

Africa must look for partnerships

By [Chris Bathembu](#)

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Africa needs to form partnerships with the developed nations in order to realise the continent's goal to industrialise, International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said .



Maite Nkoana-Mashabane says that the focus on infrastructure development and economic integration is fundamental for Africa's economy. Image: GOS

She was speaking in Washington ahead of the US-Africa Leaders' Summit called by US President Barack Obama.

Nkoana-Mashabane said while South Africa would listen to what President Obama had to say it was important that an Africa's voice be heard during deliberations this coming on Wednesday (6 August).

"Wherever we go, we, together with other African governments, will always champion the African agenda, particularly regarding peace, security and development, including industrialisation and beneficiation of our extensive mineral resources," she said.

The conference takes place after President Obama announced the Washington Nelson Mandela Leadership Initiative to develop and train political and economic leaders in Africa.

The programme will be rolled out in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and Senegal and its beneficiaries will be Africans aged between 25 and 35, who will be given an opportunity to study at some of the USA's top universities.

"We welcome this initiative. It's one of many programmes that we as the South African government support and hope other African nations will support these and other initiatives to industrialise and grow Africa's individual economies," Nkoana-Mashabane said.

Business Forum

"Africa is serious about integrating our own economies and trade among ourselves but that does not exclude working with other major economies in the world, including the US," she said.

Nkoana-Mashabane pointed out that more than 600 American companies were operating in South Africa, saying that this was good for both the USA's economy and South Africa's.

President Obama and other African leaders, including President Jacob Zuma, will take part in Business Forum discussion and Obama will host a White House dinner in honour of the almost 50 African Heads of State and Government visiting Washington.

"South Africa sees immense value in the Power Africa initiative of President Obama and an opportunity in it to promote Africa's energy projects as part of the continent's important infrastructure development programme," said a statement from the Presidency.



President Barack Obama has announced the establishment of the Washington Nelson Mandela Leadership Initiative which will allow young African leaders to study at some of the USA's top universities. Image: Wikipedia

Meanwhile, the summit agenda will be reworked to include the outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in three of Africa's countries. Already, the Presidents of Liberia and Sierra Leone - two of the countries most seriously affected by the virus - had to turn down the invitation to Washington choosing instead to stay home and deal with the outbreak that has reportedly claimed more than 700 lives in the three countries.

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