



Media Note
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United States and South Africa Break New Ground in Science Cooperation

The United States and South Africa held the first meeting of the Joint Commission on Science and Technology under the U.S.-South Africa Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement February 24-29, in Massachusetts and Washington, DC, organized by the U.S. Department of State. Among dozens of new collaborations, we agreed to establish geospatial and earth observation joint working groups focusing on global change, sustainable development, energy, and health. A separate energy efficiency and renewable energy group will be formed to translate applied research to solving energy problems, and a health group will be formed to seek new collaborations in health sciences and biotechnology and to refocus anew on chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and malnutrition. The South African agriculture biotechnology experts agreed to establish a partnership with the State of Massachusetts and exchange models and technologies and cooperate to develop human capital.

The thirteen-member South African delegation, led by Dr. Phil Mjwara of South Africa's Department of Science and Technology, visited the Boston-area technology hub and met with Governor Deval Patrick and key members of his cabinet and the legislature. The delegation met senior scientists and officials and toured the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Harvard University, Northeastern University, Children's Hospital, technology organizations, and hi-tech firms. Throughout the visit, they discussed the role of government in stimulating scientific innovation, economic development, and job creation.

In Washington, Dr. Mjwara met with the Science and Technology Advisor to President Bush, Dr. John Marburger, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Dr. Conrad Lautenbacher, and the Executive Officer of the National Academy of Sciences, Dr. William Coleglazier. Dr. Mjwara also met with National Science Foundation Director Dr. Arden Bement Jr. and discussed ways to deepen cooperation in nanotechnology, education, and atmospheric and materials sciences. Over two dozen additional meetings included eight federal agencies and several outside organizations, including the World Bank. The day-long plenary was chaired by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Science, Space, and Health Jeff Miotke.

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