South Africa takes a reformed economy and a new trade framework to India ahead of the BRICS Summit

Team South Africa brings the country's investment case to the FICCI Conclave in New Delhi.

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, September 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Team South Africa arrives at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Conclave in New Delhi today with a sharper investment case than the country has carried in a decade and a concrete framework to act on it. On 12 August, India and the Southern African Customs Union signed terms of reference to negotiate a preferential trade agreement, with talks targeted to conclude within a year. South Africa accounts for the overwhelming majority of India's trade with that bloc, which makes today's Conclave less a networking event than an early step in a live negotiation.

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>
> *Mr Bohani Shibambu, Board Trustee of Brand South Africa*

Hosted ahead of the 18th BRICS Summit, which India will host in New Delhi from 12 to 13 September 2026, the Conclave brings together government, business and industry leaders from both countries to identify where trade, investment and long-term partnership can move fastest.

A different investment proposition

South Africa comes to Delhi with results rather than promises. Load shedding has effectively ended. The country exited the Financial Action Task Force grey list in October 2025. S&P Global upgraded South Africa's sovereign rating to BB with a positive outlook — its first upgrade in more than sixteen years.
That record was on display ten months ago, when South Africa hosted Africa's first G20 Summit.

A theme that fits the moment

India's BRICS Chair-ship theme this year spells out the grouping itself: Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability. Each element maps onto a South African priority. Resilience is what ending load shedding and exiting the grey list bought. Innovation and cooperation are what today's panels exist to unlock. Sustainability runs through the country's minerals-to-manufacturing and clean energy pipeline.

Busi Mabuza, Chairperson of the South African BRICS Business Council and Bohani Shibambu, Brand SA Board Member at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Conclave in New Delhi, Wednesday 09 September 2026

Showcasing the country brand

At the Conclave's Ministerial Session, Mr Bohani Shibambu, Board Trustee of Brand South Africa, delivers the South Africa Country Brand Introduction, including a short film on the country's potential, alongside remarks on South Africa as an investment destination from Ms Rashmee Ragaven, Director: Advanced Manufacturing at the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic). The keynote address follows from His Excellency Professor Anil Sooklal, South Africa's High Commissioner to India, with welcome and opening remarks from FICCI's Mr Anant Swarup and Mr Anant Goenka, and industry remarks from Dr Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Founder and Chairman of Sun International Ltd and a Member of the Indian Parliament.

Where the opportunities sit

The Conclave's panel points to where Indian and South African business can move together in the near term:

- Manufacturing: South Africa strengthening its own manufacturing base and serving as a hub for the wider Southern African region, using its ports, infrastructure and SACU and SADC market access to convert regional raw materials into higher-value, exportable goods, drawing on India's decade of manufacturing growth in electronics, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, agrochemicals and engineering goods.
- Agriculture and healthcare: joint capacity-building drawing on India's depth in agrochemicals, crop protection and affordable generic medicine manufacturing.
- Mining and trade finance: partnerships spanning South Africa's mineral resources and India's export and project finance capacity, represented on the Conclave's panel by the Industrial Development Corporation and India Exim Bank.
- Digital and telecommunications: collaboration reflected in the panel's participation from Cassava Technologies and Telecommunications Consultants India Limited.

These sectors sit at the heart of South Africa's BRICS strategy: using the grouping to expand trade, attract investment and build durable business partnerships across the major emerging economies, while broadening access to development finance through institutions such as the New Development Bank.

Commenting ahead of the Conclave, Mr Bohani Shibambu, Board Trustee of Brand South Africa, said:

“South Africa is a different investment proposition today than it was three years ago. The lights are on, we are off the grey list, and we have had our first sovereign ratings upgrade in sixteen years. What we are bringing to Delhi is not a pitch; it is a set of results.”

“India is already South Africa's largest trading partner in this region, and with a preferential trade agreement now under negotiation, the two countries have both the reason and the framework to trade far more with each other. We are here to make sure Indian business knows it.”

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