



DECLARATION OF THE 8TH SOUTH AFRICA-EUROPEAN UNION SUMMIT

13 MARCH 2025

Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, met with Mr António Costa, President of the European Council and Mrs Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, in Cape Town today for the 8th Summit between South Africa and the European Union (EU). The Leaders issued the following statement:

1. We, the Leaders of South Africa and the European Union, met today to re-affirm our unwavering support for our Strategic Partnership based on shared values of democracy, human rights, equality and sovereignty.
2. Our meeting took place against the backdrop of rising geopolitical and geo-economic competition and instability, heightened conflict, deepening inequality, increasing global economic uncertainty, and fragmentation, as well as climate emergency. In the face of this challenging political and socio-economic environment, we underscored our belief in multilateral cooperation to collectively address shared challenges. We affirmed our unwavering commitment to act in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and its Purposes and Principles, including the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes. We further reaffirmed that all states must act in a manner consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter in its entirety, which includes the prohibition of the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of any state.
3. We agreed that, guided by these principles, we support a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in Ukraine, the occupied Palestinian Territories, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and other major wars and conflicts around the globe.

MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

4. We expressed our unwavering belief and commitment to multilateralism, a consistent approach to the rules-based order, and the centrality of the United Nations Charter.
5. We noted with concern the growing challenges to multilateralism because of rising unilateralism and protectionism, which undermine collective efforts to address shared challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, unfair trade, global pandemics, rising inequality, irregular migration, serious and organised crime, peace and security, and sustainable and inclusive growth.
6. We stressed our shared commitment to the universality and indivisibility of human rights as well as our common efforts for the strengthening of the UN human rights system.
7. The European Union expressed support for South Africa's G20 Presidency in 2025, the first on African soil, including its theme of Solidarity, Equality and Sustainable Development. We reaffirmed the importance of the G20 as the main global forum for international economic cooperation. The European Union will support the G20 partnership with African economies South Africa is forging, including through strengthening the G20 Compact with Africa, and expanding its membership.

8. We are concerned that rising conflicts and instability in various regions of the world are distracting focus from achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We affirmed our strong common commitment towards advancing the SDGs and implementing the Pact for the Future. We look forward to the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville from 30 June to 3 July 2025, which will be an important step to put in place a renewed global financing framework for sustainable development. We will work towards a successful and ambitious outcome of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP30) in Brazil.
9. We agreed on the need to reform the UN Security Council, recognising the urgent need to make it more representative, inclusive, transparent, efficient, democratic, and accountable, and better reflect today's realities by strengthening the voice of underrepresented regions, especially but not limited to Africa.
10. We stressed the importance of a transparent rules-based multilateral trading system that is non-discriminatory, fair, open, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable, as a necessity to promote economic growth, development, and poverty reduction. We recognise that the multilateral trading system is facing unprecedented challenges due to the impact of unjustified trade measures and distortive practices, which undermines and renders it vulnerable. We agreed that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) needs substantial reform to be able to respond to evolving global realities. We therefore welcomed and supported the proposal to launch an independent high-level Group of Eminent Persons to make recommendations to reform and reinvigorate the system, improve its governance, and make it fit for purpose for today's realities.
11. In response to a deteriorating global and regional security landscape, we decided to launch a dedicated Peace, Security and Defence Dialogue. It will facilitate a shared understanding of evolving threats and allow for regular dialogue and cooperation on a wide range of peace, security and defence-related issues, thereby promoting shared values, building capabilities and contributing to effective conflict prevention, and crisis response.
12. We reaffirmed our strong commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Paris Agreement and to keep 1,5 °C within reach. We reiterated our resolve to strive for the achievement of the goals of the Paris Agreement. This includes by implementing the global efforts agreed at the first global stocktake and submitting ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and adaptation communications. We are committed to just transition pathways towards global net-zero emissions that addresses both socioeconomic challenges as well as opportunities, through solid enabling policies such as carbon pricing and others. We called for adherence to the principle of equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), in light of different national circumstances.
13. We recognised the impact of rapid technological change from emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), which presents both opportunities and threats. We agreed to work together to promote international cooperation, including under the auspices of the United Nations, for an international governance framework for AI. In line with our shared commitment to the Global Digital Compact, we agreed to support developing countries to close the digital gap, and equitably share its benefits, and mitigate risks, including those related to data protection, intellectual property, privacy, and security.
14. We noted the very severe consequences associated with nuclear weapons use and emphasise that all States share the responsibility to prevent such an occurrence from happening. We stressed the need to implement all obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT), and to uphold commitments during previous NPT Review Conferences, including the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of its Article VI, with the ultimate goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

15. We committed to the advancement of peace, security and sustainable development in our respective regions, and supported the accelerated implementation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 to achieve inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development in Africa. South Africa and the European Union share an understanding that security and development are inter-dependent, and that both parties must continue playing their key global roles in recognising the importance of regional cooperation and integration.
16. We recalled that 2025 marks the 25th anniversary of the European Union - African Union partnership and underscored the importance of holding the 3rd EU-AU Ministerial Meeting and the 7th EU-AU Summit in 2025.
17. We expressed our full commitment to a vision of an African continent that is peaceful, stable and prosperous. We agreed to work collaboratively with the African Union within the framework of established agreements and processes such as the 2013 Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region, and the Luanda- Nairobi Process, to find sustainable political solutions to conflicts and crises in the DRC/Great Lakes. We expressed support for the outcomes of the joint East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit in Dar es Salaam on 8 February that aim at addressing the conflict in eastern DRC and called for their rapid implementation. We reaffirmed our full support to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2773 (2025) concerning the situation in eastern DRC.
18. We also condemned the persistent violations of international humanitarian law and the violations and abuses of human rights occurring in the eastern DRC, including sexual and gender-based violence, the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and extrajudicial killings. We welcomed the decision by the Human Rights Council on 7 February to establish a fact-finding mission that will be followed by an independent commission of inquiry to investigate and document these violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. We stressed the importance of bringing to justice the perpetrators of these heinous acts. Furthermore, we called for the protection of humanitarian personnel and the unhindered delivery of life-saving assistance to affected populations, in full respect of international humanitarian law.
19. We expressed concern about the resurgence of military coups, pre- and post-election violence, and the humanitarian needs driven by conflict which threaten to reverse the gains accumulated in the development agenda of the continent. We also noted with concern the rising prevalence of terrorist organisations on the African continent and the threat posed to regional and continental stability and security as a result.
20. South Africa welcomed the European Union's financial support, including under the European Peace Facility, for anti-terrorism efforts in northern Mozambique.
21. We recognised that the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the United Nations (A/RES/77/298) guides our work in countering terrorism and in addressing the root causes and conditions that give rise to terrorist acts.
22. We expressed concern about the funding gap on the financing of African peace operations. This must be closed through fair burden-sharing involving both traditional and non-traditional donors. We stressed that funding must also be ensured from the African continent, inter alia, from the African Union. In addition, we called for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2719 (2023) in Somalia, as an adequate, predictable and sustainable financing framework for the new African Union Support and Stabilization in Somalia (AUSSOM), in order to avoid any security vacuum.

BILATERAL SECTORIAL COOPERATION

23. We noted with appreciation the continued expansion of our bilateral cooperation across a diverse range of sectors, with regular policy dialogues covering the areas of trade and investment; macro-economic policies; scientific research and innovation; environment, climate and water; energy; human rights; and politics, defence, peace and security.
24. We acknowledged the role of science, technology and innovation (STI) for development, a significant aspect of our bilateral cooperation, driven by shared interests to address global challenges. South Africa stressed the value it attaches to its participation in the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme.
25. We agreed to work together under the Mission Innovation global research and innovation platform, including also its Clean Hydrogen Mission, to offer safe and sustainable low-carbon climate resilient solutions for all towards achieving the climate neutrality goals of the Paris Agreement. We also welcomed the signature of the collaboration agreement between the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the South African Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI). We are also committed to cooperation between the Science Diplomacy Capital for Africa and initiatives implemented as part of the European Framework for Science Diplomacy.
26. We agreed to continue to collaborate on health-related matters, with a focus on pharmaceuticals and vaccines. We underlined our joint commitment to the African Union goal to produce in Africa over 60% of the vaccines needed for Africa's population.
27. We reaffirmed the positive impact that a well-functioning and quality education system, including higher education and Technical Vocational Training (TVET), has on addressing the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.
28. We welcomed the ongoing constructive collaboration within the Human Rights Dialogue to uphold and advance human rights and democracy globally. In this context we agreed to synergise positions at the Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly Third Committee to uphold human rights for all without discrimination.
29. We committed to the full and effective implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We concur that the advancement of gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, elimination of gender-based violence (GBV), protection of the rights of children, and the rights of persons with disabilities and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTI persons, through the realisation of all human rights, be they civil, political, economic, social or cultural rights, are cornerstones of democratic and inclusive societies.
30. We acknowledged that South Africa remains the European Union's key trade partner in Sub-Saharan Africa, and that the EU is the leading foreign investor in South Africa.
31. We recalled the EU-Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which is the foundation for a mutually beneficial economic relationship and underlined the benefits of its full and effective implementation.
32. In this context, South Africa will continue to ensure the rollout of the Just Energy Transition Implementation Plan in partnership with the European Union, participating EU Member States, and other partner countries.
33. South Africa and the EU are committed to a partnership that supports economic growth, sustainable development, industrialisation, beneficiation of critical mineral at source,

partnerships with local industries and decarbonisation in a manner consistent with their respective needs and concerns at different levels of economic development. To strengthen our cooperation and boost South Africa and EU's competitiveness, we agreed to launch negotiations towards a Clean Trade and Investment Partnership to support the development of strategic cleaner-value chains for raw materials including for local beneficiation, renewable and low carbon energy (including safe and sustainable low carbon hydrogen) and clean technology by improving the conditions for mutually beneficial investment. This, in turn, will help to facilitate the leverage of public and private financing towards developing cleaner supply chains in South Africa. This partnership will also serve as a forum for regulatory cooperation between the European Union and South Africa in areas of mutual interest related to clean-supply chains. This partnership must deliver short and long term solutions without delay to enable Sasol to export sustainable fuel, especially aviation fuel to the EU, including addressing compliance and regulatory issues. The EU commits to also support the long-term decarbonisation of Sasol, in particular in Secunda, thus contributing to facilitating a Just Energy Transition. On the issue of cumulation, South Africa and EU committed to work together in the coming months to find a sustainable solution without delay to facilitate South African exports of EVs and Hybrid vehicles to the EU market under the provisions of the EU – SADC Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), while supporting battery manufacturing in South Africa and the EU.

34. The European Union and South Africa agreed to work together to address existing challenges in trade in animal and plant products. In particular, South Africa committed to find a solution to facilitate the imports of poultry from disease-free areas in the European Union into South Africa without delay and finalise the most advanced EU market access applications without delay.
35. South Africa expressed appreciation for the EU's positive completion of the technical assessment of its Residue Monitoring Plan (RMP) for Amarula and urged that the EU finalise its internal legislative processes without delay to list South Africa as a country able to export shelf-stable composite products containing processed milk and egg products to allow for the resumption of Amarula exports from South Africa to the EU market.
36. On the trade in diamonds, South Africa appreciates the extension from 1 March 2025 to 1 January 2026 of the implementation of the EU traceability requirement for processed diamonds exported to the EU. South Africa has interest to set up an export certification node for diamonds in South Africa. The EU agreed to engage on this request with South Africa.
37. The EU announced a Global Gateway Investment Package of EUR 4.7 billion to support mutually beneficial investment projects comprising grants and public and private loans from European financial institutions and European private sector. The investment package is based on three main building blocks, responding to both South African and EU priorities: i) Building South Africa vaccine production and boosting local pharmaceutical value chains; ii) Support to the Just Energy Transition through the development of critical raw materials and safe and sustainable low carbon hydrogen value chains including complementary investments in logistics and energy infrastructure, as well as a 'Just' component to support jobs and skills; iii) Connectivity infrastructure, including transport (development of the strategic corridor North-South), and digital.
38. We recognised the need to harness critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development and support the development of a framework towards clean industrialisation and investments to ensure progress towards an agreement that promotes value addition and beneficiation of critical minerals close to the source of extraction. In this context we also agreed to follow-up on the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals.

39. To strengthen existing cooperation on critical minerals, we supported the opening of negotiations between the European Union and South Africa with the view to establish a Memorandum of Understanding on raw materials between both Partners.
40. We recognised that deepening our energy cooperation can play an instrumental role in ensuring a just energy transition in the EU, South Africa and globally. We agreed to support the implementation of efforts to triple renewable energy capacity globally and double energy efficiency globally by 2030. To this end, both sides agreed to establish a regular bilateral energy dialogue that will also cover energy access as well as low carbon energy technologies and complement our already rich engagement in multilateral fora. We also agreed to support the development of strategic low carbon value chains, which can support decarbonisation and industrial development in South Africa and in the EU.
41. We agreed to further advance EU-South Africa transport relations and are committed to intensifying our work on the EU-South Africa Horizontal Agreement for Air Services and are aiming for a favourable outcome. We also recognise the need to strengthen our efforts to mitigate the climate impact of transport. We acknowledged the need to undertake joint work to boost investment opportunities to support the production at scale of sustainable aviation fuels.
42. We also acknowledged the need to undertake joint work to boost investment opportunities to support the production at scale of safe and sustainable low carbon hydrogen and its derivatives, in particular sustainable fuels, for the decarbonisation of transport.
43. We decided to continue our ongoing dialogue on visa policy between South Africa and EU Member States with a view to fostering people-to-people contacts and facilitating enhanced interactions for investors and businesses.
44. The EU extended its gratitude to the Government of South Africa for successfully hosting the 8th EU-South Africa Summit in Cape Town. We look forward to a continued strong bilateral cooperation, including in the framework of the G20 Summit hosted by South Africa in November.
45. We, the Leaders of South Africa and the European Union, agreed to reconvene in the margins of the G20 Leaders' Summit to ensure steady progress on the commitments made at today's Summit.