

JOINT COMMUNIQUE
ON THE OCCASION OF THE BILATERAL MEETING
BETWEEN MINISTER NKOANA-MASHABANE
AND MINISTER GEOFFREY ONYEAMA
13 MARCH 2017

1. On 13th March 2017, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Her Excellency, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane hosted His Excellency, Mr Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as part of continuing bilateral engagements aimed at strengthening and deepening cooperation between South Africa and Nigeria.

2. During their discussion, the two Ministers reviewed a wide range of bilateral, continental and global issues of common interest. They acknowledged the historical and strategic relations that happily exist between the two countries.

3. The two Ministers noted with satisfaction the continued exchange of the high level visits and meetings between the two countries. In this regard, they recalled the successful state visit

of H.E President Zuma to Nigeria in March 2016 during which the Heads of State decided to elevate the existing Bi-National Commission (BNC) to a Head of State level, demonstrative of their collective desire to forge a special relationship.

4. The Ministers reaffirmed the anticipated reciprocal state visit of H.E President Buhari to South Africa during the course of 2017 on a date to be mutually agreed. In this regard, the two Ministers agreed to start with the necessary preparations for this state visit in order to ensure its resounding success.
5. The two Ministers appreciated the vast nature of the two countries' bilateral cooperation which covers among others trade and investment, energy, agriculture, mining, defence, health, tourism, environment, education and transport, as well as science and technology. In this regard, the two Ministers further committed themselves to ensuring that all the signed thirty four (34) sectoral agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoU) are fully implemented.
6. Both Ministers noted with great satisfaction the economic cooperation between the two Republics as evidenced by the increasing trade volumes as well as private sector investments.

In this regard, they acknowledged the pivotal role played by Nigeria-South Africa Business Council in promoting and strengthening private sector participation in each other's economies. In this regard, they took note of more than 120 South African businesses operating in Nigeria in telecommunications, mining, aviation banking and finance, retail, property, entertainment and fast foods industries. They also noted and welcomed Nigeria's small, micro and medium enterprises, as well as big companies like Dangote Sephaku Cement that are entering the South African market.

7. Minister Nkoana Mashabane also used the opportunity of their meeting to brief Minister Onyeama on the recent sporadic violent incidents in South Africa affecting foreign nationals. She highlighted the Government's condemnation of these incidents, emphasised that no single death has occurred during this unfortunate spate of violent incidents, reiterated South Africa's condemnation of all forms of discrimination based on race, religion, sex or creed, including xenophobia or "afrophobia", affirmed South Africa's constitutional democracy which enshrines human rights, Bill of Rights, democratic values, human dignity, equality and freedoms.

8. Minister Nkoana Mashabane also dispelled the notion that these incidents affecting foreign nationals were targeted at Nigerian nationals only as other foreign nationals were affected. The Minister assured her counterpart that the South African Government was fully in control of the situation and several interventions including meetings with diplomatic community and émigré communities, security operations, policy and legislation reviews, etc, were taking place.
9. Both Ministers condemned these violent incidents and the destruction of property and reiterated their call for heightened law enforcement. The two Ministers noted with concern the inciting statements or pronouncements including fake news peddled by certain individuals, political actors and other interest and pressure groups. In this regard, the two Ministers called for an immediate stop to this.
10. The two Ministers agreed to continue to work together and enhance diplomatic consultation on this matter and many other matters relevant to the bilateral relations.
11. During their discussions, the two Ministers agreed to establish a multi-sectoral mechanism between the two

countries to meet quarterly to exchange information on prevailing developments and act as an Early Warning System.

12. With regard to the Continent, the two Ministers also exchanged views on the political and security situation in their respective regions and the continent. They expressed their grave concern on the ongoing instability in some of the countries on the Continent and condemned in the strongest possible terms the continued terrorist and extremist activities. To this end, they reaffirmed their commitment to working together in pursuit of sustainable peace and stability on the continent.

13. The two Ministers also expressed their concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in some countries on the Continent as recently announced by the United Nations.

14. With regard to international issues, the two Ministers reiterated their common view on the need to promote multilateralism and South-South cooperation. They reiterated their call for the reform of the United Nations Security Council to better represent the interests of the developing world.

15. H.E Minister Onyeama expressed his profound gratitude for the warm reception and hospitality accorded to him and his delegation and also extended an invite to his counterpart to visit Nigeria for diplomatic consultation on dates to be determined through diplomatic channel.

16. In conclusion, the two Ministers reaffirmed the strategic relations that exist between the two sister Republics and committed themselves to working together to enhance close political, economic and social cooperation in keeping with a mutual desire to establish a special relationship between the two countries.

DONE IN PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

13 MARCH 2017