

Many Ugandans live, work and study in South Africa, while South Africans are engaged in Uganda's service, trade and manufacturing sectors.

BY ANDREW BAGALA

Uganda's Ambassador to South Africa Paul Amoru has urged Ugandans living there to remain disciplined and respect domestic laws as the two countries move closer to introducing visa-free travel for ordinary passport holders.

Mr Amoru said technical processes to waive visa fees for ordinary passport holders from Uganda and South Africa have been concluded and formalisation is expected soon.

"When President Yoweri Museveni visited South Africa at the invitation of His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa in February 2023, they tasked us to make it easy for citizens of the two countries to travel to promote trade and business.

"We started with diplomatic and service passports, and we are now at the tail end of making visas for ordinary passport holders free," Mr Amoru said.

Visa-free travel would mean Ugandans no longer have to apply and pay for South African visas, a process that currently takes more than a week and costs about \$61 (Shs220,000) per applicant.

Mr Amoru emphasised that Ugandans holding ordinary passports must

How Ugandans will benefit from visa-free travel to SA



Visa-free.
We shall have Ugandans travelling to South Africa visa-free.
- Mr Simon Mundayi, Citizenship and Immigration Control spokesperson.

President Museveni (left) received by his South African counterpart, Cyril Ramaphosa upon his arrival in Pretoria, South Africa on February 28, 2023: PHOTO/ PPU



comply with South African laws, noting that good conduct supports efforts to ease travel arrangements.

On Monday, the Citizenship and Immigration Control Spokesperson, Mr Simon Mundayi, said negotiations on reciprocal visa fee exemptions for ordinary passport holders are nearing completion.

"We are still having talks for ordinary passport holders of Uganda. These talks are almost coming to an end, and very soon Ugandans holding ordinary passports will move visa-free to the Republic of South Africa," Mr Mundayi said.

During Museveni's February 2023 visit, the President and his South African counterpart agreed to pursue measures to ease travel between their countries.

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are engaged in Uganda's service, trade and manufacturing sectors.

However, Ugandans have long faced challenges travelling to South Africa due to stringent visa requirements.

Mr Mundayi said exemptions began with diplomatic passport holders, followed by service passports, with ordinary passport holders now under discussion.

"We started with diplomatic passports, then service passports. Now the talks are coming to a successful end. We shall have Ugandans travelling to South Africa visa-free. This is enabled by the fact that our passport is gaining some level of strength," he said.

Uganda has also reached agreements with Egypt allowing visa-free travel for diplomatic and official passport holders from both countries. However, holders of ordinary passports must still apply for visas.

Mr Mundayi added that visa-free arrangements with several countries indicate the growing strength of the Ugandan passport.

Uganda has also signed a similar visa-waiver deal with the United Arab Emirates covering diplomats and official passport holders.

WHAT IT MEANS

Visa-free travel would mean Ugandans no longer have to apply and pay for South African visas, a process that currently takes more than a week and costs about \$61 (approximately Shs220,000) per applicant.

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