

South Africa 

SA hails 'constructive' US trade negotiations

The meeting follows months of frosty relations between Pretoria and Washington.

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President Cyril Ramaphosa dispatched a negotiating team to Washington to try and get the levies lowered on the country's exports to the US. Image: Dwayne Senior/Bloomberg

South Africa expressed cautious optimism over progress in trade talks with the US, a month after President Donald Trump slapped the nation with 30% tariffs on its exports.

South African Trade Minister Parks Tau held a "cordial and constructive" meeting with US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer, following three days of talks by their teams, Tau's ministry said in a statement on Friday

"The two sides agreed that the matters discussed need to be prioritised," said ministerial spokesman Kaamil Alli. "Both parties agreed to a roadmap that will inform future engagements towards the conclusion of the process."

Read: [Trump's trade envoy to meet with Trade Minister Parks Tau](#)

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa dispatched a negotiating team to Washington to try and get the levies lowered on the country's exports to the US — its second-largest trading partner after China. The tariffs, the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, threaten to hammer South African sales of vehicles and agricultural products including citrus and wine to the world's largest market.

The meeting follows months of frosty relations between Pretoria and Washington. Trump has falsely claimed that South Africa's government is presiding over a genocide of White Afrikaans farmers and has offered members of that community refugee status.

Trump has also criticised South Africa's Black economic empowerment laws meant to undo Apartheid-era discrimination. In May, he berated Ramaphosa in an Oval Office meeting.

The South African leader said the fact that the countries were now engaged in formal trade talks — not "tweets and social media messages" — was progress.

"That for us is a great advance, is a great progress forward, and we're hoping that those discussions will be well concluded," he told the South African Broadcasting Corp. in an interview on Thursday evening.

Read: [SA to boost continental trade ties as US tariffs bite](#)

South Africa's trade team has submitted a revised proposal to the Trump administration, which included making it easier for US companies to sell chicken meat and pork in South Africa as well as a pledge to buy liquefied natural gas from America, the government has said.

Two-way trade between the nations totalled \$21.6 billion in 2024, with South Africa enjoying a \$7.7 billion surplus, International Monetary Fund data shows.

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