

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare**

12-September-2014 14:59 IST

**Bilateral Trade Between India and South Africa, Estimated at US \$ 11.15 Billion in Financial Year 2013-14
Both Countries Agreed for Early Finalisation of the India and Southern African Customs Union Preferential Trade Agreement**

Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Union Minister for Agriculture met with Shri Senzeni Zokwana, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Govt. of South Africa here today and informed that bilateral trade between India and South Africa, estimated at US \$ 11.15 billion in financial year 2013-14, was a remarkable development amidst economic turmoil and global recession especially in the European Union and United States.

Both the Ministers express satisfaction on formation of Joint Working Group (JWG) under the aegis of Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and South Africa on 4th June, 2010 and successful organization of the First Meeting of JWG on 24th May, 2013 in New Delhi. Shri Singh focusing on emerging economies said, we together could secure our economic progress against fluctuations in the Western countries by early finalisation of the India and Southern African Customs Union (SACU) Preferential Trade Agreement.

Shri Singh requested his South African counterpart to increase the import of Grapes, Wheat, Sugar and Cotton from India which South Africa imports from the other countries of the world.

Shri Singh felt proud to say that ‘the unique bonds between India and South Africa were civilizational and our friendship was deeply rooted in history. It was inspiring for both our nations to celebrate our common legacy and the struggle for freedom from colonialism and oppression. I would like to reiterate that Government of India is committed to assist South Africa in maintaining Gandhiji related heritage sites in South Africa and also seeks support of South African authorities in this regard’.

Recalling the successful State visit by former President of India Smt. Pratibha Patil in May 2012 at the invitation of President of South Africa Shri Jacob Zuma, Shri Singh said that President Patil had laid foundation stone for the Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Information Technology at Phoenix Settlement in Durban. The ITEC programme was also publicly praised by President Zuma as important contributor to capacity building in South Africa.

Shri Singh expressed hope that South Africa would facilitate successful implementation of the initiatives under India-Africa Forum Summit. India remains committed to working with Africa for achievement of its socio-economic development objectives through a process led by African countries, he said.

GG:SS:CP: bilateral(12-09-2014)