China is South Africa's largest economic partner and an important player for <https://assignbuster.com/south-africas-position-in-the-african-union-committee/>

the economic stability of Africa. We praise BRICS' support for the current African Union's NEPAD program and wish to inform African states that BRICS members are expected to invest nearly 480 billion dollars for the development of infrastructure in Africa. South Africa recognises China's commitment to the continent and encourages African states to cooperate through the use of the Forum on China and Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). South Africa is glad to announce that it will be hosting the next 2015 FOCAC meeting where China and African States will continue to tackle job creation, sustainable growth and clean energy. South Africa wishes to extend a hand to all African States and members of the international community in order to cooperate with China and India for the building of a better future.