

SA, Botswana focus on growing economic ties

PRETORIA: International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane says it is essential for South Africa and Botswana to pay particular attention to growing economic ties and investments as these will form a firm foundation for mutual benefits.



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Addressing the 2nd Bi-National Commission between South Africa and the Republic of Botswana in Gaborone, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane said the existence of 34 signed Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding between the two countries demonstrated the depth and extent of bilateral cooperation.

"Our task today is to review progress made in the implementation of the bilateral Agreements/MoUs. It is only by working together that we can succeed and move our cooperation forward.

"We have made good progress, but more remains to be done," Minister Nkoana-Mashabane said on Wednesday, 19 November.

A strong cooperation exists between South Africa and Botswana. The two countries continue to cooperate in various fields such as energy, water, justice, immigration, culture, transport, science and technology, defence and security, agriculture, tourism, minerals, education, sports and recreation, health, trade and industry, and issues related to regional integration.

South African companies also remains one of Botswana's major trading partners with companies involved in various sectors such as housing, food and beverages, construction, retail, hotels and leisure, banking, medical services.

"Tourism development is a critical area of focus. We need to join hands to improve tourism between our countries and this will create employment opportunities so dearly needed in our respective countries," the Minister said.

President Jacob Zuma and his Botswana counterpart, President Ian Khama are expected to meet today in Gaborone, Botswana, in their quest to strengthen cooperation between the two regional economic leaders.

The second session allows the two states to track progress made in strengthening the social, economic and political ties between the two neighbouring countries.

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