IT’S YOUR VOICE
Internal Newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Volume 9, 2017

SPECIAL ISSUE

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Editor’s Letter

Dear Diplomats,

As we draw to the close of Oliver Tambo’s centenary year, it is important to reflect on the impact that the former president of the African National Congress (ANC) and other struggle heroes had on the South Africa that we see privileged to live in today. O.R. Tambo, together with a team of dedicated freedom fighters, worked tirelessly and strategically to ensure that they fared over to future generations, a South Africa that respects the human rights of all who live in it. Essentially, Mr Tambo left us an evolving heritage that is unequally enriched South Africa’s Constitution. During O.R’s tenure as the president of the ANC, the movement formally subscribed to the Geneva protocols. To this end, O.R. contributed to the guidelines for the commission on the Constitution. To further promote his commitment to elevating children’s rights and the status of women in society, he ensured that these issues were well spelt out in the ANC’s Bill of Rights and South Africa’s Constitution.

It was during O.R. Tambo’s leadership that the foundations of a multi-party democracy were laid after liberation that encourages freedom of speech, associations, assembly, language and religion were created and thus the machinery system that is visible today.

This special edition of It’s Your Voice celebrates South Africa’s finest diplomat, O.R. Tambo, as we take a journey into the life of the Eastern Cape, which is the birthplace of Mr Tambo, to commemorate the centenary of South Africa’s hero. The town where Tambo was born (O.R. 1917) birthday celebrations in October, and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) was there to document key moments in the life of this industry. DIRCO hosted a series of debates during O.R. Tambo Month in which students from various tertiary institutions participated. The theme, “The Footsteps of O.R. Tambo”, unearthed incredible talent and knowledge of the struggle resilient among the youth, which was indeed rewarding. A number of brilliant students were identified during the debates and given the opportunity to share their thoughts on one of South Africa’s foremost leaders of democracy. Girls know about them in this issue.

Collectively, it is a great pleasure to showcase their work, Ambassador Maxima Marka’s impressive experience as she continue to educate women in diplomacy in our Homelands feature. She tells us about the impression that a poem by Miriam Makeba Tambo has had on her as a female diplomat.

In this edition, we also share an enchanting holiday destination to consider as we approach festive season. Image O.R. Tambo Memorial

“Daddy was there for us, says Tselane Tambo"

Daddy was there for us, says Tselane Tambo, the daughter of Oliver Reginald (O.R.) Tambo, South Africa’s first black president, who died in 1993. In this edition, Tselane reflects on growing up with her father, a political leader who dedicated his life to fighting for freedom and democracy. She shares memories of his commitment to education and his influence on the South African freedom struggle.

MATHABO MOERANE

NOMINATIONS FOR THE UBUNTU AWARDS 2018 ARE NOW OPEN

GO TO www.ubuntuawards.co.za TO NOMINATE A SOUTH AFRICAN WHO THROUGH EXCELLENCE IN THEIR CHOSEN FIELD HAS FLOWN THE SOUTH AFRICAN FLAG HIGH INTERNATIONALLY.

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Oliver Reginald Tambo (1917–2001) was a South African anti-apartheid activist, lawyer, political leader, diplomat and academic. He was a key figure in the South African liberation struggle, serving as the president of the African National Congress (ANC) from 1957 to 1979. Tambo spent much of his life in exile, travelling the world and bringing awareness to the cause of apartheid and the need for international support. He was the first African representative to the United Nations (UN) and was a key mediator in the negotiations that led to the end of apartheid in South Africa.

Tambo was born on 27 October 1917 in Nkantolo, a small village in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. He was the son of a schoolteacher and a farmer. He was a natural leader from an early age and showed an interest in politics and social justice. After graduating from St Peter's College, he went on to study law at the University of Witwatersrand, earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics and Bachelor of Arts degree in Law. He was admitted to the bar in 1942.

In 1951, Tambo qualified as an attorney and was called to the bar by the Bar Council of the Union of South Africa. He was actively involved in the anti-apartheid movement from the 1940s, and in 1952 he became the first black member of the South African Institute for Race Relations. In 1954, he was arrested for his anti-apartheid activism and spent several months in prison.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, Tambo was a key figure in the anti-apartheid movement, working closely with Nelson Mandela and others to coordinate the ANC’s efforts both at home and abroad. He was the first ANC member to be exiled, leaving South Africa in 1960.

Tambo’s role in international relations was crucial to the success of the anti-apartheid movement. He used his diplomatic skills to gain support for the ANC and the struggle against apartheid from the international community. He was a key player in the negotiations that led to the end of apartheid in South Africa, and he was instrumental in the drafting of the Freedom Charter, one of the key documents that contributed to the peaceful transition to democracy.

Tambo’s leadership was marked by his commitment to the ideals of democracy, human rights and the equality of all peoples. He was a strong advocate for the international community to apply sanctions against South Africa and support the liberation struggle. His leadership was respected not only in South Africa but also internationally, and he was awarded numerous honours and decorations.

In 1991, Tambo was appointed as South Africa’s ambassador to the United Nations. He served in this role until 1994, and then was appointed as the first Secretary-General of the African Union.

Tambo was a dedicated servant of the anti-apartheid movement, and his contributions to the struggle against apartheid were recognized with numerous awards and honours. He passed away on 27 February 2001, but his legacy continues to inspire people around the world to fight for justice and equality.

O.R. Tambo's role in international relations

O.R. Tambo was a key figure in the South African liberation struggle, serving as the president of the African National Congress (ANC) from 1957 to 1979. He was a key figure in the anti-apartheid movement, working closely with Nelson Mandela and others to coordinate the ANC’s efforts both at home and abroad. He was the first ANC member to be exiled, leaving South Africa in 1960.

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Oliver Reginald Tambo
The Road To Bizana

BY MATHEMPO MOKAISA

DAY 1

We drove into the humble yet busy Bizana on an incredibly foggy day as the sun was setting. As we approached the town, the streets were bustling with activity and there was a convivial mood in the air, ahead of Oliver Tambo’s centenary celebrations later that week. The Mayor, Councillor Thabiso Mafumbatha, was in high spirits as she shared with us the preparations by Mbizana Municipality for the upcoming days. There was plenty happening and they had never before hosted an event of this magnitude, with so many dignitaries to cater for. However, she was confident that all the necessary arrangements were comfortably in place. With the resilience of the resourceful staff in the Mayor’s Office, we were then offered a tour of Bizana.

DAY 2

Oliver Reginald Basil Tambo was born on 27 October 1917 in the village of Nkantolo, Bizana, in the KingBafana region of the Eastern Cape. He was the child of Mzimeni Tambo, a farmer and assistant salesperson at a local trading store, and Julia, who was the second of Mzimeni’s three wives. O.R.’s father instilled a love for education in his children, and thus O.R.’s insatiable interest in African National Congress (ANC) affairs was inevitable. Our guide for the day, Mr Lizo Fikela, from the Mayor’s Office, was extremely knowledgeable on the town, and especially the sites that were specifically relevant to O.R. He spent the day giving us a history lesson on Mr Tambo’s early life, as we traversed the streets of Bizana.

Tambo began his formal education at Marelane Primary School in Ludeke Township, Bizana, where a stately statue of O.R. has pride of place at the entrance of the building. The statue was appropriately named the O.R. Tambo Mountains. He came home when he continued to visit and lived in one of the huts near the school grounds, which still stands.

Our next stop was the gravestone of Oliver Tambo’s parents. Mr Tambo senior was buried alongside his spouses on the land that was originally owned by his parents. Mr Tambo senior was buried alongside his spouses on the land that was originally owned by his parents. The Tambo family was moved from that old home because of the Group Areas Act, to another area a few kilometres from this site. Hence the location of the next stop on our tour of Bizana.

When O.R.’s parents moved to the new place, he continued to visit and lived in one of the huts built on the premises. He came home when he was able to, even when he lived in Johannesburg where he worked with Meduna in low-level work. The new homestead was on lower land, and unfortunately, did not have the same magnificent views as their original home.

The journey then led us on an incredulously long drive to O.R.’s next school, Holy Cross Mission School, which he attended after completing his education at Marelane Primary School. Mr Fikela explained how O.R. Tambo had moved daily from home to the Holy Cross Mission School. The school was approximately 14 km away from O.R.’s home. This was an exceptionally long distance for a school child to walk every day. Eventually, Oliver’s father gave him a horse to transport him to school and to finally become a resident at the school’s boarding facilities, which were situated a few kilometres outside the school grounds. The Holy Cross Church, where O.R. and his classmates worshiped regularly, was also built near the school. Today, one can find the Holy Cross missionaries, deacons, church and hospital all within the 4km radius of this section of Bizana.

We concluded the day at the Mbizana Municipal Library where a statue of O.R. has pride of place at the entrance of the building. The statue is of O.R. disseminating an exhortation upon his return home, suitcases on the floor next to him. It is a fantastic combination of the recently unveiled statue at the O.R. Tambo International Airport. On this day, the weather gods granted us our wish for good weather, as the day was in contrast to the previous one. It was sunny and rather warm as a South African spring day is normally expected to be. By the end of the day, the Mbizana team had a whole load of sunburn, but it was all worth it.

DAY 3

Yet another early morning on the third day as we headed to the site where the 1963 log of the Pomandoro Revolt in Flagstaff, Bizana, occurred. Between 1955 and 1960, the Pomandoro people resisted the rise of the colonisers and their attempts to evict them and to co-opt their chiefs. O.R. is said to have participated in these revolts at some point during this time.

We drove into Flagstaff on an incredibly long drive. One that I would readily agree to embark on again, and would recommend to anyone as it is an invaluable educational experience that I believe is essential, especially for scholars. As we returned home, we lamented over the wealth of information – visually and mentally – that we were exposed to and assimilated. We couldn’t have asked for a better tour guide and a better setting.

From humble beginnings to selfless achievement of the goal of the ANC, Mr Oliver Reginald Tambo certainly led with humility and grace and for this, many across the globe are forever appreciative of his spirit in the Banana struggle.
Her Excellency Ms Ruby Marks

FOR HER LOYAL SERVICE TO SOUTH AFRICA

IN CONVERSATION WITH ROBINNA MARKS

1. What would you say are the key challenges of being a diplomat in the 21st century?

It’s already a highlight to serve as a O.R. Tambo Female Ambassador. As a result of this, we had lost out on a sizable ban on the import of grapes from South Africa, and time that I served as South Africa’s Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Sudan and South Sudan. These dialogues assisted in populating UN-Rosslyn 125 in particular, and served as an impetus to build solidarity among women across political parties so as to contribute to leveling peace.

2. What is your opinion on the role of women in international relations and cooperation?

Women have a critical role to play in international relations and cooperation. They can bring a different perspective and approach to conflict resolution, diplomacy, and policy formulation. Women can also contribute to peacebuilding and the maintenance of peace and security. They can help to address the root causes of conflicts and promote sustainable solutions. Women can also support the implementation of gender equality and women’s rights in peace and security processes.

3. What are the greatest obstacles you have faced as a female Ambassador?

As a female Ambassador, one of the greatest obstacles I have faced is the lack of recognition and appreciation for my work. Male colleagues and counterparts often dismiss the efforts of female diplomats, which can undermine the progress that we are making. Additionally, women often face gender-based violence and harassment, which can hinder their ability to perform their duties effectively.

4. What are the ways to overcome these challenges?

To overcome these challenges, it is important to raise awareness about the contributions of women in foreign policy and diplomacy. Women need to be recognized and valued for their expertise and experience. They should be given opportunities to lead and make decisions in foreign policy and diplomacy. Women should also be encouraged to speak up and participate in discussions, and their contributions should be acknowledged and valued.

5. What books or authors do you draw inspiration from?

I draw inspiration from many women’s stories. The book “Half the Sky” by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn is one that has particularly inspired me. It highlights the courage and resilience of women around the world who are working to overcome adversity and create change. Additionally, I am inspired by the work of women leaders such as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who have demonstrated that women can lead and achieve great things.

6. Which female figure do you draw inspiration from?

I draw inspiration from many female figures throughout history. One of my inspirations is Nelson Mandela’s wife, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. She faced incredible challenges as a political activist and a leader in South Africa, and her courage and resilience in the face of adversity continue to inspire me.

7. Name a book that changed the way you see the world?

One book that has had a significant impact on my perspective is “Half the Sky” by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. It challenges the reader to think about the role of women in society and the impact that gender inequality has on individuals and communities around the world.

8. How do you balance your career and family life?

Balancing career and family life can be challenging for women in foreign policy and diplomacy. As a female Ambassador, I have had to make many sacrifices to achieve my goals. However, I have also been fortunate to have a supportive network of family and friends who have helped me to manage these challenges.

9. What are the unique challenges faced by women in foreign policy and diplomacy?

Women in foreign policy and diplomacy face a number of unique challenges. These include discrimination and gender bias, limited access to decision-making positions, and a lack of representation in senior leadership roles. Additionally, women often face gender-based violence and harassment, which can hinder their ability to perform their duties effectively.

10. What message do you want to convey to young women who aspire to become diplomats?

To young women who aspire to become diplomats, I would say that you have the power to make a difference. The world needs women leaders who can bring a different perspective and approach to foreign policy and diplomacy. Women can help to address the root causes of conflicts and promote sustainable solutions. Women can also support the implementation of gender equality and women’s rights in peace and security processes.

11. How do you think your role as a diplomat has changed over the years?

As a diplomat, I have had the opportunity to witness significant changes in the international landscape. The world has become increasingly interconnected, and women now have a greater role to play in shaping foreign policy and diplomacy. Women are now recognized for their expertise and experience, and they are given opportunities to lead and make decisions in foreign policy and diplomacy.

12. How do you think global politics has changed in recent years?

Global politics has undergone significant changes in recent years. The world is becoming more interconnected, and women are now recognized for their expertise and experience. Additionally, the rise of non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations, has added new layers of complexity to foreign policy and diplomacy.

13. What do you think the future holds for women in foreign policy and diplomacy?

The future holds great potential for women in foreign policy and diplomacy. As more women are recognized for their expertise and experience, they will be given greater opportunities to lead and make decisions in foreign policy and diplomacy. Women will continue to contribute to peacebuilding and the maintenance of peace and security, and they will play a key role in addressing the challenges of our time.

14. What advice do you have for young women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy?

For young women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy, I would say that you have the power to make a difference. You should be confident in your abilities and believe in yourself. You should also be proactive in seeking opportunities to learn and grow.

15. What is the most important lesson you have learned from your time as a diplomat?

The most important lesson I have learned from my time as a diplomat is the importance of perseverance and determination. Success in foreign policy and diplomacy requires a great deal of hard work and dedication.

16. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing international relations today?

The biggest challenge facing international relations today is the rise of non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations. The world is becoming more interconnected, and women are now recognized for their expertise and experience. Additionally, the rise of non-state actors, such as terrorist organizations, adds new layers of complexity to foreign policy and diplomacy.

17. What advice do you have for young women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy?

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18. What advice do you have for women who are interested in pursuing a career in foreign policy and diplomacy?

For women who are interested in pursuing a career in foreign policy and diplomacy, I would say that you should be confident in your abilities and believe in yourself. You should also be proactive in seeking opportunities to learn and grow.

19. What advice do you have for women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy?

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20. What advice do you have for women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy?

For women who are just starting their careers in foreign policy and diplomacy, I would say that you should be confident in your abilities and believe in yourself. You should also be proactive in seeking opportunities to learn and grow.
The Eighth Trilateral Ministerial Commission (ITMC) Meeting of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum was held in Durban on 17 October 2017. The ITMC was chaired by Minister Malee Mbalane/Mbalane and accompanied Minister N娴o Ferreira of Brazil and Minister General Nkoana-Mashabane of South Africa.

The core focus of the meeting was to consolidate the political and socio-economic dimension of IBSA – the raison d’être of the grouping, in pioneer meeting of the three countries with vibrant democracies, from three regions of the developing world, active on a global scale, with the aim of examining themes on the international agenda and those of mutual interest.

One of the biggest successes of the IBSA Dialogue in the IBSA Fund for the Abolition of Poverty and Hunger. As a unique development funding model for South-South funding and support, the IBSA Fund has to date committed some USD5.5 billion in development projects around the world. The ministers signed the IBSA Trust Fund Agreement during the ITMC, thereby formalising the funding mechanism. Therefore, it will continue to make an impact in the international development arena as a model for South-South cooperation.

In this regard, the IBSA ministers received a presentation from the United Nations Office for South-South cooperation. The core focus of the meeting was to streamline and cluster the various work groups around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) primary pillars of development, namely social, economic and environmental development. The IBSA Sherpas have been tasked with infusing renewed impetus into the revitalised IBSA working groups, especially around the SDGs.

The ITMC also endorsed the creation of a Working Group on the Blue Economy, which will seek closer collaboration on issues affecting the blue/oceans economy, and marine governance, including compliant cooperation.

Additionally, the ITMC issued a Joint Communiqué articulating the joint positions on global and regional issues of the IBSA dialogue partners and highlighting the political commitment to the continued importance of IBSA.

Therefore, the relevance of the IBSA Dialogue Forum as a positive global force to influence international affairs, especially in the development arena, has once again been reaffirmed. The ITMC was meant to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the summit and South Africa remains committed to contributing to its success. The year 2018 will mark the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the IBSA Dialogue Forum. The IBSA foreign ministers have committed to promoting high-level events in order to showcase IBSA as a global development partner.

**Support, the IBSA Fund has to date committed some USD5.5 billion in development projects around the world.**

The four machines that are used to print smart ID cards were named after Boipelo de Bruyn, Rahima Moosa, Helen Joseph and Lilian Ngoyi, leaders of the 1966 anti-pass laws march.

**It is important for us to pay tribute to leaders such as Oliver and Adelaide Tambo, so that we can reflect on their values and the sacrifices they made to move the country forward.**

Walking in his footsteps

A leader for freedom and a champion for human rights, Oliver Reginald Tambo.

**Ambassador Tambo gets smart ID card**

The smart ID card handover was timed to coincide with the centenary year of the South African icon as a tribute to the struggles waged by Mr Tambo and his wife, Nontsikelelo Tambo, in pursuit of human rights, citizenship and justice for all.

The initiative was also part of the programme by Home Affairs to get all South Africans to apply for smart IDs. The department will work with various institutions and groups in the next few months to create awareness on the importance of smart IDs.

Presently, the department is engaging the family of the late Ahmed Timol and learners from Manenberg on the Cape Flats, as part of its roll-out.

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I don’t often get an opportunity to take some leave and hit the road to somewhere quiet and beautiful. In February this year, I visited Didima Camp, situated in the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park. It’s just before the established Cathedral Peak Hotel on the same entrance road. Yes, the G&T sundowners there are still a winner, but not what I was looking for. A fireplace with a view of the Milky Way. Didima is that for me, and more. It’s quiet and offers the most amazing sunsets and bright Milky Way views at night. I love taking pictures for our Ubuntu Magazine while on a quick breakaway, and as per my expectation, Didima catered for all my photographic desires. All I needed to do was point, shoot and enjoy the results.

If you are planning to go, please heed my advice. There is a restaurant available, but packing your own food is a fantastic option too as there are wonderful braai facilities on offer. Each unit has a small fridge, microwave and kettle. Most important, just bring your tired body and soul and get your recharge going.

The Milkyway brightly visible from the chalets doorstop
ALL WOMEN SHOULD KNOW THESE FACTS ABOUT BREAST CANCER

BY EDWINA FRADIE
DIRECTORATE: EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS (EHW)

October is international breast cancer awareness month. According to CANSA (Cancer Association of South Africa), breast cancer is the most common cancer among South African women, however, a diagnosis does not have to be a death sentence if it is detected early enough. Herewith some facts every woman should know.

- Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among South African women, with one in 31 women diagnosed in her lifetime. This statistic spans all race groups.
- The older you are, the greater risk you face when it comes to developing breast cancer. However, the disease can and does strike women under 40.
- You should examine your breasts every month, and go for regular mammograms from the age of 40.
- When detected early, breast cancer has up to 95% chance of successful treatment.
- One of the greatest risk factors for breast cancer is obesity, especially after menopause. Other risk factors include being a smoker, not being physically active, consuming alcohol, and age, among others.
- Women who have breastfed, especially for longer than a year, may face a lower breast cancer risk than women who haven’t ever breastfed, studies have found.
- Studies suggest that women who suffer from stress are twice as likely to develop breast cancer than those who don’t experience stress.
- If you want to help reduce your risk of breast cancer, do the following, starting right now: stop smoking; limit your alcohol intake; exercise at least moderately (aim for three times a week, for 30 minutes each time); find out what your healthy weight is and stick to it; always wear sunscreen when you’re outdoors, in every season; revamp your diet, cutting out junk food, sugar and high-fat foods; and try to keep stress to a minimum.
- All adult women should have annual women’s wellness check-ups, which include breast exams. These examinations can help to detect any problems early, and to treat them quickly and efficiently for your best chance of recovery. Breast cancer can be beaten, but early detection is the key.