

Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA)

28 October 2022

South Africa Spain Business Forum

On 28th of October, the Citrus Growers Association of Southern Africa (CGA) attended a South Africa-Spain Business Forum held in Pretoria. This conference followed bilateral talks between South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and President Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón at the Union Buildings that took place the day before.

In preparation of the Business Forum, InvestSA, the Spanish Embassy and the Spanish Chamber of Commerce hosted a business discussion at the Spanish Ambassador's residence in Waterkloof attended by business and industry representatives from both countries to discuss areas of mutual interest. Industries represented at the meeting included Pharmaceuticals, Manufacturing, Green Energy and Transport as well as Agriculture. CGA Chairperson Hannes De Waal attended the meeting and was requested to address delegates on behalf of these industries.

He used the opportunity to highlight that there were numerous opportunities for Spain and South Africa to integrate their citrus industries further in light of these being opposite hemisphere suppliers of fruit. However, to achieve this there needed to be greater cooperation between the two sectors. Hannes also further highlighted the many opportunities in the manufacturing, tourism, finance and energy space. He is humbled and privileged to have shared the same podium with both President Ramaphosa and Pérez-Castejón and Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition Ebrahim Patel to promote the citrus industry.

His full speech follows below.

Your excellencies the Presidents, Ambassadors Ministers and distinguished guest.

My name is Hannes de Waal and I represent, the Sunday River Valley Citrus Company (SRCC) and the 1400 citrus producers who are members of the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA).

I was chosen to address all of you today, either because of my pronounced Afrikaans accent or probably because I had the nerve to tell everyone this morning that our citrus is the sweetest. But please do not tell my many friends in Spain. A most interesting country with a huge history.

There are many opportunities of mutual interest for both countries, which include the following:

Energy:

A huge opportunity exists for energy collaboration, especially in the field of renewable energy, be it green hydrogen, solar, wind and gas. There is a strong desire from the South Africa to develop broader relationships, and to collaborate on opportunities to be pursued in this space.

Manufacturing:

There are a number of bilateral pharmaceutical opportunities between our two countries. South Africa already has a presence in anaesthetics, women health oncology and anti-coagulants and this could be used as platform to create a stronger footprint in Spain. Conversely, licencing opportunities exist in those therapeutic areas where Spain has a strong presence in our country.

Opportunity also exists for the local partnering, manufacturing and exporting of composite (fiberglass and resin) materials and the steel component for renewable projects, infrastructure, architecture and rail.

Financing:

There are prospects for investment by Spanish companies for the development of local partners and infrastructure in the African continent as a whole.

When it comes to the travel and tourism industries, both countries are picturesque and the people are friendly so there are huge opportunities in these sectors.

Both countries are also well developed in the agriculture sphere and there are many more opportunities in this space if there is greater integration and stronger partnerships.

The opposite hemisphere production creates lots of opportunities and little overlap. Spain is already invested in cultivar development, Agro Technology, Agrochemical and trading, in the country, and with South African companies, and also supplies fresh produce to local retailers.

At the same time, South African companies have also exploited opportunities in serving Spanish consumers.

The development of the broader African continent also holds huge opportunities for both countries.

We therefore believe that with the strong mutual government support, the positive trends we are seeing already, will engulf and strengthen both economies.