



Venezuela and South Africa strengthen Diplomatic relations and Solidarity

by Kirtan Bhana - TDS



Deputy Ministers Yuri Pimentel and Alvin Botes and Venezuelan Ambassador Carlos Feo Acevedo with Venezuelan and South African Officials (photo: DIRCO)

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On 14 April 2002 the people of Venezuela reinstated the democratically elected Presidency of Hugo Chávez after a failed coup d'état. The coup was widely understood to be tied to control over Venezuela's oil industry, which Chávez had moved to nationalize and use for social development. This most sought after oil resource, of which Venezuela has the highest reserve of any other country in the world, has been both a blessing and the reason for the unintended challenges that this nation of 28 million people face on a daily basis.

In April 2025, Deputy Minister for Africa of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, Yuri Pimentel, visited South Africa to strengthen diplomatic relations and commemorate shared struggles for sovereignty. During his visit, Pimentel met with South Africa's Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes to hold the first meeting of the Political and Consultation Mechanism between the two governments. He also engaged with members of the African National Congress and delivered a speech at Freedom Park in Pretoria during a solidarity event organized by the Venezuelan Embassy and the South African Communist Party (SACP).



Deputy Minister Yuri Pimentel at the Solidarity event at Freedom Park (photo: TDS)

Addressing an audience of diplomats, political figures and activists, Pimentel said, "Venezuela, through its own efforts and the support of allies like China and Russia, has begun a steady process of growth and economic diversification since 2022. That year, GDP grew by 15%, 5.5% in 2023, and nearly 9% in 2024, proving that neither sanctions nor threats will break our will."

Pointing out the accelerating decline of the US hegemonic influence, Minister Pimentel highlighted the following:

- In 1960, the U.S. accounted for about 40% of global GDP (in nominal terms), but by 2023, its share had fallen to around 24% (IMF data).
- China surpassed the U.S. in GDP (PPP) in 2014 and will soon do so in nominal terms.- U.S. federal debt exceeds \$34 trillion (over 120% of GDP),
- The dollar's share of global reserves has fallen from 70% in 2000 to 58% in 2023, as more countries seek alternatives.
- China leads in 5G patents, AI, and renewable energy
- Failed wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and now Ukraine,
- Domestically, inequality, poverty (nearly 40 million), healthcare costs, and gun violence (over 40,000 deaths/year)

The U.S. remains a dominant power, but its hegemony is no longer unchallenged - a multipolar world is emerging, said Pimentel as he envisaged a new world order led by the BRICS Plus countries advancing a consensus based system.

The Minister also pointed out that the USA blockade of his country is creating economic hardships for Venezuelans who leave the country as economic refugees to the USA but are refused entry, exposing the brutality of the double standards and punitive action of the US administration. He also called for an end to provoking tension in the region with Guyana. Pledging solidarity with South Africa, Pimentel noted the recent backlash by the Trump administration, denouncing the uncalled for attacks against the country.

"Today, that road calls us to strengthen the alliance between our people, our parties, and social movements, to denounce imperialism together and build a world of justice where the people decide their own destiny," Pimentel concluded.

Solly Mapaila, General Secretary of the South African Communist Party, in his welcome remarks, assured Minister Pimentel of South Africa's solidarity and support for the people of Venezuela to achieve growth and progress in spite of the oppressive challenges imposed by the western hegemonic powers. He recalled with praise Former President Hugo Chávez and the Chavistas and acknowledged current president Nicolas Maduro's courageous leadership.

The meeting between Pimentel and Deputy Minister Botes focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in areas such as energy, mining, agriculture, and cultural exchange. The two nations reaffirmed their commitment to mutual development and solidarity, building upon agreements established in previous years.

Pimentel's visit highlighted the enduring relationship between Venezuela and South Africa, rooted in shared experiences of overcoming challenges to sovereignty and democratic governance.



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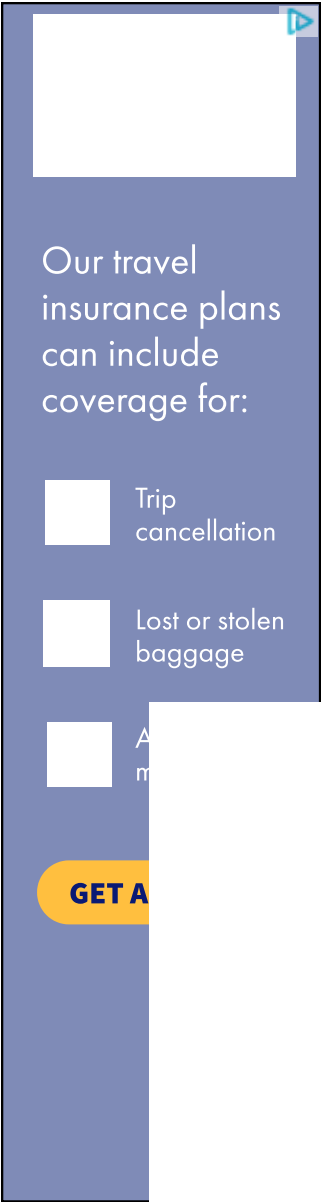


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