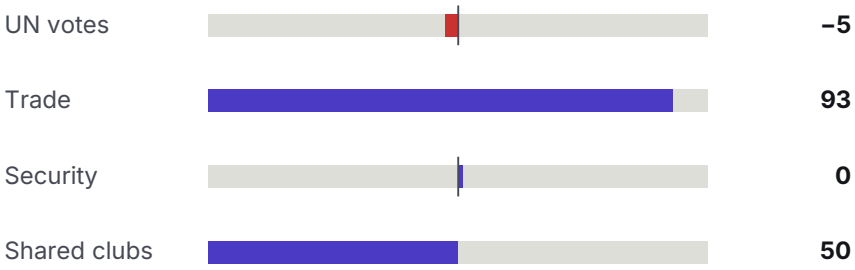
South Africa & China

+24

Neutral

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

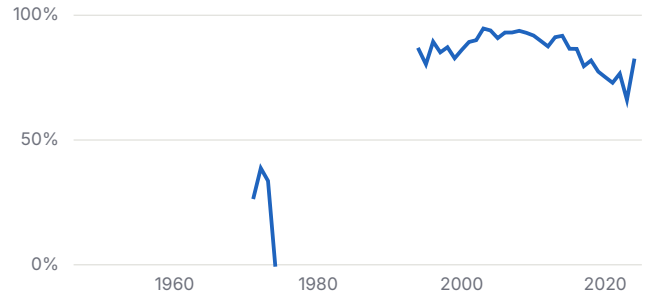


IN SHORT

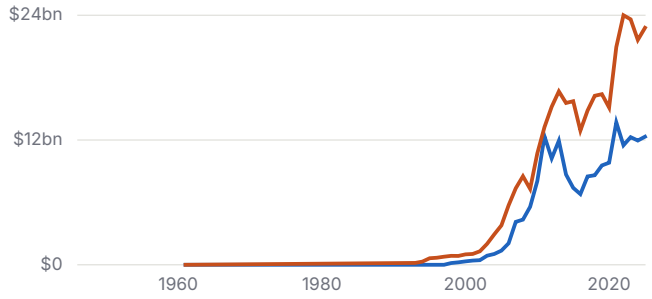
- Armed conflict: UCDP records them on opposite sides of the war in North Korea, South Korea, each supporting a side, most recently in 1953.
- At the UN their vote agreement is 75% (2022–2024), about average for both of them.
- Trade in goods ($35 billion a year) is very important for South Africa, much less so for China.
- In its UN General Debate speeches, China names South Africa far more often than the reverse (46 sentences against 11).
- 6,200 people born in China 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



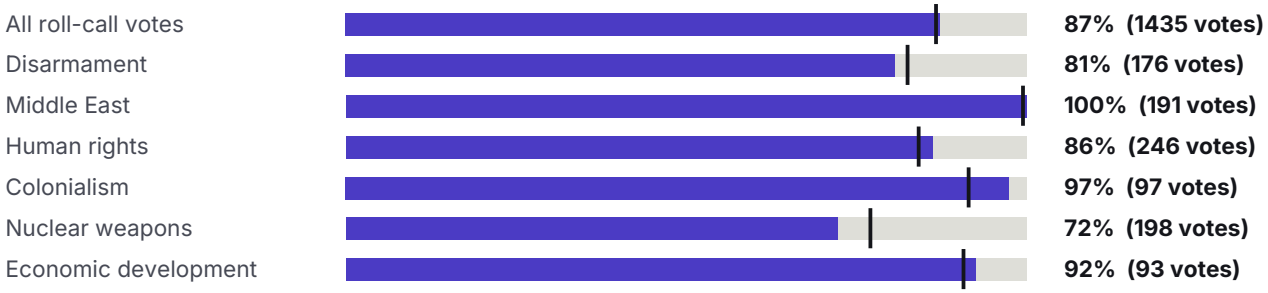
Goods exports each way (US dollars)



South Africa sells to China China sells to South Africa

VOTES TOPIC BY TOPIC (SINCE 2010)

Most alike on Middle East (100% of votes the same), furthest apart on nuclear weapons (72%), against 87% 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 South Africa and China was 75% in 2022–2024. For South Africa, China is the 65th most distant voting partner out of 191; for China, South Africa is the 75th closest partner.
Trade	Trade in goods between them averaged $35 billion a year in 2023–2025: 16.9% of all South Africa's trade and 0.7% of China's. China is South Africa's largest trading partner.
Words	Since 1946, South Africa has named China in 11 sentences of its General Debate speeches; China has named South Africa in 46.
Security	The Uppsala Conflict Data Program records them supporting opposite sides of a third party's armed conflict (North Korea, South Korea, 1950–1953).
People	5,100 people born in South Africa live in China and 6,200 born in China live in South Africa (2024, UN DESA).

HOW SURE WE ARE

UN votes	**High**	265 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

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