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MEDIA STATEMENT**IMMEDIATE RELEASE****BUSA REPORTS ON A SUCCESSFUL BILATERAL STATE VISIT TO RUSSIA WITH PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA**

JOHANNESBURG – Business Unity South Africa (BUSA) CEO Jerry Vilakazi says, the bilateral state visit to Russia which was a cooperation between BUSA, the Department of Trade and Industry, a high level business delegation, members of the SA-Russia Business Council and President Jacob Zuma, proved successful.

Vilakazi said; “It was a fruitful meeting that will further promote business and strategic relations between Russia and South Africa. What added gravitas and momentum to the meeting is that it was attended by no less than nine ministers from SA along with senior executives and business leaders from both the private and state owned entities.”

The two-day bilateral meeting was attended by over 250 business leaders from South Africa and the Russian Federation.

What came out of the meeting is that both countries have an economically-symbiotic relationship as they are both rich with mineral resources.

South Africa reportedly has over 75% of the world Platinum Group Metal resources, over 80% of chrome, vanadium and related minerals . South Africa also has significant resources of coal, gold, diamonds, alumina silicates, vermiculite, uranium and other minerals of strategic nature. Whilst Russia is rich in minerals such as nickel.



The situ mineral resource endowment of Russia is estimated at 99 years and that of South Africa at 142 years.

The business forum, noted strategic business points that would make for smoother business relation - for an example, South Africa has an advanced financial services and banking sector, which is rated amongst the best in the world, which opens up opportunities for potential expanded investments in Russia.

Similarly, Russia has an advanced technology in minerals processing, metallurgy and mineral beneficiation offering potential for technology sharing and exchange between our two countries. The Forum further noted the steady increase of companies from SA that are already invested in Russia and vice versa since the signing of the Cape Town MOU and the launch of the SA-Russia Business Council in 2006.

However, according to the business forum, there are challenges which could hinder the smooth flow of bilateral trade and investments between our two countries such as:

- Culture and language.
- Inability to share information optimally.
- Perceptions about each other.
- Legal requirements of doing business.
- Red-tape in both countries.
- Recognition of academic qualifications obtained from each of the two countries,

But a solution was given. The forum called upon the co-chairs of the Business Council to lead in a process that will address these issues through the use of the Council as an institution recognised and supported by both governments.

In conclusion, the Business Council has committed to meet more frequently, to encourage bilateral trade missions and exhibitions as well as to identify new joint projects. The Chamber of Commerce for the Russian Federation has offered to develop and maintain an information portal listing available opportunities from both countries. South Africa has agreed to host a Russian exhibition aimed at showcasing Russian products and technologies. The Business Council wishes to thank His Excellency President Zuma for the opportunity to meet during his first official state visit to the Russian Federation.



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