On "Constructive Engagement" in South Africa

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The United States is South Africa's largest trading partner, its second largest foreign investor, and the source of one-third of its international credit. US investments in South Africa include more than 200 companies and some 700 subsidiaries, with the current number of US-based companies amounting to 344. In addition, US investments in South Africa include 8.3 billion dollars inSX investments, 11.5 billion dollars in trade credits and $1.5 billion in banks and insurance.

The US government has been conducting a policy of constructive engagement in South Africa for over a decade, aimed at promoting political, economic and social reform in that country. The policy has been characterized by the following objectives:

1. To encourage the South African government to move towards a more democratic and inclusive political system.
2. To support the efforts of black South Africans to achieve greater economic and social rights.
3. To promote closer economic ties between the United States and South Africa.
4. To encourage the South African government to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The policy of constructive engagement has been implemented through a combination of diplomatic and economic measures, including the following:

- The US government has engaged in direct negotiations with the South African government on a range of issues, including human rights, political reform, and economic development.
- The US government has provided economic assistance to South Africa, including grants and low-interest loans.
- The US government has imposed sanctions on South Africa, including restrictions on US exports and financial transactions.
- The US government has supported the efforts of the South African government to implement economic and social reforms, including the introduction of a new currency and the restructuring of the public sector.

The policy of constructive engagement has been widely criticized by some US policymakers and analysts, who argue that it has failed to achieve its objectives. They argue that the South African government has made minimal progress towards political reform and that economic sanctions have had little impact on the South African economy.

The policy of constructive engagement has also been criticized by black South Africans, who argue that it has failed to address the root causes of poverty and inequality in South Africa. They argue that the policy has focused too much on economic development and has neglected the political and social dimensions of reform.

Despite these criticisms, the policy of constructive engagement remains in place, and it is likely to continue to be an important aspect of US foreign policy towards South Africa for the foreseeable future.