



**REPUBLICA DE GUINEA ECUATORIAL**  
EMBAJADA DE LA REPUBLICA DE GUINEA ECUATORIAL  
EN SUDAFRICA  
AGREGADURÍA DE PRENSA

Nº .....

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**LA ENTREVISTA EN INGLES:**

**Excellency, you have been in South Africa for a number of years representing your country as its Ambassador, which moments of your diplomatic experience stand out?**

*“Firstly, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to highlight my country in this interview. From the moment I was appointed to this post, it became relevant to my diplomatic career. I am learning the customs and cultures of this country, enhancing both my professional and social life. One specific moment I can highlight is a state visit of my President to South Africa, and his subsequent multiple visits here after that for events including a BRICS Summit, an African Union Assembly that took place here too, the China-Africa Summit, former President Nelson Mandela’s Funeral and Jacob Zuma’s second Presidential Inauguration”.*

**What are the most important areas of collaboration between Equatorial Guinea and South Africa, and how many co-operation agreements are in place between the two countries?**

*“We are in the process of making history. Diplomatic relations between our countries began in 2004 when we opened our first- ever mission in South Africa. With that opening, a general framework of collaboration was established during President Thabo Mbeki’s mandate and continued through Zuma’s administration. With the latter, many technical meetings took place to implement cooperation within different fields, and as a result of those meetings, a number of agreements were signed in areas such as aviation, fishery, transport and oil drilling, amongst others. They are to be executed by a joint commission. We are currently in conversation with President Ramaphosa, and he has taken action for the first joint sitting to take place in the near future”.*

**Equatorial Guinea is one of the smallest countries of the continent and has one of the smallest populations. Nevertheless, its incredible resources make it one of the richest. Are your nation’s economic growth and development showing such wealth?**

*“Definitely. Every country on the continent is known for its incredible natural resources, and Equatorial Guinea is no different. Yes, among other multiple recourses, my country is fixed on the exploitation of oil. This sector is controlled by foreign companies – American, British and French companies. Because we may not have all the required technical expertise, our economic share in these profits as a nation is small. From these profits, our Government invests in the development that is evident in the country, including in the building of infrastructure, of affordable housing for our people, roads, electricity and health. Yes, we take advantage of our resources, yet the Government has avoided any activity that is terminable and non-renewable.*

*We are focused on diversifying the economy through other areas such as agriculture, fishery, cattle raising and tourism. Many countries nowadays*

*depend on the tourism industry as well. To reach its goals, our Government has planned the Third National Economic Summit next year (2019). With it, many of the policies will be established in order to reach proper economic growth as well as the possible industrialisation of the country”.*

**Which South African companies have shown interest in investing in Equatorial Guinea?**

*“Currently, no South African companies are based in my country. It is not out of a lack of interest, but because companies will only establish themselves abroad when there are agreements in place that secure their investments. There is definitely an interest to do so, and we are waiting for specific agreements to be signed. The South African banking sector is one niche that is interested in our market. Numerous banks have approached me in this regard, looking at us as an investment opportunity, but they require a guarantee from the government in order to proceed. Nevertheless, our government granted the South African company PetroSA the right to extract oil from our grounds in 2004. PetroSA was unsuccessful and withdrew from Equatorial Guinea after 10 years. Other foreign oil companies then took over and in a shorter period were successful in extracting both gas and liquid oil. PetroSA is the only South African company that has seriously invested”.*

**Could you elaborate on the state of the tourism industry in your country?  
What attractions draw foreign visitors to Equatorial Guinea?**

*“Our government places the highest interest in its tourism industry, as this is*

*one of the most important sources of income. We continually invest in this sector, and as proof of our commitment to tourism, we established the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in which there is a State Secretary appointed for all tourism-related matters. This person not only focuses on promoting tourism to foreign visitors but to locals as well.*

*We have incredible biodiversity, historic sites, and ancient architectural structures. We have projects addressing ecological conservation and the protection of wildlife. We have attractive islands. There is plenty of interest in developing our tourism potential”.*

**Pretoria a, 22, 03, 2019**

**El Agregado de Prensa.**