

Dr. Chetan Tokas

Assist. Prof. (DSE College, University of Delhi)

China and South Africa are celebrating 25 years of establishment of their bilateral relationship. The Republic of South Africa and the People's Republic of China established their bilateral relations in the year 1998 and both the countries have contributed to the strengthening of their bilateral ties. The Republic of South Africa and the People's Republic of China are also celebrating the decade of 2020s as their 10 Year Strategic Programmes of Cooperation.

The two countries have contributed to the bilateral relations by cooperating for governmental relationships, business cooperations, visits of the state dignitaries, people to people interactions and all interactions at various levels. In the continent of Africa, China has the biggest trade agreements with the South Africa and China is also the biggest business partner of South Africa outside the African continent.

Both the countries are continuing their developing economies with developing their socio-economic development. In the previous 25 years South Africa and China have tried to achieve domestic development and they have tried to develop their partnership with the Global South Perspective with the help of bilateral, trilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements.

Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has been a very helpful bilateral relationship between South Africa and China with a possibility of coming together of countries from various continents. Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has given both the countries various possibilities to grow with shared experiences and to develop resources in their continents.

South Africa and China are significant countries in the contemporary global order. They have a long bilateral relationship beginning from the cold war era and the Apartheid era, continuing to the contemporary global order.

The bilateral relationships of countries have an impact of all the major developments in their contemporary global politics and it has similarly happened with South Africa and China.

The two countries similarly have been influenced by the contemporary global socio-economic, political and diplomatic relationships.

South Africa-China Diplomatic Relations: Historical Developments

The consular level diplomatic relations of Taiwan were established with the Republic of South Africa in 1962 and it began a strengthened diplomatic relations at the socio-economic level as various industries and businesses from Taiwan migrated to South Africa.

International sanctions had been imposed on the Apartheid government of South Africa as South African economy was finding it challenging to integrate with the economy of the world. Taiwan by strengthening its relations with the Apartheid government of China was not considering international economic sanctions as challenging for Taiwan-South Africa Relations. In this duration South Africa strengthened its relationship with the People's Republic of China by incorporating various measures.

Diplomatic Relations between South Africa and China

South Africa and China began strengthening their relationship in the decade of 1980s and established their governmental relationship on 01 January 1998. The beginning of the South Africa-China relationship was significant as this bilateral relationship of the countries was similar to the bilateral relationships of these countries with various other African countries.

Political Cooperation of South Africa and China

(1) Pretoria Declaration

People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa agreed on the Pretoria Declaration in April 2000. President of the People's Republic of China, Jiang Zemin and the President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki agreed on the the Pretoria Declaration for a strengthened partnership and cooperation for their cooperation and development.

Pretoria Declaration was significant in strengthening the ties of People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa as it incorporated the process of dialogue of the two countries considering their moral imperatives. It was opined during the Pretoria Declaration as the countries would support and cooperate.

(2) Bi-National Commission (BNC)

A Bi-National Commission (BNC) was established after the Pretoria Declaration for establishing a continuity in the bilateral relations of South Africa and China for a government to government cooperation and coordination.

The Bi-National Commission (BNC) would guide the countries in all the possibilities for cooperation. The Bi-National Commission would function in the process of various forms of consultations and and establishment of cooperation for the countries.

(3) Six Agreements of Mutual Cooperation for South Africa and China

- (a) Police co-operation
- (b) Maritime transport
- (c) Prevention of the spread of deadly pathogens
- (d) Animal health and quarantine
- (e) Arts and culture
- (f) Avoidance of double taxation.

(4) Bridging North-South Divide

A sustainable development is a challenge in the absence of a strengthened cooperation of countries of the North and the countries of the South. South Africa and China during their various discussions tried to work for bridging the divide of North and the South. The two countries have been functioning to remove any threatening possibility of the poor and the rich countries. The countries have incorporated their possibilities for development of economic growth of countries of the South.

(5) Rational Economic Order

Possibilities of a new, just and rational economic order for the world had been a very significant necessity for bringing improvements in the economic possibilities of countries. South Africa and China in their relationship understood the significant necessity of possibilities of reform and joint actions of the countries to improve economic order.

The bilateral agreements of South Africa and China observed the possibilities of more and more responsibilities for all the countries for a new, rational world economic order for the development of the countries in debt.

South Africa-China Economic Relations

(1) Investments of China in South Africa

All the investments discussed by South Africa and China in the beginning were very significant. They could not begin the investments for various challenges. A major challenge for China to invest in South Africa was a poor investment possibilities. Some of the challenges in South Africa were low productivity, labour flexibility challenges and various forms of crimes. Securing Foreign Direct Investment from various sources was a major challenge.

(2) Investment of South Africa in China

Investments of South Africa in China were similarly significant with the help of major South African investments companies, Landpac, SAB Miller, MIH Group and China Resources Enterprises Group. SAB Miller began its investments in China with the help of China Resources Enterprises Group and they formed an incorporated venture. Their incorporation was established in a new form as China Resources Breweries and it has been investing with the incorporation.

(3) South Africa – China Free Trade Agreement

Free Trade agreement is a mutual cooperation for the countries to develop in an incorporated and to strengthen the trade between both the two countries. China had been growing its economy in a very considerable and very powerful. South Africa was of the opinion to develop the economy with the help of Free Trade Agreement with China with the possibilities of established analysis of the economies of South Africa and China.

The countries understood various international and domestic challenges for the functioning of the Free Trade Agreement. Various trade unions, commercial organizations, business leaders and industrial establishments were incorporated for the Free Trade Agreement.

Cooperation of South Africa and China in a New World Order

Cooperation of South Africa and China in a New World Order was understood by China and South Africa as their business interests have been similar for the development of the countries and they compliment the economies. In a new world order, cooperation of the countries is essential for the political and economic development.

Opportunities for the Republic of South Africa have been growing in the People's Republic of China and the opportunities for the Peoples's Republic of China have been growing in the Republic of South Africa and a very significant functioning of enterprises, industrial houses, trade unions and business leaders.

Support of South Africa to the Chinese investments in the Continent of Africa

South Africa in its functioning of economic relationship with the People's Republic of China has understood various challenges and possibilities of investment of China in various parts of the continent of Africa. The Republic of South Africa will be able to help People's Republic of China to develop the continent with various possibilities:

- (1) Strengthening their investments by strengthening local employment generation.
- (2) Merging of NEPAD and FOCAC.
- (3) Incorporation of peacekeepers and promotion of possibilities of peace in Africa.

References

A. Brunetti, *Credibility of Rules and Economic Growth*, World Bank, 1997.

African-Asian Society, 'SABMillar's Success in the Chinese Market', *African-Asian Society Newsletter*, October 2003.

Dr. Chetan Tokas (March 2023). South Africa and the People's Republic of China: 25 Years of Diplomatic Relations

International Journal of Economic Perspectives, 17(03) 321-327 UGC CARE II

Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.com/index.php/journal>

B. Gilley, 'The year China started to climb', *Far East Asian Economic Review*, 168, 8 (2005), p.33.

B. Kite, 'Free Trade? Somebody Always Has to Pay', *Business Week*, 2 May 2001.

B. Webb, 'Deputy President Cautious on Trade Deals with China', *The Star*, 23 June 2006.

D. Monyae, 'Bridge to Beijing', *The Sowetan*, 11 December 2001.

Deon Geldenhuys, 'The Politics of South Africa's China Switch', *Issues and Studies*, 33, 7 (1997), pp. 93-131.

Deon Geldenhuys, *The Taiwan Experience: Implications for South Africa* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 1995).

Ding Zhitao, 'A Market Economy - Is China There Yet?', *Beijing Review*, 22 July 2004.

F. Ahwireng-Obeng, 'The EU-SA Free Trade Agreement', *South African Journal of International Affairs* 6, 2 (1999).

Garth Le Pere, 'Sino-African Synergy Matures', *The Star*, 6 May 1999.

G. Mills and G. Shelton, 'From Butterflies to Take-Off? Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Ties', in G. Mills and G. Shelton (eds), *Asia-Pacific and Africa - Realising Economic Potential* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2003).

Garth Shelton, 'China and Africa: Building an Economic Partnership', *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 8, 2 (Winter 2001), pp. 111-19.

Garth Shelton, 'China's Africa Policy and South Africa: Building New Economic Partnerships', *SA Yearbook of International Affairs 2000/01* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 2001), p. 389.

Institute for Global Dialogue/South African Institute of International Affairs, *SACUChina FTA Workshop*, Johannesburg, 28-9 September 2004.

Dr. Chetan Tokas (March2023). South Africa and the People's Republic of China: 25 Years of Diplomatic Relations

International Journal of Economic Perspectives,17(03) 321-327 UGC CARE II

Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.com/index.php/journal>

J. Katzenellenbogen, 'China, SA Join Forces on Nuclear Technology', *Business Day*, 24 June 2006.

J.Y.S. Cheng, *China's Challenges in the Twenty-First Century* (Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong, 2003).

P. Wadula, 'South Africa, China Set Up Binational Body', *Business Day*, 26 April 2000.

Qian Qichen, *Ten Episodes in China's Diplomacy* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), p. 204

S. Chetty, 'Forging Afro-Sino Ties', *The Sowetan*, 29 September 2000.

SAIIA Research Group (ed.), *South Africa and the Two Chinas Dilemma* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs

Wang Xiaoye and Tao Zhenghua, 'WTO Competition Policy and its Influence in China', *Social Sciences in China*, XXV, 1 (2004), pp. 43-53.

Zhong Fei, 'President Jiang's Visit to South Africa', *Chinafrica* 113, 20 May 2000, p. 5.