

South Africa to host Chinese President Xi Jinping ahead of 15th Brics Summit

President Cyril Ramaphosa is set to welcome President Xi Jinping of China on a state visit to South Africa tomorrow, 22 August. This visit precedes the 15th Brics Summit scheduled for 22 August -24 August, 2023. Celebrating 25 years of diplomatic relations and rooted in historic ties dating back to the Bandung Conference of 1955, this event marks a significant milestone in the relationship between the two countries.



Source: Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco).

The State visit by President Xi will give the leaders and their delegations an opportunity to reflect on developments under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and to consider further deepening co-operation. The visit crowns deliberations in which the two governments have been engaging on implementing structures such as the Bi-National Commission, Joint Working Group, People-to-People Exchange Mechanism and Strategic Dialogue.

South Africa and China enjoy vibrant economic relations, and China is South Africa's largest global trading partner by volume. China is an important investor in South Africa and provides support on infrastructure development projects including the Small Harbour Development Project, the TVET Refurbishment Project and the Mzimvubu Water Project, all of which are instrumental in job creation.

Discussions during the state visit will explore further collaboration and partnerships the two nations can leverage on to solidify existing diplomatic, economic and people-to-people relations. The expected outcomes of the visit include:

- Reaffirming the close and historic political ties underpinned by solidarity, a win-win partnership and people-to-people co-operation – within the framework of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and in celebration of 25 years of diplomatic relations.
- Underscoring the urgent need to address the trade balance and diversify South African exports to China by identifying broad market access for value-added products.
- Highlighting the importance of sustainable foreign direct investment through supporting manufacturing, infrastructure, and beneficiation and encouraging close private-sector engagement from both countries.
- Acknowledging the support of China on bilateral technical co-operation under the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (Focac) in addressing South Africa's domestic imperatives.
- Exchanging views on regional issues in support for development, peace and security.
- Enhancing multilateral co-operation, specifically within the context of Brics, the G77 plus China, and the G20, and to seek

Chinese support for South Africa and Africa's call for the reform of global governance institutions, notably the United Nations Security Council.

It is anticipated that several agreements and memoranda of understanding will be signed during the state visit, focusing on socio-economic co-operation, which both sides will ensure implementation that yields results for both countries. South Africa and China will co-host the China-Africa Leaders' Roundtable scheduled for 24 August, and also engage on co-operation at multilateral level, particularly at the Focac level.

Katja Hamilton is at the Brics Summit this week in Johannesburg, reporting live for Bizcommunity.

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