Iceland & South Africa

−19

Distant

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

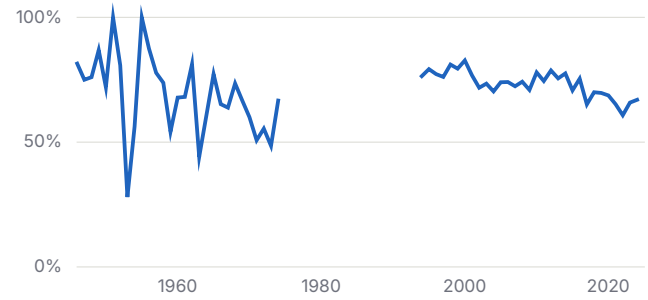
UN votes	−53
Trade	0
Security	0
Shared clubs	0

IN SHORT

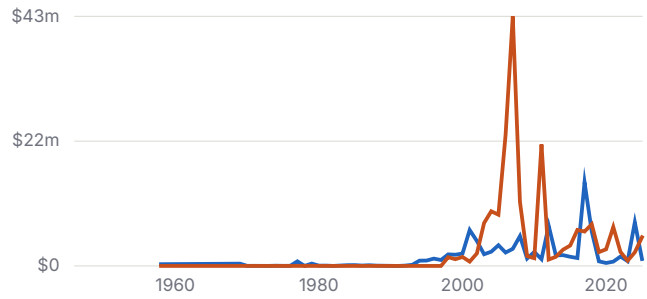
- At the UN their vote agreement is 65% (2022–2024), lower than either of them has with most countries.
- Trade in goods ($5.9 million a year) is a very small part of either country's trade, under 0.5%.
- In its UN General Debate speeches, Iceland names South Africa far more often than the reverse (45 sentences against 0).
- 189 people born in Iceland live in South Africa (UN DESA counts place of birth, however long ago they moved).

OVER TIME

Share of recorded UN votes cast the same way



Goods exports each way (US dollars)



Iceland sells to South Africa South Africa sells to Iceland

VOTES TOPIC BY TOPIC (SINCE 2010)

Most alike on Middle East (91% of votes the same), furthest apart on human rights (51%), against 72% on all votes since 2010.

All roll-call votes	72% (1445 votes)
Disarmament	70% (177 votes)
Middle East	91% (191 votes)
Human rights	51% (247 votes)
Colonialism	80% (98 votes)
Nuclear weapons	56% (199 votes)
Economic development	73% (92 votes)

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 Iceland and South Africa was 65% in 2022–2024. For Iceland, South Africa is the 54th most distant voting partner out of 191; for South Africa, Iceland is the 38th most distant partner.
Trade	Trade in goods between them averaged $5.9 million a year in 2023–2025: less than 0.1% of all Iceland's trade and less than 0.1% of South Africa's.
Words	Since 1946, Iceland has named South Africa in 45 sentences of its General Debate speeches; South Africa has named Iceland in 0.
Security	No armed conflict between the two governments is recorded since 1946 (UCDP, data to 2025).
People	189 people born in Iceland live in South Africa and 157 born in South Africa live in Iceland (2024, UN DESA).
People	Their national football teams have met 3 times.

HOW SURE WE ARE

UN votes	**High**	266 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). Iceland & South Africa [scoring rules 0.4 (14 Nov 2026), scores built 2026-11-14]. https://nationsrelations.org/p/isl-zaf

Scan to open the live page