

# Putin Looks to Do Business With South Africa's Zuma

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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President Vladimir Putin will meet South African President Jacob Zuma in Sochi on Thursday to discuss a strengthening of trade and investment ties between the two BRICS members.

The leaders will also discuss the possibility of enhancing collaboration with the United Nations to promote a peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis, and flashpoints in Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic, Interfax reported.

The visit is a follow-up to a summit of BRICS, a group of five rapidly developing countries that also includes Brazil, India and China, that Putin attended in Durban, South Africa, in March.

"Putin will hold talks on Thursday with South African President Jacob Zuma, who will be in Russia at the president's invitation on a working visit," the Kremlin said in a brief [statement](#). "The two leaders will continue the dialogue they began at their meetings in Durban on March 26-27, 2013."

The United Russia party and the African National Congress were preparing a memorandum on improving relations, Interfax said.

South Africa is one of Russia's strongest partners on the African continent and in 2012 bilateral trade increased by a record 66.3 percent to reach nearly \$1 billion. In January and February 2013, bilateral trade grew by an additional 17.8 percent.

Russia is eager to offer its expertise in the extraction of raw materials and the design of energy-producing equipment. Investment in South Africa currently stands at more than \$1 billion, with Norilsk Nickel, Renova, Evraz Group and Basic Element among the biggest investors.

Cooperation in nuclear energy production will also be discussed by the two presidents, as will the possibility of increasing trade and production of aircraft, helicopters and tractors between the two countries, Interfax said.

South Africa wants to build several new power plants with an output of 9.6 GW by 2030. State-owned nuclear company Rosatom is set to be given the contract to build the power plants, worth about \$40 billion, as well as the training personnel.

Furthermore, Russia and South Africa also want to develop a program of joint cultural projects, which will encourage links between national museums, archives and libraries, from 2013 to 2016.

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