

## **JOINT DECLARATION AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

At the invitation of His Excellency Mr Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Mr Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón President of the Government of Spain, undertook an Official Visit to the Republic of South Africa on 27 October. This was the first Official Visit by a President of the Government of Spain to South Africa.

The Presidents held official discussions during which they reviewed the bilateral relations between the two countries. The discussions focused on various areas of mutual interest including bilateral trade and investment, climate change and renewable energy, sport, culture, education and language training, and science and innovation.

The Presidents also exchanged views on international and regional affairs, including the war in Ukraine and its international impact, particularly in Africa and on developing countries. Both countries called for the immediate and peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine and reiterated their concern for the severe consequences of the conflict on food and energy security around the world. The two leaders also shared views on the insurgency in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, the situation in the Sahel as well as other areas of instability and conflict.

On a multilateral level, South Africa and Spain reiterated their unequivocal commitment to a rules-based international and multilateral order based on international law. Both Presidents reiterated their commitment to strengthening multilateralism and to working together to promote peace and prevent conflicts, strengthen respect for international law, uphold the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, promote and protect human rights, ensure humanitarian action and advance efforts to ensure gender equality, including the active participation and empowerment of women in all spheres. They will continue to collaborate, including through the Leaders' Network "Reinforcing Multilateralism Together", which recently promoted the holding of the Food Security Summit in the margins of the opening of the general debate during the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

They also addressed the existing cooperation between the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). The President of the Government of Spain outlined Spain's proposals and priorities for Spain's Presidency of the European Union in the second semester of 2023, and the President of South Africa highlighted the priorities of South Africa for its Presidency of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) group in 2023.

The global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its extensive effect was another of the issues addressed at the meeting held between the two Presidents. They highlighted the importance of promoting universal access to the vaccines and the need to increase collaboration and best practices regarding health surveillance, and to prevent, prepare and respond to future health emergencies.

Both Presidents shared their conviction that effectively addressing the climate emergency and its related challenges requires agile and innovative political solutions, in addition to the required financing for developing countries, including from the

involvement of the private sector and their contribution as regards capacities and investment.

The two Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to accelerate the implementation of urgent measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, as regards mitigation as well as adaptation, financing, in particular the provision and mobilisation of climate finance and facilitation of scaled-up access to financial resources from developed to developing countries, including public financing that is predictable and loss and damage, with a view to the forthcoming UNFCCC CoP 27 to be held in Egypt. They also restated their readiness to intensify their bilateral cooperation on weather and climate observation and prediction, with the aim of further strengthening their early warning systems to address the effects of climate change.

Both Governments consider that access to and continuity of energy and safe drinking water supply constitute basic elements for social justice and economic prosperity. They exchanged views on their respective Just Transition experiences and applauded the role played by Spanish companies in promoting renewable energy in South Africa, committing to helping them continue to do so, and trust that said collaboration will be extended to the sphere of water and its infrastructure.

The President of the Government of Spain underscored Spain's wide-ranging experience in the renewable energy sector, and offered to collaborate with South Africa, both bilaterally and multilaterally, towards the Just Energy Transition.

Spain and South Africa agreed on the need to promote effective measures for early warning, preparedness and adaptation, so as to increase global resilience to drought, wildfires and other slow-onset and extreme weather events.

The President of the Government of Spain presented to the President of South Africa the International Drought Resilience Initiative that Spain is co-sponsoring with Senegal.

There were in-depth discussions on the bilateral economic and trade relations and both Presidents underscored the need to increase bilateral trade between the two countries. They committed to promoting a favourable climate for private-sector investment and participation in projects of mutual interest. Both Presidents welcomed the engagement during the Business Forum with South African and Spanish businesses. A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Industry 4.0 was signed between South Africa and Spain.

The President of the Government of Spain announced that Spain will make available approximately € 2.11 billion in the coming five years to support the participation of Spanish companies in renewable energy and climate-related projects in South Africa. This financial support will be made available through different financial instruments.

The Presidents expressed their satisfaction with the cooperation between South Africa and Spain in various areas of mutual interest. Both sides applauded the advances made in cultural cooperation, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Library of Spain and the National Library of South Africa, as well as in the sphere of Sport, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Sport. It has been agreed that sport cooperation programmes will be implemented between the two countries under the said Memorandum. Both sides confirmed their interest in relaunching reinforced cooperation on the basis of the existing 2003 Bilateral Agreement on Scientific and

Technological Cooperation, with special emphasis on the following fields: biodiversity and climate change, health sciences, renewable energies, astronomy and open science.

Further, it was agreed that the two countries will intensify their collaboration in the sphere of education, specifically with regards to fostering mobility and exchanges between the universities of both countries and exploring the teaching of the Spanish language in schools in South Africa.

The President of the Government of Spain expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the President of South Africa for his hospitality and for the success of the visit and invited him to undertake a reciprocal visit to Spain.

South Africa and Spain reaffirmed the bonds of friendship and solidarity that exist between the two countries and look forward to continued engagement that would benefit their peoples, countries and respective regions and the world.