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SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKIYE AND SOUTH AFRICA

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Mercantile relations between nations are a driving force behind globalization, facilitating trade, investment, and collaboration. A compelling example of such economic partnership can be found in the growing relationship between Turkey and South Africa. These two nations, located in different corners of the world, have managed to forge robust economic ties that contribute to their mutual growth and prosperity. At the heart of the Turkish-South African economic relationship is trade and tourism. Both countries have recognized the potential for increased bilateral trade and have taken steps to foster this exchange. Over the years, trade agreements and initiatives have been established to create an enabling environment for economic cooperation. These agreements aim to reduce tariffs, simplify customs procedures, and provide preferential treatment for certain goods, promoting a conducive framework for cross-border commerce.¹

The economic ties between Turkey and South Africa span a wide range of sectors. Machinery, textiles, chemicals, and agricultural products are among the goods that form the backbone of their trade relations. This diversified trade portfolio reflects the complementary nature of their economies and the ability to meet each other's demands and preferences. Beyond trade, investment opportunities have also been a driving force behind Turkish-South African economic ties. Both countries have recognized the potential for collaborative ventures that can contribute to economic growth and job creation. South Africa's rich mineral resources, well-developed infrastructure, and strategic location have attracted Turkish investors interested in sectors such as mining, energy, and construction.² Turkey and South Africa have engaged in joint economic initiatives aimed at deepening their economic bonds. Business delegations, trade missions, and investment forums have facilitated direct interactions between companies from both countries. These initiatives provide a platform for business leaders to explore opportunities, establish partnerships, and forge lasting economic relationships.³ While the Turkish-South African economic ties have shown positive trends, challenges such as trade imbalances and regulatory issues have also emerged. Addressing these challenges requires ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and the willingness to find mutually beneficial solutions. Such challenges, however, also present opportunities for both nations to work together and enhance their economic cooperation.

Economic ties are often strengthened by cultural, and people-to-people exchanges.

1 Kahf M. & Sinno N. (2021). *Constructions of masculinity in the middle east and north Africa: literature film and national discourse*. p.98, American University in Cairo Press.

2 Kahf M. & Sinno N. (2021). *Constructions of masculinity in the middle east and north Africa: literature film and national discourse*. p.98, American University in Cairo Press.

3 Bloom J. & Warner N. (2020). *Architecture of the Islamic west: north Africa and the Iberian Peninsula*

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influence extended beyond North Africa. Ottoman traders and explorers ventured further into sub-Saharan Africa, establishing commercial ties and diplomatic relations with various African kingdoms and empires. These interactions led to cultural exchanges, the introduction of new goods and technologies, and the spread of Islam in some regions.

The Ottoman legacy in Africa is not without its complexities and challenges. The empire's rule was not always welcomed by local populations, and resistance movements against Ottoman control emerged in some areas. Additionally, the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th century and the subsequent colonization of Africa by European powers marked the end of Ottoman influence in the continent. However, the Ottoman legacy in Africa remains an important part of the continent's history and cultural heritage. It serves as a reminder of the interconnectedness of different regions and civilizations throughout history. The architectural marvels, cultural practices, and historical narratives left behind by the Ottomans continue to be cherished and preserved, contributing to the diverse tapestry of African identity. In conclusion, the Ottoman Empire's legacy in Africa is a testament to its historical significance and influence. The empire's architectural contributions, political systems, trade networks, and cultural exchanges have left an indelible mark on the continent. Recognizing and appreciating this legacy helps us understand the complex history of Africa and its connections to the wider world.

Turkish relations with South Africa

The history of Turkish migration to South Africa can be traced back to the late 19th century. Many Turkish immigrants arrived in South Africa during the Ottoman Empire era, seeking better economic opportunities, and escaping political unrest. These early settlers primarily engaged in trade, establishing businesses, and contributing to the growth of the local economy. One notable figure in Turkish-South African history is Haim Galanti, who arrived in South Africa in the late 1800s. Galanti, originally from the Ottoman Empire, established himself as a successful businessman. He played a crucial role in the development of the textile and mine industry in South Africa and contributed significantly to the community in the country.⁷

The Ottoman Islamic impact in South Africa is a testament to the far-reaching influence of the Ottoman Empire and its cultural, religious, and economic ties with regions across the world. While geographically distant, the connection between the Ottoman Empire and South Africa left a lasting mark on the social, religious, and cultural fabric of the country. The Ottoman Empire's legacy is deeply rooted in Is-

⁷ Sadouni S. (2019). Muslims in southern Africa: Johannesburg's Somali diaspora. P. 43, Palgrave Macmillan.

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⁸ Kallander A. A. (2019). The Ottoman Empire and the World. University of Texas Press. For
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⁹ Gençoğlu Halim.
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The Story of Angora Goats in South Africa

Angora goats have a significant presence in South Africa, where they are primarily raised for their luxurious mohair fiber. Mohair, known for its softness, sheen, and durability, is highly valued in the textile industry for producing a range of products, including clothing, accessories, and upholstery. The history and impact of Angora goats in South Africa are noteworthy. The Angora goat breed originated in ancient Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) and was initially brought to South Africa in the early 1800s. They were later imported in larger numbers, with breeding programs established to improve the quality of mohair produced by the goats. South Africa's semi-arid and arid regions provide a suitable environment for raising Angora goats. The climate supports the goats' adaptability to thrive in areas with limited grazing and water resources. The primary economic value of Angora goats in South Africa lies in their mohair production. Mohair is sheared from the goats' fleece and is known for its lustier, strength, and dye-absorption properties. The fiber is used in high-end fashion, textiles, and crafts. Angora goat farming contributes to rural employment and livelihoods, especially in regions where other agricultural activities may be limited. The industry provides jobs in shearing, sorting, processing, and trading of mohair. South Africa has invested in research and breeding programs to improve the quality of Angora goats and their mohair. Selective breeding aims to enhance desirable traits, such as fiber quality, growth rates, and reproductive performance. The Angora goat breed has faced challenges, including disease outbreaks and genetic issues. Conservation initiatives in South Africa work to preserve the genetic diversity of the breed and address health concerns. South Africa is a major global producer of mohair, with a significant portion of the country's production exported to international markets. The country's mohair is known for its high quality and is sought after by textile manufacturers worldwide.

The sustainable nature of Angora goat farming aligns with South Africa's focus on environmentally friendly and ethical practices. The goats' ability to graze on marginal lands and their low water requirements contribute to their sustainable farming. Angora goat farming has played a role in community development and empowerment, particularly in rural areas. It provides an avenue for income generation and skills development for local communities. Angora goat farming is intertwined with the cultural fabric of some South African communities. Traditional practices, knowledge, and skills associated with goat farming contribute to cultural preservation.

Indeed, Angora goats have become an integral part of South Africa's agricultural and textile industries. The country's expertise in breeding, producing, and trading mohair has positioned it as a global leader in the Angora goat industry, making a significant economic and cultural contribution to the nation.

Turkish Tobacco

Turkish tobacco is a significant part of the country's agricultural and economic landscape. It is known for its unique flavour, aroma, and quality, which are highly valued in various parts of the world. Turkey is one of the leading producers of tobacco in the world, and its tobacco is used in a variety of products, including cigarettes, cigars, and pipe tobacco. The history of tobacco in Turkey is long, with the plant being introduced to the country in the 16th century. Since then, it has become a major crop, particularly in the eastern and southern regions. The Turkish tobacco industry has played a significant role in the country's economy, providing employment for millions of people. However, the industry has also faced challenges, including declining demand in some markets and health concerns. Despite these challenges, the Turkish tobacco industry remains a vital part of the country's agricultural sector.

In some African countries, tobacco is a major cash crop, and its production and trade are significant sources of income. However, the tobacco industry has also been associated with health concerns and environmental issues. In some cases, tobacco production has led to deforestation and soil degradation. Additionally, the health risks associated with tobacco use have led to increased government intervention and regulation. Despite these challenges, tobacco remains a popular crop in many African countries, and its production and trade continue to be an important part of the local economy.

Political relations between countries play a crucial role in shaping their interactions on the global stage. One such dynamic and evolving relationship is that between Turkey and South Africa. These two nations, geographically distant but connected by shared interests and values, have cultivated a strategic partnership characterized by diplomatic engagement, economic cooperation, and collaboration on international issues. Diplomatic relations between Turkey and South Africa were established on May 10, 1994, a pivotal time for South Africa as it transitioned to democracy. This marked the beginning of a new era of engagement between the two countries. Since then, both nations have sought to build and strengthen their political ties through high-level visits, diplomatic consultations, and joint initiatives. High-level visits have played a significant role in solidifying the political relationship between Turkey and South Africa. These visits provide opportunities for leaders to engage in discussions on a wide range of issues, from bilateral cooperation to regional and global challenges. Such interactions contribute to a deeper understanding of each other's perspectives and priorities.

Political relations often intersect with economic interests, and Turkey and South Africa are no exception. Both countries have recognized the potential for increased trade and economic collaboration. Bilateral trade agreements and joint economic initiatives have paved the way for enhanced economic relations, with sectors such as machinery, textiles, agriculture, and technology offering opportunities for growth. Collaboration on international and regional issues forms an integral part of the political relationship between Turkey and South Africa. Both nations are active participants in multilateral forums, including the United Nations, where they work together on matters such as climate change, peacekeeping, and human rights. Their alignment on various global challenges reflects a shared commitment to addressing pressing issues of our time. Political relations are often strengthened by cultural, and people-to-people exchanges. Cultural diplomacy initiatives, educational programs, and tourism exchanges contribute to fostering mutual understanding and friendship between Turkish and South African citizens. These interactions create a foundation of goodwill that supports broader political cooperation. The political relations between Turkey and South Africa have evolved into a strategic partnership that encompasses multiple dimensions. Both nations recognize the strategic importance of collaborating in areas such as energy, defence, technology, and infrastructure development. These partnerships are aimed at achieving mutual benefits and advancing the economic growth and development agendas of both countries. Like any politi-

cal relationship challenges. Diplomatic negotiations for both countries. The political relationship and collaboration are not perfect, but share common interests, and joint foundation for cooperation. As they navigate the relationship remains a complex relations between the two countries, including political, economic, and cultural, engaged in diplomatic relations in various regions. South Africa continues to address global issues. Africa's efforts contribute to achieving the goals on the international

Economic and rapidly growing over the last few years, beneficial cooperation between the two countries, economic relations have been expanding in the last two decades. Between 1990 and 2000, there was an increase in trade between Turkey and Africa and Turkey's trade with Africa in the previous years. Turkey's trade with Africa, including machinery and equipment, has increased in both countries. Turkey has made significant investments in infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and in various industries. These investments have contributed to the economic growth of the countries. In addition to the economic cooperation, political relations between the two countries have also improved.

in 1994, following the end of apartheid in South Africa. Since then, both nations have engaged in regular high-level visits, exchanging delegations and strengthening diplomatic ties. These visits have served as a platform for discussing various political and economic issues of mutual interest. Furthermore, South Africa and Turkey have collaborated on various international platforms, such as the United Nations and the G20. Both countries have shared interests in promoting peace, stability, and development in their respective regions and globally. They have often aligned their positions on key international issues, including human rights, climate change, and global security. Moreover, cultural, and educational exchanges have played a significant role in strengthening the ties between South Africa and Turkey. The two countries have encouraged people-to-people interactions, fostering cultural understanding and promoting tourism. Educational scholarships and exchange programs have been established to facilitate academic cooperation and knowledge sharing. Despite the positive trajectory of economic and political relations, challenges remain. Both countries face domestic economic and political issues that can impact their bilateral cooperation. South Africa's economic inequality and high unemployment rates, as well as Turkey's political tensions and regional conflicts, can pose challenges to the growth of their relations. However, the commitment of both countries to overcome these challenges and build a stronger partnership remains evident. Indeed, the economic and political relations between South Africa and Turkey have witnessed significant growth in recent years. Both countries have recognized the potential for cooperation and have taken steps to enhance trade, investment, and diplomatic ties. While challenges persist, the commitment to strengthening the relationship remains strong. As both nations continue to explore new avenues for collaboration, the future looks promising for the economic and political partnership between South Africa and Turkey.

The Turkish community in South Africa has also made significant contributions to education. Turkish schools, known as "Maarif schools," have been established in various cities across the country. These schools provide quality education to both Turkish and South African students, promoting cultural exchange and fostering understanding between the two communities. The schools have gained recognition for their academic excellence and have become an integral part of the South African education system. Culturally, Turkish heritage is celebrated and cherished in South Africa. Turkish festivals, such as the Turkish Food Festival and Turkish Film Festival, are organized to showcase Turkish cuisine, art, music, and cinema. These events provide an opportunity for South Africans to experience Turkish culture firsthand and foster cultural exchange between the two communities. The Turkish community in South Africa has also played a vital role in promoting interfaith dialogue

and understanding. The Masjid al-Aziz, an iconic landmark, serves as a place of worship and a center for community programs that bring people from different groups. Furthermore, over the years, Turkey has included construction projects that contributed to job creation and strengthened the bilateral ties.

Despite the positive trajectory, Like any immigrant community, their cultural heritage and language barriers can pose challenges. However, the fascinating aspects of Turkish immigrants have had a lasting impact on the Turkish community. Integrating into the South African society after 1994, both countries have collaborated. Turkey, South Africa, including Turkey, on the other hand, South Africa in sectors like tourism to attract foreign investment and growth. Diplomacy between Turkey and South Africa discusses economic

These discussions focus on investment. Further, financial matters and organizational relations. South African Turkish tourists, particularly, Turkish citizens among South African

In conclusion, the economic relations between Turkey and South Africa have evolved significantly since 1994. Both countries have recognized the importance of collaboration and have taken steps to strengthen their economic ties in various sectors. Continued diplomatic efforts, trade promotion, and investment encouragement can further deepen and diversify these economic relations in the years to come.

Conclusion

Mercantile relations between Turkey and South Africa have evolved over the years, encompassing trade, investment, and economic cooperation. Both countries have recognized the potential for collaboration and have taken steps to strengthen their economic ties. Trade between Turkey and South Africa has grown steadily, with both countries seeking to diversify their trade portfolios. They have engaged in bilateral trade agreements and initiatives to promote economic cooperation. The trade relationship includes various sectors, such as machinery, automotive, textiles, chemicals, and agriculture. Turkey and South Africa have signed bilateral agreements to enhance their economic relations. These agreements aim to create a favourable environment for trade and investment by addressing issues such as customs procedures, tariffs, and market access. The Turkey-South Africa Joint Economic Commission (JEC) serves as a platform for discussions and cooperation on economic matters. It facilitates dialogue between the two countries to explore opportunities for collaboration, address challenges, and promote trade and investment.

Both Turkey and South Africa have organized business delegations and trade missions to explore potential opportunities, forge partnerships, and expand their economic networks. These delegations often include representatives from various sectors looking to establish business ties. Turkey and South Africa have taken steps to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) from each other. They provide information and support to businesses interested in investing in sectors with growth potential. Agricultural products have been a significant component of the trade relationship between Turkey and South Africa. Both countries export and import various agricultural goods, contributing to food security and supply. Tourism exchanges between Turkey and South Africa have increased, with citizens of both countries showing interest in exploring each other's culture, history, and natural beauty. Tourism contributes to people-to-people ties and economic growth. While mercantile relations between Turkey and South Africa have shown positive trends, there are challenges to address, including trade imbalances and regulatory issues. Both countries continue to work on creating an enabling environment for trade and investment. Turkey and South Africa often cooperate in multilateral forums and organizations, such as the G20, where they collaborate on global economic issues and advocate for their mutual interests.



i.The first Ottoman



ii. Donations collected by Hilal-i Ahmer for the supply of aircraft to the Ottoman Army in South Africa were sent to Istanbul by the Ottoman consul Ohannes Majakyan in Johannesburg. In the same year, Goolam Mahomed Isaac, one of the prominent Muslims of Mauritius, in the letter he sent to consul general Ohannes Majakyan Effendi, regarding the donations collected for the children of the Turkish soldiers who became martyred in the Tripoli War, 1912.

iii. Summary of Main Trade Agreements between South Africa and Türkiye, See more, Southern African Development Community (SADC): Protocol on Trade in Services, <http://www.thedtic.gov.za/sectors-and-services-2/1-4-2-trade-and-export/market-access/trade-agreements/>, accessed 20.09.2023.

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