

AGREED MINUTES OF THE 4th MEETING OF THE SOUTH AFRICA-VIETNAM PARTNERSHIP FORUM (PF) PRETORIA, 14-15 MARCH 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The 4th meeting of the *South Africa-Vietnam Partnership Forum* (PF) between the Republic of South Africa and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam was held in Pretoria from 14 to 15 March 2019.

The Partnership Forum was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Ms Reginah Mhaule and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, H.E Nguyen Quong Cuong.

Acting on behalf of the Deputy Director-General responsible for Asia and the Middle East in the South African Department of International Relations & Cooperation, Ms. Sindiswa Mququ, officially welcomed and introduced the South African delegation and Ms. Tam Thi Hai Dang, the Deputy Director-General responsible for Middle East and Africa in the Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, introduced the Vietnamese delegation.

The Partnership Forum's official program included the Opening Session, Deliberations by the DIRCO and Vietnamese MoFA, the three (3) Subcommittees and Vietnamese Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, as well as the signing of the Agreed Minutes.

2. OPENING REMARKS

In her opening remarks, Deputy Minister Mhaule welcomed Deputy Minister Quoc Cuong and the rest of the delegations to the 4th meeting of the South Africa-Vietnam Intergovernmental Partnership Forum for Economic, Trade, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Co-operation. The Deputy Minister highlighted that relations between South Africa and Vietnam have remained cordial since the establishment of diplomatic relations in November 1993.

She emphasized the need to do more to expand the opportunities for trade in order to move towards a more balanced trade relationship and also recommend the need to address all the issues that could constitute barriers to market access in the respective economies. To that end, the Deputy Minister suggested that both parties need to pay close attention to agricultural products for export between SA and Viet Nam.

Furthermore, DM Mhaule highlighted the important area of bilateral cooperation in the field of conservation and wildlife protection. She stated that the respective government officials have also worked hard to concretise cooperation so that the relations can continue to grow in strength and substance.

In his remarks, Vietnamese Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Quoc Cuong expressed his gratitude to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation and relevant Ministries and Agencies of South Africa for the excellent arrangements for the 4th Meeting

of the South Africa-Viet Nam Partnership Forum. Deputy Foreign Minister Cuong appreciated the positive developments in bilateral relations, particularly the exchange of 14 high-level visits since the 3rd Meeting in Ha Noi in 2015, most notably the visit to Viet Nam by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his capacity as Vice President in 2016 and the visit to South Africa by National Assembly Vice President Do Ba Ty in 2017.

Deputy Foreign Minister Cuong also stressed the need to deepen bilateral cooperation in defense, security, police and intelligence so as to elevate bilateral ties to a new height of mutual trust, as well as to further enhance other areas of cooperation.

3. REFLECTIONS BY DIRCO AND VIETNAM MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The two sides provided each other with an overview of the political developments in their countries and respective regions. Both sides deeply appreciated the cooperation and mutual support between the two countries at multilateral fora, particularly at the United Nations.

Vietnamese side congratulated South Africa on being elected as non-permanent member of the UNSC for the 2019-2020 tenure and believed that South Africa would successfully fulfill her mandates. On this occasion, South African side confirmed their support to the Viet Nam's candidacy to UNSC non-permanent seat for the 2020-2021 term of office through a diplomatic note.

Both sides appreciated ASEAN's consistent position to settle international disputes through peaceful means in accordance with the UN Charter and international laws.

The Viet Nam side proposed that the Tri-lateral Cooperation for the economic development of an identified African country should be considered; the cooperation should involve a private sector partner. The SA side, in principle, agreed with the proposal and requested that the Viet Nam side provides a concept document that outlines the proposal.

The two parties agreed that the Agreement in Intergovernmental Partnership Forum for Economic, Trade, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation (signed in 2004) needs to be reviewed and be ready for signature during the 5th session of the PF that will be held in Hanoi in 2021.

4. REPORT ON THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEES

4.1. Sub-Committee on Trade and Industry, Environment and Agriculture

4.1.1 Cooperation on Trade and Industry

Both Sides acknowledged that the bilateral trade together with the trade balance between the two countries has been increasing for the past five years. In addition the trade balance has been in favour of Vietnam. In order to increase the trade volume, diversify the structure of trade and enhance industry cooperation between the two countries, both Sides agreed as follows:

- a. Exchange of trade promotion activities: Both Sides agreed on supporting each other's trade promotion activities carried out in each country. In this regard, the Vietnamese Side requested for South Africa's support in upcoming trade and investment promotion activities carried out by Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam, such as: (i) Program of facilitation of Vietnamese products directly entering into chains of super markets in South Africa expected in April 2019; (ii) Program of development of cooperation in supporting industry (leather processing industry) expected in June 2019.

The South Africa Side requested the Vietnamese Side's support in organizing food and automotive component delegation to Viet Nam expected in June 2019.

- b. Cooperation in mineral sector: The two Sides agreed to expedite the signing of MOU on cooperation in mineral sector between Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam and Department of Mineral Resources of South Africa.

The Vietnamese Side also requested the South African Side to facilitate the importation of coal from South Africa to Viet Nam and support Vietnamese companies in mineral beneficiation and investment in South Africa.

- c. Other industries: The two Sides agreed on exploring new areas of cooperation in energy, oil and gas, renewable energy (solar and wind), clothing and textiles, automotive, mechanical engineering, production of consumption products, food processing, agriculture products, titanium and pigment processing and manufacturing.
- d. Joint Trade Committee: The two Side agreed on the possibility of holding the 4th Session of Viet Nam – South Africa Joint Trade Committee in Ha Noi in 2019. The exact date will be agreed upon through diplomatic channel.
- e. Implementation mechanism: Both Sides agreed to appoint contact points for carrying out cooperation activities. As for the Vietnamese Side: Asia and Africa Department, Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam. As for the South Africa Side: Asia Bilateral Relations, International Trade and Economic Development Division, Department of Trade and Industry.

4.1.2 Cooperation on Environment Issues

- a. The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) engaged with Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) counterparts in a bilateral discussion on the signed MoU on Cooperation in the field of Biodiversity Conservation and Protection and associated implementation plan, incorporating areas of co-operation relating to wildlife and biodiversity management, sampling of DNA and exchange of information related to wildlife seizures as well as CITES implementation. Although it was acknowledged that the timeframe of this MoU has expired, both parties felt that it would be important to continue the co-operation. In addition, there was a discussion on the possible inclusion of additional areas of co-operation, namely, issues pertaining to coastal management and maritime protection. Specific reference was also made to co-operation on ship building as alluded by the then DP Ramaphosa in 2016.

- b. The MARD and DEA agreed that in principle the original MoU should be reviewed with a view to concluding a new MoU. In order to take the process forward, it was agreed that the new draft documents (MoU and Implementation Plan) can be sent by DEA to MARD (which includes the areas related to coastal management). These draft documents will be reviewed and comments sent by MARD to DEA. The appointment of focal points by MARD and DEA will assist in taking this process forward.
- c. In relation to ship building, the Amb of South Africa to Viet Nam indicated that the SA Mission in Hanoi have identified the partners to deal with Ship Building and Vietnamese side took note of this issue to convey to the respective Ministry for consideration. The SA delegates would also facilitate liaison with the Department of Transport in SA to consider cooperation on the same matters.

4.1.3. Cooperation on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

In order to strengthen our bilateral relations in the areas of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, the two Sides agreed to initiate a comprehensive draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which would be exchanged through the diplomatic channels. Both sides agreed that the MoU should be finalized before the end of 2020.

Both Sides acknowledged the progress made in as far as market access is concerned. Currently South Africa exports apples, pears, table grapes and citrus and desires to export: avocado, mangoes, plums and apricots to Viet Nam. To that effect, the Viet Nam Side acknowledged receipt of the requests and informed that the request is under consideration by the competent authority.

Regarding animal products, SA is interested in exporting game meat (ostrich antelope and kudu meat); beef and salted bovine hides. To finalize this process, South Africa is consulting with relevant industry players and will inform Viet Nam upon completion.

Viet Nam is interested in exporting litchi, dragon fruits, longaans, star apple, rambutane and chicken and chicken products to SA. A formal request to DAFF for the products will be submitted shortly.

Regarding timber exports, Vietnam indicated that it would like to encourage SA to ensure legally certified timber exports.

4.2. Sub-Committee on Higher Education & Training and Science And Technology

4.2.1 Cooperation on Science and Technology

- a. The three academies, namely the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology and the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences agree to work together to host workshops, conferences and support exchange of researchers from their respective countries, focusing on specific areas of cooperation.

- b. In addition, an agreement was reached to explore a possible signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The areas of cooperation in Science and Technology include: Biotechnology, Climate Change, Geology, Nanotechnology, Environment (pollution), Social Sciences, digital humanities, sustainable and inclusive growth
- c. **MoU on Science and Technology:** two years ago both countries signed a MoU during the visit of the Deputy Minister of science Mr Tran Khan. South African Department of Science & Technology was later informed by the Vietnam side that the signed MoU was a Letter of Intent and have to start a new process for the MoU. A new draft was shared with the Ministry in Vietnam and SA have not yet received a response, DIRCO and Viet Nam MoFA to intervene.

4.2.2. Cooperation on Higher Education and Training

The South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) expressed appreciation for the scholarship that was granted to six South African students to study at the Vietnam Maritime University. The South African students have since completed their studies and have returned back to South Africa in 2017.

The Department received a draft MoU on Cooperation in the field of Higher Education between the Government of Vietnam and South Africa in 2015. The two Departments have been negotiating the texts of the MoU. The Department is now in the process of obtaining the necessary legal opinions thereafter it will be sent to the Vietnamese Ministry of Education for concurrence.

4.3. Sub-Committee on Justice, Defence and Police Matters

4.3.1. Justice Cooperation

- a. The parties have finalised the negotiations of the MoU on Cooperation in Legal and Judicial Field; Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLA) and Extradition Treaties.
- b. The MoU will be signed before the end of June 2019 and the MLA and Extradition Treaties will be signed during the third quarter of 2019 as South Africa is still busy with internal processes leading to the signing. Pending the signing of the Treaties, the two parties shall maintain the exchange of information and visits between working groups. Communication shall be continued between the Embassies and contact persons at related authorities of both sides.
- c. The Supreme People's Procuracy of the Social Republic of Viet Nam and the National Prosecuting Authority of the Republic of South Africa signed Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Combating Crime in September 2018 in Johannesburg. The parties are urged to accelerate the implementation of the MoU.

4.3.2. Defence Cooperation

- a. Both sides confirmed full implementation of the set objectives of 3rd RSA-Viet Nam Partnership Forum held in 2015 in Vietnam, Hanoi. The Vietnamese side expressed its readiness to host the 3rd Defence Policy Dialogue in Vietnam during 2019. The two sides agreed to identify suitable dates in the third or fourth quarter of 2019 to strengthen both military cooperation and defence industrial cooperation. The two sides confirmed the importance of a high level visit by the South African Minister of Defence to Vietnam as per the decision of the 2nd Policy Dialogue that took place in March 2017.
- b. The two sides agreed that the visit by the South African Minister of Defence and Military Veterans to Vietnam should be organised in 2020. The two sides also agreed to strengthen relations through exchange of visits and consultations at all levels. The Vietnamese side informed that the Vietnamese People's Army is ready to reciprocate the visit to South African Defence Intelligence in 2019. The two side will agree on suitable dates.
- c. The two sides agreed to continue strengthening cooperation on Education, Training and Development, Logistics, Military health, Special Forces, Defence Intelligence, UN Peace Keeping missions and Defence Industrial Cooperation. The two sides also noted the language training barriers and intend to address this limitation through language training exchange between the two Armed Forces.

4.3.3. Police Cooperation

The two sides acknowledged the importance of formalising cooperation between the two police agencies. In this regard, the following were discussed:

- a. Draft Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Crime; and Transnational organised crime, especially drug trafficking, human trafficking and wildlife trafficking.
- b. The final amendments to the draft agreement were discussed and the SAPS agreed to expedite the process of finalising the Draft Agreement towards early signing. The two sides also discussed various options for the signing of the Agreement. The two sides agreed to keep each other informed about the progress in this regard.
- c. The two sides discussed addressing transnational organised crime between their respective countries. Three (3) areas of concern are human trafficking, drug trafficking and wildlife trafficking. The establishing of formal communication channels was also discussed in this regard. A follow up meeting will be held in Hanoi, Vietnam, to further deliberate on transnational organised crime.
- d. Over and above the stipulated areas of cooperation, the following were also seen as important: Promotion of delegation exchange; Police training; Technology sharing; Information sharing; Coordination of investigations; and Cooperation at regional and international fora in the field of crime combating and investigation, in matters of mutual concern.

- e. Vietnam affirmed to continue cooperation in all areas, particularly exchange of information, intelligence and transnational crime,, experience sharing in law enforcement, exchange of visits at all levels, exchange of advanced technologies in security, internal affairs and propose the revised MOU on intelligence cooperation that was signed in 2006 between the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security and the South Africa Ministry of State Security.
- f. The proposal to hold Deputy Ministerial Cooperation frameworks between law enforcement entities, engage and provide mutual support for each other at bilateral and multilateral forums.

4.4. Culture, Sports and Tourism

Vietnamese side proposed that the two sides encourage to facilitate and implement activities in arts, culture and film week in each country.

Vietnamese side proposed that the two sides consider abilities to exchange delegations of leaders, experts and athletes in high achievement sports.

Vietnamese side proposed that the two sides share information about tourist destinations, policy and experience on tourism development. Vietnamese side invited South African side to consider taking part in international tourism affairs in Viet Nam in 2019 including Viet Nam International Travel Mart (VITM 2019) in April and International Travel Expo Ho Chi Minh City (ITE HCMC 2019) in September.

4. CLOSING REMARKS

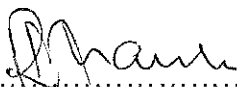
In her Closing remarks, Deputy Minister Reginah Mhaule thanked Deputy Minister Nguyen Quong Cuong and also expressed her profound gratitude to all officials and all participants in the various subcommittees for the dedication they have shown to ensure the success of the bilateral engagements. Furthermore, she stated that the meeting gave an opportunity to review bilateral relations and also exchange views on a range of issues of mutual interest in the respective regions and continents and forged common ground in most areas.

Deputy Minister Mhaule noted that the work of the subcommittees provided a solid basis for further strengthening and prioritise the implementation of decisions taken. She confirmed that both countries need to do more to deepen and strengthen the bilateral relations.


Deputy Minister reaffirmed that South Africa attaches great importance to its relations with Vietnam and that will continue towards strengthening the friendship and cooperation through exchange of high level visits, business to business delegations etc.

In his response, Deputy Foreign Minister Nguyen Quoc Cuong noted with satisfaction the substantive discussions various areas of bilateral cooperation as well as on regional and global issues. He highly valued South Africa's experience sharing on UNSC issues and their willingness to support the establishment of relationship between Viet Nam and the African Union. He called upon the two sides' line Ministries and Agencies' greater efforts to implement the agreements concluded at this 4th Meeting. Deputy Foreign Minister Cuong extended an invitation to South African delegations to visit Viet Nam in 2021 for the 5th Meeting of the Partnership Forum on a date to be mutually decided.

Signed in Pretoria on 15 March 2019.



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