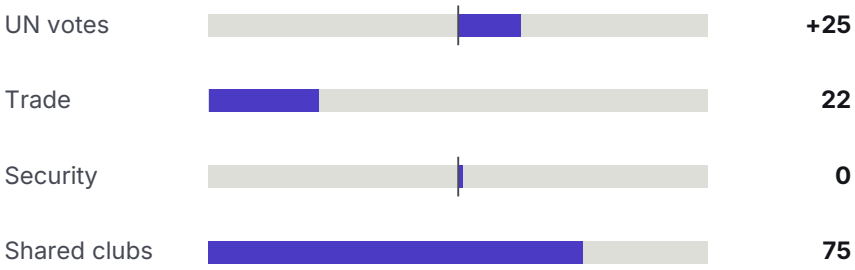
Ethiopia & South Africa

+24

Neutral

Relationship index, −100 to +100. Votes and security run from −100 to +100; trade and shared clubs from 0 to 100.

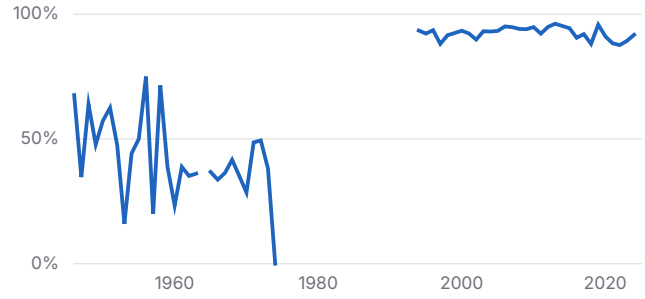


IN SHORT

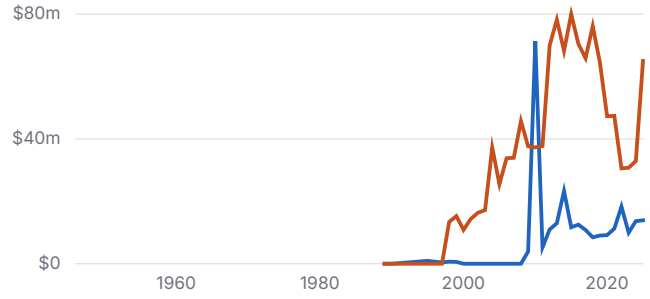
- At the UN their vote agreement is 90% (2022–2024), higher than either of them has with most countries.
- Trade in goods ($56 million a year) is a very small part of either country's trade, under 0.5%.
- In its UN General Debate speeches, Ethiopia names South Africa far more often than the reverse (222 sentences against 7).
- 104,000 people born in Ethiopia live in South Africa (UN DESA counts place of birth, however long ago they moved). A separate count, by UNHCR: 39,000 refugees and asylum seekers from Ethiopia in South Africa; the two counts measure different things and are not added up.

OVER TIME

Share of recorded UN votes cast the same way

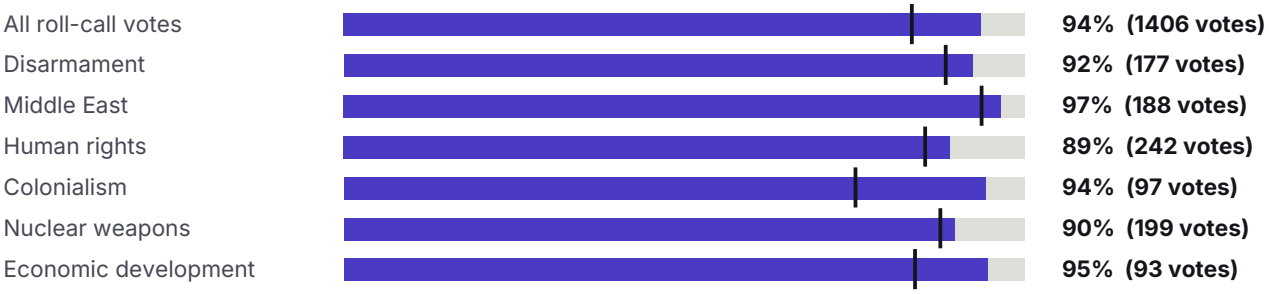


Goods exports each way (US dollars)



Ethiopia sells to South Africa South Africa sells to Ethiopia

VOTES TOPIC BY TOPIC (SINCE 2010)



Bar: since 2010. Mark: all years. Share of roll-call votes on whole texts cast the same way, counted vote by vote; an abstention against a yes counts as a difference. Disarmament, colonialism and economic development count votes up to 2018.

THE FACTS

UN votes	At the UN, the vote agreement of Ethiopia and South Africa was 90% in 2022–2024. For Ethiopia, South Africa is the 78th closest voting partner out of 191; for South Africa, Ethiopia is the 66th closest partner.
Trade	Trade in goods between them averaged $56 million a year in 2023–2025: 0.3% of all Ethiopia's trade and less than 0.1% of South Africa's.
Words	Since 1946, Ethiopia has named South Africa in 222 sentences of its General Debate speeches; South Africa has named Ethiopia in 7.
Security	No armed conflict between the two governments is recorded since 1946 (UCDP, data to 2025).
People	104,000 people born in Ethiopia live in South Africa (2024, UN DESA).
People	Their national football teams have met 4 times.

HOW SURE WE ARE

UN votes	**High**	260 shared votes on whole texts in 2022–2024, the years the headline share covers. With that many, a share is good to about ±6 points.
Trade	**High**	Goods trade is reported in 3 of the 3 years 2023–2025. Goods only, from customs data (IMF); services and energy pipelines are not in it.
Security	**High**	The Uppsala Conflict Data Program covers every state up to 2025. It counts only conflicts with at least 25 battle deaths a year.
Shared clubs	**High**	The list of tracked groups is fixed; membership is checked by hand.
Index	**High**	As sure as the weaker of its two required parts, votes and trade. Security and shared clubs add to it but never make it surer.

SOURCES AND HOW TO CITE

UN votes, speeches, mentions and trade: Nations on Record (UN General Assembly voting data, UN General Debate Corpus, IMF International Trade in Goods). Armed conflict: Uppsala Conflict Data Program, version 26.1. Migration: UN DESA International Migrant Stock 2024. Refugees: UNHCR. Football: international results archive (CC0). Every score follows fixed rules written out on /method; AI never sets a score. Independent and non-commercial; not affiliated with the United Nations.

Cite as

NationsRelations. (2026). Ethiopia & South Africa [scoring rules 0.4 (14 Nov 2026), scores built 2026-11-14]. https://nationsrelations.org/p/eth-zaf

Scan to open the live page