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SA's trade policy: the impact of China's economic slowdown on South Africa's mineral commodity trade

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ABSTRACT

The economic relations between China and South Africa have been largely based on the mineral resources of South Africa. Hence, China's rapid economic growth of recent had positive disruptive impacts on South Africa's economy. Conversely, the recent slowdown of China's economic growth has had negative effects on South Africa. By assessing the value of mineral product exports from South Africa to China from 2001 till recent, this research project provides an outline showing that the decline in China's economic growth has not been advantageous to South Africa's economic economy. It seems that as China and South Africa's comprehensive strategic partnership strengthens, South Africa will continue to be affected by the changes in commodity prices associated with China's economic growth. This also includes changes in mineral input growth.

Based on the findings of the spillover effects of this decline in SA's mineral export value to China, this research project aims to encourage the policy-makers of South Africa to see the need for their current policies to be re-assessed. This re-assessment is for determining whether their policies are capable of enabling their economies to handle the disruptive changes that can occur in their trade relations with a giant economy like China. The result should be restructuring their policies so they would have buffers for changes in global mineral prices and demand, as well as make them better prepared to enter beneficial engagements with China, when its economy grows stronger again.