

Benin President Romuald Wadagni began a two-day working visit to Rwanda on Wednesday, holding talks with President Paul Kagame as the two countries seek to build on growing cooperation.

Wadagni was received by Kagame at Village Urugwiro in Kigali, where the two leaders discussed bilateral relations and areas of cooperation.

The visit is Wadagni's first to Rwanda since he became president in May, after winning the April 12 election and succeeding Patrice Talon. Before entering the presidency, Wadagni served as Benin's economy and finance minister for a decade.

The talks come as Rwanda and Benin seek to deepen ties in areas including security, trade and investment, transport, tourism and information and communications technology.



The relationship gained momentum during Kagame's 2023 visit to Benin, when the two countries signed several agreements covering areas of cooperation, including security and military affairs. The two sides have also worked to facilitate movement between their countries and strengthen economic links.

Wadagni is not new to Rwanda. In September 2023, while serving as economy and finance minister, he visited Kigali as a special envoy of then-President Talon and delivered a message from the Beninese leader to Kagame.

The change in leadership in Cotonou has not disrupted high-level contacts between the two countries. In May, Prime Minister Justin Nsengiyumva represented Kagame at Wadagni's inauguration in Benin.

During his current visit, Wadagni is expected to visit the Kigali Genocide Memorial in Gisozi and other sites.

The visit provides an early opportunity for Wadagni, now at the head of Benin's government, and Kagame to review existing cooperation and discuss areas where the relationship can be expanded.