South Africa was celebrating as the Springboks brought home the Rugby World Cup after beating England 32-12 in the final in Japan. The victory under Siya Kolisi, the team’s first black captain, was another symbolic moment for the Springboks. In 1995, former President Nelson Mandela famously celebrated on the podium with captain Francois Pienaar after their first World Cup win. This was the third time that the Springboks had won the trophy, equalling New Zealand’s record.
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South Africa has been a proponent of the WPS Agenda since its inception and we remain committed to implementing the agenda, so that it can also support and contribute to silencing the guns across the world, and work towards saving “succeeding generations from the scourge of war”, as we committed to at the founding of the UN.

South Africa has been engaged in training women across all of these areas. We are therefore optimistic that the operationalisation of the Global Alliance of Regional Women Mediators Networks will advance some of these objectives.

On peacekeeping, South Africa will continue to ensure the meaningful participation of women in peace-support operations. The South African National Defence Force comprises 30% women. This has enabled South Africa, as a troop-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions, to deploy more females in the frontlines of armed conflicts. The South African contingent of the Force Intervention Brigade to MONUSCO is composed of 14.5% women and the officer commanding the South African force is a woman.

As we exchange views on how to strengthen implementation of the WPS Agenda, particularly as we move towards the 20th anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325 next year, it is also imperative for the international community to take into account the findings, including recommendations, made in the 2015 global study on the implementation of Resolution 1325, commissioned by the UNSC. I believe that some of the recommendations are still relevant in terms of elaborating practical and attainable deliverables and it is for this reason that South Africa advocated for its inclusion to embed the message on the full implementation of the agenda.

Our deliverables must be visible and discernible. They must be clearly aimed at ensuring the meaningful participation of women in all levels of peace processes; increasing the number of women in uniformed and civilian components of peacekeeping operations; investing in women as peacebuilders, such as in mediation and negotiation; protecting the human rights of women, particularly sexual and reproductive health rights; and advancing accountability for heinous crimes such as sexual violence.

The myriad and complex conflicts in the world underscore the need to reinforce the implementation of the WPS Agenda. UNSC Resolution 1325, which was passed 19 years ago, and its subsequent resolutions underpin the WPS international normative framework. South Africa views the WPS Agenda as a means for women to mediate in conflict situations and as essential to end the use of force as a means of settling disputes.

A report from the UN Secretary-General provided a useful overview of the successes and gaps in the implementation of this agenda. The report provided concrete recommendations that should move us from rhetoric to action, so that we can effectively implement the commitments we have set ourselves.

It is within this context that South Africa saw it fit to present a resolution focussing on the full implementation of the WPS Agenda. The resolution recognises that although there has been great progress made, great opportunities still lie ahead of us.

South Africa will continue to actively participate in existing global initiatives, such as the WPS Focal Points Network; the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations; and the UN Secretary-General’s Action for Peacekeeping Initiative. These initiatives serve as instruments to raise awareness on the importance of the WPS Agenda.

We remain resolute in our commitment to advance the cause of the WPS Agenda through implementing the recommendations and guidelines emanating from the various resolutions adopted by the UNSC. “

Dr GNM Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation
One of the key focus areas for South Africa is the security situation on the African continent. We have already drawn attention to the need to bring about lasting peace and security to the Great Lakes region, which includes, among other countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda and Uganda. We have also realized with the situation in Mali.

Regarding the Great Lakes, South Africa welcomes the normalization of bilateral relations between Rwanda and Uganda, which was mediated by Angola with the support of the DRC. In the DRC, the security situation in the east of the country remains volatile, and this is being compounded by the outbreak of the Ebola virus. South Africa has underscored the need for the Government of the DRC to strengthen the capacity of state institutions, with the support of the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC, known as MONUSCO. South Africa is one of the largest contributors to MONUSCO with over 1,000 troops serving in that country.

South Africa believes that a stable Great Lakes region will serve as a foundation for regional economic integration. The persistent illicit exploitation and trade in natural resources in the region undermine the proper management of these resources and this reverses the efforts of the international community in restoring stability to this important region of the African continent.

Regarding the situation in Mali, South Africa has welcomed the launch of the inclusive Dialogue in September, urging stakeholders to participate in the national dialogue aimed at contributing to the creation of political and institutional reforms. These reforms will characterise the future State of Mali as well as address the situation in the northern and central parts of the country with a view to maintaining Mali’s sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

There is an urgent need to resolve the root causes of instability, inter-communal clashes, terrorism and violent extremism ravaging parts of Mali. In this regard, the decision taken by the Economic Community of West African States leaders at their recent extraordinary summit, which pledged resources to fighting terrorism in the region, is an indication of the willingness of countries on the continent to resolve and find home-grown solutions to Africa’s problems.

As part of its contribution to the mandate of the UNSC to maintain international peace and security, South Africa will continue to advocate for the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means. Working closely with the two African non-permanent members (Ivory Coast and Equatorial Guinea), South Africa will also seek to facilitate greater cooperation between the UNSC and the AU’s Peace and Security Council.

We further emphasise the role of women in the resolution of conflict. In this regard, South Africa argues for a gender perspective to be mainstreamed into all UNSC resolutions in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), which was adopted at the initiative of our neighbour, Namibia.

Despite the commitments in Resolution 1325, women remain excluded within peace processes, including in the drafting of peace agreements, and their involvement in UN peacekeeping is limited. In addition, the contribution of women and girls to peacebuilding processes remains undervalued and under-resourced.

Women and girls also continue to be severely affected by conflict situations, especially with regard to sexual abuse and violence.

During our Presidency, we presided over the Security Council’s debate on this subject. The emphasis of the debate was to ensure implementation of the commitments we have made to fully implement the WPS Agenda.

As we have consistently stated, South Africa is supportive of the UN and a rules-based multilateral system.

However, the UN remains hamstrung by the fact that the organisation remains undemocratic and anachronistic. We remain gravely concerned that 74 years after the founding of the UN, key decisions on peace and security are de facto the domain of only five countries.

Twenty years of discussions on reform of the Security Council have yielded no movement towards a more representative and inclusive Security Council.

We believe that the time has come for the broader UN membership to head the overwhelming call for Africa to obtain at least two permanent seats, with all the pragmatics of permanent membership, as well as five non-permanent seats, as embodied in the Common African Position as espoused in the Ezulwini Consensus on the comprehensive reform of the UNSC.

In this regard, UN member states must invigorate the negotiations on reform at the Intergovernmental Negotiations, including by initiating text-based negotiations. @ClaysonMonyela
The World Cup final was a triumphant day as it confirmed what we are as a nation, firm in its resolve to find unity in its diversity, as exemplified in our national rugby team, which is transforming beautifully, being presented to the world with its first black captain.

We often fail to appreciate just how far we have come since that iconic moment in 1995, when a South African first held aloft the Rugby World Cup Trophy, in building a society that offers equal opportunity to all regardless of race, gender or social circumstances.

I recently attended a businesswoman’s summit in Johannesburg and was in awe of the breadth of occupations and ventures our country’s women have entered. We had among us shipping company CEOs, tech entrepreneurs, DNA specialists and production company owners. This has been made possible by the progressive policies of this government and the opportunities it has afforded its people.

We are proud of South Africa and what it has become. But, there is much more that we need to do to make this a country where the black child and the white child can attain the heights they always dream of.

We must do more to foster social cohesion in our society. Our national broadcaster – indeed all broadcasters – should commission programmes that reflect the values of tolerance and multiculturalism. Leaders of faith organisations, traditional bodies, political parties, cultural organisations, sports organisations and business bodies should all work together to foster a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Public sports and recreation facilities must be better resourced, especially in rural areas, so that young men and women who cherish dreams of sporting success attain their goals. The youth should be able to explore and appreciate their history, traditions and languages.

South Africa recently hosted the second Investment Conference as part of our ambitious drive to set our country on a path of faster growth and to create the many jobs that our people need.

To mobilise the investment we need requires a massive effort from us all. More than ever, we need to be single-minded in our determination to build an economy that can benefit all our people. So let each of us, wherever we find ourselves, become part of the campaign to build a better South Africa.

As we held our breath on Saturday, 2 November 2019, and awaited the final whistle, we momentarily forgot our woes. And now, our sails swelled by the wind of victory, our pride must not deflate, our euphoria must not dissipate and our optimism must endure.

Let the goodwill brought by our success at Yokohama inspire us to put our collective shoulder to the wheel as we confront our economic, political and social challenges together – and overcome them.

As Siya Kolisi said: “We can achieve anything if we work together as one.”
When it’s quiet/we create.

Africa never stops. The world’s second largest continent has plenty of room for growth. There’s an energy here you won’t find anywhere else. As host to many of the world’s growing economies, we’re proudly playing our part in the global arena. Let’s take our continent forward, together.

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Our success story will be a shared one

Those who have been watching developments in Africa over recent years would have seen the emergence of a common vision for peace, growth and development.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

I was privileged to open the Financial Times Africa Summit 2019 in London on 14 October 2019. Over the years, this summit has built a reputation for attracting key decision-makers, financiers, investors and development partners from Africa and across the world.

It has become a valued platform for African voices and for frank engagement on the many challenges and opportunities on the continent.

Those who have been watching developments in Africa over recent years would have seen the emergence of a common vision for peace, growth and development.

The continent has undergone profound changes since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and even since the African Union (AU) was formed in 2002. While our founding forebears had to end colonialism, free their countries and establish independent nation states, the recent generations of leaders have been forging ambitious programmes to fundamentally transform Africa’s fortunes.

This ambitious programme for the continent is outlined in the AU’s Agenda 2063, which envisages a continent that is at peace, stable and well-governed, and a continent where its substantial natural endowment is used for the benefit of all its people and not just a few elites.

In pursuance of achieving these bold objectives of changing our continent, new imaginative initiatives are embarked upon, the type that would have made Pliny the Elder, the Roman Empire era author and philosopher, continue to observe: “There is always something new out of Africa.”

This could not have been more true than with the award of this year’s Nobel Peace Prize to Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia.

This award is a worthy recognition of the work of Prime Minister Abiy in forging peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea. But this award is much bigger, in that it is a major boost for the project of silencing the guns on our continent and installing the peace that will enable us as a continent to achieve our bold ambitions.

The new generation of leaders of Ahmed Abiy’s ilk are bold, courageous and focussed on creating an Africa that is at peace with itself and growing the economies of African countries through innovation, infrastructure development and trade.

Their interest extends beyond the borders of their countries to promoting greater economic development within the respective economic regions on the continent.

As we pursue economic integration, these regions are taking on a greater significance.

The East African Community, for example, is far advanced in many respects, as it has committed itself to gradually establish a Customs Union, a Common Market, a Monetary Union and ultimately a Political Federation of the East African States.

This is a continent that despite its challenges is young, dynamic, has vast potential and has great promise.

Africa is ready for the great leapfrog on many fronts, including in attracting investment, displaying its innovative talent and capability and capitalising itself to greater heights of human development.

Africa is ready to partner with investors and the private sector because it has been proven many times over and in numerous countries that discerning investors who have the foresight to invest in Africa can earn good returns.

We have reached a moment in our history where Africa needs investment more than it needs foreign aid.

The countdown has begun to the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), it will bring together into a single market 54 nations of some 1.2 billion people and a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of over US$3 trillion.

Just as the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 represented a new era of European cooperation and integration, the AfCFTA is the realisation of the dream of the founders of the OAU 56 years ago.

We are on the cusp of a new era.

We share a common vision to see greater levels of investment directed into Africa and to see higher volumes of intra-African trade.

Trade among countries in Africa is currently at 15%, compared to 47% in the Americas, 61% in Asia and 67% in Europe.

By some estimates, the new free trade area could increase the value of intra-African trade by 15% to 25% by 2040.

In addition to its economic impact, the AfCFTA will have far-reaching political, social, physical and international effects.

On the economic front, it will improve access to existing markets and lead to the creation of new ones. The free flow of goods and services will enable African businesses and entrepreneurs to expand their horizons. It will lead to the creation of a huge number of both big and small businesses.

This treaty will unleash the manufacturing and industrial capability of the continent as companies will seek to make products for the burgeoning African market.

The removal of trade barriers will lower prices and benefit consumers. Business costs will be reduced and business efficiency will be raised.

African governments are hard at work putting regulations and mechanisms in place to ensure that the free trade area is a success.

These include easing customs controls, developing regulations on the cross-border movement of people, reforming taxation and intellectual property regimes and improving anti-corruption legislation.

On the political front, the AfCFTA will help to consolidate the union among all African states.

It will reduce the potential for conflict because there is no benefit in waging wars with countries that you trade with.

From a social perspective, it is likely to result in a more cosmopolitan Africa as the greater movement of people and skills brings more people of diverse backgrounds and nationalities together.

As African countries become more connected to each other through highways and railway lines, through regional power grids and water infrastructure, the continent will undergo an infrastructural transformation.

The borders drawn up in the palaces of Europe will gradually become less significant than the infrastructure matrix that will link African economies together.

The AfCFTA will also have a broader international impact as Africa will be able to deal with other trade blocs from a position of greater strength, able to demonstrate economies of scale.

As the incoming Chair of the AU next year, South Africa will put great emphasis on giving effect to the agreement on the AfCFTA.

There is much work that needs to be done and many obstacles that need to be overcome, but we are determined that Africa should seize this moment.

The convergence of economies and the integration of markets under the AfCFTA will make the case for investing in the African continent even stronger.

This is a continent with abundant natural resources such as minerals, oil and natural gas, but also vast tracts of arable land and water, as well as wind and sunshine – the drivers of the renewable energy revolution.

African countries have the youngest population in the world, and which is expected to have a working age population of 1.8 billion by 2035.

It is a rapidly urbanising continent. By 2030, Africa will host more than 41 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants each.

This growth in urban populations is contributing to raised standards of living and rising affluence.

Africa has become a sophisticated consumer market with increasing spending power, and increased demand for products and services.

Over the last two decades, Africa has become more stable as democracy has spread. This year alone, elections have been held in, among other countries, Nigeria, South Africa, Malawi, Mauritania, Tunisia, ...
We have been implementing key structural reforms to address perennial weak growth, igniting economic activity, restoring investor confidence and create jobs. We have taken steps to provide greater policy certainty in areas such as mining, oil and gas. We have also focused on agenda of efforts to create a stable environment for investment.

We are finalising our energy roadmap – called the Integrated Resource Plan – which involves a diversified portfolio of sources, including more efficient and lower-emission coal technologies, nuclear, hydropower, gas, renewables and battery storage.

We have initiated the release of the high-demand broadband spectrum, which will bring down data costs and encourage investment. As part of attracting skilled professionals and encouraging tourism, we have prioritised immigration reform and changes to the visa regime.

We are undertaking a process of accelerated land reform guided by the recommendations of an expert panel. It has presented a comprehensive package of measures to resolve what is not only one of the greatest injustices of our colonial and apartheid history, but is also an impediment to faster, more inclusive growth.

We are undertaking this work in line with the principles of our Constitution, committed not only to safeguard property rights, but also to ensure that all our people have an equal opportunity to exercise such rights.

We are keen to take advantage of the appetite for diversification among investors. We are therefore developing plans for industries with high growth potential, such as automotive, clothing and textiles, gas, chemicals and plastics, renewable energy, oceans economy, agriculture and the high-tech industries.

Our focus is on expanding trade and investment links with the rest of the Southern African region and the continent at large. As the largest manufacturing economy in sub-Saharan Africa, the AfCFTA presents immense opportunities for South Africa.

For example, we are the largest exporter of trucks to the rest of Africa, and the fourth-largest exporter of cars. Exports to other African countries directly support about 250 000 South African jobs. We are also strengthening trade ties with other regions of the world. Most recently, South Africa and five other countries in the southern African region concluded a new trade agreement with the United Kingdom (UK) in the event of a “no-deal Brexit”.

The new agreement will effectively replicate the terms of trade present in the existing Southern African Development Community-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement, setting out rules of origin, rules of endowment, rules of origin, and health and safety regulations.

This agreement is important for the thousands of South African workers whose jobs are dependent on bilateral trade with Britain, and for the investors who have utilised South Africa as an export base to the UK and the rest of the world.

We are working to overcome the existing challenges. With the global move towards cleaner energy sources, Africa is perfectly situated for investment in wind, solar, biogas, hydro and natural gas.

South Africa’s renewable energy Independent Power Producer Programme, for example, has attracted approximately US$14 billion in private-sector investment in 102 projects and created around 48 000 jobs.

Africa’s success will lie in collaboration, in cooperation and in partnerships for mutual benefit. It also depends on African countries working to advance the interests of their people, seeking African solutions to African problems.

Africa wants to deal with the rest of the world on its own terms. It wants to see an end to outside interference, particularly from those countries that continue to fuel conflict in African countries.

The continent cannot develop fully for as long as parts of Africa remain theatres of war. South Africa recognises that to grow our economy create jobs and support investment, we have to pursue prudent fiscal policies coupled with sound macro-economic management.

At a time when our focus is under great pressure, we are committed to ensuring debt sustainability, improving the composition of spending and reducing risks arising from contingent liabilities, especially of our state-owned enterprises.

One of the greatest challenges to our economy is the dire state of our electricity utility, ESKOM, which has huge debt, severe liquidity problems and extensive operational challenges.

We have embarked on a process to strengthen governance, control costs, improve revenue collection and increase energy availability and plant performance.

This is part of a longer-term plan for the company that will see it unbundled into three separate entities responsible for generation, transmission and distribution.

By acknowledging, confronting and addressing such challenges, we are certain that South Africa will be well-positioned to take full advantage of the many opportunities on the African continent. We are a continent of entrepreneurs, a critical ingredient for growth.
Economic integration key to SADC industrialisation

The summit took place under the theme: “A Conducive Business Environment for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development”.

The summit took place under the theme: “A Conducive Business Environment for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development”. The theme was in line with previous SADC Summit decisions that endorsed industrialisation as the overarching priority for the region based on the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015 – 2023). The summit provided an opportunity for heads of state and government to be briefed on the overall implementation of the SADC work programme, including the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (2015 – 2020) and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap. Heads of government were also updated on the status of the region’s economy, health and food security and provided policy direction about future strategic work of SADC and the SADC post-2020 Agenda.

During the SADC Troika Summit of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, President Ramaphosa presented a final report on the Lesotho facilitation process to the SADC Heads of State. The President is the SADC facilitator to the Kingdom of Lesotho. “Presenting his report, the President noted with great appreciation progress made towards the implementation of the reforms required for transformation in the mountain kingdom.”

He also encouraged the enhancement of cultural exchanges in order to promote people-to-people relations. The heads of state agreed that the Second Session of the South Africa-Tanzania Bilateral Commission would be hosted in South Africa on a date to be agreed.

The leaders also noted with satisfaction the coming into effect of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area — an ambitious initiative to accelerate intracontinental trade and advance economic integration.

Addressing the South Africa-Tanzania Business Forum, the two leaders called on their respective business communities to work together to achieve inclusive growth and development.

To promote rapid industrialisation and development, they agreed on the need to enhance the ease of doing business in the two countries. President Ramaphosa said: “South Africa is ready and prepared to craft a new partnership model with Tanzania, where government and business work together to clear the way for more investment to flow between our two countries”.

During his State Visit, President Ramaphosa also undertook a visit to Morogoro where he visited and toured the Soikone University of Agriculture’s Solomon Mahlangu Campus (formerly known as the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College [SOMAFCO]).

The college, situated in Mzambiti, was established by the exiled African National Congress (ANC) in 1978 and provided educational and vocational skills to young South Africans who had fled South Africa after the 1976 Soweto Uprising.

The President’s visit to Morogoro was the first by a sitting President of the Republic of South Africa and coincided with the 50th anniversary of the ANC’s Morogoro Consultative Conference convened under the stewardship of President Oliver Tambo. It was this Consultative Conference that adopted the Strategy and Tactics document, which determined the direction of the ANC’s struggle against the apartheid regime for several decades.

President Ramaphosa said: “We return here because we desire — like the people of this area and all the people of Tanzania — to see this as a place of development, of learning and of prosperity. We want this place to have a future that is as glorious as its past. That is why we are greatly encouraged by initiatives like the SOMAFCO Future Africa Precinct, which aims to remember and celebrate our past while investing in infrastructure and economic opportunities that make a tangible difference in the lives of the people of this area.”
Many African countries are achieving positive economic growth and developing social and economic infrastructure that expands the likelihood of national development, higher growth levels and social development for all.

These priorities are global, they are in the National Development Plan (NDP), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Agenda 2030) and in our Africa Agenda 2063. We will promote action to realise them for our country and our continent.

We pursue the priorities in a period in which Africa has entered a phase that holds much promise for genuine sustainable development. We see in our diplomacy to build stronger links with Nigeria, Egypt and Kenya as anchor countries that should advance these goals.

In the previous financial year, DIRCO was allocated R6 552.7 billion to utilise the budget allocated to the department to support progress on the priorities set out by President Cyril Ramaphosa during the State of the Nation Address (SONA).

In 11 July 2019, I presented the Budget Vote of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) in the National Assembly, providing me with an opportunity to outline how DIRCO plans to utilise the budget allocated to the department to support progress on the priorities set out by President Cyril Ramaphosa during the State of the Nation Address (SONA).

By Dr Naledi Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

ACCELERATING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY TOWARDS A BETTER SOUTH AFRICA, AFRICA AND WORLD

SAHARA is still occupied and not free. Cuba remains blocked and extremism and terrorism destabilise the world. Powerful forces of economic bullying seek to alter the established multilateral world order. Africa too continues to have many development challenges. We have to promote our relations in this challenging context. We have to use our extensive network and limited resources to support the emergence of a world where all enjoy freedom and democracy, increased human security and peace. Our relationships with the world must be centred on achieving these outcomes.

This year, we celebrate 25 years of freedom. Even though we are young adults in democracy, we can as President Ramaphosa said in SONA “move forward together towards achieving a stronger, greater, more compassionate, more united harmonious South Africa” and we add Africa.

We recall too that Rwanda is commemorating 25 years since the genocide of 1994. We reaffirm our friendship and solidarity with the people and Government of Rwanda and salute them for their determined efforts to achieve reconciliation and a nation at peace with itself. The search for social cohesion and reconciliation have been put to good effect in both our countries and we should use this common experience to forge greater links.

The work we do will advance such links and also actively contribute to the seven priorities announced by the President:

• economic transformation and job creation
• education, skills and health
• consolidating the social wage through reliable and quality basic services
• spatial integration, human settlements and local government
• social cohesion and safe communities
• a capable, ethical and developmental state
• social cohesion and safe communities

We plan to use our diplomacy to build stronger links and support them to be innovative, productive and responsive. We have the capacity, let us use it strategically.

One of our major cooperation successes is our regional economic community that has established a strong platform for greater integration and growth. We must consolidate and expand trade and investment in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and give effect to the President’s assertion that: “Within the SADC region, we should prioritise development of cross-border value chains in key sectors such as energy, mining and mineral beneficiation, industrialisation and enhancing manufacturing capacity infrastructure development as well as agro-processing.”

We will, therefore, intensify several related SADC agendas. I am pleased with the progress that was achieved during South Africa’s tenure as SADC Chair.

Programs on regional trade has been increased by the operationalisation of the Integrated Real Time Gross Settlement System (RTGS), which is hosted by the South African Reserve Bank. A total of 81 banks (central banks and commercial banks) are participating in the system. The system aims at establishing a firm platform for increased intra-SADC trade and investment to facilitate further strengthen regional financial integration. The SADC-RTGS has performed impressively since July 2013 when the system went live, with a total of 1 275 951 transactions settled as at end 2018, representing R5.21 trillion. The benefits of the cross-border payment system are its efficiency and the reduction in transaction costs. This experience is going to be a valuable contribution to the development of the payment system announced at the African Union (AU) Summit in Niger in July 2019.

A second example is the completion and adoption of the SADC Energy Foresight and Assessment Study for Renewable Energy Value Chains.

Member states are going to use the recommendations to develop SADC renewable energy capacities. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was tasked to conduct a mapping exercise of potential renewable energy value chains for use by member states. A progress report will be presented to ministers in June 2020.

Thirdly, the SADC Engineering Needs and Numbers Study has been concluded. It will assist member states to implement programmes for developing enhanced engineering training at national or regional platform to enable career development through the sharing of experience and expertise. Furthermore, member states were also urged to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects at early stages in the education systems to increase the number of students able to take up studies in engineering fields.

The Common Market for East Africa (COMESA)-East African Community (EAC)- SADC Tripartite Summit agreed in October 2008 to accelerate the programme to harmonise trade and investment among the three regional economic communities (RECs), with a view to establishing a single free trade area (TFTA) encompassing all member states of the three RECs.

Our country appended her signature on the Agreement establishing the TFTA on 7 July 2017 in The Common Market for East Africa (COMESA)-East African Community (EAC)- SADC Tripartite Summit agreed in October 2008 to accelerate the programme to harmonise trade and investment among the three regional economic communities (RECs), with a view to establishing a single free trade area (TFTA) encompassing all member states of the three RECs.

Our country appended her signature on the Agreement establishing the TFTA on 7 July 2017 in Kinshasa, DRC. The agreement has been signed by 23 member countries and requires 14 ratifications to enter into force. By July 2019, only Kenya, Egypt, Uganda and South Africa had ratified the agreement.

South Africa will intensify its diplomatic efforts aimed at urging other TFTA members to fully utilise and ratify important trade facilitation measures, including an instrument for it to become operational. To this end, a TFTA Summit is scheduled to take place in January 2020 in Rwanda, and we hope that this Summit would be achieved by that date.

The recent report of Africa’s regional bodies at the AU’s Extra-Ordinary Summit confirmed
the critical role regional bodies are playing in our development programmes. Our commitment to Agenda 2063 remains steadfast. We are honoured to have been selected as the 2020 AU Chair. We are cognizant of the huge responsibility this places on South Africa, particularly the pursuit of the ambitious goal of silencing the guns by the end of 2020 on the continent. We had a rare opportunity to place this goal on top of the Agenda of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) when we assumed the Presidency of the council in October 2019. The theme for our Council Presidency was “Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World”. It is important to use our tenures at the UNSC and as Chair of the AU to implement the Enhanced Cooperation Agreement on Peace and Security as it forms an important commitment to conflict prevention and to addressing the root causes of conflict. This is the embodiment of the legacy of Nelson Mandela who, during his tenure as President of our country, worked tirelessly to advance peace and stability on the continent and globally, through mediation and preventative diplomacy. The continued existence of conflict in Africa diverts us away from our goal of peace and development. In this regard, we repeat our call for a total ceasefire in Libya and the pursuit of an inclusive national dialogue led by the AU. On Sudan, we deplore the recent violence and deaths in that country and welcome the agreement reached by the Transitional Military Council and the Forces for Freedom and Change. This is an opportunity for the people of Sudan to begin engendering peace and stability. We applaud the mediation efforts of the AU and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). As South Africa, we stand ready to assist where we can. Our experience in conflict resolution and in drafting a progressive Constitution, make us a partner genuinely able to resolve complex national problems.

President Ramaphosa has done much to assist the Kingdom of Lesotho to achieve political stability. While appreciating progress that has been made, he is of the view that there remains a lot of work to be done. We continue to cooperate with the Kingdom of Lesotho through our bilateral relations and through the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). South Africa has partnered with like-minded countries in the AU to implement the Enhanced Cooperation Agreement on Peace and Security as it forms an important commitment to conflict prevention and to addressing the root causes of conflict. This is the embodiment of the legacy of Nelson Mandela who, during his tenure as President of our country, worked tirelessly to advance peace and stability on the continent and globally, through mediation and preventative diplomacy.

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We strongly believe that a purposive system of multilateralism is necessary to deal with the global challenges we face. We are all interdependent in an ever-globalising world and can ill afford the pursuit of narrow self-interests.

This organisation has the ability to ensure that all who yearn for freedom achieve it. We know from our experience and history that it will only be through the determined efforts of the UN family that freedom for the people of Palestine can be achieved and only through the UN that the people of Saharawi can enjoy freedom.

As early as 1946, shortly after the creation of the UN, the issue of apartheid South Africa’s discriminatory policies was included as an agenda item in the first session of the UNGA. It was therefore with no great surprise that a democratic South Africa eagerly pursued its new international role, and enthusiastically took up its responsibilities as an active member of the UN.

We have sought to participate in all aspects of the UN, including by serving in its principal organs. The principles that motivate our action derive from a firm belief in multilateralism – especially a global governance system that is fair, equitable and representative; the promotion of peace and security through global disarmament; the pacific settlement of disputes and the promotion of good governance; the promotion of human rights; and the fight against poverty through the promotion of sustainable development. We strongly believe that a purposive system of multilateralism is necessary to deal with the global challenges we face. We are all interdependent in an ever-globalising world and can ill afford the pursuit of narrow self-interests.

Today, South Africa is able to partner with the UN in addressing the injustice and imbalances that are a legacy of our past. As government and civil society, in South Africa, we respect and act on the decisions of the UN. This includes actions in response to the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are a transformative global development agenda. South Africa’s National Development Plan is the policy we have adopted to execute our commitment to achieve the SDGs. Our plan complements our efforts to support peace, development and security on our continent and the aspirations of our African Union’s (AU) Agenda 2063.

We believe that in order to achieve these goals, all member states should establish partnerships, primarily with the private sector and civil-society organisations, to ensure a joint commitment aimed at realising a world free of poverty and underdevelopment.

Intolerance an obstacle

One of the biggest obstacles to building a world free from poverty and inequity is intolerance. This includes intolerance of other nations, intolerance of our fellow human beings as well as adequate care for the natural environment that sustains us all.

Intolerance is exhibited most gruesomely by the evidence of gender-based violence (GBV) and exclusion of women from many sectors in society. South Africa is taking urgent steps to address the scars of GBV. All of us need to act urgently to ensure that we all enjoy full access to human rights and bodily security. We also face an existential threat due to our intolerance, disrespect and veritable violence we inflict on the planet, which we all depend on.

This organisation, however, is a manifestation of the rejection of intolerance. It was created in the aftermath of a devastating world war as a global forum where nations of the world could address differences and work together for the common good of all people. Our annual gathering should provide us an opportunity to reconvene to these values.

We believe that we were all at UNGA74 because we are committed to the ideal of multilateral solutions to the world’s problems, which draws on strength through diversity – diversity of perspective born from differences in upbringing and culture. By being there, we recognised that we needed each other and we needed to work together.

We must rally against intolerance of any kind so that nations can live in peace and respect each other irrespective of nationality, religion, ethnic or social origin, gender or any other status. Through our differences, we should find strength and not division.

South Africa has not been immune from evidence of intolerance and division in some parts of our nation. The incidents of violence and looting that erupted in parts of our provinces of Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal were regrettable and shameful for a nation with such a proud history of struggle and international solidarity support.

The Government of South Africa strongly condemned these tragic actions and is working hard at ensuring that we address the security lapses and intolerance that led to this violence. We are working tirelessly to tackle crime and lawlessness and to ensure that the arrested criminals face the full might of the law.

We are also committed to addressing the inadequacy of our immigration administration in order to curb illegal migration and to make sure everyone who comes to South Africa is documented and safe. We plan to work with all countries of the continent to ensure that we implement our development strategies and use them to create increased economic opportunities for all our people so that we diminish feelings of resentment and antipathy.

Working with civil society, we will build bridges that allow all who live in South Africa to reach out to each other to build bonds of friendship and Pan-Africanism.

An unavailing commitment to Africa

South Africa has an unavailing commitment to our continent. Africa. We have made dedicated efforts to contribute positively in support of peace and security and we will continue these activities even as we work to address the inadequacies I have referred to.

South Africa has enjoyed democracy for 25 years and in that time, the leaders and the people of South Africa have consistently acknowledged the immeasurable contribution the people of Africa rendered in support of the struggle against apartheid. Our neighbouring states in particular and the rest of the countries in Africa made great sacrifices in support of the liberation movements and the oppressed citizens of South Africa.

We wish to reiterate that South Africa does not condone any forms of racism, religious discrimination, xenophobia and racism, and is intolerant of these forms of intolerance. In fact, South Africa has embraced millions of migrants and refugees from all over the continent of Africa, and the majority of our people have warmly embraced their brothers and sisters from Africa. We are determined to ensure it becomes a national embrace and not one limited to some communities.

We cannot decisively deal with the threats of poverty, unless we transform the current structure of the global economy, which continues to perpetuate divisions between the global North and global South. While a few enjoy the benefits of globalisation, the majority of the people of the world have not reaped its benefits. It is necessary for us all to work together and spare no effort in addressing the challenges brought by the impact of globalisation and the untransformed structure of global economy.

The issues of global peace and security continue to be one of our foremost priorities within the UN. In that regard, we welcome the UN’s efforts to address the plethora of challenges to peace and security that continue to be a major obstacle to the development and prosperity of our continent.

South Africa is serving as an elected member of the UN Security Council (SIC). The theme for our term is: “Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World”. This is the embodiment of the legacy of Nelson Mandela and furthers the objective of silencing the guns on the African continent by 2020. South Africa is using its tenure on the UNSC to promote the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly the AU.

We believe that the African continent should be the primary focus of our UN efforts. As members of the AU, we should support each other more, both within the AU and the UN. There are cases where the AU and the UN are not on the same page, and we should do all we can to harmonise our efforts.

We wish to underscore that South Africa’s membership in the UN is not a privilege, but a responsibility. We should work towards a world that is more just, peaceful and prosperous for all.

We are looking forward to working closely with the UNSC to achieve our common goals.

We are committed to the principles of the United Nations and will continue to support the UN’s efforts to address global challenges.

We wish to express our gratitude to the UN for its role in promoting peace, security, development and human rights.

We believe that the UN is indispensable to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is necessary for us all to work together and spare no effort in addressing the challenges brought by the impact of globalisation and the untransformed structure of global economy.

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The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, led the South African delegation to the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA74) in September 2019. This marked Minister Pandor’s inaugural participation in UNGA as Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. Minister Pandor participated in the annual General Debate, which is the occasion for world leaders to gather at the UN Headquarters to discuss global issues.

This year’s UNGA was scheduled for 23 to 30 September 2019 under the theme “Galvanizing Multilateral Efforts for Poverty Eradication, Quality Education, Climate Action and Inclusion.” The theme was announced by the President of the General Assembly, Prof. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria.

In her address to the UNGA, Minister Pandor outlined South Africa’s domestic and foreign policy goals and priorities. These included South Africa’s objectives as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from 2019 to 2020 and the country’s commitment to multilateralism in addressing current challenges facing the international community, including in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and the reform of global governance.

Minister Pandor attended several high-level meetings, side events and summits taking place on the margins of UNGA. The Minister and other members of the delegation also participated in various bilateral meetings with counterparts.

Other members of the South African delegation included the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize; the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Barbara Creecy; Minister in The Presidency, Jackson Mthembu; and Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula.
We live in a globally connected world where the fortunes of nations are interlinked. This is particularly true for African countries which are all interconnected on a people-to-people, social, trade and economic level.

Since the start of our democracy in 1994, South Africa has actively sought to strengthen ties with countries on the African continent. These partnerships not only contribute to the continent’s economic base but also positively impact the daily lives of ordinary citizens.

Today, these strong ties are being expanded across the continent in various ways, and most recently, was further strengthened by Toyota South Africa exporting Hilux kits for reassembly in Kenya. The reassembly kits emanate from Toyota’s manufacturing plant in Durban, which already builds completed vehicles for markets in Europe.

The first reassembled vehicles went on sale in October 2019 and local consumers can expect better prices as they are now deemed locally manufactured and void of any import duties. Furthermore, job creation, skills development and technology transfer that often accompanies such transactions will be strengthened.

The time is now for a new era of intra-African trade, where African countries no longer look abroad for the products and services. In supporting each other, we can establish new industries, create jobs and open up new markets in Africa.

While Toyota SA will initially supply all parts for the Hilux reassembly, it is expected that over time, local content such as batteries and glass for vehicles will be sourced from Kenyan companies themselves.

Importantly, the move deepens automotive manufacturing capabilities and expands the sector’s value chain for the East African region and the continent at large. Over the longer term, it can build Kenya’s vehicle assembly industry into a formidable sector.

South Africa supports these continental forays into vehicle manufacturing and envisions a series of regional industries across sub-Saharan Africa. Similar advances to develop the vehicle manufacturing industry in Nigeria, Ghana and Ethiopia are already underway.

South Africa looks forward to share its expertise with African nations and from it successfully attracting a number of multinational automotive producers as part of our Automotive Production and Development Programme. It promoted the country as an automotive manufacturing hub and South Africa is committed to use the strong relationship it has built to create manufacturing hubs across Africa.

We see South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria as central in their regions with neighbouring countries supporting the value chain with components, technology and services.

It is indisputable that our destiny as African nations are intrinsically linked and we must work together to grow business, trade and investment on the continent. The implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) will go a long way in building a united economic and trade front as it creates the world’s largest free trade area once operational.

South Africa, along with Kenya, ratified the agreement because we appreciate the potential it has to act as a catalyst to Africa’s economic growth. Through AfCFTA, African nations can expect to benefit from an increase in foreign direct investment, while also gaining access to a broader range of expertise. Together, we can tap into the many opportunities created by a single market of goods and services for 1.2 billion people.

In the spirit of advancing the AfCFTA, South Africa invites Kenyan businesses and investors to invest in the country.

South Africa’s imports from Kenya include tobacco, textile fibres, tea, plastic products and copper. There are also a number of South African companies already operating in Kenya in the pharmaceutical, banking, engineering and retail sectors.

South Africa is open for business and we are increasing our efforts to increase trade with African countries.

The recent attacks on foreign nationals in our country have been of great concern to our government. The criminal acts of a handful of perpetrators are in no way a reflection of the true state of relations between foreign nationals living and working within our communities.

South Africa is a multicultural society that promotes interaction among people of different backgrounds. In response, our law-enforcement agencies have increased visibility in volatile hotspots, while the South African Police Service will continue to act against any acts of lawlessness.

There will also be ongoing continuous joint inspections by the different law-enforcement agencies countrywide to ensure compliance with the laws of the country. These anti-crime operations have been implemented to create the space for South Africans and foreign nationals to go about their daily lives unhindered.

We are determined that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, and all who reside here must be free to participate in social and economic activities.

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By Phumla Williams
Acting Director-General, Government Communication and Information System
SA’s first six months on the UNSC

We must recognise that states are interdependent and even the most powerful countries cannot achieve security, nor maintain prosperity and ensure sustainable development for their people by acting unilaterally or in isolation.

South Africa entered the Security Council during a period in which the global environment was undergoing complex and unchartered changes. These included concerted challenges to multilateralism and a rules-based international order. Key global players have pursued a stronger domestic focus and with less of an appetite for dealing with global peace and security, development or human rights matters unless it is linked to their own self-interest.

We have seen a move by some to undermine collective multilateral action aimed at improving our world. Hard-fought gains that we have made in the last few years on peace and security and development are being threatened.

This has made it more difficult to respond to transnational challenges. We must recognise that states are interdependent and even the most powerful countries cannot achieve security, nor maintain prosperity and ensure sustainable development for their people by acting unilaterally or in isolation.

South Africa completed the first six months of its 24-month term as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) at the end of June 2019. Our election, by an overwhelming number of member states, followed the endorsement of our candidature by the Southern African Group at the UN and the African Union (AU).

We are serving on the council for the third time in 12 years – one of the few countries that have been afforded the privilege of serving on the council so often in quick succession. This is testament to the confidence that the international community and countries on the African continent have in our ability to play a meaningful role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

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South Africa’s theme for its term on the council is: “Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World”. This resonates with the legacy of President Nelson Mandela whose values and commitment to peace were commemorated in 2018 during the centenary of his birth.

We have been using our time on the council to emphasise the importance of a more proactive approach to the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in the form of drawing greater attention to preventative diplomacy mechanisms, as well as post-conflict reconstruction and development.

We are also emphasising the role of women in the resolution of conflict. South Africa is thus promoting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all Security Council resolutions in line with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security.

The AU committed to ending conflicts and silencing the guns on the continent by the year 2020. Serving on the UNSC also affords South Africa an opportunity to meaningfully contribute towards this goal. In this regard, South Africa is continuing to work towards strengthening the cooperation between the UNSC and regional organisations in terms of Chapter 8 of the UN Charter. South Africa’s efforts can be bolstered by the fact that the country will be chairing the AU in 2020.

The questions that we must consider are whether:

• we are leveraging our role in the council, as a country that has undergone our own transition and as a country that has and continues to play a role in conflict resolution?

• we are able to make a meaningful contribution to the work of the council, despite the constraints of being an elected member?

• we are able to maintain our values in carrying out our mandate?

This is our third time on the council. Have we taken on board the lessons learnt from our past experiences and are we able to improve on our past performance and be a responsible member of the council that is actively contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security?
South Africa occupies the most southern tip of Africa with its long coastline stretching more than 3,000 km from the desert border with Namibia on the Atlantic coast southwards around the tip of Africa and then north to the border of subtropical Mozambique on the Indian Ocean.
G20 Summit a success

In the interest of advancing African development, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

President Cyril Ramaphosa conducted a Working Visit to Japan from 28 to 29 June 2019, as well as led a South African delegation to the annual G20 Leaders’ Summit, his first international engagement since his inauguration in May 2019.

This was the first time Japan hosted the G20 Summit as well as the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors’ Meeting, the Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and other ministerial meetings.

The Leaders’ Summit was held in the city of Osaka, while other meetings were hosted at eight different locations throughout Japan.

The G20 was established in 1999 to be enabled through international policy and regulatory frameworks. Looking ahead, the leaders of the G20 committed to implementing the anti-corruption action plan for 2019 to 2021, which strengthens synergies among related international instruments.

There was also a strong will among the majority of the member countries to pursue the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement’s goals of dealing with climate change.

These will be in addition to their efforts to curbing illicit financial flows.

President Ramaphosa used the summit to solidify relations with several countries. Among them were the standing trilateral meeting with the AU Chair, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt, and New Partnership for Africa’s Development Chair, President Macky Sall of Senegal.

The Presidency said these discussions made it possible for these leaders to consolidate Africa’s position around the summit’s agenda.

President Ramaphosa was also invited to participate in the China-Africa Leaders’ Meeting which exchanged views on the priorities for G20, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and Africa’s Development Agenda.

The President also participated in the standing informal Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Leaders’ Meeting that was chaired by Brazil, which reflected on the current geopolitical environment and sought collaboration and synergies among BRICS members in preparation for the G20 Leaders’ Summit.

President Ramaphosa also had numerous bilateral meetings to strengthen relations with Russia, China, Japan and Saudi Arabia and the President of the World Bank.

The President concluded his Osaka programme by engaging with business during the Japan-South Africa CEO Business Roundtable, which was led by the Minister of Trade and Industry, Ebrahim Patel.

This meeting was also attended by more than 20 Japanese business representatives and a South African business contingent who explored business opportunities as well as opportunities to build partnerships in South Africa and Japan.

President Ramaphosa described the Working Visit as a success.

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There was also a strong will among the majority of the member countries to pursue the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement’s goals of dealing with climate change.
n her book, Fascism: A Warning, Madeleine Albright, former United States (US) Secretary of State, urges us all to stay engaged, and to fight monsters without turning into monsters ourselves. Let me respond by saying that these words of warning are not falling on deaf ears. Every part of the world needs fighters for justice in the face of attacks on human rights and on human rights defenders. There is a critical need for many more people to focus on delivering solutions without becoming part of the problem.

Have there been breakthroughs in gender equality? Do we have opportunities for targeted action, and investments that will bring us closer to substantive equality and change that will last?

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Let me start with the extraordinary moment in China in 1995, when 189 countries agreed on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This was the first-ever bold pledge by so many nations to agree to advance gender equality to such an extent. It became the blueprint for gender equality and an agenda for women’s empowerment across the world for the next 25 years.

It became for the women’s movement what the United Nations (UN) Charter is to UN member states: a place of historic, consensual agreement that we can lean on in the face of disagreements and changing administrations. It instigated a global network of gender activists that formed across every corner of the world on every issue.

It set out 12 critical areas of concern for women globally that have shaped thinking and global policymaking, with women making sure that they are not victims but are leaders, taking control of their own destiny. It set us on a path to separating out women’s issues distinctly, at the same time as affirming them as fully-fledged human rights.

It was agreed that “women’s rights are human rights and human rights are women’s rights”. That helped to change the way some parts of the world saw gender equality. Women’s rights gained respect in more nations and that enabled breakthroughs with continuing impact. For example, it was after 1995 that we began to see that we should understand “the girl child” as having importantly different needs and concerns from boys. All children have rights, but girls were denied many rights just because they were girls. That is when the world began to strongly champion the end of child marriage which affects girl children in a unique way, and the end of other harmful practices like female genital mutilation.

After 1995, we were much stronger in pinpointing the abnormality of underrepresentation of women and girls in important sectors of work and in leadership positions. We initiated targeted empowerment interventions everywhere, including in academia, in sports and in politics. And because women did so well, one woman looked like she was 10 people. That’s why sometimes there’s an illusion that there are too many women who have succeeded. But we still have a long way to go.

After 1995, we began to question the framing of laws and to see that they do not always impact everyone equally. In some cases, laws are prejudicial to women’s rights, such as inequality between men and women in marriage in some countries and in some laws. We have been on a drive to eliminate these discriminatory laws and enact enabling laws, but we are not yet done.

After 1995, we created institutions in society such as women’s ministries and gender commissions. In the US, you also had a global ambassador for women and girls, who did a great job there and around the world to facilitate the drive for women’s empowerment. UN Women was born in that era of creating these institutions.

We developed new vocabulary like “affirmative action” and “minority rights” as critical areas to be considered when taking decisions. We began to differentiate between equity and equality. We targeted and addressed women’s health and sexual and reproductive rights in a particular way.

We exposed and questioned unequal pay and the place of women in economies. Data was generated to illustrate the cost of discrimination. The World Economic Forum predicted that it could take over two centuries at the current pace of change to reach pay parity at work – not under our watch. We’re now asking more women to call for equal pay in every sector as we’ve not achieved yet what needs to be achieved on this issue.

We also drew attention to the burden of household care that disproportionately falls on women and showed how this stopped women from enjoying a full work life with full rewards. We were able to convince countries to address the participation of men in the care economy, leading to countries passing laws on parental and paternity leave. Not enough men are taking advantage of these opportunities even when it is paid leave, so the work is not finished.

Across the world, even the poorest countries have seen acceptance of the importance of girls’ education. Two-thirds of countries have now reached gender parity in primary school enrollment. This is not enough yet, because we started at a very low base in some countries, but it’s important to mention. And 13 million more girls enrolled in lower secondary school in 2014 than in 2002.

More work is needed to address the quality of education and the representation of girls in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects. We’ve also seen girls graduate from college in much higher numbers in many countries, and outperform their male counterparts.

In the past 25 years, we have exposed and fought against gender-based violence and sexual violence; we have argued for the notion of consent to be recognised in law and exposed the harm that gender-based violence inflicts on women’s health and well-being, as well as on society.

Thank you to #MeToo for driving this point home. Back in 1995, domestic violence, frequently committed and rarely punished, was not a crime in many countries. Just in the last decade, 47 countries have introduced laws to criminalise domestic violence. We now have 145 countries that have some form of legislation against domestic violence. But we’re not done yet in this area because there are about 40 countries still remaining to address this.

The fight to protect the planet, combat the effects of climate change and to position women as fighters in that protection must have a gender lens.

We have also worked for women to control their bodies. At the Aspen Institute, I was part of the team that worked in Malawi in order to support the work there to entrench women’s reproductive rights and health.

In June 2019, the International Labour Organisation adopted the landmark Convention 190 on violence and harassment at work after many years of trying. We are not done here either, but we have definitely been moving forward.

Some of the gains made have been reversed, and change is painfully slow.

Agenda 2030

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are fully aligned with the aspirations that we have as women and the need to move faster. UN Women helped to ensure that gender equality is front and centre in the 2030 Agenda. The biggest deliverables of that agenda, which will benefit all nations, depend on making substantive progress on gender equality.

We realise that collective thinking that is not shaped by an embrace of gender equality in all nations will be a setback for both the Beijing Platform for Action and the SDGs.

The state of the world

The world today is certainly not an easy global environment in which to be fostering gender equality. If we were to convene today in the same way as countries did in Beijing almost 25 years ago, we would not get 189 countries agreeing to entrench gender equality. As a result, we are not opening that document for anyone to touch. The risks are just too high.

We also know that, just as we have these challenges and pushback, we also are seeing progress – with women and an increasing number of men pushing back against the pushback.

The 2019 report by Civics on the State of Civil Society says that only 4% of the world’s population in 2018 lived in countries where the fundamental civil-society freedoms – of association, peaceful assembly and expression – are respected.

The same report also reminds us of some of the wins, where rights were gained, for example, abortion rights in Ireland and LGBTI rights in India last year; laws to end early, forced marriage in about a dozen countries; and removal of laws that are lentient to perpetrators of rape and honour killing.

These are some of the gains in the midst of pushback.

Trust deficit

The 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer reveals that trust has changed profoundly in the past year. Most people trust their employers above...
all institutions. It has not always been the case that workers trust bosses, but this is the way the world is today. What has happened to public sector institutions? This makes employers and private sector key partners for change.

The UN is a body that is responsible for forging global consensus among diverse players and setting standards for the world on various matters of national and global interest. The UN also has to earn the trust of nations.

We were therefore relieved that Edelman reported that trust in the UN had increased in 10 of the 26 markets surveyed. People with the harshest lives need to see that we work for them and that we have continuously earned their trust. Women, especially, need to feel that we are working for them and that we are serving their needs.

However, to achieve the necessary extent to drive forward gender equality, we need diverse allies who were not there in Beijing. We need young people, we need men and boys, we definitely need the private sector, and we need religious bodies and traditional authorities and leaders.

Men and boys

Men and boys are a key constituency to be engaged for gender equality and I have dedicated part of my term to cultivating these relationships.

Commitment of men with power and privilege could be a major game-changer, for example on equal pay, parity and inclusion of women in all areas where women are under-represented, and ensuring that the rights of the disabled, and people of different sexual orientations are also respected.

Men are key to ending violence against women, and to the recognition, redistribution and rewarding of unpaid care. Men can be key to ending harmful practices that impact women and girls such as forced marriages, as well as stereotypes and norms that are harmful to women and girls.

The anti-slavery movement did not only have slaves fighting for themselves. The fight to end colonisation and racism, or apartheid in South Africa, did not depend only on the people who were affected. It was a broad front, where the insiders and anyone who cared to make the world better took a stand. We need more people to do that for gender equality. We are not there yet, there just are not enough people on the right side of the fight.

Men with influence can choose to make bold changes about who sits on corporate boards, who are in the political parties where there are political bosses. They can also choose to make sure that representation of women in institutions is institutionalised.

In UN Women, we have launched the HeForShe movement, aimed at mobilising men to play a significant role to change the world for the better. These champions for change include CEOs, heads of state, and presidents of universities, who must step forward and do their job. And we will not reward fishes for swimming. This is their responsibility.

Discriminatory laws

Discriminatory laws, which are institutionalised discrimination, are still a big challenge that we face. We have recognised that these laws go a long way towards robbing women of a lifetime of possibilities.

There are over 2.5 billion women and girls around the world who are affected by discriminatory laws, who live in jurisdictions where not all their rights are protected. We have a fast-track initiative (Equity in Law for Women and Girls by 2030) to make sure that we have changed this by 2023 in 100 countries that are willing. We should not arrive in 2030 in a world in which we still have these laws.

Over the past 25 years, there has been some progress, but gaps in legal protection remain worldwide, leaving women without protection or legal basis to claim their rights, and to share development.

Ending violence against women

Ending violence against women is another important area that needs all of us to work together.

In particular, we are targeting the police, as protectors, as preventers of violence against women, and as the people who are responsible to make sure that perpetrators are brought to book. Women are fighting every day for themselves. We want law enforcement also to do their job.

Parity and inclusion

On parity and inclusion, we are also fighting very hard to ensure that we move away from the current scenario where 75% of parliamentarians in the world are men. These men make laws that affect all of us. Surely this is a lot of work for them, while we are available, and able to do the work. We know what we want for ourselves and for our nations. We therefore see this as another broad front for change in order to make sure that we support women and that we create the possibility for women to take their rightful place.

Coalition-building

As we implement the SDGs and as we push forward with the implementation of the unfinished business of the Beijing Platform, we are also consolidating all of these big changes and taking them forward. We are calling on young people to be part of this. We are calling on everybody to join us in what we are calling “coalitions for change”. These are coalitions that will make sure that we focus on the remaining hardcore issues for the achievement of gender equality.

We are reviewing scientifically what the issues are that need to be pushed forward. We already have 140 countries that have presented us their reviews and their reports where they pinpoint the areas that need a big push.

We want to make sure that we use these reports and this information to take the world forward.

As Secretary Albright says in her book, Presidents Mandela and Lincoln “each fought with monsters; neither of them became one.”

Gender inequality is a monster that we can defeat together, without becoming monsters ourselves, but by unleashing the Mandela and the Lincoln in us.
Despite different ideologies and degrees of development, Cuba and South Africa share aspects of a historical legacy of colonisation, racism, slavery, liberation struggle, revolution and post-colonial reconstruction and development.

In 26 July 1953, the Moncada military barracks in Santiago de Cuba was the site of an armed attack by a group of 135 revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro. This attack is widely accepted as the spark that ignited the Cuban revolution. Castro was charged and ended his legal defence with the now-famous closing argument: "History will absolve me".

This resonates with Nelson Mandela’s statement from the dock that ended: "It is an ideal for which I hope to live and see realised ... but if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die!

Cuba’s relations with African liberation movements began in 1963, soon after the struggle’s triumph over the Batista dictatorship in Cuba. Members of the Cuban leadership travelled to Algiers to build formal relations with the Algerian National Liberation Front, and Che Guevara’s trip around Africa in 1963 was a significant turning point in strengthening Cuba’s relationship with liberation movements around the continent.

Thus, from 1963 until 1991, Cuba supported interventions in 17 African countries involving hundreds of thousands of Cuban soldiers, doctors and social workers. Another aspect of Cuba’s foreign policy was its strong stance against the apartheid regime at international fora. Cuba’s support for United Nations (UN) Resolution 435, as well as direct support to Angola’s struggle to defend its independence from 1975 until 1988 against apartheid military incursions, formed the centrepiece of Cuban policy towards southern African liberation movements. Indeed, history did absolve Fidel Castro and continues to absolve him. The evidence indicates that the Cuban revolution created a better life for all its citizens, which included wiping out illiteracy; free, quality education from early childhood development to tertiary level; returning the land and houses to the people; and free healthcare and social services, which increased the quality of life and life expectancy, thus giving history did absolve Fidel Castro and continues to absolve him. The evidence indicates that the Cuban revolution created a better life for all its citizens, which included wiping out illiteracy; free, quality education from early childhood development to tertiary level; returning the land and houses to the people; and free healthcare and social services, which increased the quality of life and life expectancy, thus giving back dignity to the ordinary people of Cuba.

Despite different ideologies and degrees of development, Cuba and South Africa share aspects of a historical legacy of colonisation, racism, slavery, liberation struggle, revolution and post-colonial reconstruction and development.

As South Africa proceeds through another decade of transformation and post-apartheid rule, her relationship with Cuba is bound by our mutual developmental agendas as the country balances its internal needs with competitiveness in the global arena. Equally, born more than half a century ago, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) embodied the collective identity and aspirations of newly independent nations in Africa and Asia. The genesis of NAM is relevant as a voice advocating for the poor, less-developed countries and highly indebted countries. Deepening South-South solidarity and using NAM as a pivotal instrument to build bridges with the North and highly industrialised countries of the world may present the best interlocutor for international diplomacy.

As we begin our next 25 years of democracy, we will continue to support our friends such as Cuba, Iran, Venezuela, Palestine, Nicaragua, Western Sahara and every other country which suffers from unilateral economic blockades, violations of international law and territorial sovereignty.
The struggle for freedom against the apartheid oppressors in South Africa mirrored Bangladesh’s struggle for nationhood.

By Ambassador Anil Soolkai
Deputy Director-General, Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Twenty-five years ago, on 10 September 1994, Bangladesh and South Africa formalised diplomatic relations. This year, we celebrate 25 years of a free democratic republic. South Africa wishes to express its gratitude to Bangladesh and the Bangladeshi people for their contribution to our fight for freedom, liberation and democracy. Bangladesh, since its own independence, has remained a most principled supporter in our struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination, and consistently called on the international community to take action against the apartheid regime. It is therefore befitting that we celebrate with our esteemed friends our freedom as well as their time and history. Both venalised to do what is right. Both believe in freedom, and both have not dared to do. They fought colonialism, followed by a war against an oppressor. They took unpopular, but courageous, decisions. Both were imprisoned for extended periods but their legacies are encapsulated in a life committed to reconciliation and nation-building.

Bangabandhu stated that: “To do anything great, one has to be ready to sacrifice and show one’s devotion. I believe that those who are not ready to sacrifice are not capable of doing anything worthy.”

Shikhtu Mijib dedicated his life to fighting for the just causes of East Bengal, demanded for Bengali to be made one of the state languages, freed the Muslim League leadership from the clutches of a few aristocrats, establish East Bengal’s rightful place in the administrative hierarchy in Pakistan, and the fair and equitable allocation of the country’s resources between the two wings of the country.

Bangladesh attained its independence on 26 March 1971 as the culmination of decades of struggle for freedom and statehood under his inspiring and resolute leadership. At his call, the Bengali people rose in resistance and waged an epic war for the liberation of their land.

Upon taking office, the Government under his leadership had to deal with the countless problems of a war-torn country. Law and order had to be restored, infrastructure developed and, most importantly, the Government had to address the most immediate needs of underdevelopment and large-scale poverty.

The struggle for freedom against the apartheid oppressors in South Africa mirrored Bangladesh’s struggle for nationhood.

We also therefore celebrate Madiba and Bangabandhu’s dedication to forge a close partnership between our two sub-continents to fight colonialism in any form and emancipate the people of the Global South from poverty and underdevelopment, in their common struggle for a fairer world.

The 1965 Bandung Conference that gave rise to the “Bandung Spirit” of South-South cooperation, underscored the principles of mutual interest, solidarity and respect for national sovereignty. These principles continue to play an important role in shaping and guiding our relations.

Committed to the pursuit of global peace and prosperity through cooperation and partnership

South Africa prides itself for being a progressive society and part of a progressive humanity that observes and respects the equality of all people and of all sovereign states. We are firmly committed as one of the co-sponsors of our foreign policy to the pursuit of global peace and prosperity through cooperation and partnership, through multilateralism and through the consistent and fair application of a rules-based global architecture.

We maintain this position at a very uncertain time internationally, a time when unilateral action is threatening to undermine this multilateral architecture. The emergence of unilateralism is taking place against the backdrop of rising nationalism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. It takes place at a time when the problems facing the world – from climate change to terrorism, from migration to poverty – require ever-closer collaboration among the countries of the world.

It’s important to emphasise that we should not abandon the institutions that have been set up over the last 70 years to mediate and manage international relations. Rather, we should strengthen them and, where necessary, reform them to become more effective and inclusive.

This approach is reinforced by a number of disturbing recent global developments. The resurgence of geopolitical rivalry, which has not been experienced since the Cold War era, has a severely negative implication for international peace and security.

There is a growing challenge to many multilateral arrangements, such as the withdrawal from commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, on climate change, financing for development and in nuclear non-proliferation.

The rise of trade protectionism threatens the multilateral trading system we agreed upon in Marrakesh in 1994 and Doha in 2001. While globalisation has brought many opportunities and much progress, it has also contributed to rising inequality among states and within states. These challenges are by no means insurmountable. However, they do require a return to a cooperative and inclusive approach to international relations.

A “Development Miracle”

South Africa values its relations with Bangladesh and recognises that there is much for us to learn from this country in achieving socio-economic achievements within set timeframes. Bangladesh has made enormous strides in addressing the socio-economic challenges faced not only by the people of Bangladesh but the wider region. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh is well on its way to achieving Vision 2021 and 2041 as it strives to transform itself into a “Sonar Banga”, having already attained the status of a low-middle-income country and crossed the thresholds for graduating out of Least Developed Country category. Due to the socio-economic achievements of the present Government, Bangladesh is now recognised worldwide as a “Development Miracle”.

The World Bank in an April 2019 report ranks Bangladesh among the top five fastest-growing economies in the world. The economy has grown at an astounding rate of more than 6% for seven consecutive years, and lifted many of Bangladesh’s poorest citizens out of destitution. According to the World Bank, the number of people living in extreme poverty has shrunk from about 19% of the population to about 9% over the same period. Development in social indicators has also shown positive results due to human capital investments, with Bangladesh’s life expectancy increased by 72% and infant mortality decreased by around 77% since 1990. Within South Asia, Bangladesh ranks first in gender equality, second in foreign exchange earnings and third in life expectancy and peacefulness.

Bangladesh also plays a key role in advancing South-South cooperation and we congratulate the country for the establishment of the South-South Centre for Knowledge and Innovation to promote closer cooperation among developing nations as we address the challenges arising from the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Pursuing the African Agenda

Turning to South Africa’s foreign policy objectives, our foreign policy is an extension of our national policy and is based on our national interests and objectives. The development of South Africa is inextricably linked to that of the African regeneration; to this end, the African Agenda is central to South Africa’s foreign policy aims and objectives. Consequently, we have defined and continue to pursue an African Agenda, which is predicated on the entrenchment of democracy, equality, respect for human rights, peace and security, and acceleration of economic growth for the betterment of all African citizens.

South Africa’s foreign policy priorities the development of our immediate neighbours in the southern Africa region. As members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), we are committed to pursuing regional integration and industrialisation. It is our belief that the development of regional value chains and industrialisation in the region will not only assist in addressing South Africa’s own domestic socio-economic challenges, but those of the region as well. South Africa’s vision is that a fully integrated and industrialised and prosperous southern African region can attract investment in our region.
South Africa is further involved in conflict resolution, prevention, and mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding on the African continent. Our involvement has been informed by our drive to ensure Africa’s Renaissance for all of Africa with the goal of the continent being at peace with itself. This goal is in line with our understanding that you cannot have peace without development and development without peace.

The advancement of the African continent in turn is also intricately connected to that of the developing countries of the Global South, and Agenda 2063 emphasises the value of the strategic partnerships as we strive for prosperity and peace on the continent. Hence, the second pillar of our foreign policy, namely: South-South cooperation. It is under this pillar that our close cooperation with Bangladesh occurs in a host of international groupings and also forms the basis of our bilateral relations.

South Africa and the UNSC

In January 2019, South Africa took its non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) under the theme: “Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World”, which is guided by the legacy of President Mandela. We will promote the maintenance of international peace and security through advocating for the peaceful settlement of disputes and inclusive dialogue. We share Bangladesh’s concern on the violation of international humanitarian law and international humanitarian law in occupied Palestine territory, and note with concern the humanitarian disaster unfolding on its borders with Myanmar. South Africa commends the efforts of the Bangladesh Government for assisting these vulnerable persons and call for a peaceful and sustainable resolution to this situation.

South Africa recognises the impressive contribution of Bangladesh as one of the largest troop and police contributors to UN peacekeeping operations, and the current participation in six missions on the African continent. A stated ambition of Agenda 2063 is the silencing of the guns by 2020. As South Africa prepares to take over the Chairship of the African Union (AU) in 2020, we are acutely aware of this responsibility, and rely on the partnerships forged with the countries of the Global South. We recognise that we have a partner in Bangladesh in achieving this noble ambition. Guided by the philosophy of ‘friendship to all and malice to none’, Bangladesh initiated the UN General Assembly Resolution on Culture of Peace and Non-Violence and South Africa joined the international community in celebrating the 20th anniversary of this resolution in 2019.

During our tenure, we will also seek to ensure that the work of the UNSC mainstreams a gender perspective, including in its resolutions. Peace cannot be achieved without the participation of women in peace negotiations, peacekeeping operations, post-conflict peacebuilding and governance. The promotion of women, peace and security in the resolution of conflict was on the agenda when South Africa took over the Presidency of the UNSC in October this year. Both South Africa and Bangladesh are long-standing members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, the G77 plus China and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

IORA is very important to South Africa, as we consider it a result of the vision of President Mandela where during a visit to India in 1995 he acknowledged that:

“The natural urge of history and geography should broaden itself to include the concept of an Indian Ocean Rim for socio-economic cooperation and other peaceful endeavours. Recent changes in the international system demand that the countries of the Indian Ocean shall become a single market.”

The theme of South Africa’s IORA Chairship (2017 to 2019), “IORA – Uniting the Peoples of Africa, Asia, Australasia and the Middle East through Enhanced Cooperation for Peace, Stability and Sustainable Development”, acknowledged and stressed the importance of the Indian Ocean becoming a zone of peace and stability for cooperation and development. The Indian Ocean Rim region is at the crossroads of global economic powerhouses where greater trade and economic connectivity are being developed.

Within this shifting global economic and geopolitical landscape of the 21st century, the “Indo-Pacific” has been identified as the new economic and strategic zone where greater trade and economic challenges facing the Indian Ocean Rim region are an increasingly contested space. It is within this myriad of security and socio-economic challenges facing the Indian Ocean Rim region that it will critically important that we have a strong IORA at its core. South Africa, in its role as IORA Chair, has identified five fundamental goals the Government aims to achieve to transform the South African society by 2030. The goals are:

• no one in South Africa will go hungry
• the economy will grow at a much faster rate than the population
• two million more young people will be in employment
• schools will have better educational outcomes and every 10-year-old will be able to read for meaning
• violent crime will be halved.

Like most emerging market economies, South Africa has not been immune to the challenges in the global environment posed by narrow nationalism and the rise of protectionism. We entered a technical recession in the first half of 2018. The Government responded with an economic stimulus and recovery package aimed at mitigating growth and promoting faster job creation. We have also been decisive in ensuring policy certainty. These and other interventions have set us firmly on the path of recovery.

South Africa’s future economic prospects are favourable and we are indeed an attractive investment destination.

South Africa is mindful of the importance to keep the values of the Bandung Spirit alive as we move forward to secure economic freedom and development for the people of our countries, regions and sub-continents. The South Africa Bangladesh partnership is securely anchored in common values and a shared vision of social and economic emancipation for all our people.
The Case for Investing in South Africa

1. VIBRANT EMERGING MARKET
2. MOST DIVERSE ECONOMY IN AFRICA
3. LARGEST PRESENCE OF MULTINATIONALS ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT
4. PROGRESSIVE CONSTITUTION & INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY
5. FAVOURABLE ACCESS TO GLOBAL MARKETS

South Africa’s Public Diplomacy in action

UBUNTU

Diplomacy | Diplomacy

EXCELLENT QUALITY OF LIFE

SOUTH AFRICA’S YOUNG, EAGER LABOUR FORCE

WORLD-CLASS INFRASTRUCTURE & LOGISTICS

ABUNDANT NATURAL RESOURCES

ADvanced Financial Services & Banking Sector

The African Continental Free Trade Area will boost intra-African trade and create a market of around 3.4 billion people with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) of US$2.3 trillion that will drive economic development.

SA has a progressive Constitution and an independent judiciary. The country has a mature and accessible legal system, providing certainty and respect for the rule of law.

SA has entered into a number of agreements in place, creating an export market.

Growing middle class, affluent consumers, and excellent returns on investment.
Let’s all be tourists

In 2018, South Africa recorded a total arrivals figure of 7.8 million from within the African continent, which represents the largest percentage of international arrivals to South Africa. This gives us a great opportunity to increase our market penetration in these large outbound tourist markets globally, with great prospects for growing the number of international tourists.

With our renewed focus in this market, we project that our efforts will generate an increase in the share of international arrivals to South Africa from China to over 7% of our total international tourist composition.

We also project an increase of the share of international arrivals from India to over 7% of our total international tourist composition. To achieve this, we will position South Africa as a China- and India-friendly tourism destination through relevant content-reviewed platforms and a comprehensive China and India Readiness Programme, developed in close partnership with the private sector. We plan to use technological platforms such as WeChat and Alipay, for ease of access to the Chinese market.

Establishing an air transport link between South Africa and India will receive our utmost attention. We will be engaging with various airlines to explore this possibility.

In 2018, South Africa recorded a total arrivals figure of 7.8 million from within the African continent, which represents the largest percentage of international arrivals to South Africa. We will create and share first-hand information to promote South Africa so that we become a destination of choice for the African continent and the Diaspora.

Initiatives will include partnering with online travel agencies, targeting the “leisure” market, partnerships with South African product owners to drive affordable family packages and delegate boosting at exhibitions, association meetings and business chambers.

The European market remains an important market for our tourism sector. Visitors from Europe can easily get visas that allow them to stay for 90 days. The close ties of the time zone between South African and European countries and our pleasant weather position South Africa as a preferred destination for both business and leisure tourism for many Europeans. As for Americans, we have seen growth in the number of visitors, and we expect the growth trend to continue.

We shall do our very best to ensure that we remove all obstacles for tourists to enjoy their journey to South Africa. In this regard, we are happy to report that recent visa waiver for Russia and Angola had a positive impact on the number of international tourists who have visited our shores. We also encouraged that South Africa’s new e-visa system is expected to launch within this financial year. This demonstrates that close collaboration between the two departments can lead to a positive economic impact which augurs well with the priority of the Sixth Administration of working together to grow our economy.

As we anticipate an increase in foreign tourist arrivals, we are aware that our primary concerns are safety and security. We are at an advanced stage of developing the National Tourism Safety Strategy, working with the South African Police Service, provinces, local government and members of the sector.

In response to some of the issues raised by tourists on social media platforms and other interactions, we are also engaging the private sector to work with us to make our country an attractive destination. For an example, access to broadband connectivity has become a basic need for the world’s population and in light of that, we are engaging with mobile network operators to make mobile data easily accessible and affordable.

We shall be active in our strategy, working with provinces, municipalities, civil communities and industry to get South Africans to travel our country. We are saying to South Africans: you are not fated to labour without rest. We would like to say to them that the beauty of the landscapes, our rich cultural diversity and our heritage, from the ancient city of Mapungubwe to Robben Island, from the Kgalagadi to Makhorora Mountains, are our common property from which all of us must feed to nurture our humanity. Simply put, let’s all be tourists.

We will also be collaborating with the private sector to create programmes to market a diversity of travel packages for South Africans of all ages and from all walks of life. In due course, we will be announcing a partnership with the retail sector that is aimed at creating opportunities for South Africans to travel their country.

We invite the financial services sector to support the tourism sector by creating financial products such as travel “stokvels” that will enable South Africans to save for travel and to make available travel packages that will make travelling more affordable for lower- to middle-income groups.

We also intend establishing a national tourism visitor and information management system that will, among other things, provide an affordable booking and transaction system and market access for a range of tourist facilities.

The Department of Tourism will continue to implement programmes aimed at growing our economy and developing the capabilities of South Africans across the tourism value chain.

Work is underway to develop a comprehensive tourism infrastructure plan.

Let’s all be tourists

In 2018, South Africa recorded a total arrivals figure of 7.8 million from within the African continent, which represents the largest percentage of international arrivals to South Africa.

By Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane

Minister of Tourism

W e must boldly re-double our efforts in increasing trade between South Africa and Latin America and South Africa and the Caribbean to realise the potential of our respective countries. Our efforts should better the lives of our people through bilateral cooperation in mutually beneficial fields.

Twenty-five years ago, the people of our beautiful country and the world celebrated the birth of South Africa’s constitutional democracy. The ascendency of our icon, Nelson Mandela to the position of President of the democratic South Africa inspired hope not only for our country but for the rest of the world that indeed good can triumph over evil. Were it not for the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality that beset our country. Hence, we are making a call that says working together, we can grow the economy through tourism.

Tourism has an important role to play in placing our economy on a sustainable inclusive growth trajectory. Globally, tourism has demonstrated a higher growth rate than any other sector, with arrivals in emerging economies up to 2030 projected to grow at double the rate of advanced economies.

Locally, the growth of the tourism sector has been a boon for our economy. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the 2018 contribution of the tourism sector in South Africa directly accounted for 2.8% of real gross domestic product (GDP), which amounts to R139 billion and this is projected to grow to R145.3 billion for 2019.

The indirect contribution of the tourism sector to our economy’s GDP in 2018 stood at an even higher 8.2%, which captures the strong economic links to the demand and supply side that the sector has with other sectors of the South African economy. In addition, the tourism sector’s direct employment accounted for 4.2% of total employment in the South African economy in 2018 and this is projected to increase to 709 000 jobs in 2019, while tourism’s indirect contribution to total employment stood at 9.2% for 2018. A sustainable tourism economy requires balanced performance in respect of both international and domestic tourism.

In his state of the Nation Address in June 2019, President Cyril Ramaphosa outlined an ambitious target of more than doubling our international arrivals to 21 million by 2030. To achieve this international arrival target, the growth rate of international arrivals needs to increase to over 4% in the short run and be consistently maintained in excess of 6% until 2030.

While our international arrivals have grown over the last two decades, our share of the global 1.4 billion international tourism arrivals in 2018 leaves room for significant international arrivals from India to over 7% of our total international tourist composition.

We project an increase of the share of international arrivals from India to over 7% of our total international tourist composition. To achieve this, we will position South Africa as a China- and India-friendly tourism destination through relevant content-reviewed platforms and a comprehensive China and India Readiness Programme, developed in close partnership with the private sector. We plan to use technological platforms such as WeChat and Alipay, for ease of access to the Chinese market.

Establishing an air transport link between South Africa and India will receive our utmost attention. We will be engaging with various airlines to explore this possibility.

In 2018, South Africa recorded a total arrivals figure of 7.8 million from within the African continent, which represents the largest percentage of international arrivals to South Africa.

We will create and share first-hand information to promote South Africa so that we become a destination of choice for the African continent and the Diaspora.

Initiatives will include partnering with online travel agencies, targeting the “leisure” market, partnerships with South African product owners to drive affordable family packages and delegate boosting at exhibitions, association meetings and business chambers.

The European market remains an important market for our tourism sector. Visitors from Europe can easily get visas that allow them to stay for 90 days. The close ties of the time zone between South African and European countries and our pleasant weather position South Africa as a preferred destination for both business and leisure tourism for many Europeans. As for Americans, we have seen growth in the number of visitors, and we expect the growth trend to continue.

We shall do our very best to ensure that we remove all obstacles for tourists to enjoy their journey to South Africa. In this regard, we are happy to report that recent visa waiver for Russia and Angola had a positive impact on the number of international tourists who have visited our shores. We also encouraged that South Africa’s new e-visa system is expected to launch within this financial year. This demonstrates that close collaboration between the two departments can lead to a positive economic impact which augurs well with the priority of the Sixth Administration of working together to grow our economy.

As we anticipate an increase in foreign tourist arrivals, we are aware that our primary concerns are safety and security. We are at an advanced stage of developing the National Tourism Safety Strategy, working with the South African Police Service, provinces, local government and members of the sector.

In response to some of the issues raised by tourists on social media platforms and other interactions, we are also engaging the private sector to work with us to make our country an attractive destination. Forexample, access to broadband connectivity has become a basic need for the world’s population and in light of that, we are engaging with mobile network operators to make mobile data easily accessible and affordable.

We shall be active in our strategy, working with provinces, municipalities, civil communities and industry to get South Africans to travel our country. We are saying to South Africans: you are not fated to labour without rest. We would like to say to them that the beauty of the landscapes, our rich cultural diversity and our heritage, from the ancient city of Mapungubwe to Robben Island, from the Kgalagadi to Makhorora Mountains, are our common property from which all of us must feed to nurture our humanity. Simply put, let’s all be tourists.

We will also be collaborating with the private sector to create programmes to market a diversity of travel packages for South Africans of all ages and from all walks of life. In due course, we will be announcing a partnership with the retail sector that is aimed at creating opportunities for South Africans to travel their country.

We invite the financial services sector to support the tourism sector by creating financial products such as travel “stokvels” that will enable South Africans to save for travel and to make available travel packages that will make travelling more affordable for lower- to middle-income groups.

We also intend establishing a national tourism visitor and information management system that will, among other things, provide an affordable booking and transaction system and market access for a range of tourist facilities.

The Department of Tourism will continue to implement programmes aimed at growing our economy and developing the capabilities of South Africans across the tourism value chain.

Work is underway to develop a comprehensive tourism infrastructure plan.
in anticipation of future growth of the sector. Under this project, four tourism master plans will be developed in the following areas:

- Port St Johns to Coffee Bay
- Honda/Okhahlamba to Port Nolloth
- Sutherland to Camarvon
- Orange River Mouth to Vioolsdrift.

We will intensify our efforts to accelerate economic transformation and job creation through the development of tourism enterprises. In this regard, the department implements enterprise development programmes to transform the sector and provide developmental support to rural tourism enterprises over the medium term.

The programme comprises hub-based tourism incubation support and offsite national support for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

The establishment of the Tourism Incubation Programme has been identified as one of the elements of the Enterprise Development and Support Programme. In 2017, four incubators were established in the following areas:

- Pilanesberg in the Bojanala District Municipality in the North West
- Manyeleti in Ehlanzeni District Municipality in Mpumalanga
- Phalaborwa under Mopani District Municipality in Limpopo
- Mier under ZF Mgcawu District Municipality in the Northern Cape.

We will also implement the SANParks Contractor Incubator in the following national parks:

- Kruger National Park
- Addo National Park
- Marakele National Park
- Golden Gate National Park
- Kgala (Kgalagadi) National Park.

We will also implement the SANParks Contractor Incubator in the following national parks:

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- Golden Gate National Park
- Kgala (Kgalagadi) National Park.

SMMEs and cooperatives from communities surrounding the parks will be incubated to enable them to set up sustainable businesses while implementing a maintenance programme in the five national parks as part of a job summit commitment from the sector.

Through the Green Tourism Incentive Programme, we aim to encourage tourism enterprises to move towards sustainable management of water and energy resources as part of responsible tourism practices. Overall, we are steadily increasing activities in the tourism sector aimed at mitigating climate change, which is a clear demonstration of our commitment to maintaining a sustainable destination.

The Tourism Transformation Fund, in collaboration with the National Empowerment Fund, was introduced in 2016 with the aim to improve transformation through access finance.

We have identified some weaknesses with this programme with regard to the accessibility of the funds and we will work towards reconfiguring the fund so that it can produce desirable results.

The department will continue to implement the Working for Tourism Programme through Expanded Public Works Programme funding. The programme focuses on job creation linked to the development of tourism infrastructure and skills development within the tourism sector.

We are also mindful of the fact that the disruptive technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution will have an impact on the tourism industry. In this regard, we will work closely with the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which has been tasked by President Ramaphosa to develop South Africa’s strategy around this phenomenon, the impact of the technological advancements associated with it, and how to leverage from the opportunities it provides. In addition, the Department of Tourism will host a conference on innovation in tourism so that all stakeholders can come together to give due consideration to the impact of innovation on the sector. This will help us prepare the tourism sector for this inevitable revolution.

Transformation in the sector remains a big challenge and it is an area that will continue to receive our attention.

Transformation programmes will focus on five priority areas, namely: ownership, management control, skills development, enterprise, and supplier development, as well as socio-economic development.

We are going to scale up on the implementation of our flagship Women in Tourism Programme, which supports the development and empowerment of women in the tourism sector. It is our belief that transformational efforts must be deliberate and they should be consciously driven.

The department will work on the development of a five-year strategic plan that will inform the overall tourism agenda for the Sixth Administration. SA Tourism will continue to implement its marketing activities to promote South Africa as a preferred leisure and business events destination in line with the priorities of the Sixth Administration and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework.

The journey to economic recovery will not be easy but working together, we can grow our economy.

In the words of the former Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah: “Countrymen, the task ahead is great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious task ahead is great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious task ahead is great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious task ahead is great indeed, and heavy is the responsibility; and yet it is a noble and glorious.”
Social responsibility has been at the heart of Cipla since inception. It mirrors Cipla’s relentless commitment to improve lives and aims to build access and affordability for the most vulnerable groups in society. The Cipla Foundation has initiatives spanning healthcare, education and enterprise development with its aim to improve life for all South Africans.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.ciplafoundationsa.co.za

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Caring for life

"Our work is not just about making medicines. It is about making a difference."

- Dr YK Hamied, Cipla chairman

Purpose Inspired
We pride ourselves on a strong legacy of crusading care. Cipla played a pioneering role in HIV/AIDS treatment globally as the first company to reduce the cost of ARVs to less than one dollar a day thereby improving the lives of millions of patients. We strive to find solutions that deliver on our ethos of “Caring for Life”.

Innovation Driven
As part of our commitment to manufacturing in Africa for Africa, Cipla is expanding our local manufacturing footprint. Our state-of-the-art factories in Uganda and South Africa, along with other manufacturing facilities worldwide, have the stamp of approval from all the main regulators and enable us to advance healthcare for all.

Excellence focussed
Cipla believes everyone has the right to world-class medication at affordable prices. Our unique formulations enable us to produce medicines of superior quality across a diverse range of therapeutic categories.

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Miles for Smiles
Miles for Smiles creates awareness and raises funds for Operation Smile to facilitate corrective surgery on children born with cleft lip and cleft palates.

2,500 smiles
R8.7 million raised since 2006

Ajuga
Ajuga creates a safe environment where young children can learn, grow and thrive.

5 ECDs
3 créches since 2012

Sha’p left
Sha’p Left is a nurse-driven primary healthcare service that teaches people close to home in their communities.

8 urban nurse surgeries
3 rural nurse surgeries since 2014

Owethu
Owethu focuses on providing access to a broad range of primary healthcare services to communities most in need.

2 clinics since 2014
The South African Embassy in London, known as South Africa House, is a prominent landmark building on Trafalgar square. It not only houses the offices of the High Commissioner, but is also home to the South African Consulate.

South Africa House was designed by Sir Herbert Baker and built by Holland, Hannen & Cubitts in the 1930s. Sir Herbert Baker was an English architect who is remembered for being a dominant force in South African architecture, having designed many of South Africa's iconic buildings, including Groote Schuur Hospital and Wynberg Boys' High School in Cape Town; St Andrew's College in Grahamstown; and the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

South Africa House was opened in 1933 and has been the centre of South Africa's diplomatic presence in the United Kingdom (UK) ever since.

About a mile down Whitehall is a symbol of a very different moment in South African history – the bronze statue of Mandela at Parliament Square, unveiled in 2007 at a ceremony attended by Mandela himself.

South Africans can be proud of their prominent landmark in London. South Africa House is no longer a focal point of unrest but rather a beautiful building that is a testament to the solid relationship between South Africa and the United Kingdom.

South Africa House: Testament to the solid relationship between SA and UK

South Africa House was opened in 1933 and has been the centre of South Africa's diplomatic presence in the United Kingdom (UK) ever since.

The London-based organisation was instrumental in applying pressure for the decades of economic, cultural and sporting sanctions that so damaged the apartheid regime, while South Africa House was a regular venue for protests and rallies. In 1985, a Polish artist famously projected a swastika on the top of the building's portico, an image that enraged South Africa's government at the time.

In 1996, Nelson Mandela first appeared on the balcony of South Africa House when he visited the UK on his official State Visit. This famous moment was repeated when he appeared once again on the balcony in 2001 to commemorate the seventh anniversary of Freedom Day – the day when apartheid officially came to an end.
The meeting noted that the MeerKAT telescope, the most sensitive telescope of its kind in the world, was performing important science and making significant discoveries.

Senior officials and experts concluded the Sixth Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Africa Partner Countries Meeting in Pretoria on 14 October 2019.

The officials in their discussions noted progress in the SKA, African Very Long Baseline Interferometry Network (AVN) and other astronomy initiatives aimed at the development of astronomy in the nine African SKA partner countries.

The SKA/AVN partners – Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia – meet annually to provide strategic leadership on matters relating to SKA/AVN projects, as well as other relevant radio astronomy initiatives.

The AVN Project aims to establish a network of self-sufficient radio telescopes in Africa through the conversion of redundant telecommunications antennas into radio telescopes, “new-build” telescopes or training facilities with training telescopes. This network will strengthen the science that the international VLBI community can do. The meeting received updates on the progress made in each partner country and found the work done to be satisfactory, with significant advances in human capacity development initiatives, the strengthening of relevant institutional capacities, the formulation of new academic programmes around physics and astronomy, the roll-out of high-performance computing capability and big data training interventions and science engagement and outreach.

SA’s Centre for High Performance Computing (CHPC)

Progress in the roll-out of high-performance computing infrastructure and training was also noted by the meeting, with delegates commanding South Africa’s CHPC for its good work in building skills and capacity in partner countries.

The meeting noted that research groups from partner countries used the CHPC infrastructure not only for astronomy, but also in the fields of material science, chemistry, bioinformatics and earth sciences.

In order to encourage collaboration among researchers, the meeting agreed that the CHPC would convene a science workshop for the different research groups using high-performance computing applications in the SKA/AVN partner countries to showcase their work and share experiences.

It was also agreed that the CHPC would bring together relevant stakeholders within partner countries to investigate the possibility of institutionalising and standardising training related to high-performance computing and big data.

This would support accreditation at country-level institutions of higher education and training.

DARA Project

Partner countries were unanimous in their appreciation of the partnership opportunities made available under the United Kingdom-South Africa Newton Fund cooperation framework, which had resulted in initiatives such as the Development in Africa with Radio Astronomy (DARA) and DARA big data training programmes.

Since 2013, 123 students have received training under the DARA Project.

The meeting also noted that DARA, the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO) and the CHPC, in consultation with partner countries, would be working together to develop long-term sustainable plans that would include interventions such as internships and employment for trainees and graduating students.

Several initiatives have been proposed to take affordable steps in the development of radio astronomy capacity in each partner country, such as two-dish interferometry and colocation.

The two-dish interferometer concept involves the provision of a small-scale AVN instrument to universities in partner countries to build capacity in radio astronomy.

This instrument will be capable of performing very-long-baseline interferometry (VLBI) experiments and useful for both teaching and outreach purposes.

The interferometers will be funded by SARAO, the partner countries, universities and the DARA initiative.

The funding will cover single dish science training, basic science, interferometry training, and a VLBI training network across all nine partner countries.

Kenya is considering using its 7.2-metre two-dish interferometer to be part of this initiative.

Colocation Initiative

The meeting was given a progress report on the Colocation Initiative, which looks at the placement of astronomy telescopes, satellite ground stations, data-processing infrastructure and other science instruments on one site in order to make operations sustainable in the long term through cost-sharing (labour and electricity) and generating revenue.

A colocation pilot phase is underway at the Ghana Radio Astronomy Observatory. The meeting expressed appreciation for the progress in the development of the AVN Project, particularly with Ghana being the first of the partner countries of the AVN to complete the conversion of a communications antenna into a functioning radio telescope two years ago.

In Kenya, which has acquired two 7.2-metre dishes, talks with telecommunications companies about acquiring a site in Longonot earmarked for conversion are at an advanced stage.

In Zambia, the Government is engaging further on funding to relocate a telecommunications mast on their Mwembeshi site.

In Madagascar, the observatory that will administer the Arivonimamo site, which has an old antenna earmarked for the conversion, has been established.

The refashionment of the rooms and facilities to accommodate the engineers and technicians is almost complete and a memorandum of agreement is ready to be signed by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.

Mauritius is offering the Maurice-Africa Scholarship Scheme, which offers 50 scholarships a year to resident citizens of member states of the African Union in undergraduate and postgraduate studies in astrophysics and other fields (except medicine).

Doppler

Mozambique has a DARA equivalent programme called Doppler, which is a collaboration between Portugal and Mozambique’s astronomy communities. Mozambique now has four astronomers at Eduardo Mondlane University.

In Namibia, the development of a national science field is science and technology policy and strategy is at an advanced stage. Discussions on Namibia’s collaboration in the Africa Millimetre Telescope Project are underway. The country is also in the process of establishing a satellite ground receiving station.
The SKA SA project has invested heavily in the Northern Cape province, from upgrading knowledge centres to creating jobs and providing deserving students with much-needed academic funding. With its partners, SKA SA has contributed towards social and technological development in areas such as Carnarvon, Vosburg, Williston, Van Wyk, and Brandvlei.

SKA SA has five focus investment areas in the Northern Cape:

- Investing in the youth
- Supporting community upliftment programmes
- Developing small to medium enterprises
- Nurturing learners’ talent
- Ensuring communication connectivity

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Diverse terrain together with an ideal climate for outdoor activities make South Africa a rich hunting ground for adrenaline seekers. The country offers unique adventure tourism opportunities, from world-class climbing, surfing, diving, hiking, horseback safaris, mountain biking and river rafting, all supported by dedicated and authorized operators.
August 2019 saw the 37th commemoration of the death of anti-apartheid activist Ruth First. Ruth First was born on 4 May 1925. She was the daughter of Jewish immigrants, Julius and Matilda First. Her parents were founder members of the South African Communist Party (SACP) in 1921. First grew up in a politically conscious and active household where intense political debates took place. She studied at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and graduated with a BA (Social Studies) in 1946. First was secretary to the Young Communist League, and was active in the Progressive Youth Council in the Johannesburg branch of the SACP.

First became the Johannesburg editor of a left-wing weekly newspaper. Driven by her keen sense of justice, she specialised in investigative reporting. Articles about gross violations of human rights in the slave-like conditions on Bethal potato farms, migrant labour, bus boycotts and slum conditions remain witness to her courage to speak the truth in the 1950s.

First’s determination and political involvement never abated. She did support work for the 1946 mineworkers’ strike, the Indian Passive Resistance Campaign and protests surrounding the outlawing of communism in 1950.

She travelled to China, the Union Soviet Socialist Republic and countries in Africa. She meticulously documented her experiences. She was actively involved in debates within the Johannesburg Discussion Club, which led to the formation of the underground SACP.

During the State of Emergency following the Sharpeville shootings of March 1960, First fled to Swaziland with her children. On 9 August 1963, First was detained at the Wits University library. This took place following the arrests of members of the underground African National Congress (ANC), the SACP and Umkhonto we Sizwe in Rivonia on 11 July 1963. She was kept in solitary confinement under the notorious 90-day clause.

On 17 August 1982, First was killed by a letter bomb, widely believed to have been the work of security agencies within South Africa. Her close friend, Ronald Segal, described her death as “the final act of censorship”.

In honouring the memory of First, an environmental patrol vessel named the Ruth First was launched in 2005 by the Department of Environmental Affairs. In 2010, First’s former high school, Jeppe Girls, set up a scholarship entitled the Ruth First Jeppe High School for Girls Memorial Trust, with Albie Sachs as patron.

In 2014, Ruth First received the Order of Luthuli in Gold posthumously for her exceptional contribution to the struggle against apartheid.

Her activism left an indelible mark that continues to spur generations to stand for what is just.
Reflecting on 25 years of democracy

This is a government that is not afraid of new ideas, and of new ways of thinking.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

The Presidency, in partnership with Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection, an independent research institution, and the University of Johannesburg, working in concert with other stakeholders, hosted the 25 Years of Democracy Conference from 23 to 24 July 2019. The conference formed part of a broader social dialogue to enrich our understanding of the last 25 years and to contribute to a common vision and programme for the next 25 years. Such engagement is essential if we are to forge durable and lasting social compacts across society to attain our developmental objectives.

A conference such as that one fulfilled a dual purpose. Firstly, it was an opportunity to assess progress towards the achievement of our vision of a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, prosperous and free society. Secondly, it was a platform to identify the challenges, opportunities and tasks of the present and the future.

In reflecting on these issues, it was important to give consideration to the priorities, tasks and recommendations contained in National Development Plan (NDP). Based on an extensive diagnostic report, which provided a frank assessment of the state of the nation, the NDP set out a vision to 2030.

Through the State of the Nation Address and departmental budget votes, government has described the measures that will define our developmental pathway for the next five years and beyond.

Research and academic institutions have a critical role to play in advising government in providing the necessary data that informs our planning models. This is a government that is not afraid of new ideas, and of new ways of thinking.

In his famous Reith Lecture series on Representations of the Intellectual, Edward Said posited the role of the public intellectual against what he termed “the insiders”. It is these insiders, he said, “who mold public opinion, make it conformist, and encourage reliance on a superior little band of all-knowing opinion, make it conformist, and encourage...”

The substantial investment we have made in economic and social infrastructure, in providing houses, water and electricity, in expanding access to education and healthcare has undoubtedly improved people’s lives. There are several indicators of social progress, from the growth in the size of the black middle class to an improvement in educational attainment, from a massive improvement in health outcomes, from a sharp decline in the incidence of unemployment and from a sharp decline in the incidence of poverty.

However, this progress has been undermined, first and foremost, by the growth in the size of the black middle class to an improvement in educational attainment, from a massive improvement in health outcomes, from a sharp decline in the incidence of unemployment and from a sharp decline in the incidence of poverty. We have pursued an economic path that is concerned with production and accumulation of knowledge that is interventionist by nature.

While we are bound together by a shared Constitutional democracy, while we share an allegiance to the symbols of a united and free South Africa, the schisms of race, gender, class, language and ethnicity continue to run through our society.

The process of nation-building – which is by definition multifaceted and multilayered – is therefore very much work in progress.

The substantial investment we have made in economic and social infrastructure, in providing houses, water and electricity, in expanding access to education and healthcare has undoubtedly improved people’s lives. While we are bound together by a shared Constitutional democracy, while we share an allegiance to the symbols of a united and free South Africa, the schisms of race, gender, class, language and ethnicity continue to run through our society.
Our elected representatives must be held to account, yes, but true nation-building requires collaboration across society. It necessitates active and ongoing engagement.

We are first and foremost citizens, and the national interest demands that we each do our part. We need to work together to improve the current state of affairs, to aid in nation-building and the forging of a common national identity. We need to ensure, in this context, that our academic output helps us sharpen our response to some of our most pressing challenges.

This, as Edward Said writes, is not always a matter of being a critic of government policy, but “rather of thinking of the intellectual vocation as maintaining a state of constant alertness, of a perpetual willingness not to let half-truths or received ideas steer one along.”

We looked to the 25 Years of Democracy Conference to challenge received ideas, to critically interrogate our experience of democracy over 25 years, while demonstrating a determination to be an active and interested part of charting a new path for our country.
Johnny Clegg: South Africa’s universal man of uncommon passion

By David Coplan
Professor Emeritus, Social Anthropology, University of the Witwatersrand

I’ve never known of a performer in his prime, not one merely famous long ago, who could get away with so much talking and retain the rapt, wide-eyed attention of his audiences. Who returned, show after show, tour after tour.

Universal Man: Jonathan Clegg “Sikeyi” (1953 – 2019). “Sikeyi” is a Zulu dance praise name: “The path through a yoke that secures oxen in position, from Afrikaans juksei (juk: yoke], referring to the capacity of a formidable dancer to hold his stand.”

In my mind, like a Zulu ngoma (drum) dancer completing his turn, I somersaulted backwards landing on my back, exhausted and helpless. Abstractly I had known the odds, and that this dark day could not be delayed. But, as I could not imagine the world as a place that didn’t have Johnny in it, the shock was still like an unpulled punch, disorienting. This super-human energy, this great soul: forever flown away, leaving a huge, unfillable hole in the universe. I cried; for myself.

Since his passing on 16 July 2019, the tributes from journalists – snappy, thoughtful, reflective, celebratory – have poured onto the pages of news outlets. I have read as many as I could access, and wonder what remains for me to say.

In addition, I don’t like obituaries. Like funerals, they stand as a kind of forerunner to one’s own, though I have written a few, for people I hadn’t known so personally and for so long, which was easier. Yet mournful as it is, I have a duty. I met Jonathan Clegg in 1975. I was still a graduate student in Ethnomusicology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The address he prophesied has not yet come to pass.

Johnny was not a teacher; he was an experience, even for his mentors such as bandmate Sipho Mchunu.

We have the record of this in the many televised and published interviews and presentations he delivered, including his acceptance address when awarded an honorary doctorate in Music in 2013 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The address was a complex analysis of indigenous isZulu aesthetics, as when explaining how modernising migrants used Western instruments and values to modify and bring the traditional tribal world view into line with the forces of social change.

Or his own methods of composition in performance:

“It is this underlying idea of crossing boundaries and mixing competing approaches that forms the background, influence, and the crossing over of musical forms in most of the music I have composed.”

Interviews ranged beyond performance studies to rural Zulu semiotics, social organisation and conflict, responses to colonial conquest and apartheid hegemony, the effects of the migrant labour system on Zulu people, and the very character and condition of the nation.

In the field of political economy, he was a student of the martyred anti-apartheid activist Professor David Webster. With uncommon passion and analytical brilliance, he passed on to his own students at Wits how the “infernal machine” of racial capitalism operated on African workers over the decades of violent legalised compulsion. That is, when he wasn’t singing and dancing and exploring the sometimes heroic, sometimes tragic imperatives and paradoxes of Zulu migrant masculinities.

It was in this period, the late 1970s and early 1980s, that he wrote a series of detailed ethnographic studies, in particular for the conferences on Ethnomusicology organised at the International Library of African Music at Rhodes University, on the aesthetics and practice of rural Zulu music and dance.

After giving up the lecture theatre for the theatre of global musical stardom, he continued his teaching career from the stage, interspersing songs with five-minute mini-lectures on les choses chez les Zulus and the peculiarities of African life in South Africa in general.

I’ve never known of a performer in his prime, not one merely famous long ago, who could get away with so much talking and retain the rapt, wide-eyed attention of his audiences. Who returned, show after show, tour after tour.

I would dearly wish to illustrate the evocative, musical-literary depth and meaning of his song lyrics, but copyright and its holders forbid. These are in any case evident in his best-known compositions, Impi (1986), Scatterlings of Africa (1986) and Asimbonanga (1994). While keeping it magnificently simple, he rivalled the songsmithing abilities of Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, John Lennon and other luminaries of popular musical poetics of his era.

Nor was this even all: his conceptualisation and articulate hosting of the documentary series A Country Imagined (Curious Pictures 2010), a travelogue of the byways of the South African landscape of creative cultural history, produced a new neglected landmark in national television.

It is embarrassing to confront the oeuvre of a man who so far surpassed my own contribution to African performance studies as a Professor at two of our distinguished universities. The only responses available to me are egocentric disparagement and am I love. Like Johnny then, let me make it love.
The empowerment of women is about dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the transformation of society, particularly of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws.

Sixty-five years ago, our nation was a very different place to what it is today. Oppression occurred on a daily basis and women enjoyed almost no rights. It was a society characterised by repression, subjugation and tyranny.

Notions of a free society were unheard of and those who dared to stand up against apartheid tyranny were met with brutal and unrelenting force. These were the circumstances which faced the brave and patriotic woman who devised the Women’s Charter in 1954.

The 1954 Women’s Charter called for a single society that recognises that “women do not form a society separate from the men” and therefore “share in the problems and anxieties of our men, and join hands with them to remove social evils and obstacles to progress”. The charter was adopted a year before the historic Freedom Charter of 1955, and helped to set the tone for today’s democratic order. It was further reviewed in 1994 under the Women’s National Coalition, which adopted the Women’s Charter for Effective Equality. Both the 1954 and 1994 women’s charters called for a society where women are free from discrimination and prejudice. They called for a society which respects women and enforces their rights and inherent human dignity.

Our democratic breakthrough in 1994 represented the start of our journey to an inclusive society that cares for all. Since 1994, successive democratic administrations have committed to a progressive legislative framework and a human rights agenda that is strongly informed by the principles of gender equality, women’s emancipation and empowerment. Although we have made progress, we are mindful that we must do more to substantially transform society and the economy. We are committed to speed up transformation across society by strengthening partnerships with civil society to ensure that we address the many challenges faced by women and girls.

The empowerment of women in South Africa is about dealing with the legacy of apartheid and the transformation of society, particularly the transformation of power relations between women, men, institutions and laws. It is also about addressing gender oppression, patriarchy, sexism and structural oppression.

Without doubt, our society has undergone a sea change since 1994, however, as we commemorate 25 years of freedom, more still needs to be done to create a conducive environment which enables women to take control of their lives. It remains a sad fact that many women are still confined by both their circumstances and the prevailing patriarchy in society. Therefore, we must continue to fight the stark gender disparities that are evident across the many areas of national life.

Education remains essential and so is ensuring that girls and women have greater access to basic and higher education. There is also a pressing need to ensure that our economy is inclusive and offers women a chance at success.

Currently, many women still find themselves excluded from the formal economy and in low-paying jobs and economic sectors, while those who are lucky enough to find a job never make it to the middle and top management echelons, particularly in the private sector. By growing an inclusive economy, we will begin to transform the power relations between women and men. By doing so, we will build a society where women are free to make choices and not be hampered by economic and social pressures.

Achieving this new future relies on the combined will of all in society; government cannot do it alone and the voices of men and women are critical to overcoming all our challenges and building a better tomorrow. Just as the women of 1954 knew that they had to take a stand to bring about change, it is up to us now to ensure that we create an economy that works for everyone.

When women are empowered, we see that families thrive, communities are safer, and economies grow. Through the inclusion of more women in the economy, we can also stop generational poverty and in the process stimulate economic growth.

We must do more to encourage women to become entrepreneurs and to start their own businesses. Women entrepreneurs are known to use profits from their business to improve their families’ living conditions and lifestyle. More critically, they also invest in their children’s education, which ensures that the cycle of poverty is broken.

It is up to all of us to ensure that women empowerment becomes a lived reality. We dare not be happy with the status quo which excludes many women from the social and economic mainstream. By working together, we can ensure a societal shift so that women can take their rightful place and contribute to the country’s socio-economic growth and development.
Sharing data can help prevent public health emergencies in Africa

By Moses John Bockarie
Honorary Chief Specialist Scientist, South African Medical Research Council

Global collaboration and sharing data on public health emergencies is important to fight the spread of infectious diseases. If scientists and health workers can openly share their data across regions and organisations, countries can be better prepared and respond faster to disease outbreaks. This was the case with the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Close to 100 scientists, clinicians, health workers and data analysts from around the world worked together to help contain the spread of the disease.

But there’s a lack of trust when it comes to sharing data in North-South collaborations. African researchers are suspicious that their northern partners could publish data without acknowledging the input from the less resourced southern institutions where the data was first generated. Until recently, the authorship of key scientific publications, based on collaborative work in Africa, was dominated by scientists from outside Africa.

The Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness, an international network of major research funding organisations, recently published a road map to data-sharing. This may go some way to address the data-sharing challenges. Members of the network are expected to encourage their grantees to be inclusive and publish their results in open access journals. The network includes major funders of research in Africa like the European Commission, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust.

The road map provides a guide on how funders can accelerate research data-sharing by the scientists they fund. It recommends that research funding institutions make real-time, external data-sharing a requirement. And that research needs to be part of a multidisciplinary disease network to advance public health emergencies responses.

In addition, funding should focus on strengthening institutions’ capacity on a number of fronts. This includes data management, improving data policies, building trust and aligning tools for data-sharing.

Allowing researchers to freely access data generated by global academic counterparts is critical for rapidly informing disease-control strategies in public health emergencies.

Why share data

Mounting appropriate and timely responses to emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases requires global cooperation on data analysis across disciplines. Examples include Ebola, Lassa fever and Yellow fever.

During the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, field and laboratory data collected in real-time were shared between scientists from different countries. These data revealed how the Ebola virus was evolving and spreading in the region. The information was then used to contain the spread of the virus in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Ninety-six individual investigators, including clinicians and scientists, from 60 institutions in 18 countries worked together. They collected and analysed data by sequencing 1,610 Ebola virus genomes. The data informed policy decisions in West Africa because government ministers from Sierra Leone and Liberia were part of the investigators.

The work done in West Africa shows that global data-sharing can work.

This North-South collaboration is the research partnership model that the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership uses on the continent.

This is a partnership between the European Union and national institutions in Europe and sub-Saharan Africa. It was initially created in response to the global health crisis caused by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Now it includes research and responses to neglected and emerging infections.

It currently supports several institutions that were involved in the West African study. As the regional director for Africa, I promote global collaborations that acknowledge inputs from African researchers and institutions.

Collaborations

Our North-South partnership is also making strides to improve the capacity for collaboration and data-sharing.

The Global Research Collaboration includes a number of members such as the African Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology in Egypt and the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC).

There are several initiatives under way. For one, the African Academy of Sciences is in the early stages of building a Coalition for African Research and Innovation. This platform will foster collaboration on research and innovation in Africa. It will also address the under-investment in scientific talent and research infrastructure.

Another example is the Pan-African Clinical Trials Registry. This is hosted by the SAMRC. The registry provides access to contacts for researchers as well as trial sites. It also provides information on which organisation or institution funds various research projects.

This data can be used to map clinical trial activity in several disease conditions relevant to the continent such as Ebola.

In 2017, for example, two public health emergencies networks and four regional networks of excellence were funded. This was to ensure that African countries are better prepared to prevent, respond to and minimise the impact of infectious disease outbreaks.

Building partnerships

Collaboration and data-sharing have become a serious focus in the fight against public health emergencies.

Funding agencies, ethics and regulatory bodies in Africa, reviewers and grant recipients have been looking for ways to consolidate efforts for collaboration and data-sharing.

Among the issues that need to be addressed are big data, the way that databases can be managed and the implementation of systematic reviews. This is critical to prevent the next epidemic.

What the Ebola crisis in West Africa has shown us is that wide-scale collaboration is helpful and works. The Global Research Collaboration roadmap instills confidence for such inclusiveness.
Ambitious plans underway for homegrown South African climate change model

By Tony Carnie

“...we should not just sit and wait for others to bring us solutions. We should be part of the solution.”

Developing South Africa’s capacity to predict and adapt to the global climate crisis is critical, and local scientists have an ambitious plan to develop the country’s first “homegrown” weather and climate change modelling system.

In simple terms, a “numerical climate modelling system” involves using mathematical models of the atmosphere, land surface and oceans to simulate future climate scenarios. It makes use of supercomputers, parallel computing, satellites, radiosondes and other technology. It depends on people with highly-specialised skills in areas such as mathematics, physics, numerical modelling and computer programming.

Such a project, led by a group of specialists from the South African Weather Service (SAWS), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the universities of Witwatersrand, Pretoria and Cape Town, has just received a major financial boost with a US$100,000 (R1.4 million) grant in a research scheme, which involves the African Academy of Sciences, the United Nations, World Meteorological Organisation and other partners.

Dr Mary-Jane Bopape, SAWS chief scientist for weather research, expects it could take 10 years, largely because there are currently not enough suitably-skilled climate modellers in South Africa – less than 10 she estimates – “who really understand how [climate] models work” and are able to make a clear contribution.

Bopape was one of 21 African scientists awarded funding in June through the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) initiative, which aims to improve weather and climate early warnings over southern Africa. A big chunk of these funds will be used to run a series of workshops on high-performance computing systems in southern Africa, model development and new products for the agriculture, water, health, energy and disaster risk reduction sectors.

The push to improve climate simulation skills comes at a time when local climate modellers are warning that temperatures in Africa are rising faster compared to the global average. In sub-tropical Africa, they suggest temperatures are rising about 1.5 times faster – so if the average global temperature goes up by 2°C, this could translate to about 3°C over sub-tropical Africa.

According to research by leading South African climatologist Prof. Francois Engelbrecht and colleagues, this has major ramifications for a continent where tens of millions of subsistence farmers depend on rainfall agriculture rather than irrigation.

Remote sensing using satellites has also helped to improve predictions on a continent that has fewer ground-based weather observation stations compared to Europe or the United States.

“Before the use of satellites as an input to numerical models, there was a large gap in skill over the Northern Hemisphere vs the Southern Hemisphere, which is covered by a large ocean area, and also has limited observations over land.”

Other major improvements have been made possible by supercomputers and the introduction of parallel computing. “In parallel computing, a simulation that would otherwise run on one computer is split up so that it runs on a number of computers at a time and therefore produces simulations faster than when using only one. Parallel computing has also resulted in increased resolution and models getting more sophisticated to represent the atmosphere better.”

Bopape believes machine learning will lead to further improvements in forecasting and, over time, the contribution of human forecasters is likely to decrease.

In South Africa, the Department of Science and Technology has invested in the Centre for High-Performance Computing, which houses a high-performance computing (HPC) system that is on the top 500 list of the biggest computers in the world.

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“...this system is available for South African scientists to conduct research that is on par with the international community – and the majority of the simulations will rely on this system,” she said.

The SAWS and some universities also have HPC systems that can be used for research purposes, but because the SAWS system is needed to produce operational forecasts, opportunities for research remain very limited.

Bopape also sees a need for significantly increased funding from the public and private sector to support locally-developed models.

“There have been some investments towards the model development work that has already taken place. For example, support has in the past come from the the Water Research Commission, CSIR Parliamentary Grant, SAWS and the National Research Foundation’s Thuthuka Programme.

“However, the current funding is not nearly enough to put us in a position where we can work on par with nations that have been working on model development for decades. Also, the modellers we have in South Africa are usually multi-hatted and are working on other areas of research due to limited funding for model development.”

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Win-win for people and planet: smart shepherding in South Africa

By UN Environment

A new pilot initiative covering about 25 000 hectares and using shepherds, has succeeded in increasing production of rangeland lamb and beef while simultaneously restoring vegetation and fostering biodiversity.

The Karoo, in South Africa, is a harsh environment in which to make a living out of agriculture – the area is mostly devoid of surface water. Its name is derived from the Khoisan word meaning ‘land of thirst’.

The land was traditionally used by pastoralists but drought, overgrazing and predation by wild animals made this activity precarious. Predators were kept in check by predation by wild animals made this activity precarious. Predators were kept in check by herders on large commercial livestock farms.

The kraals, made of cargo netting held up by metal stakes, are established in highly degraded areas and are used at night. Nutrients from animal excrement and hoof action breaking up the surface in the kraals help restore degraded land. To prevent overgrazing during the day, the kraals are moved every week.

“In the presence of shepherds and kraaling for the last 30 months, despite a severe regional drought, livestock numbers have increased from 1 000 ewes to 2 000 sheep, and from 250 to 360 cattle,” says Boil Smuts, Environmental Manager, medical doctor and Director of the Landmark Foundation.

“At a management and flock health benefit of shepherding is the daily audit and monitoring of livestock which permits early diagnosis of injury and disease. While weaning success of sheep was around 70% prior to human herding, this has now increased dramatically, says Smuts.

“We wanted to implement an alternative livestock husbandry model that addresses overgrazing, desertification and negative biodiversity impacts and excludes lethal predator control, and we’ve drawn on more than a decade of the Landmark Foundation’s leopard research and small predator livestock conflict studies,” he adds.

Herders work a six-day cycle: two 24-hour shifts, two eight hour shifts with 48 hours off. They are paid 70% above the ordinary farm labour wage and their jobs are seen as elevated positions on the farms.

“The Fair Game farms have helped prevent veld degradation and also enhanced drought resistance, which has allowed Fair Game farmers not only to increase livestock numbers during the drought, but also sell lambs and cattle at premium prices,” says UN Environment Global Environment Facility Task Manager, Jane Nimpamya. “The project is replicable in other dryland areas where predation is a problem for livestock farmers,” she adds.

In May 2019, the Landmark Foundation’s Shepherding Back Biodiversity Project (of which Fair Game is a part) was recognised at the annual Eco-Logic Awards for providing services that support and protect the planet.”
Rhino conservation heroes honoured

Prince Albert stressed that "biodiversity and its preservation represent one of the greatest challenges of our time" and further mobilisation was needed urgently.

The heroic actions of those that fight for the conservation of the rhino were acknowledged, celebrated and rewarded at the Rhino Conservation Awards. The gala dinner ceremony was held on 27 July 2019 at the Montecasino Ballroom, Johannesburg. Prince Albert II of Monaco, Patron of the Awards, delivered the keynote address at the event, congratulated the winners for their exemplary efforts and was presented with the Grand Patron Award.

The award finalists were joined at the event by high-level dignitaries, South African government officials, foreign diplomats, media, sponsors and other significant NGOs supporting rhino conservation.

Prince Albert stressed that “biodiversity and its preservation represent one of the greatest challenges of our time” and further mobilisation was needed urgently.

“You know how much your project is dear to me, more importantly how much admiration I have for the individuals being honoured tonight, as well as all the ranges of course, the true heroes of biodiversity. Biodiversity and its preservation represent one of the greatest challenges of our time. Allow me to point out a few figures, which I believe speak for themselves: figures from IPBES, which is commonly known as the IPCC of biodiversity. Its latest report, published in the spring, elicited a wave of fear.

“It announced that one million animal and plant species from the Earth’s surface and the ocean floor were in danger of extinction in the near future. One million from a total of 8.7 million animal and plant species described to date; this means that one species in eight is critically endangered … In vertebrates, this represents 25% of mammals – one in four – 19% of reptiles and 13% of birds, but more importantly 39% of marine mammals and 41% of amphibians, i.e. nearly one in two species within these families.”

Moreover, only a fraction of living species has been discovered so far, and many of them are lost or have already been lost without our being able to measure the loss. Most importantly, the mechanisms of destruction is spiralling out of control; if nothing is done to prevent it, IPBES experts herald further acceleration in the global rate of extinction.

These figures have naturally prompted a reaction. As we approach key deadlines, such as the IUCN World Congress in June 2020 in Marseille and COP15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in China in 2020, strong responses are called for.

“However, apart from the emotion lasting a few days or a few weeks, we have to accept that there is insufficient mobilisation. Of course, progress is being made.”

“The UN has engaged in important international negotiations on these issues, in which Monaco is actively involved. Many countries have developed protection mechanisms for certain sensitive areas and species, both on and offshore.

“And private initiatives are being developed around the world, by responsible businesses, as well as NGOs. For instance, my foundation has committed to and supported dozens of biodiversity conservation projects since it was established in 2006.

“From the Canadian beluga whale to the Chinese tiger, from the monk seal to the Mediterranean bluefin tuna, we have made a commitment to ensure the protection of many species – with a certain degree of success. But all these initiatives, as relevant and useful as they are, are not enough to counter the dreadful movement of destruction caused by humanity. They are overwhelmed by the challenge looming ahead: the sixth wave of mass extinction of species, which is likely to upset the equilibrium of our Planet definitively.

That is why it is important to engage our contemporaries more effectively, to make them aware of what is at stake today, for our common future. In this respect, the rhino situation is a particularly good example.

“It is useful because it is a positive representation of all the species we are dealing with. While our contemporaries may find it hard sometimes to get upset about the disappearance of an insect or an amphibian, the rhinoceros has an unparalleled ability to raise awareness, which should be a precious ally for us. The rhino situation is also a good example in that it reveals the mechanisms of destruction: globalised circuits, based on selfishness and ignorance, criminally fuelled by the thirst for profit, whatever the cost.”

“It is useful because it maps out concrete and effective solutions to combat a decline which has often seemed inexorable. You are proof of this, and the awards presented tonight are testimony of this fact: it is possible to fight destruction, provided we have the will, and more importantly the courage to do so. That is above all the rhino situation strikes me as exemplary, and it is also why I am here: to pay tribute to the determination and the exceptional courage, of those who are fighting, often putting their own lives at risk, to save, to give hope to our children and to enable the species at threat today to continue to contribute to the necessary diversity of nature. By embodying this fight, by giving it a face, a voice, a story, by being true heroes of biodiversity, you are doing far more than saving the rhino: you are helping to save the honour of human beings, faced with the huge responsibility we bear of leaving future generations a habitable Planet.

“Some of you may have seen or read the famous play written shortly after the Second World War by the French-Romanian writer Eugene Ionesco, entitled Rhinoceros. The play describes a town whose inhabitants gradually turn into rhinoceroses. The book, unravelling like a tale, talks about the rise of totalitarianism and the resigned behaviour that makes it possible. Of course, Ionesco randomly chose the rhinoceros as an image. But I cannot help but seeing it today as a veiled message: this animal, which was for him the symbol of resignation, is now for us, thanks to you, the symbol of resistance.

“Resistance, in the face of resignation, in the face of impending disaster. Resistance in which you are the heroes, and for which I am delighted to pay tribute to you today.”

The Rhino Conservation Awards were founded in 2006 by Dr Larry Hansen and Xiaoyang Yu in 2011 and have been hosted annually in collaboration with the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Game Rangers’ Association of Africa.
The black mamba is the most venomous snake in sub-Saharan Africa. One bite can kill a person in just a few hours. It is also the namesake of the all-female anti-poaching unit that operates in the 56,000-acre private Balule Nature Reserve at Kruger National Park in South Africa.

The Black Mambas were founded in 2013 and comprise more than 20 women largely from the Phalaborwa community who reside near the park. Prior to the group’s formation, poaching for rhino horn and bushmeat in the reserve was rampant, with poachers — many who came from the local communities — fetching up to US$26,000 for one horn.

Leitah Mkhabela, the supervisor Mamba, said that a reason for the nearby communities’ involvement was that they didn’t feel the wildlife belonged to them, as most had never had a chance to even see the animals. Poaching was a way to make a lot of money quickly.

This is why one of the Mambas’ mandates is to educate on the importance of conservation as well as gather information from locals about poachers.

“The community needs to benefit from the reserves that are near,” said Mkhabela, highlighting a wider ongoing discussion across Africa on protected areas. “If the game reserves can benefit the local communities by providing freshwater sources or giving bursaries for higher education, we are going to see a decrease in rhino and bushmeat poaching.”

Through the Bush Babes Environmental Education Programme, the Mambas take members, especially children, from the communities to the reserve to see the wild animals. “There are some people who live just 10 km from the reserve, but have never seen a rhino, lion or elephant in their life,” said Mkhabela.

Aside from educating the local communities, the Black Mambas track 126 km of the park’s border every day, looking for snare traps, inspecting the electric border fence and searching cars. Their work has reduced poaching in the reserve by 75%.

“In 2013, when this project started, we used to come back from sweeps with 80 fresh snares,” said Mkhabela. “Today, if we sweep the whole area, we might come back with just five, some of which are old.”

Cecilia Njenga, head of United Nations (UN) Environment Programme South Africa, said that the Black Mambas highlighted the importance and effectiveness of local knowledge and commitment, crucial to combatting the illegal wildlife trade.

“The Black Mambas are an inspiration not only locally, but across the world to all those working to eliminate the scourge of the illegal wildlife trade,” said Njenga. “We recognise the rapid and impressive impact they have made, and the courage required to accomplish it.”

While the rewards of protecting wild animals are unparalleled, Mkhabela says the job isn’t for everyone. With salaries being minimal, at roughly US$224 per month, living conditions rough, and the dangers from poachers always present, it takes guts to be a ranger.

“I have to put my life at risk every day, making sure that South Africa’s iconic wildlife is safe,” said Mkhabela.

For example, in 2017, Mkhabela and two other Mambas were staging an ambush in Balule when three poachers, whom they were pursuing, spotted them due to a full moon that evening. The women — who patrol unarmed — were lucky enough to escape unscathed after finding a blown-out section of the park’s electric fence, which an elephant had brought down earlier that day.

But for Mkhabela the risks are worth it. She says that being women and mothers, the Mambas understand what it means to care and protect.

“We need to speak for the animals because if we don’t speak for them, nobody will speak for them. We have to fight for them, because if we don’t fight for them, there’s nobody that will fight for them. We know what love is,” she said.

In 2015, the Black Mambas were bestowed with the UN Environment’s Champion of the Earth Lifetime Achievement Award. Since winning, Mkhabela says that the anti-poaching unit has received even more admiration from the communities than previously, and this has given the Mambas confidence in the value of what they are doing.

Mkhabela said that there were more women in training to become Mambas and she hoped the project would grow further and receive more funding.

“I’d like to see many more girls from the community getting jobs as rangers,” she said. “We need the Black Mambas project to continue. We cannot let the poachers win.”

"I’d like to see many more girls from the community getting jobs as rangers. We need the Black Mambas project to continue. We cannot let the poachers win."
Robben Island joins list of protected marine sites in South Africa

By Alison Kock
Marine Biologist, South African National Parks (SANParks); Institute for Communities and Wildlife in Africa, University of Cape Town, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity

South Africa’s Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries recently declared 20 marine sites as protected areas. One of them is Robben Island, the site of the prison where anti-apartheid activists, including Nelson Mandela, were jailed for decades.

Marine protected areas are geographically distinct regions of the ocean that are given special protection under law. They are used worldwide to address over-exploitation of marine resources and safeguard them for future generations.

In the context of South Africa, marine protected areas are designed to protect marine species, habitats and cultural heritage. They’re also designed to restore over-exploited marine stocks, promote research and ecotourism and protect coastal and offshore habitats. South Africa has 136 coastal and marine habitat types, from the coastal nesting grounds of leatherback and loggerhead turtles of Stilbaai, to the unique coral and gravel habitats of the Amathole Offshore marine protected area. The addition of the new protected area network means that 90% of these habitat types are now protected.

South African marine experts combined the best available scientific information, strategic thinking and a strong participatory process to create a network of marine protected areas that conserves ecosystems, rather than individual species.

The impact on communities – economically and socially – differs as each marine protected area has its own set of priority objectives. Take Robben Island, located in Table Bay adjacent to the City of Cape Town, which is on the latest list. It has three priority objectives: to protect the breeding and feeding area of endangered seabirds like African penguins, to help rebuild important abalone and west coast rock lobster stocks and to promote the area for tourism and protect the area’s cultural heritage.

There’s a real danger that the protections won’t be enforced – or become paper parks. To avoid this happening, marine protected areas have to be adequately funded, staffed and have community support. In addition, monitoring programmes must be put in place. These must measure whether marine protected areas meet their ecological, economic and social objectives.

This needs to be coupled with an effective compliance and enforcement strategy. Generally speaking, marine conservation and protection are underfunded in South Africa and sustainable funding models haven’t yet been developed. But with the support of other government departments, South African Police Service, industries and NGOs, the country has managed to implement compliance and long-term monitoring programmes.

An example of an effective, long-term monitoring programme is the multidisciplinary and multi-institutional project in Algoa Bay that monitors ecosystem change. The project is important because it generates essential knowledge for site management and sustainable development.

But more needs to be done. New innovative technologies such as vessel monitoring systems, remote cameras and drones should be used for better surveillance and effective compliance. In addition, marine protected area management has to take a more human-centred approach and the benefits of protected areas have to be shared more equitably.

The Betty’s Bay marine protected area recently employed local community members to help scientists and managers monitor fish populations. This has led to a greater understanding of the goals of the protected area and improved the relationship between the community and management authority.

To this end, marine protected areas should have clear, consistent management with clear legal, administrative and management frameworks. This needs to be coupled with an effective compliance and enforcement strategy.

A marine protected area network involves extensive consultations between various industries. These include fisheries, mining, aquaculture, tourism industries and local communities.

This article was first published on The Conversation following an interview conducted by The Conversation’s Nontobeko Mtshali.
Africa yet to unleash full potential of its nature-based tourism

By UN Environment

Countries in Africa can do more to develop tourism in protected areas, which would in turn create jobs in rural places, diversify and grow their economies and improve environmental resilience in the face of growing pressures.

Africa’s biodiversity could “transform” the continent’s economy, but at present, many governments are scaling back on protection because of limited budgets needed for other pressing public needs, a report produced by conservation organisation Space for Giants Club and the United Nations (UN) Environment Programme said. To preserve their wildlife and wild places, governments should look at protected areas not only as environmental assets but economic ones as well, with the continent’s 8 400 protected areas producing US$48 billion in revenue. “Africa’s unique diversity of wildlife and habitat has the potential to radically transform the continent’s economy,” said the report. Yet, “at present, few of Africa’s protected areas are meeting their potential as engines for tourism growth and are underfunded by up to 10 times the required level.”

According to the report, nature-based tourism could improve the livelihoods of many people as it generates 40% more full-time employment than agriculture and provides greater opportunities for women than other sectors. Oliver Poole, Executive Director of Space for Giants Club, said the organisation “strongly believed” that the right type of nature-based tourism done in a sustainable way was a powerful conservation tool. “That’s because it creates jobs for the local community, and it brings visitors to the national parks, creating money for wildlife services, that often have limited budgets,” he said. “But, it also starts building a nature-based tourism sector that pays taxes and builds economies, making them of national importance and therefore more likely to be protected.”

Wildlife is the single biggest revenue for Africa’s tourism, with the UN World Tourism Organisation stating 80% of annual trips to Africa were for wildlife watching. And as projections point to a doubling of visitors to the continent by 2030 from the current 62 million, the report argues that additional revenue is attainable.

Ethiopia, which boasts nine UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation world heritage sites, wasn’t able to attract more than 50 000 visitors to each one in 2016. To improve these numbers, the report says the country would need to invest in better infrastructure for national parks and capitalise on its unique features, like being home to 853 bird species – a potential birderwatcher’s paradise rivaling Costa Rica or South Africa.

As the continent grapples with a growing population, poverty, climate change and a booming illegal wildlife trade, the report says important ecological areas could be lost before their value is utilised. Several places in Africa have already developed parks in ways that could threaten their natural capital, while others are planning to extract oil, minerals and other activities.

Doreen Robinson, wildlife expert at UN Environment said it was important for governments to develop partnerships with private, community and non-profit organisations to realise the full capacity of nature-based tourism in Africa and thus ensure wildlife for future generations. “Private investment and know-how are needed to develop attractive tourism services and products, while good public management must ensure equitable business practices and reinvestment of profits into conservation of wildlife,” she said. “Ultimately, this formula grows the economy, protects nature and supports human development.”

The report states only four African countries – Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe – are top nature tourism destinations, each attracting between two to five million visitors a year. But there is a lot of room for improvement, particularly in western Africa that has tropical forests and beaches, yet due to poor marketing, hasn’t tapped its full tourism potential.

For governments to gain the most of protected areas, they should create national tourism plans for protected areas and integrate them into the economic plans of the country – that way, wild places will finally get the resources they deserve. 

Space for Giants grew out of pioneering research in the early 2000s into how to encourage the co-existence of people and wildlife in modernising Africa. Since then, it has spent close to two decades working in these landscapes, studying how people and wild animals live together, and how that relationship is changing. Space for Giants understands that to survive, these landscapes and their wildlife must prove that they bring value now and in the future so that the value of the assets is protected.

“We believe that it must be shown is important to not take these opportunities for granted, even if they are not immediately obvious. We firmly believe that these landscapes and their wildlife bring value now and in the future,” said Poole. “We are working with governments and communities to create value today so that they can protect the future.”

Space for Giants is an international conservation organisation that protects the great wildlife landscapes that Africa’s remaining elephants need to thrive. These landscapes give homes to giants, but they also bring great value to people and nations: biodiversity, livelihoods and enterprise, new medicines, carbon storage, even the very oxygen we breathe. But they are under threat. Criminals kill endangered animals for tusks, horns, scales and skins. Farmers needing more land to feed their families expand into wildlife habitat. When wild animals then damage their crops, they retaliate.

Space for Giants grew out of pioneering research in the early 2000s into how to encourage the co-existence of people and wildlife in modernising Africa. Since then, it has spent close to two decades working in these landscapes, studying how people and wild animals live together, and how that relationship is changing. Space for Giants understands that to survive, these landscapes and their wildlife must prove that they bring value now and into the future so that the value of the assets is protected and governments fight to protect them. We also understand that some of these landscapes have the potential to deliver more value in the future than they do today.

While we work to demonstrate this value, we must also act now to preserve these landscapes so that they don’t disappear before it’s too late.”

www.spaceforgiants.org
Firefighters lauded for bravery

This was the third successful deployment between Canada and South Africa, bespeaking the importance of heightened cooperation and resource-sharing agreements put in place by the international fire-fighting community.

On 30 July 2019, Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Minister, Barbara Creecy, welcomed back a group of 45 Working on Fire (WoF) crew and their senior managers, who spent almost 30 days fighting fires in the province of Alberta in Western Canada.

The team was deployed to assist in combating the huge Chuckegg fire, which had burnt over 350,000 ha since May 2019, following a request by the Canadian Inter-Agency Forest Fire Centre.

“The situation was so severe that evacuation was effected in high level and surrounding hamlets. Seven homes were lost in the fire and fortunately, there was no loss of life. This was a mammoth operation that the Canadians could not handle on their own, hence we lent a hand,” the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) said.

The DEFF has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Department of Natural Resources, in terms of which either country may request urgent support from the other with regard to wildfire management.

“The camaraderie built through your morning WoF parade, will stand you in good stead in years to come. Almost all of you have reported benefiting greatly from the exposure to new techniques, approaches, equipment and the novelty of fighting underground fires,” she said.

The team left South Africa on 24 June to assist the Canadian province of Alberta in combating its wildland fires.

“The selection included firefighters who had experience in overseas deployment and those who had not yet had an opportunity to serve on overseas assignments. The 40 firefighters, of whom 12 (30%) were women, came from all nine provinces in South Africa,” the department said.

WoF is an internationally renowned programme for its Integrated Fire Management services, which include creating fire awareness, proactively putting fire-preventative measures in place (such as prescribed burns and fuel-load reduction), and forest fire suppression, and rehabilitation of burnt areas.

The programme was launched in 2003 as part of government’s drive to create jobs and alleviate poverty.

It is one of several programmes in the DEFF that is implemented through government’s Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

SAnews.gov.za
HOW OUR AFRICAN ANCESTORS MADE SOUND IN THE STONE AGE

By Sarah Wurz
Professor, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits); Joshua Kumbani, PhD Student, Wits; Justin Bradfield, Senior Lecturer, University of Johannesburg; and Neil Rusch, Research Associate, Wits

The Middle and Later Stone Age, which lasted from about 300 000 to 10 000 years, was an important time for the African continent. During this period, humans developed many different strategies to produce a variety of stone tools. They used fire as an engineering tool and to cook. As expert hunter-gatherers, they used different tools to produce these stone tools, which were typically made of organic materials that don't survive well archaeologically.

Working with bone artefacts from archaeological sites in South Africa's southern Cape region, we've been able to show that some implements might have been used for sound production in the past.

But how could we be sure what the southern Cape artefacts were or what they were used for? Simple: we headed to a recording studio. Using the actual bone artefacts wasn't possible – they are protected by heritage legislation – so we made modern bone replicas and spun them mechanically for a total of 15 hours. The resulting sounds were recorded in the Field Sound Studio, Cape Town. We also recorded where evidence of wear from use occurred.

The sound frequency of the objects we assumed were woer woers ranged from 52 to 200 Hz. These are bass sounds, resembling those in nature such as bees humming. The frequency range across the sample of pendant replicas varied from 55.5 to 250 Hz, which is comparable to that produced by bullroarers. The replicas produced a sustained pulsing sound that may be likened to the breaking of ocean waves, thunder or breathing. If placed in a cave, such as the sites where the original artefacts were found, the aural effect would have been impressively magnified.

Armed with these data, we conducted a few more experiments. Our interpretation of these results is that one of the decorative pendants was used to produce sound, in the same manner as a bullroarer. If this interpretation is correct, it means that aerophones were used in the distant past in southern Africa. Aerophones produce sound by creating vibrations in the air when they are spun around their axes. They are known as some of the earliest musical instruments in the archaeological record.

Buzz ing as ritual gateway

So, why were these ancient bullroarers used? It's possible that sound may be associated with burying the dead. The artefacts tested from both sites were associated with human remains. Matjes River has yielded the remains of 120 individuals. The site was certainly a sacred one within the landscape. It was a burial ground for thousands of years.

There are other possible uses, based on ethnographic knowledge from southern Africa.

The Ju|h/ůansi San of Namibia associate the sound of the bullroarer, which they use in male initiation ceremonies, with mythical creators. Xam Bushmen in the 19th century reported how they would use the bullroarer to manipulate bees. Interestingly, people entering an altered state of consciousness report hearing a buzzing sound as part of their hallucinatory experience. Bees are also depicted in San rock art. These are believed to be associated with the altered state of consciousness shamans induced to enter the spirit world. When a woer or bullroarer is spun quickly, a stroboscopic effect is produced, which may add to the hallucinatory experience.

This work not only aids our understanding of our ancestors' behaviour. It also suggests that it may be worth re-examining other bone artefacts whose true function may not yet be known.

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Township Youths build exquisite sculpture

By Ashraf Hendricks

The art project is a collaboration with Mexican street artist Libre Gutierrez and the Sozo Foundation. Gutierrez creates artwork across the globe sometimes involving migrants and incarcerated people.

I don’t make all the violence stop but it reminds people that there is beauty in the world.

These are the words of a volunteer who, together with over 40 youth from Vrygrond, Capricorn and Overcome Heights in Cape Town and volunteers from San Francisco in the United States (US), built a sculpture which now stands three metres tall on the corner of Prince George Drive and Capricorn Boulevard near Muizenberg.

Over a four-week period earlier this year, the group built the sculpture from recycled materials such as wooden pallets and steel. Titled, “The Ship of Ubuntu”, the sculpture has a boat shape with the face of a man in front and a collection of houses on top. According to a press statement, the hull of the boat pays homage to Vrygrond’s history of being a fishermen’s village, while the houses on top symbolise the unity of the community.

“This represents a start to something greater,” says Vrygrond resident, Anteeno Hendericks, who participated in the project. For him, the sculpture represents a community that “can go anywhere”. “If we stand together as a community, we can do anything,” he says.

Hendericks has been living in Vrygrond for five years and says that it has been a “struggle”. Vrygrond has been hit hard by gang violence and housing problems. Gangsters try to recruit children, he says. Through the art work they are trying to show that there are better options than gangsterism in this world. “There is something better than selling yourself short or going to prison for somebody else,” he says.

The art project is a collaboration with Mexican street artist Libre Gutierrez and the Sozo Foundation. Gutierrez creates artwork across the globe sometimes involving migrants and incarcerated people. Last year, he facilitated and painted a colourful mural on the Vrygrond Community Centre’s walls. The sculpture was also supported by the Vrygrond Community Development Forum.

Lygia Stebbing from San Francisco said that a lot of people had ideas of what Vrygrond was about: that “it’s full of gangsters and drugs”, but “really the community is beautiful”. Stebbing is one of the art work organisers from EDvance, a teachers preparation programme at San Francisco State University in California.

“People should challenge themselves beyond the stereotypes,” says Stebbing. “People may look one way but it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are people to be afraid of or that they don’t care about their community”.

Since 2012, Stebbing and her students have been running programmes in Vrygrond which include bringing in pre-school teachers from the US.

Keemo Mowers says that he is trying to change the perspective of Vrygrond with this sculpture. “Vrygrond is not all bad. Something nice can come out of Vrygrond”. He says that he has always been positive. Even though it can be difficult living here, Mowers says: “You learn. You get streetwise.”

One of the exchange students is Noelle Owusu. Owusu teaches children in the Bay View area in San Francisco and says that communities there face similar struggles to those in Vrygrond, including gang violence, poverty and inequality. She describes it as a “forgotten community within a very affluent resource-filled area”.

Owusu says that when you see beauty in a neighbourhood like this, it doesn’t make all the violence stop or take the trauma away “but it gives people a reminder that there is beauty in the world”.

For Randall Daniels, this artwork is a way of him giving back to the community. He says that when you search for Vrygrond online all you see is “poor people”, but when you’re inside the community “you see rainbows”. He says that this sculpture is the community coming together with one mindset. He says they are showing people that “there is something good coming out of this place”.

Daniels, 26, has been staying in Vrygrond his entire life. He says that at one point he was doing all the “bad stuff”. But he started working with a different group of people. “The people I was involved with didn’t allow me to be the person that I was,” he says. “They saw something in me that I didn’t see in myself.”

In the future, Stebbing hopes to take youth from Vrygrond to the US for programmes in San Francisco.

www.groundup.org.za
Reaffirming the importance of rebuilding international solidarity

By Nicholas Wolpe
Chief Executive Officer, Liliesleaf

"The ability to harness and galvanise the international community and build a solid and cohesive support base was a unique feature of the struggle against apartheid.

As Ahmed Kathrada remarked: "It would be a wrong interpretation of history if we ignored the role of the international community in our struggle." This quote by the late struggle icon vividly captures the important role played by the international community in the struggle to attain democracy and human rights.

The struggle against apartheid stimulated and harried international support that transcended geopolitical fault lines, which at the time were pronounced and rigid. It inspired countries and their people to unify and stand shoulder to shoulder against the time were pronounced and rigid.

The ability to harness and galvanise the international community and build a solid and cohesive support base was a unique feature of the struggle against apartheid.

The formation of MK signalled a decisive shift in the focus and tactics of the liberation movement. The ANC’s move was a response to the only language the apartheid government knew and understood, and that was the language of violence.

Though the move to armed struggle marked a fundamental shift in the liberation movement’s emphasis, it occurred within a clearly defined and articulated political context and framework. The military wing was expected to operate within moral boundaries which defined the struggle as a legitimate and just cause.

Despite the ANC having turned to armed struggle, the bootswearing of the Nobel Peace Prize on Chief Albert Luthuli, then President of the ANC, and the first African to receive this prestigious award, signalled an acknowledgement that this armed struggle was a necessary and justifiable response to the brutal repression of the apartheid regime.

The move to armed struggle should not be seen in isolation, but as part of a two-pronged strategy, which recognised that armed struggle alone could not bring about a transfer of political power.

There was a sanguine acceptance that success depended also on galvanising broad-based international support. To this end, in 1960, the movement instructed Oliver Tambo to go into exile and mobilise the support of the international community for the liberation movement and in particular for the shift to armed struggle.

Oliver Tambo was an astute politician who undoubtedly grasped the nuances of international opinion, sentiment and concerns, and successfully navigated complicated Cold War politics to build an international coalition and secure backing for the move to armed struggle.

As already highlighted, there was a recognition that the armed struggle alone could not achieve political victory. Consequently, the establishment of a broad base of support found acceptance within the movement and was formalised at the Morogoro Conference of 1969.

Building international support was adopted as a key feature of ANC policy – the Fourth Pillar of the struggle. This resolution, adopted at the conference, is critical to understanding why international solidarity became a mission critical focus for the ANC. The ability to harness and galvanise the international community and build a solid and cohesive support base was a unique feature of the struggle against apartheid.

While there is general acknowledgment and recognition that international solidarity played..."
a critical role in bringing down the apartheid state, we are today confronted by the stark reality that the notion of solidarity, of building a common bond to counter the erosion of human rights and dignities, has all but disappeared from the political lexicon and in many quarters, holds little or no meaning or significance.

Thus, in keeping with Liliesleaf’s commitment to preserve and keep the beacon of international solidarity alive, we have developed a number of permanent exhibitions depicting the support provided by individual countries, and which highlight the significant role played by the international community in overthrowing apartheid.

The aim of these permanent exhibitions is to highlight and articulate what international solidarity was, and how it was articulated and expressed. The voices that so eloquently speak of the bonds of friendship convey and express what solidarity meant. It was much more than just unified political beliefs, ideals, purpose and opposition to a repugnant ideology. Solidarity transcended politics and went into the realm of friendship, which was most vividly exemplified by the relationship between ANC President Oliver Tambo and Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme.

Gandhi remarked that humanity was an ocean, that we collectively shared the same sea and all that was contained within it. However, today the geopolitical order is characterised not by the bonds that define and shape solidarity, but by an inward looking, protectionist view defined by “I” and not “us”. As Olof Palme remarked: “There exists no they and we, only us. Solidarity is and has to be indivisible”. This notion has unfortunately faded from realpolitik. The political discourse today is about a return to preserving own borders and keeping the “other” out.

The world is in disarray. Climate change is threatening the most vulnerable and the future of our youth; social inequality is on the rise (again); intolerance is fracturing what threads of solidarity exist; and right-wing movements and leaders are shaping and defining the political agenda and, in the process, sowing the seeds of fracture.

The reality is that our response to global conflicts, challenges and problems is no longer being shaped and defined by a common focus and purpose, but, unfortunately, by self-interest and self-preservation.

The shift in sentiment away from “us” has seen a rise in global strife, which has manifested in various forms, and an inherent unwillingness to collectively address and solve the growing conflicts which have come to shape global relations.

Highlighting the crucial role played by the international community in breaking the shackles of colonialism and the evil political edifice of apartheid forms part of Liliesleaf’s programme of memory against forgetting. Thus, through our focus on international solidarity, we hope to rekindle the flames and bonds of international solidarity, which Liliesleaf feels is an essential imperative if we are to meaningfully address the current-day geopolitical conflicts that have become far too common a feature of our global landscape.

Thus, the permanent exhibitions at Liliesleaf, as well as our mobile exhibitions, depict the long tradition of commitment and dedication to solidarity shown by such countries as Sweden, Norway and the former German Democratic Republic. We hope these exhibitions will play some part in reigniting the flames of solidarity.

As Rudi Muhammad, in a report to the United Nations Human Rights Council, stated in 2010:

“International solidarity is a precondition to human dignity, the basis of all human rights and a human-centred approach to development and has a bridge-building function across all divides and distinctions.

“It encompasses the values of social justice and equity; goodwill among peoples and nations, and integrity of the international community; sovereignty and sovereign equality of all states, and friendly relations among them.”

Oliver Tambo was an astute politician who undoubtedly grasped the nuances of international opinion, sentiment and concerns, and successfully navigated complicated Cold War politics to build an international coalition and secure backing for the move to armed struggle.
Dominant Boks win Rugby Championship

Handre Pollard scored 31 points as the Springboks thrashed Argentina 46-13 in Salta on Saturday, 10 August 2019, to win the Rugby Championship for the first time.

The Springboks last won a competition in 2009 when they finished first in the Tri Nations, the forerunner of the Rugby Championship.

André Pollard was named Player of the Match for his two-try, 31-point display.

Top South African AIDS scientist Salim Abdool Karim becomes Fellow of prestigious Royal Society

Top South African epidemiologist, Professor Salim S Abdool Karim, has officially become a Fellow of the prestigious Royal Society, the world’s oldest science academy, over three decades after he first science made it his goal as a student while studying at the London School of Economics.

Professor Karim joins the ranks of the most “eminent scientists, engineers and technologists from the UK and the Commonwealth” – according to the society’s website – a group that has included people like Sir Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking.

Each Fellow is elected for life through a peer review process. The Centre for the AIDS Research Programme of SA (Caprisa) – of which Professor Karim is Director – explained that to qualify for Royal Society Fellowship, an individual must have made a “substantial contribution to the improvement of natural knowledge, including mathematics, engineering science and medical science”. Professor Karim has achieved this excellence.

The Royal Society said that Prof. Karim “has made seminal contributions to HIV prevention and treatment globally. His clinical research showed that antiretrovirals prevent sexually transmitted HIV infection and genital herpes in women. He is an inventor of patents used in HIV vaccine candidates and antibody-based passive immunisation strategies. His TB-HIV treatment studies have shaped international guidelines on the clinical management of co-infected patients.”

According to the Royal Society, there are about 1 600 Fellows and Foreign Members, including approximately 80 Nobel Laureates. Each year, up to 52 Fellows and up to 10 Foreign Members are elected from a group of around 700 candidates who are proposed by the existing Fellowship, says the society.

The Royal Society was established in 1660, according to Caprisa. Professor Karim has won multiple awards, including The World Academy of Sciences’ Prize in Medical Science and the African Union’s Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Award (the continent’s most prestigious scientific award). Together with his wife, he has won a Lifetime Achievement Award for Public Service from the Institute for Human Virology in America, and both inspiring researchers are featured in the Academy of Science SA’s book, Legends of South African Science.

Banyana Banyana crowned Cosafa Cup champions

Banyana Banyana won the Cosafa Cup, downing Zambia 1-0 in the final played at Wolfson Stadium in Port Elizabeth on Saturday, 10 August 2019.

South Africa scored their winning goal through Tshepo Mashubela in the 22nd minute, her second of the tournament.

Despite Zambia’s best efforts to find an equaliser, Desiree Ellis’ charges held on for victory.

The win sees Banyana to a hat-trick of Cosafa Cup wins.

Giniel de Villiers wins 2019 Moroccan Rally

South Africa’s Giniel de Villiers won the 2019 Rallye du Maroc in a Toyota vehicle, in what was crucial preparation for the 2020 Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia.

The 47-year-old South African ensured that he goes into the world’s toughest off-road race in January on a big high with a comprehensive victory margin of 17 minutes and 42 seconds over Spaniard Carlos Sainz who was last year’s winner.

De Villiers, the 2009 Dakar Rally champion, said after the victory: “A big thank you to the team for their hard work this week and also to Alex Haro for the navigation! This was one tough rally!”

The Moroccan rally-raid race was over five desert stages.
Hout Bay pizzeria named the best in Africa

A local Hout Bay pizzeria called Massimo’s has been named the “Best Pizzeria in Africa” by 50 Top Pizza – the ultimate in pizza awards.

The awards took place in the very birthplace of pizza itself, Naples, Italy. What makes this award so significant is that for the first time since the 50 Top Pizza awards were established three years ago, it recognized an African pizzeria as one of the world’s top 50.

The pizzeria has a cozy, authentic feel and caters for carnivores, veggie and children and even has a doggy menu.

Opened in 2009 by owner Massimo Orione, the wood-fired, authentic Italian-style pizzas have high ratings of 4 and 5 out of 5 stars on reviewer websites like TripAdvisor.

But there’s even more to this little pizzeria. They invest a lot in their local community. In 2015, Massimo’s started a Pay-It-Forward Campaign. When dining at Massimo’s, you can decide to pre-buy a R10 slice of pizza when you settle your bill. That is, if you buy a virtual slice of pizza for someone, Massimo’s will “bank” it and settle your bill. That is, if you buy a virtual slice of pizza for someone, Massimo’s will “bank” it and settle your bill. The unique fact is that for every six slices sold, Massimo’s will deliver an entire pizza to a local charity or institution.

Actress Thembi Mtshali-Jones receives Living Legends Award at US Festival

Veteran actress Thembi Mtshali-Jones was honoured with the Living Legend Award at the National Black Theatre Festival in North Carolina.

Taking to Twitter, President Cyril Ramaphosa congratulated the “legend and veteran”. The President explained that the imbewu actress was “being recognised for her extraordinary talent & lifelong contribution to the arts”.

The actress made sure to share moments of her trip in the United States on social media, which included meeting actors such as Keith David, Lamman Rucker and Andre De Shields.

Thembi also shared an image of herself with her award and caption, reminding followers to “remain strong. When I look back on my life, I see pain, mistakes and heartache. When I look in the mirror, I see strength, learned lessons and pride in myself,” wrote the actress.

SASCOC congratulates SA Para Athletics Team

The South Africa Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) congratulated the South African team who participated in the 2019 World Para Athletics Junior Championships, held in Nottwil, Switzerland, from 1 to 4 August 2019.

The triumphant athletes made South Africa proud by obtaining 22 medals (seven gold, 10 silver and five bronze) and placing fifth in the world on the medal table. Further, Team South Africa broke four world records and a number of African records.

The President of SASCOC, Gideon Sam, congratulated the team: “Congratulations to the team and to the South African Sports Association for the Physically Disabled on your great achievements at the World Para Athletics Junior Championships.”

“You performed exceptionally and all your hard work has paid off. You have raised the national flag high by placing fifth position on the medal table. This boards well for Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Well done!”, Sam concluded.

Lira becomes first African to get own 60th Anniversary Barbie Doll

Lirato “Lira” Molapo has become the first African to have an official 60th anniversary Barbie doll made in her likeness.

The Lira doll was made as part of the 60th Anniversary Barbie Shero Campaign in an effort to inspire more girls. Other role models from around the globe include tennis star Naomi Osaka, artist Frida Kahlo as well as National Aeronautics and Space Administration mathematician and physical Katherine Johnson.

“I am the very first African to be bestowed with this honour and I’m simply thrilled to be honoured in this way”, Lira announced on her social media pages.

Cape Town’s La Colombe names 12th-best Fine Dining Restaurant in the World

Cape Town’s La Colombe has been announced as the 12th Best Fine Dining Restaurant in the World by the acclaimed TripAdvisor® Travellers’ Choice® Awards 2019.

TripAdvisor® is the world’s largest travel platform with nearly 795 million reviews and opinions from travellers worldwide.

La Colombe, with its seasonally-driven, globally inspired modern cuisine, is also the only restaurant in Africa to be selected in the Top 25 in the World, with La Colombe also no. 1 on the dedicated African list.

This announcement came fresh off the heels of the local JHP Gourmet Guide Awards, where La Colombe was awarded the highest accolade of three plates.

This year’s awards recognised 584 restaurants globally, including the Top 25 in the World, plus dedicated lists for Asia, Africa, Europe, India, Canada, Mexico, Australia, South America, South Pacific, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Award winners were selected using an algorithm that took into account the quantity and quality of reviews for restaurants around the world, gathered over a 12-month period.

Chef proprietor, Scot Kirton, and executive chef, James Gaag, said: “The unique fact about this recognition, is that it is the ‘people’s choice’ – an unsolicited review by diners from all over the world. Our team is absolutely delighted with this award”.

www.sabreakingnews.co.za

www.sascoc.org.za

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Sun City wins big at World Travel Awards

The World Travel Awards were established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate excellence across all key sectors of the travel tourism and hospitality industry. Today, it’s recognised globally as the ultimate hallmark of quality, with winners setting the benchmark to which all others aspire.

Sun City’s Marketing Manager, Thapelo Modise, says: “We are honoured that Sun City has claimed awards in two categories in the regional World Travel Awards Programme.

In the prestigious World’s Best Vineyard 2019 Competition, a voting panel from around the world analysed 1 500 wineries from 17 countries.

Vergelegen was named the best winery in Africa, and number 34 overall. The top estate in the world was named as Zuccardi Valle de Uco in Argentina.

Vergelegen is renowned for its wine, food, exquisite gardens (including its rose garden with 80 different varieties of roses), historic buildings and sustainable biodiversity ... but is sure to attract even more local and international visitors with this latest accolade.

The estate, which is an hour’s drive from Cape Town, welcomes about 190 000 visitors annually ... half local, and half foreign tourists.

Thanks to an initiative at the estate, bontebok, one of the rarest species of antelope in the world, are now thriving at Vergelegen where nine new born bontebok were welcomed earlier this year.

Vergelegen’s previous accolades include the International Best of Wine Tourism, Cape Winelands, awarded in 2016 for an unprecedented fifth time. The estate was also the first Biodiversity and Wine Initiative Champion in 2005.

South Africa’s Vergelegen voted Best Wine Estate in Africa

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The World’s Best Vineyard 2019 competition, held in London recently, announced that the Vergelegen wine estate in Somerset West, in the Western Cape province of South Africa, was Africa’s top winery.

“We are absolutely delighted by this award,” said Vergelegen CEO, Don Tooth.

“The Vergelegen team is committed to building South Africa’s reputation as a producer of world-class wines and this win is an acknowledgement of that passion.

“Tourism is a vital part of our economy, outperforming many key industries in job creation, so this is not only a proud moment for Vergelegen, but for the South African wine and tourism sectors overall.”

Two South African restaurants named on World’s Best Restaurants 2019 list

A restaurant in South Africa’s Khayelitsha township in Cape Town, 4Roomed The Restaurant, and Le Wine Chambre in Johannesburg have been named as two of the world’s best restaurants of 2019.

The list was compiled for the first time ever in a partnership between two prestigious global magazines – Food & Wine and Travel + Leisure.

It includes 30 restaurants from around the world and was curated by one award-winning writer, Besha Rodell, who travelled anonymously to 81 restaurants in 24 countries to find the best of the best, based on recommendations from a panel of worldwide experts.

What Rodell loved most about both restaurants selected in South Africa was that they honoured South African taste and delivered an authentic African experience.

Rodell says while some of the wonderful wineries and restaurants in Cape Town can lead you to believe you’re in California or France, “Cape Town is not in America or Europe. It’s in Africa. 4Roomed The Restaurant makes no secret of that fact – what’s celebrated here is the food and culture of Africa, and South Africa in particular.”

SA interior design firm again named one of the world’s best

For the sixth time, Cape Town-based interior design firm ARCC has been named one of the top 100 designers in the world.

This year, it was again selected by the Andrew Martin Interior Design Review in the United Kingdom for the “Oscars of the interior design world”.

The Andrew Martin Interior Design Review showcases the top international projects every year. It is now in its 23rd year. ARCC was the only South African firm among the top 100.

The firm specialises in luxury residential interiors, and describes itself as “humble yet brutally honest.” Working from Cape Town, its more than 50 designers do interiors across the world, including in Europe, Australia and the United States.

A spokesperson told Business Insider SA there was currently “a hunger for African design” in other countries as contemporary African art and fashion are “having a profound effect on global tastes”. There is a global realisation that Africa is not only a source of inspiration for luxury goods but is a creator of them too, according to ARCC.

“African designers are drawing on the continent’s diverse aesthetics and artisanal traditions to help craft a new, modern luxury that is becoming increasingly more appreciated and sought-after globally.” Business Insider SA
South African motorcycle-racing sensation

Brad Binder claims awesome victory in Malaysia

Binder had already demonstrated that he was one of the fastest riders in free practice and took the lead at the very first corner. The South African set an extremely strong pace, riding quicker than the previous race lap record at Sepang.

In spite of dropping to third place on lap six, the Red Bull KTM Ajo rider did not lose his focus and he soon regained the lead, a position he would defend to the finish line, to secure the 14th Grand Prix victory of his career. The result saw Brad move into second place in the general standings, with 234 points.

The Red Bull KTM Ajo team concluded the 2019 season at the Valencia GP, which was held at the Ricardo Tormo Circuit from 15 to 17 November 2019.

Binder will become the first South African to race MotoGP in the four-stroke era and the first to compete in the premier class since 2000.

www.redbullmoto gp.com

Endangered Wildlife Trust wins prestigious international award

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) recently announced that two of its programmes, the Wildlife and Energy and Wildlife and Transport programmes, were recipients of the International Conference on Ecology and Transportation International Stewardship Award for their innovative and holistic approach to tackling the impacts of linear infrastructures, such as roads and power lines, on wildlife in Africa.

“The EWT has worked tirelessly for over 45 years to save wildlife and habitats, with our vision being a world in which both humans and wildlife prosper in harmony with nature. From the smallest frog, to the majestic rhino from sweeping grasslands to arid drylands; from our shorelines to winding rivers: the EWT is working with you, to protect our world.”

The International Stewardship Award is presented to agencies or organisations that demonstrate, through the results of their actions, a cooperative effort to maintain or restore ecological function amid transportation above the regulatory requirements.

www.goodthings guy.co.za

SA gymnasium set for historic Olympic Games performance

Caitlin Rooskrantz has qualified for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the recent 2019 Artistic World Championships in Stuttgart.

Rooskrantz will be the first South African woman to qualify for the Games in artistic gymnastics since the end of isolation.

Rooskrantz, Naveen Daines and Mammu Rankoe flew the flag at the Olympic qualification competition in Stuttgart.

The Johannesburg-based gymnast scored 49.466 finishing narrowly ahead of Naveen (49.399) who performed cleanly on all apparatus.

Caitlin finished ahead of gymnasts from Sweden, Chile, Israel, Norway, Azerbaijan and Olympic medalist Oksana Chusovitina of Uzbekistan.

Only one gymnast per country is allowed to qualify at these championships, which meant Naveen would get a shot at the 2020 African Championships that will be hosted in Pretoria in April.

Rooskrantz, a Grade-12 learner from Parktown Girls’ High in Johannesburg, made history in September by becoming the first South African to win a gold medal at an international gymnastics competition. She finished first in the uneven bars at the FIG Challenge Cup in Sombathely, Hungary.

SA Gymnastics Federation acting president, Donovan Jurgens, commented that the three women’s performances were the best South Africa had seen in years.

“It is the first time a South African Artistic Woman has qualified at the World Championships for the Olympics without utilising the African Continental birth,” Jurgens said.

“And to have two gymnasts’ neck on neck in this race is even more encouraging. Should Naveen qualify at the African Championships, this will be the first time in South African Gymnastics history that two gymnasts from the same discipline have qualified for an Olympic Games.”

www.gymnastics.co.za

SA star named Player of 2019 Netball World Cup

D espite the Proteas falling short of a podium finish at the 2019 Netball World Cup in Liverpool, they were given some consolation with the news that their wing defence, Karla Pretorius, was named Player of the Tournament. Pretorius was honoured during the medal ceremony in front of a pact M&S Bank Arena in Liverpool.

“I feel very honoured to have been named the best player of the World Cup. You are only as good as those around you and the team did so well at this World Cup, and even though we won’t return home to South Africa with a medal, I know that we all put our hearts and souls into each and every game in Liverpool and can hold our heads high. This good run obviously was what inspired me to play as well as I did and I am grateful to have been recognised by the tournament and given this very special award,” said Pretorius.

The last South African to win the same award was Erin Burger and ironically was the touring roommate of Pretorius who was given player of the 2011 Netball World Cup in Singapore.

“When Erin won the award eight years ago, it really inspired me. I have always believed that we can compete with the best in the world even though we don’t play as often as we would like against the top nations. Me winning this award shows that South Africa has the talent, players and team to go to the top. I am excited about the future of the Proteas,” continued Pretorius.

“Tigers rescued in Germany begin new life in South Africa

T wo big cats rescued from Germany recently arrived in South Africa to start a new life.

Tigers, Bela and Sharuk, were rescued from an inappropriate private facility and have been transferred to Lionsrock Big Cat Sanctuary in Bethlehem, Free State.

Bela and Sharuk were born in 2014, while a little sibling, Ima, did not survive.

Before their transfer to South Africa, Four Paws took the tigers to their Tierart centre in the Rhineland-Palatinate state in western Germany.

“We took intensive care of the two siblings for more than four years. They have always been fixed on each other and spend a lot of time together cuddling on their platform or playing,” said Florian Eliserof, site manager at Tierart.

But, she said that the tigers needed more space than the 14-ha property could provide.

The decision was made to move them to the 1 250-ha Lionsrock site.

“It became clear to us that these tigers, especially shy Bela, need more space and less interference from humans to make further progress. We are convinced that they will find this in their new home,” said Eliserof.

The tigers were checked by the state vet in Johannesburg and given the all-clear to travel to the Lionsrock sanctuary.

“Although it has been a very long journey, both tigers are doing well considering the conditions and have already had some species appropriate food,” said Hildergard Piker, head of the animal welfare department at Lionsrock.

www.redbil.com

Terry Pheto wins Best Actress Award in London

The South African flag continues to fly high with leading lady Terry Pheto.

The star took home the Best Actress Award at the fifth annual British Urban Film Festival Awards, which took place in London in September 2019.

Faces, the movie for which she took home an award, also won Best Feature Film.

In absentia due to her obligations as a jury member for the 92nd Annual Academy Awards (Oscars) for Best Foreign Film, Photo said it was a surreal feeling to win the nod.

“I’m elated that my talent not only continues to cross borders but is recognised among the best on international platforms.”

The actress also thanked the Faces team for an amazing experience.

“It’s an honour to be part of such an important and celebrated project.”

Photo’s latest Best Actress win forms part of her already impressive catalogue of international awards.

www.redbil.com
CAPE TOWN WELCOMES YOU

VISIT, LIVE, WORK, PLAY & INVEST IN ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CITIES ON EARTH

Cape Town has been voted the world's Best City by readers of the UK's Telegraph for five consecutive years, and there's good reason why. We sell among the world's top destinations to visit and invite all the 4th travelers that appeal to people looking for a great city in which to live, work, play and invest.

Cape Town is a proud inclusive city, welcoming all who can join in our vision to create a safe, sustainable, vibrant urban environment for generations to come. Our national leaders in business and have a thriving knowledge economy; our skills market is growing, and the city offers numerous opportunities for work and investment.

Cape Town is also a proud recipient of a number of international awards and accolades. In 2018, the city was named one of the Top 10 Surf Cities in the world by Surfer Magazine and covered the number one city in Africa for business tourism events by the International Congress and Convention Association. Cape Town has also been voted one of the Top 10 Cities in the World for Travelers by Lonely Planet in 2018. Skytrax voted us as the 5th Best in Africa and fourth Best in the world.

Cape Town is a number of world-class museums that offer a treasure trove to the past. A number of these museums are located in the city centre — all within walking distance of each other — and together offer a view as diverse and entertaining as the city itself.

The state of the art Zeitz MOCAA — recently voted the world's most cultural destination — is the latest addition to the Cape Town landscape and the first major museum in Africa designed to contemporary art. The museum, housed in the historic Grain Silos at the V&A Waterfront, contains over 9,000 square meters (102,000 square feet) and is one of the largest contemporary art museums worldwide.

Zeitz MOCAA is spread over nine floors, of which 6,000 square meters (65,000 square feet) is dedicated to exhibition space. Through an entire floor dedicated to education, the museum aims to develop a new art-loving, museum-going audience.

LIVE
Cape Town has a terrific mix of areas to live, from vibrant city living to quiet, leafy residential suburbs. The city is known for its successful property market. In recent years, Cape Town’s property values have risen, and so it is no surprise that international property investors are taking notice. The city and regions around it have over 4,000 properties internationally, two globally recognized business schools and a number of reputable public and private institutions.

Cape Town is also home to some of the most globally renowned companies, and the city has been recognized as one of the most livable cities in the world. The city is also home to some of the most globally renowned companies, and the city has been recognized as one of the most livable cities in the world.

WORK
Cape Town’s work-life balance is one of the major reasons why many of the top wealth and asset management firms choose to base themselves here. The city is home to an impressive group of wealth managers, including the likes of Allan Gray, Old Mutual, First National Bank, Sanlam, and Absa. Most of these companies’ staff and executives live in the city.

The top employment sectors in Cape Town include community and social services, the financial and trade sectors, the media and publishing sector, and the tourism sector.

Cape Town offers a wide range of cultural events and international events — from concerts and community-based events to business conferences and international sports tournaments. The city is a cultural hub with arts, heritage and cultural sites, activities and opportunities for all.

We have a vibrant arts and culture scene where creativity and heritage are explored through theatre, live music, dance, visual arts and more. Each day and night in Cape Town offers you exciting cultural spaces to visit and events to join.

INVEST
Cape Town was South Africa’s oldest city, second most populous and an important contributor to national employment. It is the legislative capital of South Africa, the administrative and economic centre of the Western Cape, and Africa’s third largest economy.

The Mother City produces 9.8% of South Africa’s gross domestic product (GDP) and accounts for more than 7% of the Western Cape’s economic activity (Global Insights, 2016). The city has a diversified economy, and the three largest sectors are: finance, insurance, property and business services.

Cape Town is attracting thinkers, innovators and designers who are helping to build an ecosystem that is strong in many aspects of the knowledge economy. The city is the leader on the African continent in the technology information sector, with many tech start-ups and more than 400,000 people working in the technology sector.

Cape Town has been chosen as the African headquarters of innovation by companies such as Stanley Rice and Thomson Reuters. The city is also home to many of South Africa’s and Africa’s fintech and eyeball institutions, and coupled with the national headquarters of many large and consulting firms, offers all the services needed to underpin a global drive into Africa.

One of the fastest-growing sectors in Cape Town’s economy is the business processes outsourcing (BPO) sector, which offers a wide range of career opportunities and online retailers like Amazon choosing to conduct their operations from our shores.

www.capetowntourism.gov.za/visit
www.livelivecapetown.com
www.capetown.travel
Underberg is a charming little farming town at the foothills of the Southern Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal. The town is a popular stopover for travellers using the Sani Pass to and from Lesotho and boasts a charismatic blend of dusty roads, mountain streams and sandstone mountains.
These young singers and dancers are committed to making their audiences smile, clap, sing and feel the warmth of the Limpopo sun in their hearts. Not only for enhanced opportunities but as a diversion from the challenges that come from living in disadvantaged communities. The risk of alcohol, drugs, teenage pregnancy and other problems are practically eliminated because choral music requires such a time investment.

The Ndlovu Care Group aims to create a place of comfort and care and strives to nurture values such as self-discipline, self-confidence, tolerance, respect and leadership in the choristers.

The choir performs an impressive assortment of South African music ranging from Afro-Pop classics to traditional South African music and original compositions. These young singers and dancers are committed to making their audiences smile, clap, sing and feel the warmth of the Limpopo sun in their hearts. The choir is vibrant, exuberant and colourful, and delivers a toe-tapping and energetic South African musical performance irresistibly combined with mesmerizing choreography.

The contagious joy that the Ndlovu singers pour into their music cannot be faked. As their youthful smiles light up their faces, their entire being radiates the talent, opportunity and potential of millions of young people. One nation, one continent.

Although they weren’t placed in the top five, there is no doubt they will keep on inspiring and making South Africa and Africa proud.

In the semi-final of AGT on 3 September 2019, the Ndlovu Youth Choir garnered international attention for their performances and this time they put their spin on Higher Love by Whitney Houston and Kygo’s Stole Winwood.

For their final performance on AGT, the Ndlovu Youth Choir gave a tribute to Africa. Closing off the show the choir shined on the stage with their spin on Africa, by Toto. The choir shared a moving post on Twitter about their performance saying:

“Tonight we were proud young ambassadors of a united Africa. Africa has the world’s youngest population, and our hope is that our performance reflected the talent, opportunity and potential of millions of young people. One nation, one continent.”

These were the powerful words of the Ndlovu Youth Choir choirmaster, Ralf Schmitt, after the Limpopo-based group knocked the socks off the judges at AGT.

Schmitt is renowned as an African choral music specialist. His arrangements and compositions are regularly aired on television and radio and have been performed both locally and abroad. He has a passion for the preservation of traditional South African folk music and has arranged and recorded several traditional South African songs.

He has presented skillfully interactive workshops on South African music at schools, universities and festivals in Argentina, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada and the United States of America (USA). Schmitt has conducted the National Youth Choir of South Africa on two occasions, and holds the position of artistic director at the Mzansi Youth Choir. Performance highlights include extensive concert tours of Argentina, Canada, USA, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Austria as well as performances at the Zim Riya Choral Festival (Jerusalem, Israel), the New Orleans Jazz Festival (USA) and as the conductor for the opening of Andrea Bocelli’s concert in South Africa.

Schmitt started his musical career as a chorister. He was in the Drakensberg Boys Choir, after which he followed his passion and continued to study music and choral conducting under Christian Ashley Botha at the University of Pretoria.

This ebullient and talented young choral conductor also leads the choirs of Roedean Girls School Johannesburg, St Albans Boys Choir, Pretoria, and the Rustenburg High School Choir.

In September 2019, the proudly South African Ndlovu Youth Choir made their way to the final of America’s Got Talent (AGT) 2019. Since its inception in January 2009, the choir has profoundly affected the lives of the choristers and demonstrates the potential of any human being to achieve excellence no matter their background, education or place of birth. From its humble beginnings as an after-school activity, the choir has evolved into a truly outstanding professional ensemble.

The choir forms part of a more significant project which started in 1994. The Ndlovu Care Group was founded by a Dutch doctor named Dr Hugo Templeman, in the rural village of Moutse, Limpopo. The care group provides innovative healthcare, childcare, education and community development. The Ndlovu Youth Choir was subsequently created in 2009.

Choristers who have been part of the music programme at Ndlovu have said that the chance to be part of a world-class extra-mural developmental programme offers them hope, not only for enhanced opportunities but as a diversion from the challenges that come from living in disadvantaged communities. The risk of alcohol, drugs, teenage pregnancy and other problems are practically eliminated because choral music requires such a time investment.

The Ndlovu Care Group aims to create a place of comfort and care and strive to nurture values such as self-discipline, self-confidence, tolerance, respect and leadership in the choristers.

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The contagious joy that the Ndlovu singers pour into their music cannot be faked. As their youthful smiles light up their faces, they remind one of the very best South Africa has to offer. In 2018, the choir released its third album, which was produced by multiple Grammy Award-winning producers Rachel Faro and Jimmy Douglas.

In 2018, the Ndlovu Youth Choir performed an isiZulu cover of Ed Sheeran’s “Shape of You” during an interview on Jacaranda’s Breakfast Show. Since then, they have been doing some incredible things.

Most recently, they travelled to America to audition for AGT 2019 and breezed through to the next rounds while filling South Africa and the world with pride. They have an inspiring message for people across the globe. They hope to inspire every child to follow their dreams. “The sky is the limit. Just because you’re born in poverty doesn’t mean you are poverty.”
The Lazy Makoti’s Guide to the Kitchen

Mogau Seshoene has recently returned from Macao, China, after attending the Gourmand International Awards ceremony for Best Cookbooks of the Year. Her book, The Lazy Makoti’s Guide to the Kitchen, was nominated in two categories, namely: Best First Book and Best Photography.

Seshoene became a recipient of the prestigious Gourmand World Cookbook Awards in the category First Book, placing second in the world for 2019. Since its launch in October last year, it is still the number one cookbook in South Africa, and is now in its fifth print run. It is a proudly South African moment that the book has proved to be more popular than both Jamie Oliver and Ottolenghi.

“The entire experience was amazing!” says Seshoene. “More than I could put into words. And Macau is absolutely breathtaking. Meeting industry peers who write so passionately about the food of their own countries inspired me a million times over. I’m so proud of the book we produced – the full cycle, from writing to shooting to launching it, for it to have become a bestseller in South Africa, and now to have this world recognition. I’m truly proud and grateful.”

Key indicators set by the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards for what they consider a world-class cookbook include: the increasing influence of social media and television in expanding the food culture market; the importance of reflecting the wide diversity of world food culture; the significance of trying to save local food culture and the sharing of this knowledge; focussing on quick and easy comfort food; and health and nutrition.

The Lazy Makoti’s Guide to the Kitchen combines every one of these factors. In being an advocate of traditional South African heritage and culture, Seshoene has become an Instagram sensation, with over 100,000 followers. Her no-nonsense recipes, using simple unpretentious ingredients likely to be in everyone’s pantry or fridge, are quick and easy to make.

“I wanted to take the intimidating aspect – those Instagram-perfect presentations delivered on TV by sophisticated chefs – out of cooking and create a cookbook for inexperienced people, one that is as visually appealing as it is useful. Turn every makoti (daughter-in-law) into a kitchen goddess,” says Seshoene.

Her book is user-friendly, from the kitchen basics to clever tips and fresh ideas. She shows beginners how to transform pantry staples or leftovers into simple but delicious meals but also takes them through show-stopper seven-colour Sunday lunches. Her chapter on traditional and township dishes reimagines African favourites, just like gogo would make them.

According to chef, food writer and cookery-book author Dorah Sithole: “Mogau ensures that African food gets the respect and global exposure it deserves.”

Libby Doyle, the co-founder of Quivertree Publications, says: “Mogau came to us with a strong concept, one that is humorous and true to her heritage in a way that so many can relate to. She followed that up, as she does, with her own personal campaign that included making a round of the bookshops and shaking managers’ hands. Mogau has that star quality, with great charisma and authenticity. She is to be commended for her clever, hard work, which has resulted in such incredible sales and a swift rise in social media. Congratulations, Mogau, we are so proud.”

Brand South Africa
ROVOS RAIL CELEBRATES 30 YEARS

Rovos Rail, often described as the most luxurious train in the world, celebrated three decades in South Africa in April 2019.

Since its first overnight journey with a seven-coach train to what was then the Eastern Transvaal, Rovos Rail has expanded exponentially and now offers eight trips around southern Africa with more trains that can accommodate 72 passengers. Journeys range from 48 hours to 15 days with the newest route, Trail of Two Oceans, departing for its maiden voyage in July this year from Dar es Salaam to Lubuto in Angola. It was the first time in history that a passenger train travelled the east-to-west route.

“With his wife Anthea at his side, Vos travelled the world attending travel shows and calling on leading travel agents and tour operators. “It was both invigorating and exhausting,” says Anthea. “We were starting out at the same time as the Vartys from Londolozi and the late Liz McGrath as well as a few others. We all used to lose our voices from puntin our offerings so vigorously!”

It took a decade for the company to break even. “We managed to side-step bankruptcy more than once,” says Vos. “I was inexperienced and had no idea just how expensive trains would be to operate.” An auspicious moment arrived in 1993 when Vos formed a relationship with Philip Morrell from Jules Verne in the United Kingdom. Together, they plotted a route from Cape Town to Victoria Falls. “We had no money at the time for any advertising but we placed an ad in the Sunday Telegraph nonetheless. It was December and I didn’t hold much hope.” However, much to his surprise, the advertisement worked and the maiden voyage sold out. When Phillip called to share the good news, Vos’ words to him were: “Send cash!” The new Victoria Falls journey proved successful.

What’s next for Rovos Rail? “Consolidation,” says Vos. “Once we’ve launched our sixth train we need to focus on maintaining all the coaches, training staff and persevering in our pursuit to be independent,” he adds. “Our daughters are also actively involved in the business and I imagine there will be significant change over the next few years as they work with me to propel us forward.”

The company also has long-standing, amicable and prosperous relationships with many travel agents and tour operators around the world. “Without them we would not be here, so I feel this is as much their celebration as it is ours,” says Vos.

Like many in the hospitality industry, Rovos Rail has had to weather its fair share of turbulence and even though the company has grown substantially, the determined and family-oriented spirit that started the business 30 years ago is still very much at its core. “We have staff members here who have been with us since the beginning and over 100 employees who’ve been here for over 20 years,” says Vos. “It’s quite incredible and unheard of these days, so for this I am truly thankful,” he smiles.
FIMA 2019 a reason for African pride

The 2019 edition of FIMA brought together many African designers and more than 2,000 personalities from more than 40 nationalities.

The 12th International Fashion Festival in Africa (FIMA) was held between 4 and 7 July 2019 in Niamey, Niger. This edition was entitled: “Industry and Creativity, A New Dynamic toward African Integration” and organised by Alphadi, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Artist for Peace and President-Founder of the FIMA.

This edition took place in an unprecedented context, as it occurred at the same time as the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. It represented the consecration of more than 25 years of actions in favour of a recognition and a promotion of African knowledge by Alphadi. Hadja Aïssata Issaoufou, President of the foundation, “Guri Va Meilleure”, and the First Lady of Niger sponsored the festival, which focussed on a special topic each day.

After the inauguration day, the second day was dedicated to Niger, the third to Africa and the last to the youth. Furthermore, participants could attend many events, including conferences, workshops, selling exhibitions of handmade products and other meetings between cultural figures, tourism professionals, artists and agents of the economic world.

The FIMA seeks to promote the emergence of a fashion and arts industry dedicated to the development of Africa, capitalise on traditional expertise and make Africa a hub of the fashion, arts and culture industry.

The first edition of the FIMA was organised in 1998 at Tiguidit in the desert of Ténéré (north of Niger). Alphadi’s idea was to create a festival in order to present and promote, in Africa, African creators’ work to representatives of the artistic world and to journalists from all around the world, offering them international visibility. Moreover, Alphadi seeks to materialise his work into sustainable projects in favour of peace and the development of Niger, including the reopening of Agadez Airport, road construction and the electrification of villages.

The 2019 edition of FIMA brought together many African designers and more than 2,000 personalities from more than 40 nationalities.
South Africa’s most beautiful streets

Traveller24 recently featured its list of the most scenic streets in South Africa, filled with beautiful architecture, stunning trees and colourful haunts.

The best way to experience a city or town is by walking it, immersing yourself in the noise (or lack thereof) for a fully authentic experience. This walking culture has given rise to streets becoming tourist destinations themselves, may it be for the plethora of restaurants and shops, stunning buildings or just general small-town vibe that lets you disappear into your beautiful surroundings.

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Church Street, Tulbagh
This small Western Cape Town has become a popular dorpie escape among South Africans, and most notably for its Church Street, where you’ll find the largest concentration of national monuments in the country.

Wale Street, Cape Town
Wale Street is home to the city’s iconic colourful Bo-Kaap houses. But when visiting, always remember these are people’s homes and their privacy should be respected.

Herbert Baker Street, Pretoria
When in Pretoria during springtime, everyone’s looking for the best Jacaranda spots, but Herbert Baker Street in Groenkloof takes the prize for the most beautiful display, including the rarer white Jacarandas!

Baakens Street, Port Elizabeth
If you’re an architecture fan, a stroll through Baakens Street in Port Elizabeth is a must-do. Here you’ll find the city’s main library and city hall, and it’s right in the middle of Route 67, a historical walk that highlights Nelson Mandela’s struggle for freedom.
Church Street, Victoria West
This Northern Cape Town makes one feel like you got stuck in time and boasts a classic Dutch Reformed church and the last art deco cinema in the country, the Apollo Theatre.

Anton Lembede Street, Durban
While the street is very long and right in the hustle and bustle of Durban, there’s a section between Samora Machel and Dorothy Nyembe streets with beautiful buildings that will make you feel like you’ve been transported to Europe. Highlights include the Albany Hotel, The Playhouse Company theatre, the Old Court House Museum and the Durban City Hall and Harbour Park.

Murray Street, Graaff-Reinet
Located in another famous dorpie in South Africa, and the oldest, Murray Street offers the best route through the town, with the original homes of settlers all the way to the Sundays River.

Main Street, Pilgrim’s Rest
This old mining town in Mpumalanga is genuinely stuck in the past, with its original buildings from the heydays of the gold rush turned into a museum complex on its Main Street.

Rissik Street, Haenertsburg
Nestled on the edge of Limpopo’s Great Escarpment, this village is the epitome of a quiet escape in nature. The tree-lined Rissik is just the right spot to walk down and is the starting point for wilder hikes into the mountains.

Oak Avenue, Cullinan
This town on the Diamond Route has a picturesque main road filled with heritage buildings, cute coffee shops, galleries and museums to tell you more about the town’s mining history.
JHB PRIDE CELEBRATES 30 YEARS WITH PRIDE OF AFRICA LAUNCH

To “capture the intention, collaboration, and strength of Pride of Africa”, the organisation created a new flag inspired by all 54 African countries.

After 30 years of advocacy, Johannesburg Pride has become the most-established and well-attended pride event in South Africa, attracting an ever-growing number of supporters each year. With the 2019 parade taking place in October, JHB Pride announced the launch of Pride of Africa – an umbrella organisation which will house Johannesburg Pride, as well as other events aimed at the LGBTIQ+ME community.

“Pride of Africa will officially be launched in 2019 as a unified platform and voice for a diverse community. The platform will see the introduction of a lifestyle conference and youth shelter, in addition to supporting events being hosted across Africa,” a press statement explained.

To “capture the intention, collaboration, and strength of Pride of Africa”, the organisation created a new flag inspired by all 54 African countries.

“A flag that helps to create a positive stance for a continent where the community faces such overwhelming negativity. A flag that says you are accepted, you are welcome, and you are safe where this flag flies,” the statement went on to say.

The 30th Johannesburg Pride Parade and Festival took place on 26 October in Sandton, Johannesburg.

AFRICA’S TOP POLO PLAYERS TAKE ON THE WORLD AT “AFRICAN ASCOT” IN LONDON

South African polo players took part in the second annual Lux Afrique Polo Day in Richmond, London, on Saturday, 3 August 2019, to celebrate polo – the Sport of Kings – and African culture, alongside Kenyan and Nigerian players.

The second Lux Afrique Polo Day, an event to celebrate African polo players, was held in London and highlighted African dress, music and talent.

“We like to think this is our African Ascot where you can come every year, wear your best outfits with beautiful colours, (and) represent the different countries you’re from,” founder Alexander Amosu told Reuters.

The British-Nigerian entrepreneur opened the match between Africa’s finest vs The Rest of the World, the only African polo event of its kind in Europe.

Held at the prestigious Ham Polo Club, it was a day of glamour and festivities with eminent Africans and polo aficionados, and South African polo players took part in the second annual Lux Afrique Polo Day in Richmond, London, on Saturday, 3 August 2019, to celebrate polo – the Sport of Kings – and African culture, alongside Kenyan and Nigerian players.

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“A flag that helps to create a positive stance for a continent where the community faces such overwhelming negativity. A flag that says you are accepted, you are welcome, and you are safe where this flag flies,” the statement went on to say.

The 30th Johannesburg Pride Parade and Festival took place on 26 October in Sandton, Johannesburg.

AFRICA’S TOP POLO PLAYERS TAKE ON THE WORLD AT “AFRICAN ASCOT” IN LONDON

The second Lux Afrique Polo Day, an event to celebrate African polo players, was held in London and highlighted African dress, music and talent.

“We like to think this is our African Ascot where you can come every year, wear your best outfits with beautiful colours, (and) represent the different countries you’re from,” founder Alexander Amosu told Reuters.

The British-Nigerian entrepreneur opened the match between Africa’s finest vs The Rest of the World, the only African polo event of its kind in Europe.

Held at the prestigious Ham Polo Club, it was a day of glamour and festivities with eminent Africans and polo aficionados, and prizes for the best-dressed. The dress code was African Boldness: Polo Chic.

According to Lux Afrique, polo is a “rapidly growing sport in Africa” and the polo tournament in London provided “a platform for young and emerging African talent to compete on prestigious, British ground”.

Team Africa (Upendo) was narrowly defeated by Team Rudo (The Rest of the World), but it was still a fantastic day with great music provided by Afrobeats and Fela Kuti and an after-party with DJs to dance the night away.

The super-glam day also included a luxury shopping lounge and a supercar parade of iconic vehicles, presenting on the lawns for guests’ enjoyment.

Lux Afrique, a lifestyle and concierge company, said all proceeds would go directly to an African charity.

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LIFESTYLE

Stargazing in the Northern Cape