



**JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**

**STATE VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
HIS EXCELLENCY MATAMELA CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

**AND THE**

**6<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE BOTSWANA-SOUTH AFRICA  
BI-NATIONAL COMMISSION (BNC)**

**GABORONE, BOTSWANA**

1. At the invitation of Advocate Duma Gideon Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana, His Excellency Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, undertook a State Visit to the Republic of Botswana from 20 to 21 May 2026.
2. During the State Visit, Advocate Duma Gideon Boko and President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa co-chaired the 6th Session of the Botswana-South Africa Bi-National Commission (BNC). The Session was preceded by a Ministerial meeting held on 20 May 2026, and Senior Officials meeting held from 17 to 19 May 2026.
3. His Excellency President Ramaphosa expressed appreciation to the Government and People of the Republic of Botswana for the warm hospitality and arrangements extended to the Delegation of the Republic of South Africa.
4. The President observed that the Republic of Botswana was in mourning following the passing of the Former President, His Excellency Dr. Festus Gontebanye Mogae, and conveyed his deepest condolences to the Former President's Family and to the Government and people of the Republic of Botswana. He paid tribute to the Former President's distinguished leadership and contribution to Botswana's peace, democracy, and development.
5. The Heads of State reaffirmed the longstanding fraternal relations, historical solidarity, and excellent bonds of friendship between Botswana and South Africa, underpinned by shared cultural and linguistic ties, mutual respect, and common aspirations for regional peace, stability, and prosperity. They further reaffirmed their shared commitment to strengthening political, economic, social, cultural, and security cooperation for the mutual benefit of the two countries and the broader Southern African region.
6. The two Leaders expressed satisfaction with the cordial state of bilateral relations and the continued strengthening and expanding scope of bilateral cooperation across a broad range of sectors under the BNC framework. They agreed that the BNC continues to serve as an effective platform for deepening collaboration and advancing sustainable economic

growth, regional integration, and the mutual prosperity of the peoples of both countries.

7. The two Presidents noted that there are 28 bilateral legal instruments under implementation and welcomed the signing of four (4) additional bilateral instruments during the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the BNC. These include:
  - i. Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on the Joint Management of Water Quality and Aquatic Invasive Species in the Upper Limpopo River Basin;
  - ii. Agreement on the Co-ordination of Aeronautical Search and Rescue Services;
  - iii. Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Energy;
  - iv. Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) on Cooperation in the Field of Correctional and Prison Services.
8. In this regard, the two Heads of State directed the Ministers and officials to establish a Coordination and Implementation Committee to accelerate implementation of agreed programmes and projects and ensure timely execution of agreements under the BNC framework. Furthermore, the two countries agreed that the next Mid-Term Review will be hosted by the Republic of South Africa in May 2027.
9. On social and people-to-people cooperation, His Excellency President Ramaphosa congratulated Botswana on successfully hosting the 2026 World Athletics Relays, marking the first time the event was hosted on the African soil. In addition, the two Heads of State reaffirmed the importance of enhancing cooperation in sports, education, culture, youth development, tourism, and health.
10. The two countries also committed to improving coordination and resolution of consular matters affecting citizens of both countries and enhancing cooperation in migration management, border management, and defence and security.
11. On diplomatic and political cooperation, the two Heads of State acknowledged that they are meeting at a time when the global order is

undergoing profound transformation characterized by geopolitical uncertainty and instability, and reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism, international cooperation, and a rules-based world order.

12. President Advocate Boko congratulated South Africa on the country's election as the current Interim and Incoming Chair of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and as a Member of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU-PSC) for the period 2026-2028.
13. The two Presidents reaffirmed their support for regional integration and sustainable development under the SADC framework. They further reiterated commitment to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as instruments for promoting inclusive growth, industrialisation, and economic transformation in Africa.
14. The two Leaders reiterated the importance of regular high-level political consultations and coordination on regional, continental, and international matters of mutual interest. They further underscored the importance of regular consultations among Ministers and Senior Officials.
15. On economic cooperation, the two Heads of State welcomed the convening of the Botswana-South Africa Business Forum on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026 and directed that the Business Forum be convened on the margins of all future BNC sessions, noting its importance as a platform for advancing strategic public-private sector partnerships and investment cooperation.
16. The two Presidents welcomed progress in cooperation on Special Economic Zones; livestock disease management; critical minerals beneficiation; mineral beneficiation; electricity trading, tourism; environment and wildlife conservation; science, technology, innovation, and digitalisation; space science, health security and resilience; education and skills development; and sports, arts, and culture.
17. Moreover, the two countries resolved to accelerate implementation of projects, programmes, and initiatives classified as High Impact Priority Projects (HIPPs), due to their strategic significance in enhancing economic

partnership, regional integration, trade facilitation, infrastructure connectivity, and sustainable development between the two countries and the broader region. These include:

- i. North-South Corridor Development;
- ii. Mmamabula-Lephalale Railway Line Projects;
- iii. Lesotho-South Africa-Botswana (LESABO) Water Transfer Project under Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM);
- iv. Cooperation on joint fuel storage and petroleum infrastructure development;
- v. Collaboration on prevention and management of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD);
- vi. Establishment of One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs);
- vii. Implementation of 24-hour operations at key commercial border posts;
- viii. Refurbishment and expansion of the Martin's Drift/Groblersbrug Border Post and bridge infrastructure;
- ix. SACU industrialisation and Value Chain Development Initiatives;
- x. Cross-border agricultural value chains, agro-processing and technology transfer Initiatives.

18. During the State Visit, President Ramaphosa undertook a tour of the Botswana Vaccine Institute (BVI) to appreciate the joint efforts underway to combat the Foot and Mouth Disease. Additionally, the two Presidents participated in the Botswana-South Africa Business Forum held on 21 May 2026.
19. The Heads of State expressed concern at the recent outbreak of the Ebola virus in some parts of the continent and recognized it as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) as declared by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC).
20. The bilateral talks during the State Visit were conducted in a frank and cordial manner, which is characteristic of the longstanding warm and friendly relations between the two countries.

21. At the conclusion of the BNC, His Excellency President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa extended an invitation to President Advocate Duma Gideon Boko to visit South Africa for the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the Bi-National Commission (BNC), to be held in South Africa, in 2028, on a date to be mutually agreed through diplomatic channels.

**Issued at Gaborone, Botswana, on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2026**