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draft**MEDIA STATEMENT****BUSA ACCOMPANIES PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA ON A STATE VISIT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

JOHANNESBURG – Business Unity South Africa (BUSA) under the leadership of its CEO Jerry Vilakazi, will arrive in China on Monday. The over 350-people business delegation is the largest high level delegation to accompany President Jacob Zuma on a state visit scheduled for the 24 and 25th of August.

China is the last country of BRIC, that BUSA has undertaken to visit with President Zuma, after significant state visits to Brazil, India and Russia in the last few months. Jerry Vilakazi says discussions between the two countries will focus on strengthening strategic partnerships between the two countries, with the signing of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement (CSPA), a first for an African country with China.

Vilakazi: “This visit to China is significant, in that it happens at a time when China has replaced Japan as a major economic player in that region, which means China’s position has been reaffirmed as a major economic powerhouse in that region. Added to this is the position of South Africa which is also a strong economic player in Africa. South Africa acts as a gateway to the rest of the continent.”



According to South African government statistics, Africa's trade with BRIC grew from 4.6% of its total trade in 1993 to just more than 19% last year, which produced a US \$ 20.2 billion (R147 bn) trade surplus for Africa.

Vilakazi: "The extent of bilateral trade has increased in the last few years, but we want to look for more partnerships with China which add value, particularly on the mining sector side with beneficiation, we are looking to form partnerships as the Chinese have the technology and the expertise to beneficiate."

South Africa and China already have working partnerships in place. For an example the Standard Bank and Industrial Commercial Bank of China which is situated in Sandton, recently there was the opening of the first diamond cutting and polishing plant in the Eastern Cape, called Matla Innovations, a joint venture between a Chinese and a South African company.

South Africa multinationals that have made inroads in China are well over 40 and among them Sasol, Discovery and Naspers.

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Jerry Vilakazi says discussions between the two countries will focus on strengthening strategic partnerships between the two countries, with the signing of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement (CSPA), which will be a first for an African country with China. Vilakazi: “ These state visits are very significant in that it is time for developing economies to play a more visible role in global affairs, with the China visit being unique, in that it is a powerhouse in Asia - and South Africa the continent’s biggest economic engine, which is always used a gateway into the rest of the continent.”

Africa’s trade with BRIC grew from 4.6% of its total external trade in 1993

South Africa also shares strategic relations with Russia through the South African Russia Inter government Committee on Trade and Economic Co-operation. Vilakazi reflecting on the Russian state visit in early August 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.”

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