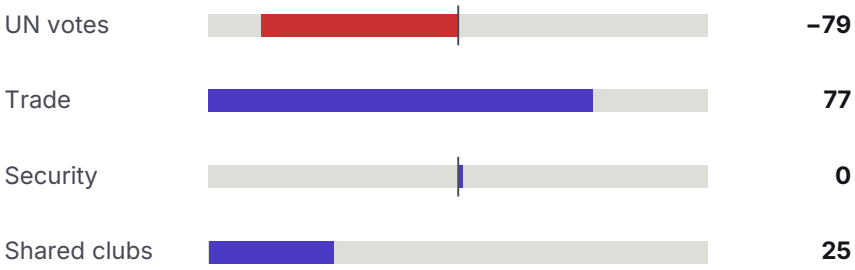
# United States & South Africa

**−8**

**Distant**

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

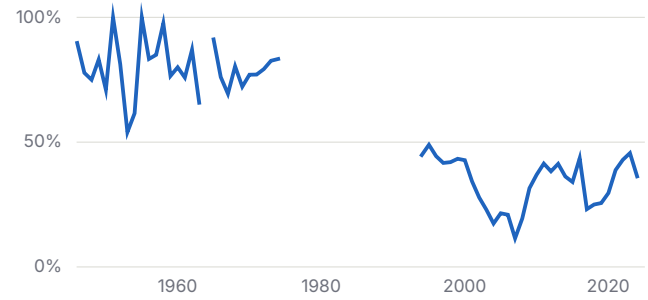



## IN SHORT

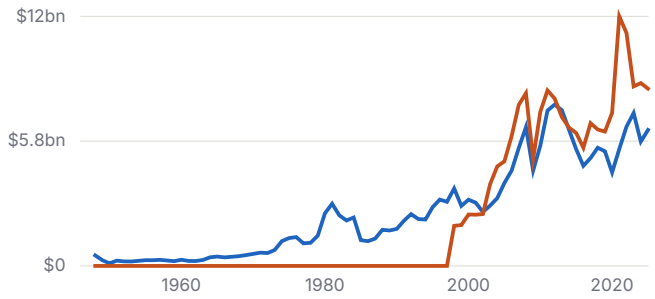
- At the UN their vote agreement is 42% (2022–2024), among the lowest either of them has with any country.
- Trade in goods ($15 billion a year) is important for South Africa, much less so for the United States.
- In its UN General Debate speeches, South Africa names the United States more often than the reverse (72 sentences against 37).
- 162,000 people born in South Africa live in the United States (UN DESA counts place of birth, however long ago they moved).

## OVER TIME

**Share of recorded UN votes cast the same way**



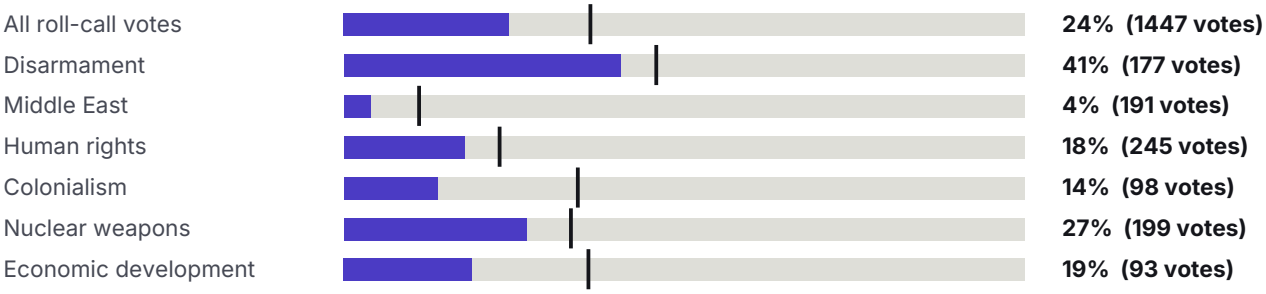

**Goods exports each way (US dollars)**




United States sells to South Africa · South Africa sells to United States

## VOTES TOPIC BY TOPIC (SINCE 2010)

Most alike on disarmament (41% of votes the same), furthest apart on Middle East (4%), against 24% on all votes 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 the United States and South Africa was 42% in 2022–2024. For the United States, South Africa is the 40th most distant voting partner out of 191; for South Africa, the United States is the 2nd most distant partner. |
| **Trade** | Trade in goods between them averaged $15 billion a year in 2023–2025: 0.3% of all the United States' trade and 7.2% of South Africa's. |
| **Words** | Since 1946, the United States has named South Africa in 37 sentences of its General Debate speeches; South Africa has named the United States in 72. |
| **Security** | No armed conflict between the two governments is recorded since 1946 (UCDP, data to 2025). |
| **People** | 6,700 people born in the United States live in South Africa and 162,000 born in South Africa live in the United States (2024, UN DESA). |
| **People** | Their national football teams have met 3 times. |

## HOW SURE WE ARE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **UN votes** | **High** | 267 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). United States & South Africa [scoring rules 0.4 (14 Nov 2026), scores built 2026-11-14]. https://nationsrelations.org/p/usa-zaf

Scan to open the live page