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UBUNTU

a Nguni word meaning humanity

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation's quarterly magazine



ON THE COVER

Tremendous progress has been made in addressing the challenges faced as a country and a continent in access to vaccines. As a result of negotiations with pharmaceutical companies and various developed-economy governments, South Africa and Africa have been able to secure vaccines and are able to manufacture vaccines on the continent. Aspen, based in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, will from October 2021 be manufacturing vaccines solely for the African continent.

The World Health Organisation has also chosen South Africa as a hub for the manufacture of vaccines. The Biovac Institute in Cape Town, Western Cape, has been appointed to manufacture the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for distribution within Africa.

"The Coronavirus pandemic is the greatest threat to the lives and health of our people and to the recovery and transformation of our economy. We need to continue to do everything in our means to contain the spread of the virus. As we have always said, our most effective weapon in the fight against COVID-19 is an effective and comprehensive vaccination programme."
– President Cyril Ramaphosa

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African Union



“TALENT IS LIKE ELECTRICITY. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND ELECTRICITY. WE USE IT.”

Maya Angelou



ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE:
Levers for Building the Africa we Want

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LETTER FROM THE MINISTER



This year, we commemorate 25 years since the adoption of the Constitution of a South Africa finally freeing itself from the shackles of apartheid.

We agreed that our thematic focus for 2021 would be extolling and recollecting our national heroine Charlotte Maxeke, a woman of distinction who marked her place in history through excellence, commitment and service. It is absolutely fitting to mark such heroes and heroines as they have left an indelible mark on the socio-political landscape of our country.

The compilation and adoption of our Constitution was one of the boldest decisions taken by our infant democracy. It signalled a decisive and necessary break with our past while simultaneously setting out clear, progressive, and even radical aspirations for the future.

Our Constitution is a result of a long journey by the people of South Africa, of Africa and the world. It draws us together in a manner that no single legal instrument does and is extraordinary testimony of the ingenuity and humanity of millions of South Africans and the legion of men, women and communities who entrenched the values and principles that are emphatically elaborated in it.

The Constitution weaves together the struggles for humane treatment and fair play

fought for by the Khoisan in the beginning of the struggle. Their desire to settle on their land and derive sustenance from it, to breed and rear their cattle and not to be pushed to the margins are embodied in the transformative land rights and recognition of communities elaborated in 1996.

The epic confrontations of the frontier wars of the Xhosa, the Basotho and the Barolong, their dispossession and displacement and their yearnings are mirrors in the aspirations of nationhood and unity in the Constitution. The brave heroism of Makhanda, Xhosa, Moshoeshoe, Bathoeng and Sekhukhune reverberate.

Our Constitution was crafted over centuries of experience. This is why we can refer to the African claims of 1946, the Freedom Charter of 1955, the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960, the assertion that Africa is for Africans by Robert Sobukwe and the courage and steadfastness of Steven Bantu Biko in his belief that given opportunity, the oppressed will achieve excellence and determine their destiny.

Added to these influences are illustrious women fighters such as Charlotte Maxeke, who showed women's place is in struggle. Albertina Sisulu, who withstood banning prison and brutal assault on family, yet emerged with dignity and compassion for South Africa and all her people. Winnie Madikizela Mandela, who would never give up believing that struggle would lead to victory. It is Mama Winnie whose undying spirit must persuade us to consistently believe that the progressive ambitions of our Constitution will be realised and that we must never tire of wanting to achieve realisation of its key goals for every person in South Africa.

There is the leadership of Oliver Tambo and the African National Congress constitutional committee in formulating *Ready to Govern* to prepare for drafting a constitution that draws from our history, our lived experience and our ambitions. Luminaries such as Kader Asmal, Zola Skweyiya and Frene Ginwala all played a role. Human rights lawyers such as Justice Mohammed, Arthur Chaskalson and Nelson Mandela believed just laws and accessible judicial institutions were plausible and should


apply universally and not for a privileged few. Our Constitution firmly affirms those beliefs.

Idah Mtwana, Helen Joseph and Ray Alexander came from vastly different backgrounds, yet are united in the Constitution by the full recognition of the rights of workers and the protections they should enjoy. Mary Burton promoted gender equality and the rights of all, drawing on these brave men and women and their core beliefs.

The sacrifices, bravery and fearlessness of the young people of 1976, of Mashinini, Hector Peterson, Antoinette Peterson and thousands of others gave life to the right to education and to children's rights in our document.

Those who shaped the Constitution of South Africa number millions. It does not belong to a few; it is our instrument of freedom honouring Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba and Sekotore.

We in Parliament and government have a critical role to play in honour of these men and women and millions others. We need to consistently ensure that the ambitions of service to the people are honoured and realised; that we do support the maturing of a nation united in its diversity. And, that all rights enshrined in the Constitution are accessed and enjoyed by all people in South Africa. We strive for this not just for ourselves but for all men and women who suffer oppression and exclusion today. This is why we are mandated to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Palestine, of Saharawi, of Cuba and of Myanmar. They too will overcome as our leaders and our people ensured South Africa overcame.

This history of framing our Constitution must be read today alongside the still visible remnants of systematic exploitation and discrimination that continue to scar our nation due to centuries of colonialism and exclusion. The key challenge all of us face is to strengthen our efforts at reversing the precarious socio-economic situation in which millions of the most vulnerable find themselves. We acknowledge that much has been achieved but the full realisation of our Constitution demands much more of each of us. 

Our Constitution is a result of a long journey by the people of South Africa, of Africa and the world. It draws us together in a manner that no single legal instrument does and is extraordinary testimony of the ingenuity and humanity of millions of South Africans and the legion of men, women and communities who entrenched the values and principles that are emphatically elaborated in it.

Agenda 2063



THE AFRICA WE WANT

Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want

- A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- An integrated continent, politically united, and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism
- An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
 - A peaceful and secure Africa
- An Africa with a strong cultural identity, Common Heritage, values and ethics
- An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential offered by African People, particularly its women and youth, and with well cared for children
 - Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner

Agenda 2063 is gaining momentum. It is time for action.
Be part of the transformation!



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In the 24th edition of *Ubuntu* magazine, I thought I should reflect on South Africa's engagements/record on human rights matters in the United Nations (UN) and other international fora.

Eyebrows were raised when South Africa appeared to be opposing an initiative in the Security Council (SC) on the COVID-19 global pandemic. This was a principle matter for us. South Africa's work in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic is well documented. We are on record on the issue of calling for the vaccination programme to be rolled out in a fair and equitable manner.

All countries must get vaccines and must get them speedily. It is vital to the global containment of COVID-19, that vaccination takes place in all countries and among all populations. Unfortunately, challenges of accessing vaccines for developing countries, particularly in Africa, remain.

In this regard, South Africa, India and other like-minded countries have called on the World Trade Organisation to temporarily waive

specific intellectual property obligations related to the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 for a defined period and within defined parameters.

This would enable countries in Africa and elsewhere to access active pharmaceutical ingredients and benefit from technology transfer, including the know-how to manufacture vaccines in Africa at a cheaper cost.

Back to the UNSC matter. South Africa's recent term as an elected member of the UNSC ended in December 2020. When the COVID-19 initiative came up for a discussion, South Africa called for the SC to consider the pandemic in the context of its linkages to threats of international peace and security. The health or development dimensions of the pandemic are dealt with in other UN organs and agencies. South Africa therefore consistently maintained that the SC should consider the impact of the pandemic within the parameters of the council's mandate, which is to maintain international peace and security. South Africa also called on the SC to support the UN Secretary-General's (SG) call for the easing of sanctions so as to allow affected countries to deal with the economic impact of the pandemic. This was rejected by other members of the UNSC.

One has observed that when some permanent members of the UNSC fail to get results at the council due to the use of veto, they then use the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to get results. The UN SG, António Guterres, refers to this as the "instrumentalisation" of human rights and has repeatedly warned against it. Interestingly, one of the key outcomes that some countries want from the upcoming review of the HRC is a direct link between the HRC and the UNSC, as opposed to the HRC being accountable to the UN General Assembly.

Essentially, arguments put forward by some countries that the UNSC should address

issues that are extraneous to its mandate, such as human rights, climate change or development issues, undermine other parts of the UN and the wider multilateral system tasked with addressing these issues. This ultimately weakens the multilateral system, as the perception is that the only body that is important and which matters is the UNSC. It also undermines the authority and mandate of more representative, and often more democratic, bodies such as the General Assembly or the HRC. The reality is that bringing human rights matters to the UNSC also allows these issues to be subject to the geopolitical divisions and paralysis that many highly contentious issues on the SC's agenda face, specifically when the permanent members utilise their veto, or threat of the veto, to prevent any action.

An honest assessment of South Africa's record in this area since 1994, will show our country's massive success in efforts at advocating for the human rights of people living under foreign and colonial occupation, such as those in Palestine and Western Sahara, specifically at the UN General Assembly, the UNSC and the HRC. South Africa has also provided leadership on efforts in advancing the implementation on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, specifically during South Africa's last term on the UNSC.

South Africa will never deviate from a foreign policy anchored in respect and the promotion of human rights. Human rights remain our ultimate tool to help societies grow in freedom – to ensure equality for women and girls, advance sustainable development, prevent conflict, reduce human suffering and build a just and equitable world.

As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims; human rights are "humanity's highest aspiration".

@ClaysonMonyela

All countries must get vaccines and must get them speedily. It is vital to the global containment of COVID-19, that vaccination takes place in all countries and among all populations. Unfortunately, challenges of accessing vaccines for developing countries, particularly in Africa, remain.

UBUNTU RADIO

SOUTH AFRICA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

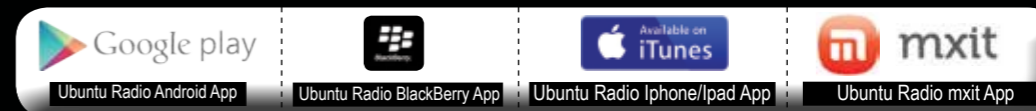
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Betty's Bay is a small holiday town situated in the Overberg region of the Western Cape. It is located 96 km from Cape Town beneath the rugged Kogelberg Mountains and is on the scenic R44 ocean drive between Pringle Bay and Kleinmond.



2021 to 2031: The Decade of African Roots and Diasporas

Since the countries of Africa gained their independence, as apartheid and minority rule were defeated, we have sought to cultivate the relationships between the peoples of Africa and the Caribbean Diaspora.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

On 25 May 2021, we celebrated Africa Day. On that day, we celebrated the unity of the African people, those who live on the continent and those in the Diaspora.

We celebrated the ties that bind us together – ties that no ocean, no slave trader, no war and no pandemic can tear asunder.

We commemorated the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity nearly 60 years ago, in 1963.

The world was a vastly different place back then.

Jamaica had just gained independence the year before, joining a wave of movements

that were sweeping across much of the Global South.

The people of South Africa were still suffering under a racist regime, and it would be a full 31 years before we attained our freedom.

The great luminaries and thinkers of the Caribbean were at the heart of the Pan-Africanist movements that inspired our own liberation struggle.

Among them were CLR James and Henry Sylvester Williams of Trinidad, Frantz Fanon of Martinique, Walter Rodney of Guyana and Marcus Mosiah Garvey of Jamaica.

I also speak of General Toussaint Louverture, who was the leader of the Haitian revolution, of the Cuban internationalists, and of the many men and women from the region who

played a leading role in the struggles against oppression, racism, fascism and colonialism.

I speak of Robert Nesta Marley, one of Jamaica's most famous sons, whose music didn't define just one generation, but continues to provide hope and inspiration to people around the world even today.

It was these sons and daughters of Africa whose ideas, proclamations and actions contributed so much to the drive for African unity, independence and self-reliance.

We remember with the deepest of humility and gratitude, the invaluable support that Jamaica gave to our struggle for liberation.

Jamaica was one of the first countries to impose a trade embargo on apartheid South Africa, and supported successive

United Nations (UN) resolutions aimed at the elimination of apartheid.

In 1987, the President of the African National Congress (ANC), Oliver Tambo, visited Jamaica and delivered an important speech in Kingston on the unity of the African Diaspora.

We recall the joyous reception that Nelson Mandela received in Jamaica in 1991, following his release from prison.

It is a testament to the unwavering support of the Jamaican people for the struggle for our freedom that three Jamaican prime ministers – PJ Patterson, Edward Seaga and Michael Manley – have been bestowed with our National Order of the Companions of OR Tambo.

That cherished relationship continues into the present, driving our shared efforts to build a more just, peaceful and inclusive global community.

Our common African heritage provides the rich soil from which our common future will grow.

Since the countries of Africa gained their independence, as apartheid and minority rule were defeated, we have sought to cultivate the relationships between the peoples of Africa and the Caribbean Diaspora.

The inaugural Global African Diaspora Summit in Johannesburg in 2012 was the culmination of years of engagements and consultations, giving clear form and focus to our collective aspirations.

We must acknowledge the progress that we have made in forging unity within the Diaspora.

The Diaspora agenda is now fully integrated into the activities of the African Union (AU).

For example, the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate of the AU is working on documenting the valuable work of diasporas in providing humanitarian assistance in emergencies and pandemics.

The Diaspora has an important role to play in meeting the aspirations of the AU's Agenda 2063 and in helping African countries to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the 34th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU in February 2021, the years 2021 to 2031 were declared as the Decade of African Roots and Diasporas.

This is an initiative aimed at strengthening the role and contribution of people from African roots and diasporas to the economic, social and cultural development of the African continent.

The Diaspora is the symbolic sixth region of the continent, signalling our desire to build ever-closer relations and our determination to deepen collaboration between bodies like the AU and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Many people in the African Diaspora are actively engaged in the continent's development.

This global African community represents a vast pool of knowledge, expertise, energy and commitment able to make a tremendous contribution to Africa's growth and progress.

The AU's theme for 2021 is: "Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa we Want".

This is part of our effort to enhance the contribution of art, culture and heritage as catalysts for social and economic development and integration.

It is an opportunity to explore, celebrate and develop all of Africa's cultural treasures.

Our shared histories provide many opportunities to deliver a united message to the world about the vast potential of the African continent.

These are opportunities to influence policies that unlock trade, investment and development.

At the same time, our common histories and experiences must be harnessed in the cause of justice for the descendants of victims of the transatlantic slave trade.

We commend the advocacy of the Government of Jamaica as part of the CARICOM Reparations Commission for reconciliation, truth and justice for victims of slavery and their descendants.

Just as the world must recognise the horrific crimes committed against people of African descent, so too must it acknowledge that the devastating social and economic legacy of slavery continues into the present.

The Diaspora is the symbolic sixth region of the continent, signalling our desire to build ever-closer relations and our determination to deepen collaboration between bodies like the African Union and the Caribbean Community.

This is about a struggle to recognise the inter-generational trauma that lingers still, and that has held back development of whole societies.

It is about the restoration of dignity, about justice and about building a better future for all. Now more than ever, as the world confronts this grave pandemic, we are called upon to act in unity and solidarity.

As we stood together against colonialism, apartheid and injustice, now we must stand together to overcome the Coronavirus pandemic.

Our struggle, however, is not just against a virus.

It is a struggle against the deep inequalities that have so severely hampered global efforts to contain the pandemic, and have left so many societies vulnerable to hardship and despair.

It is therefore a priority that we must confront and overcome all forms of global injustice that favour the few at the expense of the many.

We must confront the vaccine apartheid that is allowing wealthy countries to buy up vaccines while less-resourced developing countries languish in the queue.

South Africa and India have sponsored a proposal at the World Trade Organisation for a temporary Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights waiver to allow countries in need to produce COVID-19 vaccines and medical products.

I thank Jamaica for supporting the proposal from the floor. With its support, and the support of an ever-growing list of countries, I have no doubt we will prevail.

We also welcome your ongoing support for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator as it works to provide equitable access for all to vaccines, diagnostics and treatment.

On Africa Day 2021, it was our ardent wish that we deepen our collaboration to overcome poverty, inequality, underdevelopment, disease, illiteracy, gender-based violence and conflict.



In doing so, we are guided by the overarching objective of finding African solutions to African problems.

During our tenure as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2019, South Africa and other African members of the council worked closely with the Caribbean nation of St Vincent and the Grenadines.

This organic cooperation was a practical demonstration of Africa-Caribbean partnership for peace and security.

We share a common commitment to building a continent that is stable, developed, prosperous and capable of delivering the better life that all its people yearn for.

Sustainable peace can only be achieved by building a just world and a rules-based international order that is inclusive and that addresses the root causes of conflict, such as poverty and underdevelopment.

In January 2021, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) came into operation. It establishes a continental market of some 1.3 billion people. This is a major milestone towards the economic integration of our continent.

This is the clearest affirmation that Africa is determined to take charge of its own destiny,

and that its success is fundamentally tied to harnessing the potential and energies of its people, including in the Diaspora.

The AfCFTA will improve the prospects of Africa as an attractive investment destination.

It will advance the empowerment of Africa's women by improving women's access to trade opportunities, which will in turn facilitate economic freedom for women and expand the productive capacity of countries.

As nations that have known oppression and the denial of rights, we remain forever on the side of justice for the oppressed, wherever they are.

We must all be concerned about the resurgence in many parts of the world of racism, ultra-nationalism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance.

We stand united behind the Black Lives Matter movement because it is black men, women and children who are more often than not on the receiving end of prejudice and violence.

Ours is a movement for respect for human rights and for the affirmation of our dignity.

In the words of Marcus Garvey:
"Our desire is for a place in the world; not to disturb the tranquility of others, but to lay down

our burden and rest our weary backs and feet by the banks of the Niger, and sing our songs and chant our hymns to the God of Ethiopia.

"Yes, we want rest from the toil of centuries, rest of political freedom, rest of economic and industrial liberty, rest to be socially free and unmolested, rest from lynching and burning, rest from discrimination of all kinds."

As a people who have known centuries of oppression, we have a moral duty to stand with the Palestinian people and the people of Western Sahara in their quests for nationhood and self-determination.

We know that freedom for only some is freedom for none.

We share a common position that reform of the UN system is urgently needed.

We need a fair system of global governance that allows for the voices of all countries to be heard, regardless of their economic strength or militarily might.

Let us unite, let us work together and let us continue the onward march to prosperity and progress. 🇵🇹



President Cyril Ramaphosa on Tuesday, 25 May 2021, participated in a webinar marking the celebration of Africa Day.

The President's participation in the webinar, titled, "A Conversation with Africa", under the theme, "A Destiny of Peace, Prosperity, Strength and Unity", was at the invitation of Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

The Presidency in an advisory said the event was part of a series of webinars that started earlier this year, aimed at enhancing the relationship between Africa and the Caribbean.

They are hosted by a collaboration between the South African High Commission in Kingston and the Jamaican Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports.

"The initiative aims to strengthen and boost South Africa-Jamaica bilateral relations and further revive the broader Africa-Caribbean Partnership, and as a result, forge even stronger strategic, economic, cultural and political cooperation between the two countries," the advisory read.

The two countries enjoy a special relationship and share a tradition of pursuing racial equality.

The Presidency said Africa Day was a very important day for the people of the continent and those in the Diaspora, as it commemorated the establishment of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The OAU in 2002 became the African Union, especially for its role in decolonisation and African independence.

President Ramaphosa and Prime Minister Holness were joined by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator Kamina Johnson Smith; Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Olivia Grange; and South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, in the webinar. SAnews.gov.za



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“ Zambia will not be independent and free until the rest of Africa is free. ”

Dr Kenneth David Kaunda

Comrade **KK** has left an Africa united and strong

He has left us, but we know that what he stood for, the standard of leadership he set, and his progressive ideals live on.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

Former President Kenneth David Kaunda passed away on 17 June 2021 in Lusaka, Zambia. Born on 28 April 1924, in Lubwa, near Chinsali, in the then Northern Rhodesia, he led Zambia to independence in 1964 and served as that country's President until 1991.

South Africa joined the people of Zambia and all the peoples of our continent in mourning the passing of our great leader and father.

Dr Kaunda was a loyal friend of the South African people. He stood by us during our long struggle for liberation.

Even as the brutal apartheid regime sought to wreak havoc in the frontline states in its efforts to destroy the liberation movement, Dr Kaunda stood firm, and never wavered in his support for the people of South Africa and the region.

Zambia provided us with material and moral support, and gave refuge to our leaders.

South Africa is grateful we could acknowledge Dr Kaunda's great role in our struggle for freedom during his lifetime.

In 2002, he was bestowed with one of our highest national orders, the Order of the Companions of OR Tambo in Gold.

Dr Kaunda was one of the last surviving leaders of the generation who lit the path to Africa's freedom from colonial misrule.

He has left us, but we know that what he stood for, the standard of leadership he set, and his progressive ideals live on.

Dr Kaunda was a man for all seasons.

As a freedom fighter, he led the liberation movement to victory and independence.

As a president, he led with humility and selflessness. He walked among the people.

He refused to surround himself with the trappings of power and influence. He was a man of extraordinary empathy.

He was often moved to tears of compassion against injustice.

He was an elder statesman who even after leaving office played an important role in national life, advocating for important causes like HIV/AIDS, peace and conflict resolution.

He was a lifelong Pan-Africanist who worked to advance African unity and integration. He loved young people. He wrote of how being among youth always filled him with humility and respect.

He called on Africa's youth to work hard, to reject lives of idleness and vice, and to be

part of nation-building, saying: "The fate of this country is in their hands".

He was a champion of African self-reliance. We draw strength and inspiration from this now more than ever, as we find ourselves in the grip of a deadly pandemic.

He would be proud to see us working together to bring recovery to our continent that is rooted in compassion and human dignity.

Like the mighty and noble African fish eagle that adorns the national flag of Zambia, Comrade KK has soared into the sunset.

He has left a Zambia proud and free.

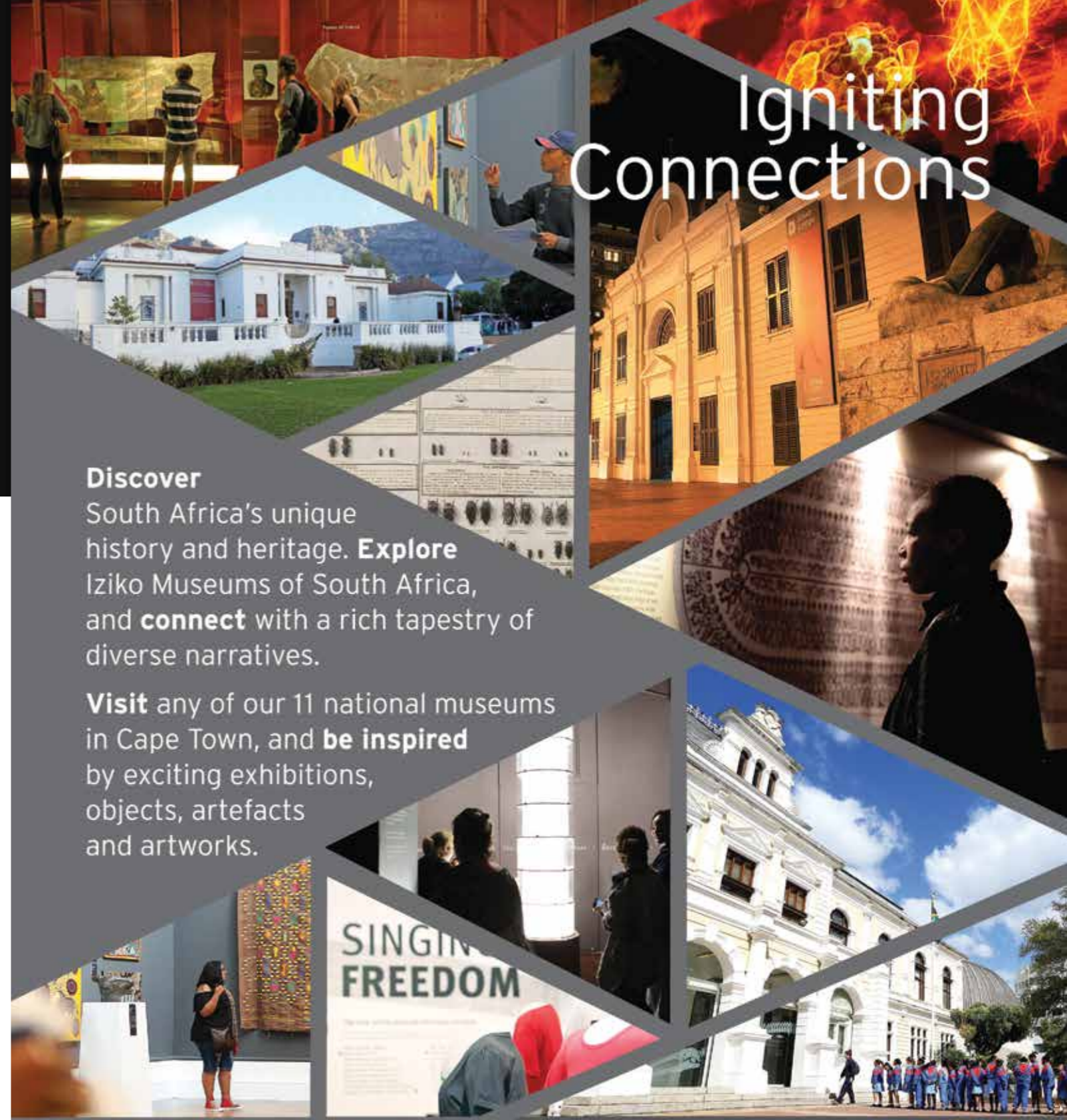
He has left an Africa united and strong.

In taking forward his legacy, let it be that Dr Kaunda's teachings on compassion, empathy and dignity are Africa's gift to humankind.

And that in the words of Steve Bantu Biko, it is we, the peoples of Africa, who bestow on the world a more human face.

Let us go forward, one heart, one spirit, united.

Let us go forward, for equality, for justice, for human prosperity, and for a better Africa and a better world. 🇿🇶



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Powerful nations must accept that we all depend on each other and even the most powerful will not achieve peace and security through unilateral actions and neglect of the poor, the oppressed and marginalised. We call on the UN and the Gulf Council to be more resolute in pursuing freedom for the people of Palestine.

Building back better, to advance the legacy of Charlotte Maxeke

By Dr GNM Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

Even in the worst effects of the pandemic, the one feature that was prominently confirmed was the vital importance of multilateralism in global collaboration. Faith was restored in multilateral institutions that had been confronting negativity for several years.

In 2020/21, South Africa chaired the African Union (AU) and we had plans to advance our policy agenda of a better Africa and a better world.

The key focus for 2020 was the priority of silencing the guns in Africa and advancing the economic participation of women. We were also committed to ensuring implementation of all the steps necessary to give effect to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement and further implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

The funding pressures we continue to experience have caused severe cutbacks in key areas. Low levels of economic growth and declining investment in South Africa and Africa are a severe constraint on our international ambitions.

South Africa is fortunate to have dedicated men and women in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) who work very hard to ensure

that we do achieve our objectives and who tolerate significant sacrifices to ensure we succeed. We have done even more to focus missions overseas on economic diplomacy as we must secure more growth and jobs in South Africa.

The positive character of DIRCO officials was shown in the COVID-19 crisis. The Consular Services Branch ensured the successful repatriation of thousands of South Africans stranded overseas. The department's efforts benefitted from support of Portfolio Committee members and from the general public. I wish to thank all who played a role in the repatriation efforts.

With respect to our AU Chairship, President Cyril Ramaphosa gave sterling leadership to the Bureau, the AU Commission and our continent. The AU Chair ensured a coordinated African response to the pandemic, developed an Africa strategy and secured the support of African leaders through an open

and consultative approach. Agreement that Africa should use its own resources to support the African Centres of Disease Control as the scientific adviser on our pandemic response was a critical factor in Africa addressing the pandemic's effects. Furthermore, the decision of the Chair to create the Africa Medical Supplies Platform, a web-based platform for equal access to health equipment, treatment and diagnostics, was innovative and impactful.

The role of Chair went beyond the health response and also focussed on the economic impact of the COVID-19 virus. The economic envoys appointed by the AU Chair and the commission engaged financial institutions and government leaders to secure debt relief and debt standstill for indebted African countries so they can focus on the pandemic and have liquidity for focussed socio-economic recovery. We continue to engage multilateral financial institutions to provide such new funding and not more debt loans. While

focussing on our COVID-19 response, much was done to continue our engagements with the globe, including support to the President's annual investment conference. The objective of securing recovery funding is still being pursued by President Ramaphosa and other leaders. The Financing Africa Summit in Paris in May 2021 focussed on the urgent need for the International Monetary Fund to finalise the matter of Special Drawing Rights and the issue of vaccine production as well as the call for the World Trade Organisation's temporary waiver of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

Even in the worst effects of the pandemic, the one feature that was prominently confirmed was the vital importance of multilateralism in global collaboration. Faith was restored in multilateral institutions that had been confronting negativity for several years. COVID-19 revived and affirmed global cooperation. The multilateral and other regional bodies enjoyed long-denied prominence and leadership. This reality has assisted our long-held belief that multilateral institutions matter and are a more inclusive and equitable global option for managing global affairs. We have continued to engage in the United Nations (UN) and to uphold the rights of the people of Palestine to statehood, those of Western Sahara to self-determination and the need for the UN and the AU to assist Africa to finally achieve continent-wide peace and focus on development.

Our 2019/20 *Annual Report* and that of 2020/21 show the progress we have made in meeting our goals and objectives. They show that while our strength is diminished

by inadequate resources, we continue to punch above our weight in international cooperation. We will seek even greater impact in 2021/22. We will do more to support Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt to negotiate an agreement on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. We will also work closely with South Sudan and Libya to promote and support post-conflict reconstruction and finally much more will be done to achieve the gender agenda mandated by the AU adoption of 2020 – 2030 as the Decade of the Financial Inclusion of Women in Africa.

The impact of COVID-19 resonates strongly with the legacy we have inherited from Mama Charlotte Maxeke. She was a woman who believed that it is possible to build back better. In the unquenchable spirit of this great woman of Africa, it is imperative that we focus this year on building back better.

The negative impact of COVID-19 has clear directives for our future agenda. We will continue to promote the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all our contributions in the UN and AU. Working closely with the AU Special Envoy on Gender and the Commission for Peace and Security, we will consult women leaders in post-conflict areas and work with them to ensure their full contribution to reconstruction and development in their countries.

We are pleased to be serving in the UN Peacebuilding Commission for 2021 – 2022 as this will help us contribute towards the maintenance of international peace and security just as we did during our term in the UN Security Council (UNSC). Peace and security are extremely fragile or absent in

many parts of the globe. The vicious attacks by Israel on Palestinian people and the forced removal of Palestinians from their homes are clear evidence of the absence of peace and security for millions worldwide. Sadly, we all watched as Palestine suffered more and more brutally. Greater effort must be exerted to achieve peace in the Middle East. Powerful nations must accept that we all depend on each other and even the most powerful will not achieve peace and security through unilateral actions and neglect of the poor, the oppressed and marginalised. We call on the UN and the Gulf Council to be more resolute in pursuing freedom for the people of Palestine.

Charlotte Maxeke was a bold agent of change. We must be as bold and determined in seeking concrete practical reform of the UNSC. I am pleased that early steps toward text-based negotiations are in motion in the UN. There is significant resistance to changing the status quo and we must continue to insist that change is urgently necessary. We need a representative and 21st-century relevant UNSC responsive to today's challenges. There were 51 member states in 1945; we have grown to 193, yet, the most important mechanism of the UN remains untransformed.

Building back better also means we should utilise our global cooperation to secure Africa's ability to effectively respond to complex challenges such as a global pandemic. We must increase our research and innovation capacity and be more ready to rely on our ingenuity, our products and our institutions in future. Charlotte Maxeke and all our great heroes and heroines believed



in our innate abilities; let us use them to free ourselves from post-colonial dependency.

Africa lies at the heart of our international agenda. We firmly believe we should ensure Pan-African ability to determine our affairs and shape Africa's future. We have begun a process of reviewing our Africa strategy in an effort to respond to the new realities on the continent through a new approach and consistent with Agenda 2063.

We have comparative advantages that can support and promote increased African success. We intend to build strategic partnerships and political alliances in a far more rigorous manner. We will strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation and build strategic partnerships with clear goals and objectives. We plan to begin in southern Africa, and to ensure that Southern African Development Community (SADC) plans are reinforced and concretely implemented.

MamaMaxeke did not limit her world to South Africa and as with our dialogue series icon, she was a remarkable internationalist. This is one of the reasons why we are robustly strengthening our trade cooperation and people exchange with Southeast Asia. We are thrilled that our portfolio committee recognised the exciting opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) formation and supported our entry into the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation of the ASEAN.

In August, South Africa will assume Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Peace and Security. The organ has been deliberating on the extremist attacks in Mozambique and ministers of the organ have developed proposals for support to Mozambique.

2020 was our second year as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. The feedback we received indicates that the role

of South Africa in the Security Council was deeply appreciated due to South Africa's principled position on issues on the council's agenda. This relatively independent position, together with a compelling commitment to peaceful resolution of disputes and a fair and balanced approach in engaging with member states, allowed South Africa to play a bridge-building role in a divided Security Council. During our tenure, we continued to advance UN and AU cooperation on peace and security matters, especially with reference to Libya, the Sahel region and the transitional process in South Sudan. We note with hope the positive progress in Libya and further actions on the comprehensive agreement in South Sudan. DIRCO will remain closely attentive to support for post-conflict reconstruction in South Sudan and we are in constant contact with the Government there. We also welcome the efforts by various organisations in South Africa to assist Sudan in the transition and constitution-making processes.

President Ramaphosa also worked closely with G20 countries, with our BRICS partners and the European Union (EU) to continue supporting South Africa and Africa in implementing our international agenda.

The continued economic impact of COVID-19 has led us to review South Africa's diplomatic footprint globally. In an effort to reduce costs while ensuring a presence throughout the world, we are in the process of closing 10 of our 122 missions during the course of 2021. The missions in closest geographic proximity will provide diplomatic and consular services to countries that no longer host our missions. We plan to utilise improved information technology services to ensure efficient consular support to our citizens in these countries. We also intend

It is due to the need to support the economic ambitions of our government that we have directed increased attention to the promotion of economic diplomacy through all our missions. We are also working hard to secure increased trade opportunities with our major trading partners.

to appoint honorary consuls to ensure we continue to have a presence and that we uphold established relations.

It is due to the need to support the economic ambitions of our government that we have directed increased attention to the promotion of economic diplomacy through all our missions. We are also working hard to secure increased trade opportunities with our major trading partners. China is one of our most significant trading partners. Two-way trade with Asia and the Middle East region grew from R45 billion in 1990 to a staggering R984 billion in 2020. COVID-19 caused a contraction of 1,6% in our trade with Asia and the Middle East but, importantly, even in this time, trade with China continued to expand. In 2019, two-way trade with China stood at R413 billion and grew to R437 billion in 2020. The agriculture sector has led this growth. This has resulted in more jobs, more small and medium sized business growth, more small commercial farmers and enhanced trade exchange. Most pleasing is that trade is beginning to be a surplus gain for our exporters with an increasing number of countries in the region.

Added to this welcome progress are the improved trade figures for South Africa in the ASEAN region. In 2020, two-way trade between South Africa and East Asia amounted to R119 billion. I have asked our missions in that region to help identify increased opportunities in the massive halal market and in citrus and other commodities. The statistics on current trade indicate significant growth in the ASEAN – a fast-growing region with a gross domestic product of over US\$3.1 trillion and a market of over 650 million people.

This evidence of progress links well with our progress in BRICS, especially in the work of the New Development Bank (NDB).

Charlotte Maxeke was a team player who sought to benefit all in her circle. She did not shy away from a challenge as shown by the support to her choir when stranded in the United States of America (USA). Similarly, we have been steadfast advocates of a vibrant active collaborative BRICS. We are hopeful of expanded bank membership this year and fully appreciate the US\$2 billion we secured from the NDB to assist us in our response to COVID-19. We also secured a billion dollars for our non-toll road infrastructure programme in 2020.

Our trilateral IBSA Forum with India and Brazil has been a glowing example of a new blueprint for South-South cooperation. Since its inception in 2005, the IBSA Fund for poverty and hunger alleviation supported over 30 development projects in 22 countries of the global South to the value of US\$32 million. In 2020, the fund approved new development projects in several African countries, including Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin, Uganda, Sudan, Mali, Niger and eSwatini.

Our focus in international relations includes our promotion of the values and ethos of our Constitution through advocating for human dignity, democracy and equality. We continue to stand in full solidarity with the people of Palestine and will work even harder to persuade the AU and the UN to robustly pursue freedom for the people of Palestine. The cruel bombings and killings of the innocent we witnessed recently are a sad testimony of the cruel impunity the world has granted to Israel. The international

A better Africa continues to be the key foreign policy focus of South Africa. Working closely with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, we will support implementation of the AfCFTA.

community must stop this impunity. South Africa should support the International Criminal Court in the planned investigation of the abuse of human rights by the Israeli Government. We hope sanctions and other measures to show the world's offence at this brutality will soon be evident.

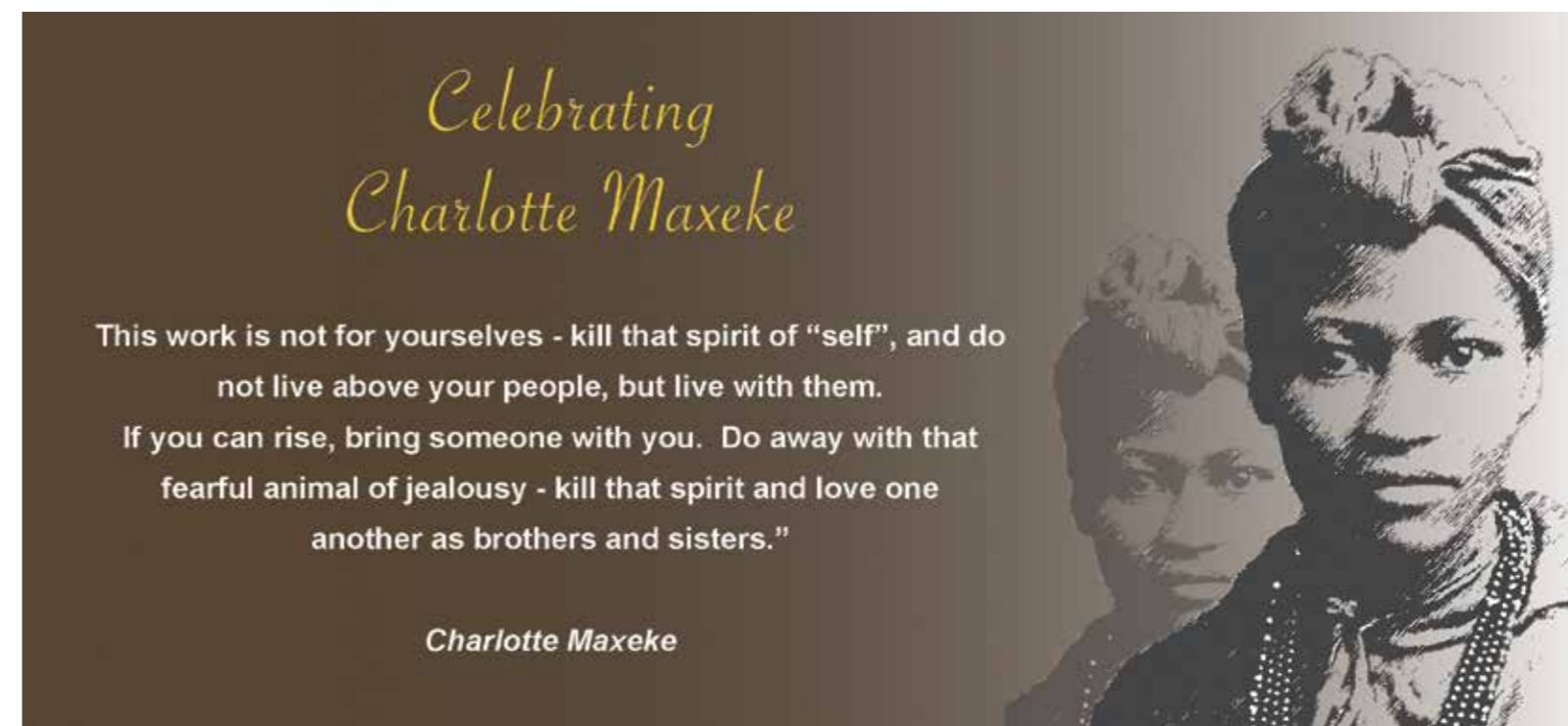
The people of Cuba also continue to be victims of an unwarranted blockade that should be finally ended by the new US Administration. We will continue to support Cuba and work closely with that solid friend of South Africa.

A better Africa continues to be the key foreign policy focus of South Africa. Working closely with the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition, we will support implementation of the AfCFTA. We must do everything possible to ensure successful implementation of the free trade area. For many African countries, the AfCFTA means more productive capacity, economic infrastructure and new trade opportunities. We must ensure evidence-based planning as we implement projects for increased African trade.

DIRCO has supported countries that held elections in 2020, providing expertise via the Independent Electoral Commission or relevant non-government partners. The support to the Central African Republic supported an election that many judged as free and fair. While

pursuing our Africa Agenda vigorously, we will also build on the excellent trade relations with the USA, the EU member states and the United Kingdom. These are also significant trading partners for South Africa and we plan to grow the trade, people and cultural links through our embassies. Several ambassadors have drawn my attention to the inadequacy of our cultural diplomacy. I am told Black Coffee could fill Wembley Stadium and profile South Africa, but when he performs overseas, there is an insufficient association to his South African identity. We have immense talent in a range of fields and could mount international cultural events with a diversity of talents worldwide. This is an area of diplomacy I would like to focus on more as we begin to free funds from other areas of activity. I also hope we can work closely with the Department of Arts and Culture on this aspect of our work.

We are working hard to build back better as Charlotte Maxeke expects us to. We must provide skills opportunities to young people, enhance our innovation and digital capabilities so we rank with the best and ensure we continue the work to build a South Africa, Africa and world that will be of service to humanity and responsive to the most progressive human development goals. 🇿🇦



South Africa's partnerships with Asia and the Middle East are crucial

South Africa would like to continue working closely with governments in this region to pursue more trade, investment and business potential. There is substantial scope for improving current levels of investment, especially in industries that are geared towards the beneficiation and value-addition of our local commodities and natural resources.

By Dr GNM Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

Asia and the Middle East are important trading partners for South Africa. Our two-way trade stood at R984 billion in 2020.

One of the major determinants of the strength of the short-term economic recovery after COVID-19 will be the effectiveness of pandemic containment measures. South Africa intends to strengthen cooperation with the Asia and Middle East region in containing further COVID-19 outbreaks. As part of this strategy, we are aggressively pursuing opportunities towards the production of vaccines in Africa.

South Africa, alongside India, has submitted a proposal to the World Trade Organisation for a temporary waiver of certain rules in the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement to facilitate wider access to technologies needed to produce vaccines and medicines, especially to the poorer countries. We are pleased with the support of the international community that we have received. A temporary waiver will allow the use of intellectual property, to share technology transfer, to produce vaccines and therapeutics, lower prices and expedite distribution to everyone, everywhere. Effective and comprehensive global vaccination is vital to ending the pandemic.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the global economy generally and on Africa in particular. Furthermore, Africa has to deal with the additional challenge of securing vaccines. Several countries in the Asia and Middle East region have committed significant resources to the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) facility. This will benefit many African countries as well as other nations. South Africa firmly supports the World Health Organisation in spearheading COVAX to roll out vaccines to the global South.

Sadly, in addition to the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic, our brothers and sisters in a number of countries in the Asia and Middle East region also had to endure the pain and suffering of armed conflict and oppression.

Nothing good can come out of conflict. The tragedy of the recent bombardment of Palestine is testament to the cruel effects of war and conflict. More than 75 000 Palestinians were displaced, resulting in about 243 casualties, including 64 Palestinian children and 38 women. Israel also suffered casualties. We call on all in the Middle East to intensify peace efforts.

We commend all the parties that assisted in the negotiations that led to the current ceasefire. The Government of South Africa will continue to campaign for the independence of Palestine under the two-State solution, based on the international recognition and independence of the viable State of Palestine, based on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and with both Palestine and Israel existing peacefully as independent states. All outstanding status issues must be resolved through direct negotiations without preconditions between the parties, with support from the international community.

South Africa counts itself among progressive members of the international community advocating for the settlement of disputes through inclusive dialogue, and the protection of the rights of vulnerable nations. Given our history, it is natural that we are in solidarity with the oppressed.

Regarding the conflict in Syria, we believe that only a Syrian-led solution will provide a lasting outcome. The situation in Yemen has been of particular concern for South Africa as it has created the greatest humanitarian crisis of our times. South Africa reaffirms its call for

a United Nations-mediated and Yemeni-led negotiation to resolve this conflict.

On a positive note, South Africa welcomes the progress being made in efforts to restore the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We are pleased at the attempt to find a diplomatic solution to this issue.

The world is confronted by economic recovery challenges after COVID. The countries in Asia and the Middle East are important trading partners for South Africa. Our two-way trade with the region stood at R984 billion in 2020. Our country's bilateral relations with the countries of this important region are also well established in areas such as technical cooperation, health and skills development opportunities for our people, as is their investment footprint in South Africa.

South Africa's accession to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in November 2020 is a milestone and will contribute to closer and more beneficial economic opportunities.

We fully support the association's constructive role in facilitating a peaceful solution to the undemocratic developments in Myanmar.

South Africa would like to continue working closely with governments in this region to pursue more trade, investment and business potential. There is substantial scope for improving current levels of investment, especially in industries that are geared towards the beneficiation and value-addition of our local commodities and natural resources. The benefits of using South Africa as a logistical nodal point from which to access the vast African market to gain the full benefit of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement are another opportunity.

The Middle East will also be crucial to our reconstruction and development after the pandemic. In 2020, total trade with the region

amounted to R122 billion, despite the effects of COVID-19 on trade and investment.

A key priority for South Africa with the Middle East is to diversify our trade and this has been happening gradually, but the dominance of crude oil and petrochemicals remains. We are now working on diversifying this trading dynamic through growth in other sectors.

This is an overview of the state of relations between South Africa and the vast region of Asia and the Middle East, as well as some of our future priorities, and the global issues that confront us and that will have an impact on or guide our future relations.

South Africa counts itself among progressive members of the international community advocating for the settlement of disputes through inclusive dialogue, and the protection of the rights of vulnerable nations. Given our history, it is natural that we are in solidarity with the oppressed.

South Africa values the partnership with countries in Asia and the Middle East. We are particularly happy that these countries agree with our view that we should preserve the centrality of multilateralism, speak out against

unilateralism, protectionism and populism, and continue to call for the respect of international law and a reformed global order that is more equitable, inclusive and representative of current global realities.





Canola produces small yellow flowers, making a vibrant magical scene. The Canola fields in the Western Cape offer a picturesque landscape during the months of August to September as the farmlands become a patchwork of bright yellow flowers.



Justice for the Palestinian people

The Palestinian narrative evokes experiences of South Africa's own history of racial segregation and oppression.

By Dr GNM Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

The world has recently witnessed some of the most horrific scenes of brutality and violence exercised against Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. We have witnessed the senseless taking of young, innocent lives, the destruction of civilian infrastructure and livelihoods in an “unbalanced power equation between an occupying power and a people, resisting occupation”.

The Palestinian narrative evokes experiences of South Africa's own history of racial segregation and oppression.

As oppressed South Africans, we experienced first-hand the effects of racial inequality and discrimination and we are well aware of the long-term impact and

consequences of racial and other forms of discrimination.

An unwavering commitment is required to eradicate discrimination and policies of exclusion completely and permanently the world over. It is paramount that the global system deepens its efforts to eradicate the scourge of racism and discrimination and allow those whose basic rights have been violated, to enjoy the inherent human rights that others enjoy on a daily basis.

The fundamental freedoms that many of us take for granted remain absent for Palestinians living in the Occupied Territory. A recent report, published by the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, *B'Tselem*, provides a detailed account of the military occupation imposed on the approximately five million Palestinians

living in the Occupied Territory, and the laws and practices engineered to impede them from participating in the political system that governs their lives and determines their future.

The Human Rights Watch Report, *A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution*, published on 27 April 2021, draws similar conclusions. The regular land dispossession and illegal seizure of homes evoke apartheid-forced removals and intolerable harm to all people.

These actions undermine the Palestinian people and deprive them of their universal and inalienable right to self-determination and equality. It goes against internationally adopted human rights instruments, violates international law, further provoking political tension and endangering international peace and security.

coordination to uphold international norms and standards as we seek justice for Palestinians.

Most importantly, with regard to the ongoing human rights violations Palestinians endure, South Africa urges the international community, and in particular the UN, to ensure the safeguarding of the rights of the Palestinian people. In this regard, we welcome the initiative to convene a Special Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) on the grave human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which was held on 27 May 2021.

South Africa supports the recent adoption of the UN HRC Resolution, which establishes an International Commission of Inquiry to Investigate Violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel. However, action in this regard has to be peremptory to avoid reducing these initiatives to “feel good talk shops”. It is therefore our sincerest hope that the Independent Commission of Inquiry will be established with all due haste to investigate all violations and abuses and that the necessary action will be taken to follow up on the commission's findings.

We are currently living in unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented enormous social and economic challenges, straining existing systems that are already grappling with numerous difficulties. The pandemic has further exacerbated the challenges faced by civilians and vulnerable

groups, especially women, girls, people with disabilities and children, including those in the Occupied Territory. Containment measures have affected access to socio-economic necessities. Women and girls living under occupation and in armed conflicts are often subjected to not only social, economic and political subjugation but are also at particular risk of suffering from lifelong psychological traumas.

In this regard, it is paramount that the occupying power fulfil its obligations in terms of international law and together with the international community ensure that all barriers to accessing healthcare are eliminated in order to save lives.

We wish to reiterate that illegal settlements leading to dispossession and displacements and human rights abuses are incompatible with international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The policies and practices of Israel, as the occupying power, are in flagrant violation of UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and contravene international law. It is therefore imperative that the Security Council, as the body entrusted to maintain international peace and security, take concrete steps against these illegal acts and go beyond mere rhetoric condemnation. The recorded failures of the Security Council in ensuring respect for and the upholding of the rule of law have dented the integrity of this august organ and highlighted the urgent need for Security Council reform. [U](#)

Since its inception in 1945, the United Nations (UN) has championed the principles of equality, non-discrimination and the right to self-determination as an integral element of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

With international human rights instruments to guide us, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960), we ask, why is it that, over half a century later, the question of Palestine remains unresolved and why is it that the people of Palestine are denied many of the rights contained in these seminal documents?

We, along with many in the UN membership, have long accepted and supported a two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace. Decades of aggression have made this internationally recognised concept improbable.

The pivotal role played by the UN and civil society in supporting our respective liberation struggles and the impact this had on us achieving our self-determination must encourage the UN and its member states, the international community and civil society to join efforts to strengthen international action and





South Africa committed to remain an influential actor and partner on the international stage

We are making use of innovative ways, such as digital diplomacy, to achieve our objectives within a global environment that continues to come to grip with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

By **Candith Mashego-Dlamini**
Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

During this financial year, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) will focus on the following objectives, in line with the Government's Medium Term Strategic Framework for 2019 – 2024:

- increase foreign direct investment into South Africa and Africa
- improve South African access to foreign markets
- contribute to increased tourism arrivals to South Africa
- improve investor confidence.

In our five-year strategic plan, we have said that we are striving towards:

- a united and politically cohesive continent that works towards shared prosperity and sustainable development

- enhanced regional integration with increased and balanced trade within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and on the continent by supporting the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area
- promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent
- using South Africa's membership and engagements in various international fora to advance the African Agenda.

We are pursuing these objectives in a global environment that continues to grapple with the effects of COVID-19. We are making use of innovative ways, such as digital diplomacy, to achieve our objectives within a global environment that continues to come to grip with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The department is working on a strategy, which focusses on developing, renovating

and refurbishing the state-owned properties housing our missions abroad.

In his first speech to the United Nations as President of a free and democratic South Africa, delivered in October 1994, President Nelson Mandela said: "South Africa will help to create for themselves and all humanity a common world of peace and prosperity". This is a mission we continue to pursue, especially on our continent.

In our own neighbourhood, we continue to focus not only on the situation in Mozambique, but we also remain seized with the political and security situation in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

We cannot overemphasise the importance of a stable, secure and prosperous Lesotho. It is in our mutual interest as South Africans and Basotho that our neighbourhood is safe and secure.

President Cyril Ramaphosa, in his capacity as SADC Facilitator to the Kingdom of Lesotho,

appointed a facilitation team led by retired Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke, assisted by three deputy ministers, to support him in his facilitation in the Kingdom of Lesotho as per the decision of the SADC Double Troika Summit, held in Luanda, Angola, in April 2018.

The 40th Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government, held virtually on 17 August 2020, decided that the role of the SADC Facilitator, President Ramaphosa, should continue.

The summit also recognised the important role played by the SADC Facilitation Team to the Kingdom of Lesotho, leading to the inauguration of the National Reforms Authority on 6 February 2020, which will manage, coordinate and lead the national reform process from 1 October 2020 until 30 September 2021, with a possible extension until 30 April 2022, if circumstances require.

The latest visit by the SADC Facilitation Team to Maseru took place from 11 to 13 March 2021. The objective of the visit was to receive a status update on the implementation of the reform process since the last visit in November 2020. The current mandate of the SADC Facilitation Team to the Kingdom of Lesotho is valid until the next SADC Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in August 2021, where the facilitator is required to report on the status of this process.

In July 2021, the Republic of South Sudan marked 10 years of its existence. South Africa enjoys cordial bilateral relations with South Sudan and the two countries have a long-standing historical relationship that predates South Sudan's independence from the Republic of Sudan in July 2011. An agreement establishing official bilateral relations was signed in September 2012.

In 2019, South Africa committed to provide humanitarian assistance to the Republic of South Sudan through the African Renaissance Fund (ARF) in the form of food aid and medical supplies. These initiatives were intended to address socio-economic challenges facing vulnerable communities, including the refugees and internally displaced persons, comprising mainly women and children who were negatively affected by the conflict in South Sudan. The last intervention we made was to send a consignment of food items donated by the South African Government to the people of South Sudan. This humanitarian aid package formed part of a series of other interventions by South Africa towards alleviating the humanitarian challenges facing the people of South Sudan.

At the request of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, David Mabuza, Deputy President of South Africa, in his capacity as the Presidential Special Envoy to the Republic of South Sudan, was invited to facilitate a series of meetings between the parties to the Revitalised-Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) to resolve the impasse. His mediation efforts significantly contributed towards an amicable political settlement among the signatories to the R-ARCSS.

The Middle East region is very important economically. Our trade with the Middle East for 2020 amounted to R122 billion. There has been export growth in a number of key areas, particularly in agriculture products such as live animals, citrus, nuts and vegetables. We are also exporting precious metals, iron, steel, aircraft and machinery to a number of countries in this region.

South Africa is intensifying its economic diplomacy efforts, and we are looking at some

of the economies that continue to grow despite the difficulties associated with COVID-19. Some of these are found in Asia.

South Africa's bilateral trade with India amounted to R108.7 billion in 2020. There are more than 130 Indian companies present in South Africa. Our strategic partnership has important dimensions beyond the bilateral facets, and also relates to multilateral institutions, of which both countries are members. These institutions include the G20; Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS); and India, Brazil and South Africa; (IBSA).

DIRCO does important work to provide assistance to South Africans in distress abroad. Following the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic early last year, we set up the Consular Incident Command Centre to facilitate assistance to South African citizens who found themselves stranded abroad due to unforeseen circumstances and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The other instance was during the insurgence attack in Mozambique.

During the 2020/21 financial year, the total number of consular cases attended to were approximately 700. In dealing with South African citizens in distress abroad, it became evident that the concept of Consular Services was misunderstood by the South African society and many of our citizens are unfamiliar with the nature of assistance they can expect when stranded, destitute and distressed abroad hence the ongoing need to encompass consular awareness campaigns, especially for citizens travelling abroad.

The department has created an application for South Africans to register themselves during a major disaster, be it natural or manmade, so that an accurate database of South African citizens globally can be maintained. This database will assist to expedite the process and time to render consular assistance to our citizens abroad. The training phase of this application will commence during the course of the current financial year.

These are some of the measures to ensure that we remain of service to South African citizens wherever they find themselves in the world.

South Africa is committed to remain an influential actor and partner on the international stage, while effectively contributing to the delivery of the country's domestic priorities and advancement of the African Agenda. [U](#)

South Africa's foreign policy draws on the spirit of internationalism

South Africa is unequivocal that the deepening of multilateralism is paramount to world peace.

By Alvin Botes
Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

The values that inspire and guide South Africa as a nation are deeply rooted in decades of struggle for liberation. As a beneficiary of many acts of selfless solidarity in the past, South Africa believes strongly that what it wishes for its people should be what it wishes for the citizens of the world.

Our foreign policy therefore draws on the spirit of internationalism and is intertwined with our pursuit of a better Africa in a better world.

As we celebrate 27 years of freedom, as a generation we should always be conscious that there is a dialectical relationship between our 27 years of freedom and the 27 years of imprisonment, which sought to break the resilient spirit of Nelson Mandela.

As we celebrate the silver jubilee of South Africa's Constitution, we are conscious of the constitutional values reflected in the Bill of Rights. Our foreign policy aims should not conflict with the realisation of these rights. The right to self-determination, social justice and freedom are unalienable rights. Political freedom is at the apex of our envisaged vision for a just and equitable world, which errs on the side of the most vulnerable.

The objective of global solidarity and to deepen South-South cooperation become an important attribute in our foreign policy repository.

We pause to mark 119 years of the independence of Cuba from the Spanish empire and the end of the first United States (US) military occupation on 20 May 1902. Cuba remains a historical and strategic partner and our relations continue to display a good model of South-South cooperation and human solidarity. South Africa condemns the continuation of unilateral sanctions against Cuba and will continue to support the annual resolutions in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on the "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Blockade against Cuba".

We trust that the leadership of President Joe Biden will be inspired by the US foreign policy initiative of 2015, when President Barack Obama authorised a process of back-channel negotiations and normalised diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cuban people and Henry Reeves International Medical Brigades have been an inspiration to humanity with their commitment to support other countries in their battle against this deadly virus. Even before the pandemic began, Cuban doctors and health professionals were already providing medical support in 59 countries; during the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba deployed 187 of her most skilled medical practitioners to assist the South African people in our fight against COVID-19.

The Cubans provide this solidarity and ask for nothing in return, because they believe in global solidarity, and possess a genuine commitment to make our world a better place for everyone. They are instinctively multilateralist and progressive internationalists.

We must reiterate our unwavering support for the people of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. We call on the US to reconsider its stance on Venezuela regarding the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Sanctions and Human Rights, Alena Douhan. She published her initial recommendations in February 2021, which called for the lifting of US unilateral coercive measures.

Within the Western hemisphere, the Americas and Caribbean span a vast geographical area that includes developed, developing and least developed economies as well as regional and global powers. Stark contrasts exist among these countries, among others, in terms of territorial size, populations, economies, technologies and military power. The diversity within this hemisphere necessitates a nuanced foreign policy approach and offers a wide range of

opportunities for engagement that span the whole spectrum of South Africa's foreign policy priorities.

The US is a strategic partner for South Africa and a major export market for value-added products as well as a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI), technology transfer, development assistance and tourism. The bilateral relationship continues to grow, and we must regain the momentum that was lost because of the COVID-19 pandemic and policy shifts under the Trump Administration.

South Africa believes that agreements reached through multilateral forums must be implemented in good faith. We are pleased, therefore, to note that the new administration in the US, under President Biden, has taken steps to return to the multilateral fold by rejoining the Paris Climate Accord and the World Health Organisation, and her leadership on negating the matter of vaccine nationalism. South Africa and the US have extensive relations that cover a wide spectrum of issues, which are aligned to South Africa's domestic priorities, including in such areas as health (the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief [PEPFAR]), education, science and technology, water and the environment. The PEPFAR allocation for 2021 to 2024 by the US has been cut by 11%, but still amounts to US\$465 945 195.00. The African Growth and Opportunity Act agreement continues to facilitate trade between South Africa and the US and amounts to R173 billion. Our citrus exports increased by 30% in 2020

As a beneficiary of many acts of selfless solidarity in the past, South Africa believes strongly that what it wishes for its people should be what it wishes for the citizens of the world.

due to the international need for Vitamin C nutrients, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. South Africa will be using the opportunity to reset the bilateral relationship with the US. South Africa is unequivocal that the deepening of multilateralism is paramount to world peace.

In addition, contact with the African Diaspora in the region would serve to enhance relations between South Africa and the African continent, especially with respect to the Caribbean countries. The African Diaspora in the Americas, particularly in the Caribbean, continues to have significance for South Africa considering their support for Africa's liberation and a shared vision of an equitable world.

Canada remains a vital ally in helping address our national priorities, including support for our efforts to build a capable state. South Africa and Canada have a shared commitment to multilateralism, gender empowerment and building social cohesion. We are also seeing continued strong investments by Canada in the mining sector and will be strengthening this cooperation further in the areas of mineral beneficiation, value addition and support for junior miners.

Similar to South Africa, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a devastating impact in Latin America and the Caribbean with significant regional economic decline that has resulted in rising unemployment, poverty, inequalities and a significant loss of lives.

South Africa will build on the existing solid relations with the region to facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation in several areas such as agribusiness, biotechnology, the blue economy, education and skills, energy (especially biofuels and renewable energy), mining, health, pharmaceuticals, science and technology, water and waste management, human rights, South-South partnerships and multilateral cooperation to advance the development agenda of the South.

The countries of Western Europe are well-placed to support South Africa's post-COVID-19 economic recovery. This applies both to our bilateral relationship with these countries, as well as to the South Africa-European Union (EU) Strategic Partnership, which continues to serve as the main platform of engagement between South Africa and the EU and its member states. This region includes some of our major trading partners, sources of FDI and tourism and providers of development assistance.

In the year ahead, we will focus more on developing relations in those areas that will assist us to address our domestic challenges.

These include the promotion of investment, skills development, promoting exports, protecting our market share and promoting our country as a preferred tourist destination.

We will be working with the countries of Western Europe to support President Cyril Ramaphosa's target to attract US\$100 billion in investment. Total investment from Europe is estimated at around R1.4 trillion, which represents approximately 77% of total FDI in the country. It has made a significant contribution towards job creation and industrialisation in South Africa.

The apex event in terms of our relations with Western Europe will be South Africa's hosting of the Eighth South Africa-EU Summit, which will revitalise the Strategic Partnership between South Africa and the EU. The strength of this partnership is based on shared values and interests, including effective multilateralism, the promotion of peace and security, human rights, democracy, the rule of law, free and fair trade and sustainable development across both regions.

We trust that in the new South Africa-EU Multi-annual Indicative Programme for the period 2021 to 2028, which will be under the EU's newly created Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument, the EU's development support for South Africa's national programmes will continue. For us, the critical aspects to

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cuban people and Henry Reeves International Medical Brigades have been an inspiration to humanity with their commitment to support other countries in their battle against this deadly virus.

be considered by the EU and its member states in terms of development cooperation are the targets as expressed in our National Development Plan, and our recently adopted Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

South Africa's trade relationship with the United Kingdom (UK) continues unchanged after the UK left the EU and the country remains one of South Africa's key trading partners. The strong and historic relationship that we have with this region will be an important advantage as we look towards rebuilding our economy and pursuing our domestic, regional and international priorities. [U](#)





Advancing the African Agenda and seeking a better world

We require a singular African identity, premised on the African Renaissance, Africa unity and African solidarity.

By Alvin Botes
Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

South Africa continues to execute its foreign policy through the canon of Pan-Africanism, South-South solidarity, South-North cooperation and multilateralism. We do so, knowing that our national interest is intertwined, interrelated and integrally infused with the stability, unity and prosperity of Africa.

The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his speech to the UN General Assembly in 2018, warned that “our world is suffering from a trust deficit disorder, and that trust in global governance is fragile”.

Trust must be earned

The former Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Aziz Pahad, was instructive on the occasion of accepting his honorary doctorate degree from the

University of Pretoria in April 2021, when he wrote: “We would do well to remember at times like these that we remain bound together as never before as communities of fate, brought together by our mutual vulnerabilities and an abiding sense of solidarity, compassion and interdependence”.

By building back better, we are restoring the trust deficit.

Franz Fanon cautioned in his seminal work, entitled: *Black Skin, White Masks*, that without conceptualisation and a new way of life, the struggle would rely on the memories of past battles and old formulas and fell back into an unhappy unconsciousness – what is called “Afro-pessimism and Afro-optimism on the other hand”.

We can no longer speak like our forebears of the Monrovia State, Brazzaville Groups, Casablanca Powers, Anglophone and Francophone. Let us put an end to these terms.

We require a singular African identity, premised on the African Renaissance, Africa unity and African solidarity.

South Africa assumed the Chairship of the African Union (AU) in 2020. The priorities it set when assuming the Chair included:

- We supported continental integration, economic development, trade and investment on the continent. We are pleased that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) came into operationalisation and commenced trading on 1 January 2021. The AfCFTA has a dialectical rooting from the Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Treaty, and is a potent decolonial instrument we must use to negate our national grievance of unemployment, poverty and inequality.
- We steered the implementation of the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICI) in support of the AfCFTA.

The AU noted with appreciation the progress report President Cyril Ramaphosa presented as Chair of the Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee’s High-level Sub-Committee on the PICI. The AU Development Agency-NEPAD must collaborate with the African Development Bank in order to support the Africa Co-guarantee Platform.

- We strengthened cooperation between the AU and the UN. South Africa has recently concluded its two-year term as an elected member of the UN Security Council (SC), and occupied a particular proximity with other members of the A3, and other elected members in the E10 formation, with an emphasis on states from the Non-Aligned Movement.
- We promoted peace and security and advanced efforts to Silence the Guns on the African continent. The AU Master Lu-saka Roadmap of “Silencing of the Guns in Africa”, thereby advancing Aspiration 4 of Agenda 2063, acknowledges the dialectical relationship between peace and development. Patrice Lumumba reminded us that African unity and solidarity were no longer dreams. They must be expressed in decisions. The AU Assembly congratulated the decision of South Africa, together with Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal, for their pledges to financially support the Peace Fund.

Systematic work is being done in South Sudan (unity government); Sudan (peace agreement); Libya (ceasefire agreement); and Burundi (the

UNSC removed the matter from its agenda). Unfortunately, there remain significant risks of instability and conflict on the continent. These include developments in Cabo Delgado (Mozambique), North Kivu (Democratic Republic of Congo), Tigray (Ethiopia) Sahel and the Great Lakes; resurgence of hostilities between Morocco and the people of Western Sahara; and potential tensions arising from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

We deepened democracy. The last few years has seen an increase in participatory politics across the continent with rising numbers of democratic governments emerging. Over the last year alone, over 20 African countries held elections (Guinea, Mali, Benin, Burundi and Malawi, among others) and 25 more are destined for a renewal mandate (South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, South Sudan, São Tomé and Príncipe, among others) at either presidential, parliamentary or local level in 2021.

We supported advancing gender equality, the empowerment of women and the combatting of violence against women and girls. South Africa has been chosen as the co-leader of the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition of the Generation Equality Forum. This means that South Africa will remain part of the global leaders aimed at accelerating gender equality and the financial inclusion of African women.

Deepening multilateralism

South Africa continues to participate in many different plurilateral platforms such as the G7, G20 and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS), and we must be seized with the plight of the highly indebted states, and particular the least developed countries, of which 33 are African states, including our immediate neighbours, Lesotho and Mozambique.

India’s Chairship of BRICS coincides with them being subjected to the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic and we should as a caring nation err on the side of the vulnerable and mobilise humanitarian assistance to our BRICS ally.

There is high-level support from China and Russia for the operationalisation of the BRICS Vaccine Research and Development Centre, as approved by the Johannesburg Declaration of the 10th BRICS Summit in 2018.

Solidarity

South Africa must remain steadfast against the unilateral economic sanctions against Zimbabwe by the United States and United Kingdom administrations. This economic blockade has severely strain the Zimbabwean

economy, especially after Tropical Cyclone Idai, which destroyed their economic infrastructure. South Africa, through the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund, pledged R50 million in humanitarian support to Zimbabwe and the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, on Africa Day, solidified our intent with substantive food security interventions. That is humanitarian diplomacy par excellence and translating our value system of Ubuntu.

South Africa must remain unwavering on the question of the self-determination of Western Sahara. Morocco has suspended all contacts with the German Embassy in Rabat and related German organisations due to “deep misunderstandings” over Western Sahara. We must hail Germany’s absolutely correct posture, which underpins the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people.

On Cuba, we must continue to solidify our economic diplomacy, through the Economic Assistance Package Agreement with Cuba, and indicate our unequivocal support for the annual UN General Assembly Resolution, entitled: “Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba”.

South Africa’s freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestine people. The UN Human Rights Council has agreed to launch an open-ended international investigation into violations during the 11-day conflict between Israel and Palestinian groups in Gaza, and into “systematic” abuses in the occupied Palestinian territories and inside Israel. We must heighten our advocacy work for the realisation of the Middle East Peace Process, without pre-conditions.

The African heads of states at the 34th Ordinary Session said the following about President Ramaphosa’s leadership:

“The AU Assembly expresses deep appreciation to His Excellency President Ramaphosa for providing exemplary, timely, focused and effective leadership to Africa’s response to COVID-19;

“Acknowledges the commendable and extraordinary efforts he invested during his chairmanship of the AU in the year 2020;

“Expresses and reiterates its profound gratitude to His Excellency President Ramaphosa, for his vibrant, visionary and sterling leadership of the Union during his term of office.”

President Ramaphosa has reset the trust button; he has earned his stripes. Ma’m Charlotte Maxeke would have been proud and confident about the inclusive Africa we envisage in Agenda 2063. 🇺



South Africa and Nigeria: the continental giants with a sometimes uneasy, but always **symbiotic relationship**

"The success of political and economic integration in Africa rests heavily on the shoulders of these two regional powers that have both collaborated and competed with each other in a complex relationship that is Africa's most indispensable."

By Dr Bobby J Moroe

Deputy High Commissioner of South Africa to the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Africa's two continental giants, South Africa and Nigeria, maintain a complex relationship that is often misunderstood, leading some in the public discourse to conclude that the relationship is messy, truculent and laced with enmity.

Much has been written about the perceived or imagined rivalry, competition and the quest for the hegemony of the continent by South Africa and Nigeria, and much less about their successes, cordiality and milestones over the years. Even fewer works that are available focus on the socio-economic contrasts between Nigeria and South Africa in a way that seeks to project and promote competition.

Formal diplomatic relations between South Africa and Nigeria resumed at the dawn of

South Africa's new democracy in 1994. The two countries have always enjoyed cordial fraternal relations dating back to the early days of South Africa's struggle for freedom and liberation – a dark period during which Nigeria stood by South Africa.

Buoyed by their strong historical ties, the two countries established the South Africa-Nigeria Bi-national Commission (BNC) in 1999. Initially, the BNC was conceived at the level of vice-president/deputy president as a mechanism to manage their diplomatic relations. It was not until 2016 that the two countries elevated the status of this mechanism to head of state. Since then, the mechanism has operated at the highest level between any two nations who enjoy diplomatic relations, and this on its own signifies the strong bonds and ties that exist between the two countries and their people

There is no shadow of a doubt that the relations between South Africa and Nigeria are among the most significant on the continent due to their enormous economies, abundant influence and conspicuous stature. In his book, *The Eagle and The Springbok*, Professor Adebayo Adedeji validates the notion of two powerful states by asserting that: "The success of political and economic integration in Africa rests heavily on the shoulders of these two regional powers that have both collaborated and competed with each other in a complex relationship that is Africa's most indispensable."

To this day, this narrative remains strong and has disappointingly bred a narrow-minded and myopic picture about the two countries and how they view each other. It does not take a rocket scientist to understand that any two

nations, or more, pursuing relations of any form with each other, will always be confronted with challenges. These relations will be impoverished if they are understood within the context of the narrow confines of their divergences, and not in their shared common history, aspirations and global influence. It is important to change the existing narrative and focus on what enjoins the two countries towards a common destiny, rather than what can potentially destroy the very fibre of their relations.

There is, therefore, an urgent need in the public discourse to overcome a lack of substantive theoretical framework in defining the relations between South Africa and Nigeria and contextualise them within the framework of what they seek to achieve. By doing so, understanding relations within this framework will close the existing gap in the inadequacy of research conducted on how greater social and economic value can be achieved from harnessing South Africa-Nigeria solidarity for concrete, stronger and revived economic and social cooperation.

The National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030, in Chapter 7, asserts that: "The shift of global power towards developing countries provides South Africa with an opportunity to maximise its regional and international influence over the next 20 to 30 years". Among the other strategic key intents of the two countries are their collective desire to drive and lead the advancement of the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063. Advancing this agenda is critical for continental development — and the two countries are key in this process.

South Africa's international relations are guided by the promotion of the well-being and upliftment of its people, protecting the planet for future generations and ensuring the prosperity of the country, the region and Africa. In order to achieve these objectives, a critical and pragmatic evaluation of existing international relations and untangling the "spaghetti" bowl of overlapping regional affiliations and commitments are necessary (NDP 2011: 217). It is in this context, and in pursuit of national interests, that South Africa's approach to engaging with Nigeria must be understood.

While Africa's growth increases the size of the continent's economy, this growth provides the continent with a greater voice in global and economic institutions. To this end, Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, remains a key strategic country for South Africa due to its big economy, population, power and influence on the continent. As such, this presents an opportunity for South Africa to leverage available opportunities in Nigeria.

Nigeria and South Africa account for about a third of Africa's economic might, with each accounting for 60% to 70% of the economies in their subregions (southern Africa and West Africa respectively). Both countries are former British colonies and are members of the Commonwealth of Nations and the AU. According to a 2013 BBC World Service poll, 63% of Nigerians view South Africa's influence positively, with 24% expressing a negative view. Nevertheless, it remains strategic for South Africa to maintain a strong presence in Nigeria due to its fast-growing economy, highest gross national product on the continent and third-largest manufacturing sector. Nigeria also boasts the largest agricultural output and the highest number of cattle, but requires partnership in agricultural research expertise, which South Africa can provide through bilateral engagements.

According to US News and World Report's 2019 power ranking, Egypt, South Africa's and Nigeria are the three most powerful countries in Africa. Since South Africa's and Nigeria's transitions to democracy in different times of history, they have been economic allies and are also seen as competitors. The top South African investors in Nigeria are the MTN Group, Rengro, Shoprite, Pick n Pay Holdings, Black Rhino, Pep, Standard Bank Group, Clover Industries and Naspers. A total of R2.67 billion from six Nigerian companies was invested in South Africa between 2008 and 2020. Dangote and GZI are the most significant, accounting for 95% of the total foreign direct investment from Nigeria into South Africa.

Despite their steady economic growth trajectory, which may be well below their potential, South Africa and Nigeria remain pivotal states in the continental firmament. According to Brand South Africa, the total African gross domestic product/economic output in 2017/18 was US\$2 175 billion. Of this, South Africa's output was US\$295 billion and Nigeria's US\$405 billion.

Nigeria is a member of several international, regional and subregional organisations, which include the United Nations (UN) and several of its special and related agencies: the World Trade Organisation, the Non-Aligned Movement, AU, the Commonwealth of Nations, Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries and the International Maritime Organisation. In West Africa, Nigeria holds a powerful position in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as a member and host country. ECOWAS seeks to harmonise trade and investment practices for its West African member countries and ultimately to achieve a full customs union. The West African country has also consistently committed itself to the cause of peacekeeping in the region.

On the other hand, South Africa is a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and remains one of the most influential member states in the regional body. Since the resumption of its membership in August 1994, South Africa has taken a leading role in the region to address issues, including development and economic integration. Projections of global power capabilities among SADC countries using the International Futures forecasting tool show that by 2040, Angola will be the only country that approaches South Africa, but that the latter will still wield more power potential. The only other country in SADC that will come close to these two heavyweights is Tanzania, largely because of its rapid population growth.

With the two countries wielding so much power and influence in the region, and globally, their relations become significantly important, particularly for purposes of driving industrialisation on the continent. It is therefore critical that their relations are not only viewed within the context of competition, but rather, collaboration that seeks to benefit the entire continent. ☰





The Cederberg Wilderness Area in the Western Cape is one of the most undisturbed parts of South Africa. It has a range of hiking trails that vary in intensity, including routes to fascinating rock formations such as Wolfberg Arch.



LIBERATION HERITAGE:

Ray

ALEXANDER-SIMONS

Ray Alexander-Simons, née Alexandrowich, was born on 12 January 1914 in Latvia. While at school, she displayed little fear in challenging authorities. Her independent thinking suggested she pursue a career in medicine but she soon took up politics. When she was about 13, she became active in the underground Latvian Communist Party.

She arrived in South Africa on 6 November 1929, and began to organise black worker unions. Five days later, on 11 November 1929, after meeting Cissie Gool and lifelong friend John Gomas, she joined the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA), aged 16.

In the same year, she lost her first job when she took part in an anti-pass campaign. She was involved with all facets of the party's work, and after being dismissed from a job for attending the founding conference of the Anti-Fascist League, she became increasingly involved in trade union activity.

Alexander-Simons was the Secretary of the Communist Party in 1934 and 1935, and recruited many women into the organisation.

"She was undaunted when facing the bosses, the bargaining councils or the police forces. She sacrificed a lot, including her own family to fight for a democratic South Africa."

She helped organise workers in many different trades, but the union which became synonymous with her name was the Food and Canning Workers Union (FCWU). Founded in 1941, the FCWU spread through the fruit canning industry of the Boland and up the west coast among fishing communities.

The FCWU recruited black and white workers, men and women, and earned the reputation of being both effective and militant. In the 1950s, it played a leading role in the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). She also wrote a regular column on trade union matters in *The Guardian*, a newspaper affiliated to the CPSA.

In September 1953, she was served with banning orders. It was issued by Justice Minister Charles Robberts (Blackie) Swart, which forced her to resign as general secretary of the FCWU.

In April 1954, together with Helen Joseph, Lilian Ngoyi and Florence Mkhize, she helped found the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW), which fought for women's rights and participated in drafting the pioneering Women's Charter.

Her FCWU banning precluded her attending the 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings, but she was involved in its organisation and recruited about 175 women from Cape Town. After another banning order in April 1954, she was forced to resign from FEDSAW.

Alexander-Simons married Eli Weinberg in 1937, but they separated and she later married Professor Jack Simons, a devoted communist and a lecturer in African Studies, in 1941.

On 6 May 1965, Alexander-Simons and her husband left South Africa for Zambia. From Zambia, they went to England, where he obtained a lecturing post at Manchester University. Together, they wrote the classic labour history, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850 – 1950*, a pioneering analysis of the relationship between class and race, and how these shaped the South African political and social landscape.

They returned to Lusaka in 1967, and were the first white people to be accepted into the African National Congress (ANC). During this time, her husband lectured in the bush camps in Angola and Alexander-Simons continued to do underground work.

In 1990, she attended the Malibongwe Conference in the Netherlands, which was a follow-up to the 1984 women's conference. Alexander-Simons and her husband returned to South Africa in 1990.

Together, they wrote the classic labour history, *Class and Colour in South Africa: 1850 – 1950*, a pioneering analysis of the relationship between class and race, and how these shaped the South African political and social landscape.

After her return, Alexander-Simons advised various trade unions, as well as the ANC and SACP, and worked on a book on her involvement in the FCWU. Her husband passed away in 1995.

Ray Alexander-Simons remained honoured for her contributions to organisations such as the CPSA, ANC, FEDSAW, unions, South West Africa People's Organisation and the New Women's Movement. In 2004, the ANC's National Executive Committee bestowed the ANC's highest honour of Isithwalandwe on this liberation movement stalwart.

She was the third woman to receive this award, and some of the previous 18 recipients were Chief Albert Luthuli, Father Trevor Huddleston and Yusuf Dadoo in 1955, Lilian Ngoyi in 1982, and Nelson Mandela and Helen Joseph in 1992. Literally translated, Isithwalandwe means "the one who wears the plumes of the rare bird".

Ray Alexander-Simons died on 12 September 2004 at the age of 91.

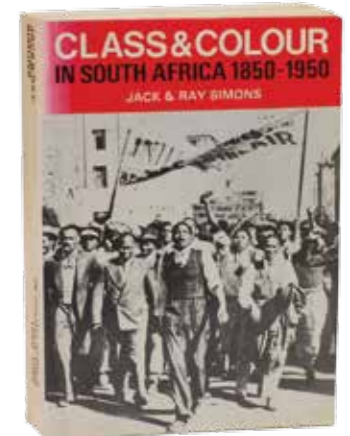
On 7 November 2016, the South African Parliament honoured the late labour unionist and civil rights activist for her heroic role in championing the rights of farm workers and women in South Africa.

Her family joined members of Parliament, academics and civil-society organisations in a symposium under the theme: "Progress and Challenges for Working Women: From the 1956 March to Now", as part of Parliament's Memory Project aimed at celebrating the lives and contributions of women veterans of the struggle for South Africa's liberation.

Alexander-Simons was described as "a pioneer unionist" and "a practical and very patient mentor" by her friend and fellow trade unionist, Leon Levy, who delivered the keynote address during the symposium.

Alexander-Simons' daughter, Tanya Barben, said: "It is appropriate that the function takes place on the 7th of November for it is the date on which teenager Rachel Esther Alexandrowich (Ray Alexander) arrived in Cape Town from Latvia and it is also the anniversary of the October Revolution [which took place in Petrograd, Russia, from 7 to 8 November, 1917]. She was undaunted when facing the bosses, the bargaining councils or the police forces. She sacrificed a lot, including her own family to fight for a democratic South Africa," she said.

www.sahistory.org.za / www.parliament.gov.za



REMEMBERING THE LEGACY OF THE *YOUNG LIONS OF 1976:* THE POWER OF YOUTH AS AGENTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

As we pay tribute to the 1976 Young Lions, I firmly believe the youth can truly honour their legacies by becoming agents for change; the change they wish to see.

By Ambassador Rapulane Molekane

Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Vienna, Austria

The month of June is dedicated to the youth of South Africa. Our former President Nelson Mandela paid tribute to the heroism of youth by stating: "The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow". As a former youth activist, I have a deep appreciation for the strong convictions and boundless energy young people have for causes close to their heart. I firmly believe they have an integral role to play in the upliftment and development of our country and people, as demonstrated so many times in the past.

16 June 1976 has been seared into the collective consciousness of all South Africans. It is a stark reminder of the brutality of the apartheid regime opening fire on unarmed schoolchildren protesting against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at schools. The protest, which drew thousands of young people, ended in tragedy with hundreds dead and many more injured. The senseless killing of innocent schoolchildren struck a poignant cord in the heart of the international community and signalled a turning point in our history, leading to the downfall of the apartheid government. South Africa's youth had risen and issued a direct challenge to the Government of the day. They would fight for the country and the future they wanted.

Eighteen years after the Soweto Uprising, the apartheid regime was dismantled and a new democratic government elected. South Africa's transition cannot be fully appreciated without acknowledging the pivotal role played by its youth in the struggle. As we commemorate the sacrifice of these courageous young people, it provides a timely opportunity to reflect on the contribution of the youth to the upliftment of society and the role they can play as agents of social change.

Youth as agents of change

South Africa has given birth to several youth icons who have not only transformed their immediate societies but also the global community with revolutionary ideas in many fields such as politics, culture, literature, science and technology. Charlotte Manny Maxeke was the first black South African woman graduate, a teacher, religious leader and political activist. Her extraordinary life was spent in service to her people and community under very challenging circumstances at the turn of the century. We recall a young Nelson Mandela calling for human dignity amid gross racial prejudice; the brave 11-year-old AIDS activist, Nkosi Johnson, campaigning against discrimination faced by those living with HIV; and Miriam Makeba with the heavenly voice of angels and lyrics of freedom songs. What they

all had in common was the power to inspire and bring about the change they desired.

More recently, we witnessed South African youth successfully take up issues impacting on their lives and livelihoods such as the high cost of data and tertiary education through the "Data Must Fall" and "Fees Must Fall" campaigns. On the African front, we have witnessed the Arab Springs Uprising in Tunisia and Egypt followed by the powerful Blacks Lives Matter Campaign, which have ignited long-overdue discussions on accountability, transformation, social inclusion, police brutality and racial discrimination globally. The novelty of these movements lies in the fact that they were largely coordinated by the youth and conducted through technological platforms in real time. The youth have reclaimed their agency and advocacy through powerful campaigns, which have reawakened political consciousness and redefined social awareness.

South Africa's future lies in the hands of its youth

South Africa is blessed to be a youthful nation. However, the recent unemployment statistics pertaining to young people are cause for concern. The 2020 Fourth Quarter *Labour Force Survey* found that about 8,6 million young people aged between 15 and 34 years were not in education and not in employment.

In helping to draw more young people into the economy, government has under the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention initiated various youth development and empowerment initiatives to support young people. It ranges from formal education and training, learnerships and internships as well as support for youth entrepreneurship. Our initiatives provide the necessary support for young people to take on their challenges and win.

The Presidential Youth Employment Intervention, implemented under the auspices of the Basic Education sector, has created employment opportunities for more than 320 000 education and general education assistants, who were placed in schools around the country. Other initiatives include the Expanded Public Works Programme, Community Works Programme and the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator. The National Youth Service also provides a platform for young people to become activists and leaders in their communities. During June 2021, government and its agencies such as the National Youth Development Agency hosted a number of engagements, including youth expos, dialogues and youth entrepreneur hubs to showcase opportunities available to young people.

Keeping pace with a changing world

The world is evolving at a rapid pace, ushering in great technological and social change, which offers opportunities and challenges alike. Globalisation and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) have enabled countries to leapfrog development and improve the living standards of their people in a shorter span of time. Dividends of 4IR such as digitisation, automation, biotechnology, genomics, robotics, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things and cloud computing have redefined the workspace and reconceptualised how we engage with the world. Innovation and creativity are now considered key skills for leveraging the 4IR. According to the World Economic Forum, the future workforce will need to align its skillset to keep pace.

As daunting as this may appear, it has given rise to career options, which were unimaginable a decade ago. In line with their global counterparts, South African youth have embraced the technological frontier through the explosion of tech hubs across the country. As the cost of data drops and broadband speeds up, we can look forward to more young South Africans using social media and smartphone applications to display their innovative ideas tailored to the local market. Some of the more famous apps created by South Africans include Gradematch, which assists learners to apply for tertiary education and Khwela, which provides commuter information on where to catch taxis on their route, saving time and money, among others.

As the workspace migrates from physical to digital, this new landscape offers a wide range of opportunities to those willing to extend themselves. South Africa is filled with a deep pool of talent of creative young people, who will no doubt be instrumental in rebuilding sectors devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The youth have a pivotal role to play in post-COVID recovery efforts through digital innovation to promote socio-economic transformation, equality, inclusiveness, quality healthcare, climate resilience and sustainable industrialisation. They are best placed to understand the current and future needs of our societies to shape new solutions in the post-COVID world.

The importance of education

The South African Government recognises and values the importance of quality education in transforming the lives of people and building a better future for them and their communities. Mandela said: "Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a miner can become the head of a mine and the child of farm workers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make of what we have and not what we are given, that separates one person from another."

Commemorating Youth Day in Vienna

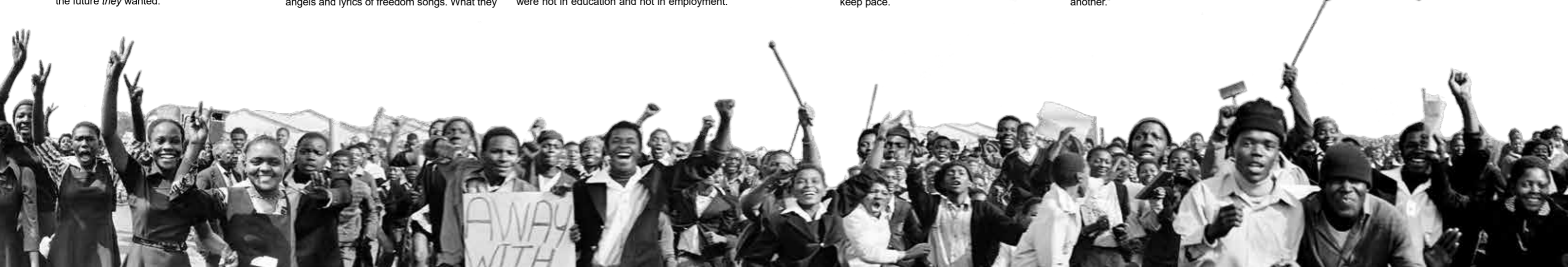
In commemoration of Youth Day, the South African Embassy in Vienna, in collaboration with the Southern African Documentation and Cooperation Centre, hosted a virtual panel discussion on "The Challenges Faced by Young South Africans Pre-and Post-Democracy: A Reflection" on 16 June 2021, where I had the opportunity to share my personal recollection as a youth activist in South Africa. We invited two young South Africans, Mthobisi Shandu and Rustum Manuel, based in Vienna, to reflect on the challenges facing the current generation of youth. Both highlighted the positive attributes that democracy have yielded in the country such as the Constitution, freedom of speech and movement and opportunities to access educational institutions and jobs previously reserved for the white population. However, they also noted disparities among the races, mainly attributed to unaddressed historical and systemic factors such as the level of education, skills, resources and opportunities, which have further entrenched inequality and perpetuated unemployment within the country.

The panel discussion drew awareness to the historical significance of Youth Day and provided a platform for dialogue on challenges facing the South African youth. As we pay tribute to the 1976 Young Lions, I firmly believe the youth can truly honour their legacies by becoming agents for change; the change they wish to see. [U](#)

**THE YOUTH
OF TODAY**

**ARE THE LEADERS
OF TOMORROW.**

-Nelson Mandela





The Gariep Dam is located near the town of Norvalspont, bordering the Free State and Eastern Cape provinces. Its primary purpose is for irrigation, domestic and industrial use as well as for power generation. It is also a key tourist attraction with the focus on water sport and nature. Gariep Dam is the biggest dam in South Africa and attracts fishing enthusiasts and boat lovers. It is surrounded by nature reserves with wildlife running on open plains.



100
PHOTOGRAPHS

THE MOST INFLUENTIAL
IMAGES OF ALL TIME



SOWETO UPRISING - © SAM NZIMA



Capturing the Soweto Uprising: South Africa's most iconic photograph lives on

An important question to ask is: to what degree does a powerful photograph reduce commemoration to the name of one person, thus overlooking the tragedies of other individuals who were killed on the same day?

By Ruth Simbao

South African Research Chair in Geopolitics and the Arts of Africa, Rhodes University

Sam Nzima, the photographer who captured the iconic image of the 1976 Soweto Uprising passed away on 12 May 2018. The photograph was one of six frames showing Mbuyisa Makhubu carrying 12-year-old Hector Pieterson who was shot by police, and Hector's sister, Antonette Pieterson (now Sithole), running alongside.

Sensing the impact these photographs would have in exposing the cruelty of apartheid, Nzima hid the roll of film in his sock. Following the release of the photograph worldwide, the police were ordered by the apartheid government to kill Nzima if they found him taking any photographs. When he was summoned to John Vorster Square, the dreaded police headquarters in Johannesburg, he went into hiding. His career as a journalist

for the anti-apartheid newspaper, *The World*, came to an abrupt end.

While Nzima's photograph quickly became known as the most evocative photograph to emerge from the struggle against apartheid, initially few people associated the photograph with him. At times, it was erroneously attributed to acclaimed photographer Peter Magubane.

Just over a year later, *The World* was banned by the apartheid government, but Nzima's photograph lived on. Printed onto numerous T-shirts, posters and pamphlets, it became virtually synonymous with protest.

Protest and (over)exposure

What happens to images that appear over and over again in the visual economy?

Art historian Colin Richards suggests that powerful images can also be extraordinarily vulnerable, for when they are sensationalised,

overexposure can weaken the historical moments they capture.

In 1989, liberation struggle stalwart Albie Sachs made a similar assertion when he presented the paper "Preparing Ourselves for Freedom" at an African National Congress in-house seminar on culture. He argued that: "the power of art lies precisely in its capacity to expose contradictions and reveal hidden tensions."

Sachs warned that the repetitive use of visual portrayals of struggle icons such as guns, clenched fists and protest slogans merely flattened meaning and impact. His call to ban the statement "culture is a weapon of struggle" was contentious and ignited an intense debate. Respondents such as historian Rushdy Siers argued that culture was based on lived experience, and "vivas, raised fists ... AK's and Amandlas" were indeed the lived experiences of cultural workers.

The photograph's shadow

In Nzima's original photograph, the three figures cast a deep shadow on the ground. However, many versions of this image that were silkscreened onto protest posters and T-shirts flattened the image and omitted the shadow. Artworks that drew from this image, such as Kevin Brand's duct tape mural on the outside wall of *Musée de Dakar* (1998) in Senegal, and Ernest Pignon-Ernest's public murals at Warwick Triangle (2002) in Durban reintroduced the shadow, suggesting that this powerful photograph withstood potential numbing often induced by repetition.

Recalling philosopher Roland Barthe's assertion that texts need shadows in order to be productive and subversive rather than sterile, the shadow of this photograph and its numerous re-representations can be read as a metaphor for the rich debate that this image continues to bring to the surface. Commemoration is contested, and Nzima's photograph has raised numerous debates.

An important question to ask is: to what degree does a powerful photograph reduce commemoration to the name of one person, thus overlooking the tragedies of other individuals who were killed on the same day? Due to the wide reach of Nzima's photograph, it was initially believed that Hector Pieterson was the first student to be killed by the police. But oral testimonies suggest that Hastings Ndlovu was not only the first to be gunned down, but was also deliberately sought out by the police.

Artist Johannes Phokela created a ceramic memorial wall that is dedicated to student leader Tsietsi Mashinini. It was unveiled at the 30th anniversary of 16 June in 2006. The memorial is shaped like an exercise book and the grouting between the tiles represents the lines on the pages.

This commemoration does not erase the memory of Hector Pieterson. Nzima's photograph is portrayed behind the words of Mashinini that are written on the wall. Representing an open book, the commemorative wall suggests a willingness to accommodate counter-narratives of the uprising. As such, the horrific events of this day are not flattened, but are presented as stories or texts with shadows.

History reanimated

The persistence of Nzima's photograph is remarkable. Not only was it used on T-shirts, posters and pamphlets in the 1980s, but it has reappeared in the form of artworks, memorials, monuments and numerous cartoons, including the work of cartoonists Sifiso Yalo and Zapiro.

The fact that it raises ongoing debate is important, as this works against the grain of much government-led commemoration that tends to reduce historical events to one-dimensional interpretation.

One of the most poignant forms of response to this iconic image is the live re-enactment of the photograph. When I participated in the 2006 commemorative march from Morris Isaacson High School to the Hector Pieterson Memorial in Orlando West, a group of young people ended the march with a re-enactment of the famous Nzima photograph.

This performative engagement with Nzima's photograph, like the recent correlations between the Soweto Uprising and the Rhodes Must Fall movement, is critical in terms of the reanimation of history. Not only are the historical events of Nzima's photograph recalled, but new generations redefine events on their own terms and in relation to their own contexts. This brings alive the shadow of this iconic photograph. [U](#)

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

The persistence of Nzima's photograph is remarkable. Not only was it used on T-shirts, posters and pamphlets in the 1980s, but it has reappeared in the form of artworks, memorials, monuments and numerous cartoons, including the work of cartoonists Sifiso Yalo and Zapiro.





Africa's free trade area offers great promise. But only if risks are managed with resolve

The free trade deal won't solve all of Africa's woes. But it does have the potential to increase economic participation and lift citizens out of poverty.

By John Luiz

Professor of International Business Strategy and Emerging Markets at the University of Sussex and the Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town

For all its stutters and missteps, there can be little argument that the European Union (EU) has largely lived up to its ambitious billing: to create stability and growth on a continent that, for a period, was dangerously prone to nationalism and conflict.

The question facing Africa is whether the continent's free trade area can likewise mitigate conflict and forge a prospering Africa. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a project of the African Union (AU). Founded in 2018, it's described as a framework through which to deliver "inclusive and sustainable growth". By July 2019, 54 of the AU's 55 member states had signed the agreement, with Eritrea the only holdout. While negotiations are still ongoing, the trade agreement officially commenced on 1 January this year. The idea is that it will be rolled out over three phases.

The World Bank imagines it as a means "to lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty".

But will it?

The experience of the EU could help show the way both in terms of the upside, as well as potential pitfalls.

Lessons and pitfalls

In terms of success, the EU has contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. It has also promoted economic convergence between its wealthier and poorer constituent parts.

When the EU was awarded the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize, the committee argued that "through well-aimed efforts and by building up mutual confidence, historical enemies can become close partners". It highlighted a number of achievements, including the EU's contribution to the introduction of democracy in Greece, Spain and Portugal, the strengthening of democracy in Eastern Europe and overcoming the division between East and West as well as ethnically based national conflicts.

In terms of pitfalls, the EU has seen its fair share of detractors and crises.

For example, questions were asked about its heavy-handed response during the Greek debt crisis and more recently about its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But, the EU has shown great resilience, even in the face of losing one of its largest members, the United Kingdom (UK), through Brexit.

It's easy to aspire to such integration without recognising the careful construction

The World Bank estimates the pact will boost regional income by 7%, or US\$450 billion, speed up wage growth for women and lift wages by 10.3% for unskilled workers and 9.8% for skilled workers.

and staging of successively deeper integration that preceded the EU. Before becoming full members of the EU, candidate countries have had to meet strict criteria in terms of governance and economic conditions, among other factors. Its exclusivity is part of the reason for its success.

The promise

The main objectives of Africa's free trade area are "to create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of businesspersons and investments". Its remit is sweeping: from the reduction of tariffs among member countries to introducing regulatory measures such as sanitary standards and removing technical barriers to trade.

There are tantalising opportunities for the plucking. Currently, a massively underperforming Africa accounts for just 2% of global trade. And only 17% of African exports are intended for other countries on the continent, well below intra-continental trade in Asia (59%) and Europe (68%).

As the largest free trade area in the world when measured by the number of participating countries, the potential for the AfCFTA to nudge those numbers in the right direction is significant.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development suggests that, if the trade pact is fully implemented, the gross domestic product of most African countries could rise by 1% to 3% once all tariffs are removed.

The World Bank estimates the pact will boost regional income by 7%, or US\$450 billion, speed up wage growth for women and lift wages by 10.3% for unskilled workers and 9.8% for skilled workers.

The caveats

Some thorny issues still need to be thrashed out. These include bringing down existing tariffs. For example, oranges imported from South Africa for sale in a supermarket in Kenya currently attract a 25% tariff. Non-tariff barriers, such as sanitary rules, also need to be tackled.

Another unresolved issue is finding consensus over "rules of origin". This requires getting agreement on what tariffs, if any, will apply to goods that one country buys cheaply in Asia, for example, and wishes to trade in Africa.

Vested interests often make it hard to deal with these issues. Again, the example of the EU is instructive, as the clear benefits from membership seemingly outweigh costs.

Africa needs to overcome some other challenges too.

African countries rate poorly for ease of doing business. Only two – Mauritius and Rwanda – rank among the global top 50 countries in the World Bank's *Doing Business 2020* report where business can be conducted with ease.

Trying to implement a project of this nature among 54 countries with sometimes vastly disparate economies and infrastructure will stretch systems and patience. There are also challenges associated with marrying the free trade deal with existing regional agreements, as well as with bilateral trade agreements with non-African countries.

In the case of the EU, candidate countries had to implement various economic reforms as part of the price of membership.

Risks and pitfalls

There is the danger that this could be yet another bold African declaration that is stillborn or badly implemented. The fall-out could mean that the continent simply reverts back to the status quo. But, some countries could be hurt more than others.

There is also a danger that the deal results in winners and losers. It's therefore important to accept from the outset that not all countries will benefit equally. Countries with larger manufacturing bases and more developed transport infrastructure and with more diversified economies are likely to benefit more.

If the agreement deepens inequality between countries, it could raise tensions, and potentially spark conflict. Here, lessons gleaned from the EU could help. Under its arrangement, wealthier countries support

poorer nations within the block through various transfers.

The difficulty in Africa is that it has countries at vastly disparate levels of development facing different challenges and so each step in the process is going to be highly contested.

One possible solution for down the line would be to put in place a mechanism that offers both carrot and stick. This could be done, for example, through the establishment of a solidarity fund where future gains get "taxed" with a levy to redistribute between countries to promote convergence.


Rewards

In 1946, Winston Churchill espoused the notion of a "United States of Europe", of the need to recreate the European family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom.

That is the role the AfCFTA can play for the continent.

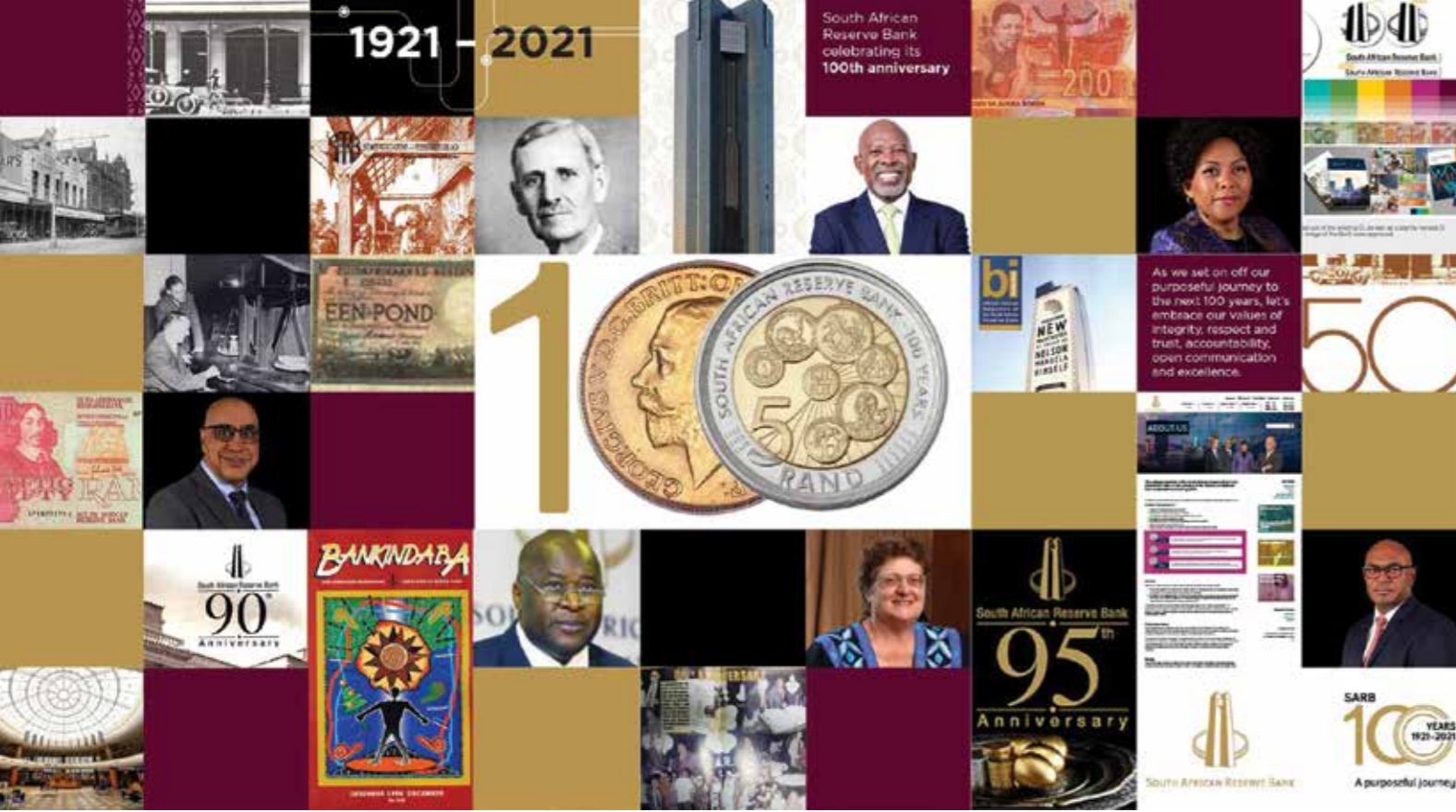
To make it work, however, African leaders need to commit to a full implementation of the agreement. This will mean that they must avoid turning inward, and buy into the notion that a united and coordinated front presents opportunities for the continent as a whole.

They must also get buy-in from citizens. As the UK's exit from the EU showed, people will want to opt out if they can't feel – or understand – the benefits.

The free trade deal won't solve all of Africa's woes. But it does have the potential to increase economic participation and lift citizens out of poverty. 

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.





SA Reserve Bank celebrates 100 years of excellence

The women and men who staff this institution have proved their mettle, repeatedly rising to the challenges they are faced with. With this strength, we face the future, optimistic that we will continue to play our vital role in supporting our economy through maintaining price and financial stability.

By Lesetja Kganyago
Governor of the South African Reserve Bank

On 30 June 1921, at Church Street east, the first Governor of the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), William Henry Clegg, and 14 other men opened the doors of the SARB to the public. The world had just emerged from World War I, leading to unusual financial and monetary conditions. In establishing the SARB, the primary objective was simple: to restore and maintain order in the issue and circulation of domestic currency, and restore the gold standard to the pre-World War I rate of exchange. From the archives, the first Board meeting minutes, dated 29 July 1921 at 10:00, disclose that the first order of business entailed “the purchase of property in Pretoria for £7 000 and the first orders of banknotes”. The former was finalised in the late 1920s, while the first

batch of banknotes ordered from England was issued to the public on 19 April 1922.

The monetary policy framework adopted at the SARB’s founding was the gold standard, linking banknotes to gold. However, the Great Depression and its link to weaknesses in the gold standard ushered in a period of monetary policy reform. A new policy direction linked the value of the South African pound to the British pound sterling, and the further decision to join the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1946 as a leading member of the international monetary system.

Other currency reforms were initiated in subsequent years. In the 1950s, the Decimal Coinage Commission recommended that South Africa formally introduce a decimal system, which eventually led to the introduction of the rand in 1961. This occurred at the same time that South Africa became a

republic. Despite the introduction of the rand, the 1960s was a period of rising inflation at home and globally. In 1967, anti-inflationary measures were introduced to slow the rise in the price level. These gains proved short-lived, however, as inflation again picked up in the 1970s on the back of the United States (US) dollar depreciation (as the US removed parity to gold), major fiscal expansions and the first oil price crisis. By the end of the decade, oil

There is no question that our recovery will progress and our sound policy frameworks will continue to allow flexible approaches while building confidence.

The SARB debuted its “Big Five” banknote series, and introduced a R5 coin, commemorating the inauguration of our first democratically elected President, Nelson Mandela. We have continued the tradition of reflecting on our history and have released a newly designed R5 coin to commemorate our centenary.

prices had tripled and inflation reached post-war highs around the world.

The early 1960s, amid the introduction of a new currency, also saw signs of inflation, resulting in anti-inflationary measures that, by 1967, slowed the rate of price increases. These troubles ushered in a period of economic policy reform that eventually led us to the modern approaches to monetary and fiscal policy that we see today.

Leading up to the 1980s, South Africa was in deep political and economic turmoil. At the height of the anti-apartheid struggle, inflation hit a high of 18.4% in 1986, and annual growth slowed to 1.6% for the decade. Significant capital outflows resulting from the debt default and economic sanctions saw another policy reform: exchange controls. The SARB adopted a broadly defined money supply (M3) growth target framework. Inflation gradually slowed towards the end of the decade, averaging 12.9% in 1989. The SARB Act of 1944 was replaced by the South African Reserve Bank Act 90 of 1989, which contained the revised primary objective wording of “monetary stability and balanced growth”.

The 1990s ushered in a renewed spirit among South Africans with the advent of democracy. Continuity amid the change was crucial for the smooth transition to democracy and gaining international investor confidence. This led to President Nelson Mandela asking Dr Chris Stals to continue serving as Governor. A critical pillar to this was ensuring that the SARB as an institution was stable, by retaining institutional memory and the requisite skills, while at the same time preparing to transform the organisation.

The SARB debuted its “Big Five” banknote series and introduced a R5 coin, commemorating the inauguration of our first democratically elected President, Nelson Mandela. We have continued the tradition of reflecting on our history and have released a newly designed R5 coin to commemorate our centenary.

The adoption of our Constitution in 1996 saw the SARB bestowed greater responsibility in the rebuilding of our economy. The SARB’s primary objective reads: “to protect the value of the currency in the interest of balanced and sustainable economic growth in the Republic”. Moreover, “in pursuit of its

primary object, [the SARB] must perform its functions independently and without fear, favour or prejudice, but there must be regular consultation between the Bank and the Cabinet member responsible for national financial matters”. Central bank independence emerged as an effective way of ensuring that monetary policy focussed on the key objective of keeping prices stable. To ensure that the SARB could pursue that objective independently and effectively, the late 1990s were marked by further enquiry into monetary policy frameworks.

The early 2000s saw our biggest policy shift, the adoption of the inflation-targeting framework. At the time, South Africa was the 13th country to introduce this policy framework. The Governor at the time, Tito Mboweni, was tasked with guiding the SARB through this uncharted territory. Our inflation target, set by the Minister of Finance in consultation with the SARB, is between 3% and 6%. The adoption of inflation targeting saw a radical change in the way in which the SARB communicated with the public, focussing on transparency through communication, and ensuring that independence and accountability worked hand in hand.

The flexibility of the inflation-targeting framework and its anchoring of public expectations about inflation assisted the country to weather the global financial crisis in 2008 and 2009. With the critical role of financial institutions in that crisis underscored, Governor Gill Marcus helped expand the SARB’s mandate to explicitly include financial stability. In doing so, the Financial Stability Committee was formed and resources

expanded for its work. The early 2010s also saw Cabinet approve the move towards the Twin Peaks model. The Financial Sector Regulation Act was signed into law on 21 August 2017, paving the way for the formation of the Prudential Authority. In April 2018, the Prudential Authority was officially launched, amalgamating the SARB’s Bank Supervision Department, the Insurance division of the Financial Services Board and the Supervisory team of the Cooperative Banks Development Agency.

The SARB was born at a time when the world was exiting the devastating impact of the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. As we approached our centenary year, the world began grappling with the great flu pandemic of our time, the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 cases began to rise, South Africa, like many other countries, mandated forceful containment measures to abate the human cost associated with the virus. While these measures minimised the impact on human lives, they came at a great cost to the economy. South Africa’s real gross domestic product contracted by a substantial 7% in 2020. This was the second-largest annual contraction since 1920, and about five times larger than the contraction following the global financial crisis in 2009. Unemployment recorded its highest level since Statistics South Africa began measuring unemployment. Both headline producer and consumer price inflation recorded historic annual average lows of 2.5% and 3.3% respectively for 2020.

In anticipation of the economic shock that would ensue, the SARB responded quickly




and aggressively with a broad array of actions to limit the economic damage. The SARB's policy responses encompassed monetary policy instruments, interventions in financial market operations, regulatory tools as well as collaborations with other entities to provide relief to the economy and enable the financial sector to help customers in need. In addition, through its participation in global fora, the SARB contributed to the strengthening of the global financial safety net.

South Africa entered the COVID-19 crisis with stable and low inflation rates and moderate

inflation expectations, giving the SARB significant policy space to provide support to households and firms, primarily through the reduction in the repurchase (repo) rate. The repo rate was cut by a cumulative 275 basis points between March and July 2020. At the current rate of 3.5% (from 6.5% on 1 January 2020), the repo rate is at an all-time low, while the prime rate, at 7.0%, is at a 54-year low.

The economic recovery is still on track, but there will be pitfalls along the way. There is no question that our recovery will progress and our sound policy frameworks will continue

to allow flexible approaches while building confidence.

The SARB is a solid institution that all South Africans can be proud of. The women and men who staff this institution have proved their mettle, repeatedly rising to the challenges they are faced with. With this strength, we face the future, optimistic that we will continue to play our vital role in supporting our economy through maintaining price and financial stability. 



As part of its centenary celebrations, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) released a commemorative R5 coin as well as a gold-plated sterling-silver collector's coin.

The coin, which depicts the design of previously issued coins, will circulate alongside the existing coins, and its value will remain the same as the existing R5.

The existing R5 coin in circulation will also remain legal tender and will continue to be issued.

The bank also launched a refreshed currency mobile app to create greater public awareness of South African banknotes and coin, as well as the role of the SARB.

Some of the previously issued coins that appear in the new R5 include:

- the 1923 three pence (tickey) represents the currency issued during the period of the Union of South Africa
- a 1961 R1 gold coin features the springbok, South Africa's national animal
- the 1965 20c coin depicts the king protea, South Africa's national flower
- the 1990 1c coin features two sparrows and represents the third decimal coin series
- the R5 coin minted in 2008, in honour of former President Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday, recognises his vast contribution to South Africa
- a 10c coin from the fourth decimal series depicts the Cape honey bee and represents the future of the currency and the SARB.

The obverse of the coin features the traditional Coat of Arms as well, the name of the country in two official languages – "uMzantsi Afrika" and "Suid-Afrika", as well as the 2021 printing date.



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Inspiring new ways



Rooibos tea: EU protection is good news for South African agriculture

Rooibos is in good company – this is the same kind of protection given to champagne, *prosciutto di Parma*, feta and many other iconic foods. This designation contributes to a product's global standing, and is likely to have benefits – economic and beyond – for the region.

By Enrico Bonadio, Reader in Intellectual Property Law, City, University of London, and Magali Contardi, PhD Candidate, Intellectual Property Law, Universidad de Alicante

The European Union (EU) recently added rooibos (red bush) tea to its register of products with a protected designation of origin. The iconic tea is the first African product to receive such status in the EU, and the 40th from a non-EU country.

Rooibos is in good company – this is the same kind of protection given to champagne, *prosciutto di Parma*, feta and many other iconic foods. This designation contributes to a product's global standing, and is likely to have benefits – economic and beyond – for the region.

Protected status is given to products whose quality is strictly linked to the local area and peculiar manufacturing techniques.

Rooibos is obtained through the infusion of dried leaves or stems of *Aspalathus linearis*. The plant grows in Cederberg, a mountain region with a fertile soil north of Cape Town, and in harsh microclimate conditions with hot dry summers and wet winters. Once harvested, the bushy plant is grown following a specific process to produce a tea that is fruity, woody, spicy in taste and naturally caffeine-free.

Café de Colombia was the first-ever non-EU product protected under this scheme in 2007, followed in 2011 by others such as the Indian tea Darjeeling and Chinese green tea Longjing cha.

Part of the EU legal framework for protecting regional foods is that they have acquired a strong reputation among consumers. Favourable climates and

centuries-old manufacturing techniques rooted in their designated areas have contributed to this renown.

These protected designations identify “products with a story”. Rooibos tea is now one of them. Its new EU status will “signal its unique quality to consumers, not only in Europe but all over the world”, Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Ivan Meyer, said.

Authenticity matters

Such legal protection matters, as attempts to misappropriate the rooibos brand have occurred in the past. In 2013, a French company tried to register the trademark “rooibos” for skincare products in France (one of the health benefits of this tea is its rich antioxidant content that may improve skin health).

The new EU designation is likely to offer rooibos producers and farmers a valuable market advantage, because only infusions produced in the local area north of Cape Town and according to specific rules can be labelled “rooibos”.

The new EU designation is likely to offer rooibos producers and farmers a valuable market advantage, because only infusions produced in the local area north of Cape Town and according to specific rules can be labelled “rooibos”. This ensures that tea produced in other areas cannot be sold in the EU – one of the biggest markets in the world – under the name rooibos/red bush. Evocative uses of such designations by third parties (for example, “Rooibos kind”, “Red Bush type”, “Rooibos style” or “Red Bush imitation”) are also prohibited.

This brand monopoly in the EU will arguably enhance the economic development of the Western Cape and the whole of South Africa. The region already produces an average of 14 000 tonnes of rooibos per year, and in 2019-20 expanding global demand resulted in an increase to about 20 000 tonnes.

The South African Rooibos Council estimated that the total rooibos sales in 2020 equalled six billion cups of tea – close to one cup per human on earth. It also reported that half the production is consumed locally, whereas the other half is exported to more

than 60 countries. In 2019, the biggest export markets were Germany (28%), Japan (22%), the Netherlands (9%) and the United Kingdom (8%).

The global herbal tea market is growing at 7% per year. With rooibos' new EU status, not only is the global demand for this product expected to increase; related sectors, such as agritourism, are also likely to benefit. In 2021, an EU report revealed that European food products listed on the EU register of all protected geographical names generated in 2017 an estimated sales value of €77 billion (£66 billion).

As the example of Darjeeling tea shows, premium pricing and more robust revenues often follow geographical name protection as a result of consumers' recognition of the product's quality. This is exactly what farmers and the entity that manages the rooibos brand (the South African Rooibos Council) now expect.

Beyond economics

The rooibos EU designation could also contribute to further promoting South African

gastronomic heritage and genetic resources. As Mogale Sebopetsa, head of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, put it, “in this way, we safeguard our heritage for posterity”.

The use of the dried leaves and stems of rooibos as a tea was first reported in 1772, although Khoisan indigenous people from western South Africa have been consuming the drink made with rooibos for centuries. The name itself derives from the Afrikaans language, meaning “red bush” and referring to the plant's red-brown leaves.

Employment could be boosted, too. As confirmed in the Rooibos Council report, the rooibos industry is already the biggest employer of people from the rural provinces of South Africa, with direct income and employment given to more than 8 000 farm labourers, and many others in the supply chain (processing, packaging and retailing). With more production and international sales in sight, this trend will probably increase. [U](#)

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

This brand monopoly in the EU will arguably enhance the economic development of the Western Cape and the whole of South Africa. The region already produces an average of 14 000 tonnes of rooibos per year, and in 2019-20 expanding global demand resulted in an increase to about 20 000 tonnes.





A portal designed especially for informal businesses could be a game-changer

African governments must explore how state-backed platforms can be used to support the informal sector. They can be used to help informal businesses access bigger markets and thereby increase their incomes.

By Professor Justine Olawande Daramola
Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Africa has the highest proportion of informal sector workers anywhere in the world. They account for more than 85% of the continent's workers. This compares with 68.2% in Asia and the Pacific, 68.6% in the Arab States, 40.0% in the Americas and 25.1% in Europe and Central Asia.

It is easier to work in the informal sector because no academic certificate or formal training is required. The most important thing is the readiness and ability to work.

The informal sector consists of all businesses that don't fall under government

regulation. These include all forms of petty trading, artisan work, and sales and supply of goods. They also include diverse services such as hairdressing, barbers, mechanics, painters, handyman, artisans, domestic services and other work endeavours that people engage in for money. This definition excludes people who are involved in crime.

But these businesses face numerous challenges, which hinder their growth. Based on research in South Africa, these include: lack of access to finance; poor access to skills training and technology; weak informal business associations and their lack of "voice"; problems in the legal and regulatory

environment and issues of intergovernmental coordination; lack of organisation; poor quality of service; and lack of service standards. They also lack business documentation, making it difficult for governments to tax them.

The same challenges are associated with the informal sector of most African countries.

There have been a number of information, communications and technology (ICT)-based initiatives in South Africa targeting small, micro and medium-sized enterprises.

But they have all bypassed the informal sector.

The Cape Peninsula University of Technology sought to close this gap by initiating a research

project on Technology Support for the Informal Sector of South Africa. The goal was to tackle some of the challenges of the informal sector through ICT in a way that was beneficial to all stakeholders.

The project aims to provide an online platform (portal) that uses Artificial Intelligence and cloud technology to support business transactions in the informal sector. So far, the first version of the platform (called *Uvuyo*) has been created. It will enable informal business owners to register on the portal for free, and position their businesses to be seen by customers.

We will go further in the second phase of the project to ensure that interactions between customers and service providers on the portal can be done in local South African languages using text or voice messages.

Online platforms that are specifically designed to support local people in the informal sector of Africa in this way are not yet common.

In a paper published in 2018, I set out how purpose-built portals could help informal businesses meet some of their basic needs. I proposed the creation of an online platform that could be accessed via mobile phone, web or voice input. I argued that the platform would meet some well-known challenges such as poor service quality and a lack of visibility. And that government agencies could benefit from data generated from the portal to make strategic plans on how to develop the informal sector better.

Many new modern businesses are based on the idea of a sharing economy where a technology platform facilitates on-demand services between customers in need of services and providers of these services. Many international companies that are doing well, such as Uber, Bolt and Taskrabbit.com, use this approach.

We believe the same idea can be used to promote informal sector services.

What's in place, and what's missing?

Africa already has a reasonable foundation for the extensive use of technology. Take the widespread use of mobile phones. A recent report showed that 91% of adults in South Africa own a mobile phone, 51% of adults have a smartphone and 40% have a basic phone.

Ghana, Senegal, Nigeria, Kenya and Tanzania also have relatively high-mobile penetration with over 30% of the adult population having a smartphone.

This means that an informal service provider can engage in business transactions with customers over the phone via SMS or social media.

Today, a lot of people post information about their business on social media to gain the attention of customers. Smartphones enable service providers to link instantly with customers.

The continent has a number of businesses that operate this way. Notable examples include Kenya's *lynk.co.ke*; Nigeria's *kobo360.com*, *anyservice.ng* and *fixam.com.ng*; and South Africa's *Sweepsouth.com*, *domestly.com* and *kandua.com*.

They make money by matching customers with service providers. They vet credentials of service providers, receive payments on their behalf and provide a guarantee for the risks of transactions. They also get rewarded by receiving a percentage of the service cost paid by the customer.

These online platforms – business models that are part of the so-called sharing economy – are becoming more popular in Africa, particularly among the younger generation.

But governments in Africa are yet to take advantage of this trend to help the informal sector and micro businesses. Thus far, virtually all the well-known platforms based on the sharing economy are run by private enterprises.

African governments must explore how state-backed platforms can be used to support the informal sector. They can be used to help informal businesses access bigger markets and thereby increase their incomes.


Next steps

Governments will have to put in a lot of money and resources to make it work, and deal with the obvious challenges faced by the informal sector and informal sector workers.

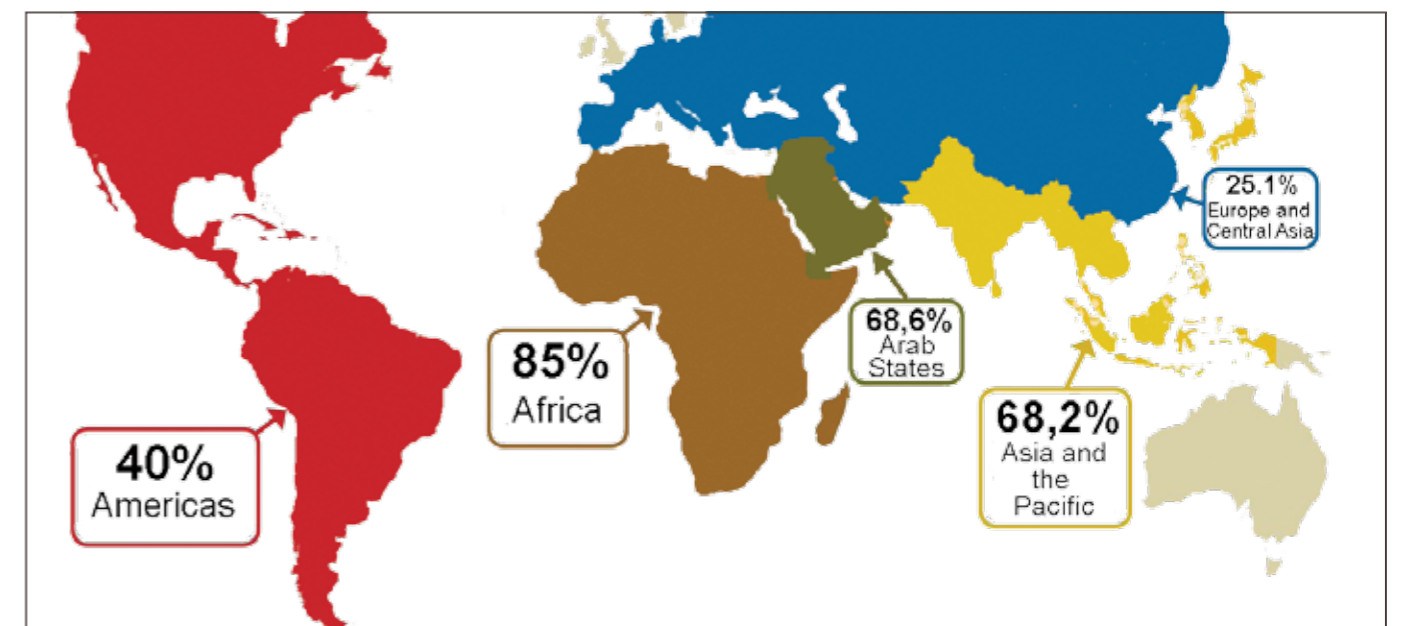
For example, money will need to be spent on training users of the online platforms since most people in the informal sector have low levels of education. A possible solution might be to make information available in languages that sections of the informal sector community speak and read. Not-for-profit organisations can help with recruitment and training of informal sector workers, and their registration on the platform.

Other interventions should include free Internet, free data or cheap data for micro businesses and informal operators who cannot afford the cost of data to use the Internet.

The question then is who pays the data cost.

This is where the participation of governments, multinational companies and telecom companies all across Africa will be required. With various governments taking the lead, these entities can collaboratively support the informal sector to ensure that technology is used for the good of the majority of Africans who work in the informal sector. 

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The SDGs and South Africa's Fourth Industrial Revolution Commission recommendations

The Fourth Industrial Revolution highlights the continued relevance of technology as a catalyst in the Sustainable Development Goals, with essentially all of them requiring technological inputs, as well as renewed thinking around sustainability.

By Dr Bhaso Ndzendze, Head of the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Johannesburg (UJ); and Professor Tshilidzi Marwala, Vice-Chancellor and Principal of UJ, Deputy Chairperson of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution and member of the Namibia Fourth Industrial Revolution Task Force

We live in technologically defined times, which are set to become increasingly so as we enter the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The scope of inequality between industrialised and industrialising worlds has long been recognised by the international community, with the United Nations at the forefront in the new millennium. Following on the heels of the Millennium Development Goals (2000 – 2015), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a total of 17 socio-economic aspirations to be realised

by the year 2030. In sum, they represent a “catchup” approach to development, both as a project and more explicitly in SDG 10 (reduced inequalities).

They recognise that technological access works as a key determinant of the economic performance for countries. This is expressly the case in SDGs 8, 9 and 10 as they note that sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs. Furthermore, they observe that investments in infrastructure are crucial to achieving sustainable development. Additionally, they assert that to reduce inequalities, policies should be universal in

principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised populations, respectively. They also entail a recognition of the need to reduce internal inequalities along the lines of gender (SDG 5).

In this regard, the 4IR is a complicating factor, as it presents both challenges, with inequality within countries and between countries standing to be widened, reproduced and perpetuated. But, just as well, it represents opportunity, provided the less developed and still industrialising countries bolster their absorptive capacity. Moreover, the 4IR highlights the continued relevance of technology as a catalyst in the SDGs, with

essentially all of them requiring technological inputs, as well as renewed thinking around sustainability (particularly affordable and clean energy per SDG 7), given the high energy demand represented by the growth of automation, blockchain technologies and data storage. Already, some 25% of global energy consumption stems from cooling off computers in data centres.

It was against the backdrop of the convergence of these technological changes and developmental imperatives that the South African Government set up the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (PC4IR) in 2018, beginning operations in 2019. The PC4IR presented its report at the beginning of August 2020 to President Cyril Ramaphosa, following two years of consultative sessions, stakeholder engagement, comparative research on the 4IR strategies and trajectories of other countries as well as punctilious analysis of the various aspects of the South African and global economies. From this, the PC4IR proposed eight core recommendations:

1. Invest in Human Capital
2. Establish an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Institute
3. Establish a Platform for Advanced Manufacturing and New Materials
4. Secure and Avail Data to Enable Innovation
5. Incentivise Future Industries, Platforms and Applications of 4IR Technologies
6. Build 4IR Infrastructure
7. Review and Amend (or Create) Policy and Legislation
8. Establish a 4IR Strategy Implementation Coordination Council in The Presidency.

A number of these recommendations have readily apparent moorings with the SDGs. The prioritisation of human capital development is pertinent to the SDGs' focus on the dissemination of quality education as per SDG



The South African Government set up the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (PC4IR) in 2018.

4. The meaning of “quality” takes on renewed relevance given the kinds of skills required of the worker, economic participant and citizen of the future. This requires a focus on computational thinking. With South Africa's basic education budget representing the most significant portion of its annual national expenditure and being higher than the global average of 5% of gross domestic product (GDP), the country (at above 6%) has not attained as much as it should from this massive investment. In 2014, the World Economic Forum's competitiveness report ranked the country last out of 148 countries for the quality of its Mathematics and Science education. The worst-affected schools in this regard are schools in rural settings.


The establishment of an AI Institute, on the other hand, similarly has congruence with SDG 4 as it indicates the prioritisation of the widespread knowledge of AI. Moreover, in its noting that “the AI institute will be responsible for the country's computer vision and deal with arising ethical issues but will not replace the role of the universities in carrying out basic research on these issues”, the PC4IR advocates for national and international partnerships. The report therefore recognises the importance of partnerships in the same

vein as SDG 17 (partnerships to achieve the goals).

On 5 August 2020, government, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and institutions of higher education gathered for the first South African AI Dialogue, with a view towards fostering an inclusive and prosperous AI ecosystem in the country.

On the other hand, in the advocacy for expertise in advanced manufacturing and new materials, the PC4IR is congruent with SDG 9, as it will fulfil the goal of ensuring decent work and economic growth, while also giving impetus to SDG 9 as it requires investments in industry, innovation and infrastructure to offset the trend of de-industrialisation, which saw the country's manufacturing base, for example, decline from 21% of its GDP in 1995 to 13.53% in 2019. Similarly, the fourth, fifth and sixth recommendations (securing and releasing data to enable innovation, prioritising future industries and investing in 4IR infrastructure) are in keeping with SDG 9 as they will result in a reinvigorated industry and innovation while also integrating enabling smart cities and smart villages that will mean more efficient service delivery, increased tourism and new forms of economic participation by those currently on the margins of the formal economy. They also stand to promote access to decent work and economic growth (SDG 8).

The seventh recommendation of the PC4IR, the promulgation of legislation, is in keeping with SDG 16 as it recognises the enabling and regulatory role that institutions should play in the creation of a conducive and inclusive environment. Moreover, the legislation stands to bring predictability in times of disruptive innovation.

Finally, the creation of the Coordination Council with access to the head of state allows for the forging and management of partnerships, with national and international networks and initiatives to be channelled in the most efficient and impactful directions. 





Accelerating digital transformation in challenging times with national, regional and international initiatives

The COVID-19 crisis must be viewed as an opportunity to leapfrog Africa to new heights, exploiting new opportunities brought about by the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

By Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams

Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies

This year, we deemed it proper that we celebrate Africa Day together as Southern African Development Community (SADC) ministries responsible for information and communications technologies (ICTs) under the theme: *Accelerating Digital Transformation in Challenging Times, Throughout the Year with National, Regional and International Initiatives*.

We celebrated Africa Day under the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic, a challenge which has put human genius to test in a manner that knows no parallel in recent history. As we raise our banners in memory of those we lost as a result of COVID-19, we rededicate ourselves as a region to work together in confronting the pandemic.

In spite of our limited resources, we have coped well so far. The economic impact has been severe, and it has knocked many

countries off-course from the promising growth trajectories that were prevalent on much of our continent before the crisis. On the other hand, the COVID-19 crisis must be viewed as an opportunity to leapfrog Africa to new heights, exploiting new opportunities brought about by the advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This gives new impetus to our global priority of connecting the unconnected, and demonstrates the importance of access to broadband.

There has been a significant increase in the demand for ICTs and the use of the Internet. Unfortunately, this has been accompanied by rising inequality, whereby lack of access to the Internet leaves our disadvantaged communities more vulnerable. Access to broadband will enable our peoples to access health services, education and governmental services online when necessary, and thus reduce the need for public gatherings. It will

also enable greater access to the rapidly growing e-commerce sector.

It is in this context that our commemoration of Africa Day reflected on our responsibility to accelerate digital transformation in challenging times – the theme of the World Telecommunications and Information Society Day this year.

We already have a comprehensive programme as SADC countries, which is updated regularly to respond to emerging issues. Three issues offer great potential for the development of our region.

Firstly, the 21st-century financing models for sustainable broadband development. The issue of financing broadband roll-out has long been a challenge for many developing countries around the world. We all agree on the priority of rolling out broadband, the benefits it brings to society and to our economies, and the importance of extending participation in the

digital economy. The recurring challenge that we continue to face is that of funding.

The United Nations Broadband Commission was established in 2010, with the mission “to bridge the digital divide and bring the goal of universal connectivity to the forefront of policy discussions”. It brings together a group of influential leaders from government, business, and experts from international organisations, academia and development organisations. It has produced some valuable reports addressing a range of important subjects. Of particular relevance is the work that is being finalised on *Innovative Financing Models for Sustainable Broadband Development*.

As South Africa, we are interested in this work as it may further assist us in implementing the SA Connect programme, which is our national broadband roll-out strategy. SA Connect seeks to ensure universal service and access to reliable, affordable and secure broadband services to all South Africans, prioritising rural and underserved areas. A key goal of the programme is to enable schools, health facilities and government offices to access connectivity through high-speed Internet access. Through this programme, over 44 000 government facilities will be provided with high-speed broadband connectivity. Government will be collaborating with the private sector, including greater participation of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), in rolling out broadband in an efficient, cost-effective and sustainable manner.

SA Connect seeks to pool public-sector demand for broadband, in order to stimulate investment into broadband infrastructure. In the process, cross-border connectivity will also be addressed by upgrading infrastructure and increasing network capacity to improve regional integration.

The benefits of broadband to economic growth have been widely recognised by international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The recent research from the Broadband Commission recognises that broadband investment is not just about the traffic that goes on the network. Rather, broadband investment creates an ecosystem of economic activity.

The second issue concerns the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This is a critical and timely intervention for the development of the African continent. It embodies the ideal of greater integration and of a united Africa. Currently, 80% to 90% of Africa’s trade is directed to the rest of the world, which is higher than any other region. Consequently, we have very low levels of

intra-regional trade. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of reducing the external economic dependencies of the continent. Currently, we carry excessive risk from the fortunes or attitudes of the major economic powers and regions, which cannot be good in times of crisis.

Of greater importance in the longer term is that, by easing the ability to trade within the continent, we will provide a platform for African businesses to flourish and benefit from economies of scale within the region, thus increasing regional economic activity. This could create a virtual dynamic effect, creating further opportunities for our businesses to benefit from a thriving regional economy. African companies need other African markets to thrive and develop capabilities to build more value-added products. However, there is much work to do to fully benefit from the AfCFTA. We need to strengthen the infrastructure that links our economies, businesses and people together. This must include not only the transport infrastructure, but also the ICT sector. ICTs will be critical in linking business and people together, providing the first step in strengthening regional integration.

It is therefore important to continue to prioritise and strengthen our programmes to build our regional and national ICT infrastructure and the digital economy. The implementation of the African Digital Transformation Strategy will no doubt be critical to support regional integration. In particular, we must look to create an enabling environment, and develop appropriate policies and regulations for the sector that will support the development of our digital infrastructure, digital skills and capacity-building, entrepreneurship and innovation. We must also address the cross-cutting issues (digital content and applications, digital ID, emerging technologies, cyber security, and personal data protection, research and development) to ensure we transform our digital future.

Equally important, the draft African e-commerce strategy will provide the basis for dramatically improving e-commerce in the region. This could be critical to ensure African countries benefit from this rapidly growing sector, both in terms of participating meaningfully in the logistics supply chain, and by providing platforms for SMMEs and manufacturers to benefit from intra-regional trade and international exports through e-commerce. This will include implementing measures to modernise our customs services in line with the World Customs Organisation, and capacitating our postal services through the Universal Postal Union.

In addition, it is critical we also look at the ICT sector from the perspective of local economic development. How can we develop and nurture local production of ICTs, including both hardware and software, as well as in the creative industries?

It is critical to our future as Africa, to find ways to unlock the potential of local innovation. We must create an environment that will allow our innovative SMMEs and entrepreneurs to flourish and to access regional and global opportunities. This will contribute to local economic development, with local innovation often creating solutions that are relevant for our local circumstances and challenges. Often, such solutions can resonate globally too. Local innovation and SMME development can lead to an increase in our local intellectual property, higher value employment creation, and increased local and regional investment and production, as well as exports.

Encouragingly, at the ITU Digital World Exhibition and Forum last year, an impressive number of SMMEs from SADC were recognised for their innovative ideas at a global level. Appy Saude of Angola won the award for e-health. Companies from Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia were shortlisted in all the remaining categories, which is an impressive showing from our region. Clearly, we have great potential. However, more needs to be done to create an environment that is conducive, that will enable these creative and mostly young entrepreneurs to convert their ideas into a successful business.

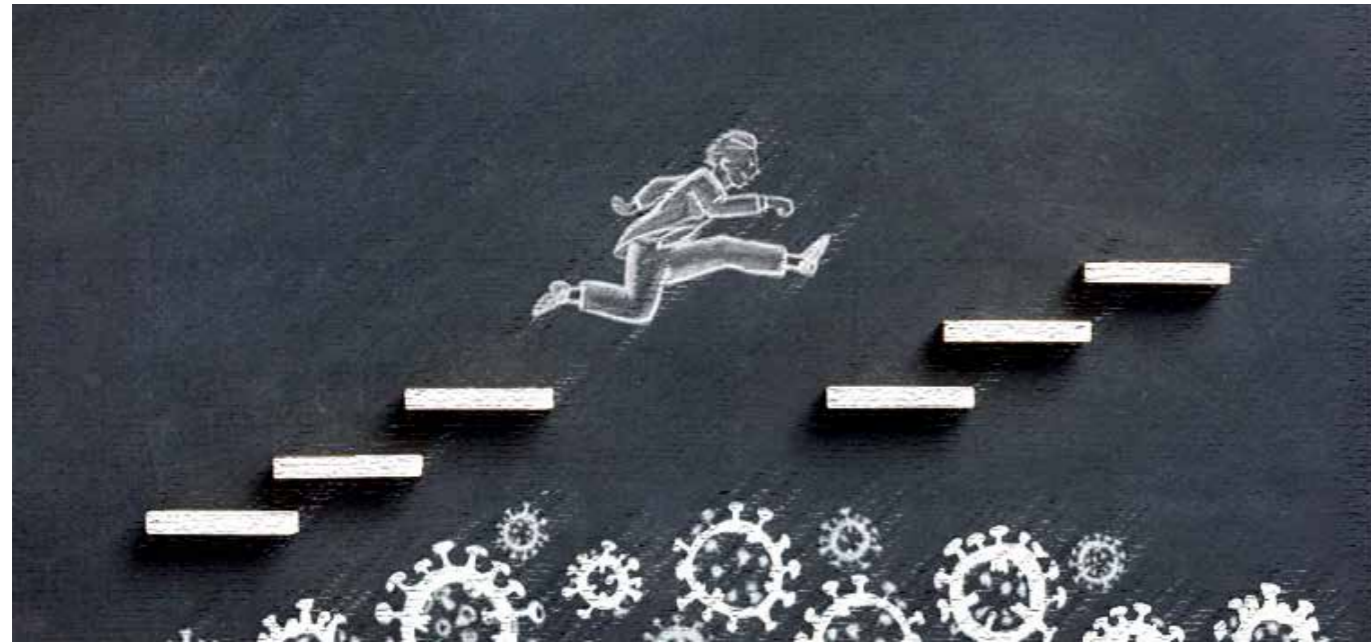
In each of the preceding three years, young South Africa entrepreneurs have won awards in the ITU Digital World. In 2018, we dominated the prizes, winning the overall SMME global award, and three of the four category prizes. That year, we took approximately 50 SMMEs to the event, as we were the host.

We need to harness the energy and creativity of our young aspiring entrepreneurs in the region. We must find ways to help them to develop their business plans and skills, and to create a supportive ecosystem that will allow them to develop. They need access to finance and markets. Their success will encourage others, and will unleash the creative potential of our youth to solve the developmental challenges we face. Our youthful population is a significant demographic asset. However, they need opportunities to shine.

Their success will assist in the upliftment of our people and our economies. 🇺🇦



Annually, from roughly June to December, Hermanus is known as a mecca for whale watching, with the southern right whales choosing the area as their home and "playground". The estimated population of southern right whales in Hermanus is 12 000.



COVID-19 has shown that following the same road will lead the world over a precipice

It is in every country's self-interest to cooperate to contain global threats. Similarly, it is in each of our own self-interest to contribute to the creation of more cohesive and stable societies.

By Ian Goldin
Professor of Globalisation and Development
Director of the Oxford Martin Programmes on Technological and Economic Change and Future of Development, University of Oxford

Despite the tragic deaths, suffering and sadness that it has caused, the pandemic could go down in history as the event that rescued humanity. It has created a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reset our lives and societies onto a sustainable path. Global surveys and protests have demonstrated the appetite for fresh thinking and a desire not to return to the pre-pandemic world.

The devastating consequences of COVID-19 have led to a deepening recognition that business as usual is highly destabilising and the source of our darkest fears. It has shattered the mental mirrors that have prevented us from breaking from the past and embracing new horizons.

In *Rescue: From Global Crisis to a Better World*, I show how the Coronavirus rupture has demonstrated that citizens are prepared to

change their behaviour when required to do so. And that governments are able to break out of their economic straitjackets.

My work on globalisation and development has led me to believe that while flows across national borders – trade, people, finance, medicines, and most importantly ideas – are a very good thing, they also can lead to growing risk and inequality unless properly managed. What I think of as the Butterfly Defect of globalisation has created a new form of systemic risk. It was the source of the global spread of the 2008 financial crisis, is evident in escalating climate change and inequality and has now overwhelmed us with the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have been predicting that a global pandemic was likely and would inevitably lead to an economic meltdown. The only question is why more effort hasn't been put into managing this underbelly of globalisation

and the reluctance to depart from the business as usual. My book shows why we urgently need to.

Old excuses for inaction are no longer credible. The task now is to turn the reactive response to the health and economic emergencies into a proactive set of policies and actions to create an inclusive and sustainable world of shared prosperity. Before the pandemic, this may have seemed unattainable, even idealistic. Changes that would have taken a decade or more to emerge have taken place almost overnight.

Into sharp relief

Among the positive changes have been a deeper recognition of the importance of nature, the role of essential workers, the contributions of science and experts and having supportive family, friends and colleagues.

But the pandemic has also exacerbated health and economic inequalities within

countries and between them, devastating the lives and livelihoods of many and greatly increasing isolation and mental illness. A world that functions online is more atomised and may lead to a hardening of social and political silos. Unless the negative consequences of the pandemic are urgently addressed, they will cast a long, dark shadow.

The idea that there is no such thing as society, only selfish individuals, can now be relegated to the dustbin of history. We have witnessed an outpouring of solidarity, not least of the young for the old and of essential workers for others. The young sacrificed their social lives, education and jobs and took on enormous debts to help the elderly get through COVID-19. Essential workers placed themselves at daily risk to staff our care homes and hospitals and ensure that food was delivered, rubbish collected and that lights stayed on. Many sacrificed their own health for others.

The intolerable costs of austerity and a culture that celebrated individualism and undermined the State have been starkly revealed.

The world wars forever changed global politics and economics; the economist John Maynard Keynes argued that it was necessary to "snatch from the exigencies of war positive social improvements".

The pandemic too will change everything, from personal priorities to global power. It marks the end of the neoliberal era of individualism and its primacy of markets and prices, and heralds a swing of the political pendulum back to state intervention.

As Nobel Laureate economist Angus Deaton has argued, "we now face a set of challenges which we cannot duck", which threaten the fabric of society, providing a "once-in-a-generation opportunity to tackle the disadvantages faced by many that this pandemic has so devastatingly exposed".

More, not less, global cooperation

Globalisation has caused universal health and economic emergencies. And yet, to address it, we need more globalisation, not less. We cannot stop a global pandemic without more global politics.

Nor can we stop climate change or any of the other great threats by political deglobalisation.

Economic deglobalisation would condemn to continuing poverty the billions of people in the world who are yet to benefit from the jobs, ideas and opportunities that globalisation brings. It would mean that citizens of poor countries would not have access to the international vaccines, solar power panels,

investment, exports, tourism and ideas that are urgently needed to rebuild countries and create a future of shared prosperity.

If isolating ourselves and stopping globalisation could insulate us from risk, it may be a price worth paying. But far from reducing risk, it will only increase it. What we need is better managed and more regulated and coordinated global flows, so the benefits of connectivity can be shared and the risks stopped.

The greatest threat to our lives has historically come from internal or external conflicts. Now, the threat comes from forces that are beyond the control of any one country and which requires international cooperation, rather than assertions of supremacy. It is in every country's self-interest to cooperate to contain global threats. Similarly, it is in each of our own self-interest to contribute to the creation of more cohesive and stable societies.

COVID-19 has tested us. By passing the test, we will have proved we can also conquer climate and other threats.

How to avoid the precipice

Nothing should be taken for granted. The virus is not only changing our possibilities and actions, but also the way we think, our dreams and our imaginations. Every crisis creates an opportunity, and it behoves us to explore the silver linings. By highlighting the significance of systemic risks, the pandemic has raised

awareness of other threats, including those posed by future pandemics and climate change, and has given us the means to rescue our lives and the future.

COVID-19 has caused the biggest development setback of our lifetimes, reversing 70 years of progress. Low- and middle-income countries suffered negative growth for the first time since the 1950s

Many more people will have died of starvation and poverty-related causes than from the direct health impact of COVID-19.

The pandemic has resulted in as many as an additional 150 million people falling into extreme poverty, and acute hunger doubling from 130 million people in 2019 to 260 million in 2020. In many poor countries, education and health systems have collapsed and government safety nets are threadbare, where they exist at all.

It is business as usual, which allowed the world to be overwhelmed by COVID-19. The pandemic has revealed and exacerbated inequalities within countries and between them.

It forcefully demonstrates why bouncing back or forward along the same road we are on is leading us over a precipice. Without systemic change, we are all condemned to a more unequal and unstable future. COVID-19 has generated the potential to create a fairer and more inclusive world. [U](#)

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**Progress made but
world set to miss
environment-related**

Sustainable Development Goals – UN report

The report found that some environmental areas – such as biodiversity loss and climate change – have continued to deteriorate.

By the United Nations Environment Programme

Despite progress in key environmental areas such as clean water, sanitation, clean energy, forest management and waste, countries are still living unsustainably and are on course to miss the environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, according to the *Measuring Progress: Environment and the SDGs* report issued by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to coincide with the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2021.

The report found that some environmental areas – such as biodiversity loss and climate change – had continued to deteriorate.

“We have still not embraced the rate of change necessary to come in line with the

2030 Agenda,” said Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the CBD. “The report makes it clear that we are falling short, and, in some cases, actually receding. The world cannot sustain our rate of use and abuse forever, and it is imperative that we accept the changes in lifestyles and livelihoods necessary to achieve the 2030 goals.”

The 2030 Agenda emanates from the 2015 UN Resolution that sets clear targets for a sustainable future, with internationally agreed goals in 17 areas such as poverty, hunger, health, climate action, clean energy and responsible consumption, among others. The *Measuring Progress* report calls for improved data and indicators to understand how to ensure development progresses within planetary boundaries.

The report reviews data and information about the environmental aspects of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

and their progress around the world. The publication is based on global and regional performances as assessed through the SDG indicators that have a direct relation with environmental issues.

The report flagged an increase of available data, but with the newly available data, an increase in downward trends are among more indicators when compared with a previous progress report in 2019. Environmental data published in the first *Measuring Progress* report showed that out of the 32% of indicators with data (30 indicators), 74% (22 indicators) followed a positive trend, and 26% (eight indicators) indicated little change or a negative trend. In the 2021 report, out of the 42% of indicators with data (39 indicators), 67% (26 indicators) followed a positive trend and 33% (13 indicators) showed little change or a negative trend.

The interlinked nature of the SDGs means that achieving one goal or target may contribute to achieving other goals or targets, or the pursuit of one objective may conflict with the achievement of another. The report uses an analytical approach, driven by data, to test the relationship between SDG indicators. The analysis revealed examples where correlations were significant and were consistent with intuition or published evidence. For example, the report found that Domestic Material Consumption related to biomass extraction was negatively correlated with species at risk of extinction.

On the other hand, with regard to biodiversity loss, the increasing extent of protected areas and other protective measures have not led to reductions in the number of species under threat of extinction. Without exception, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets – a 10-year global strategy designed to conserve biodiversity by 2020 – have been missed, according to the Fifth Global Biodiversity Outlook.

The report identified a gap in the diversity and use of environmental data and statistics to inform government policy and decision-making, particularly big environmental data produced by remote sensing, in situ sensors and Artificial Intelligence technologies, as well as data collated through environmental-economic accounting activities. Many existing data products, statistics and indicators seem to be under-utilised, and governments have failed to place an emphasis on that data when crafting policy.

“Our comprehension of the environmental dimension of the SDGs is lagging,” said Jian Liu, Director of the Science Division at UNEP. “Our limited capacities to collect, disseminate and effectively use environmental data have hindered our holistic understanding of the environment and the effect on it of socio-economic factors – we hope this report



“The report makes it clear that we are falling short, and, in some cases, actually receding. The world cannot sustain our rate of use and abuse forever, and it is imperative that we accept the changes in lifestyles and livelihoods necessary to achieve the 2030 goals.”

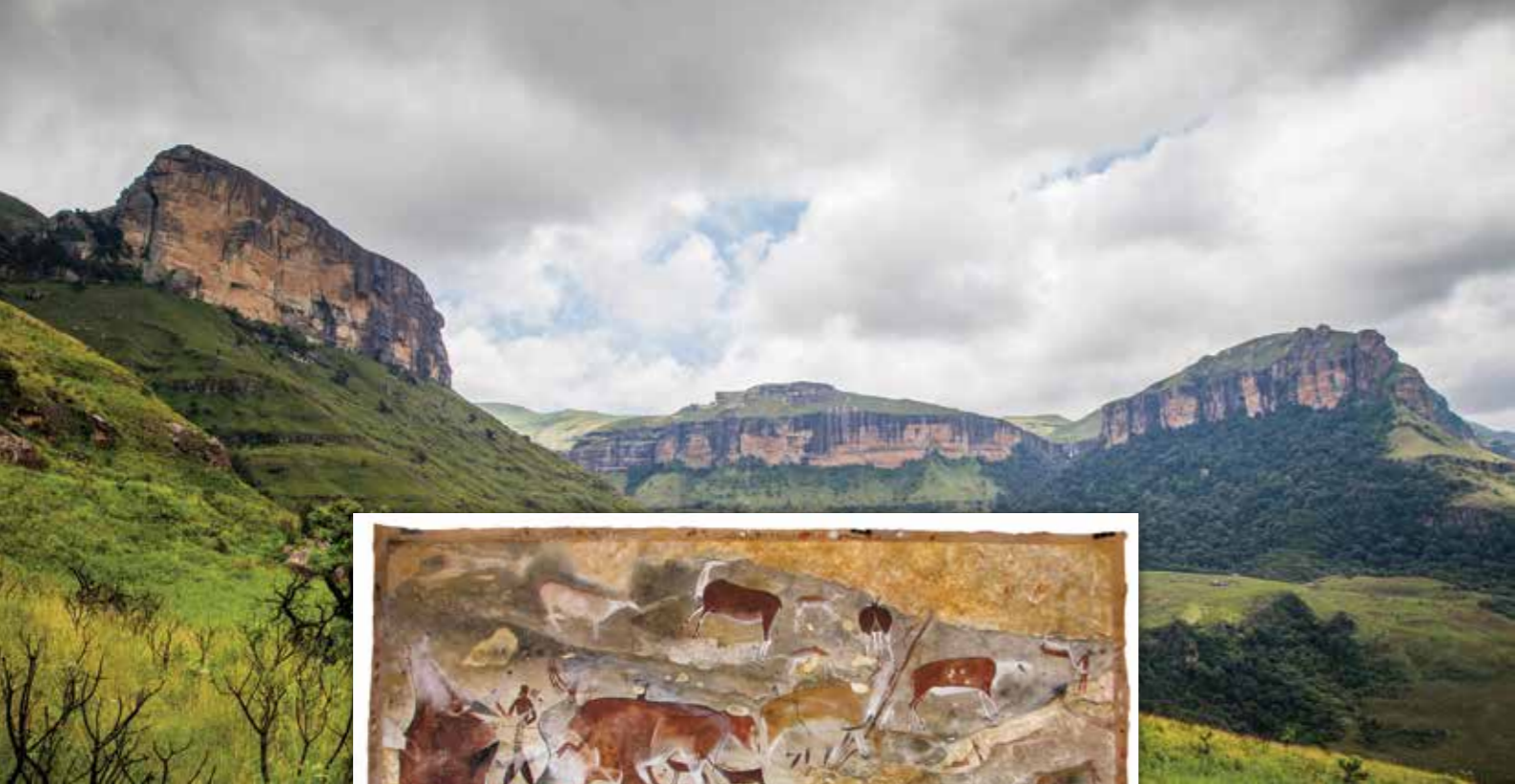
will support countries as they strengthen action on the environmental dimensions with a view to meeting the 2030 Agenda.”

Strengthening environmental data capacities is needed if policymakers are to improve their understanding of the priority actions required to “bend the curve” of continuing environmental deterioration and advance the chances of meeting the environmental SDGs. Capacity-building is required in three areas: for collection of data using international-standard methodologies to ensure data comparability; for data management to ensure open access to data; and for data analysis where data are used to better understand what happened, why it happened, what may happen next and how to respond, according to the report.

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

Opened for signature in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and entering into force in December 1993, the CBD is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 parties, the CBD has near universal participation among countries. [u](#)





An ancient San rock art mural in South Africa reveals new meaning

We know from the ethnography that the San believe in a universe with spiritual realms above and below the level on which people live. Decades of research have shown that the rock art is deeply religious and situated conceptually in the same multilevel universe.

By David M Witelson, PhD Candidate, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits); David Lewis-Williams, Emeritus Professor, Wits; David Pearce, Associate Professor, Wits; and Sam Challis, Senior Research Scientist, Wits

The indigenous San communities of southern Africa were originally hunting and gathering peoples. One of the greatest testaments to San history is the rock art found throughout the subcontinent.

The oldest rock art in southern Africa is around 30 000 years old and is found on painted stone slabs from the Apollo 11 rock shelter in Namibia. Where our study took place – the Maloti-Drakensberg mountain massif of South Africa and Lesotho – rock paintings were made from about 3 000 years ago right into the 1800s.

For decades, people thought that one guess about the art's meaning was as

good as another. However, this ignored the San themselves.

We can deepen our understanding if we try to view rock art in terms of San shamanistic beliefs and experiences. Advances in ethnography (literature produced by anthropologists who work with San people) help convey San worldview to rock art researchers.

By locating new sites – thousands are still to be found – and revisiting known ones in the light of developing insights, we can go much further than guessing.

New insights from old images

We re-investigated such a site in the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg mountains. It was first described in the 1950s and is recorded as RSA CHI1. At first glance,

the ceiling panel seems a confusing collection of paintings of antelopes and human figures, some of which are painted on top of others, in shades of earthy reds, yellow ochres and white.

In 2009 and working under challenging circumstances, South African artist and author Stephen Townley Bassett produced a documentary copy of the ceiling panel. It shows the art's beauty and mystery.

San rock art ranks among the best in the world if we consider its beauty, its intricacy and the rich sources of explanation on which we can draw.

When we looked at his copy, we found that the significance of some images on the site's ceiling panel had been missed by other researchers. This allowed us to examine the meaning of these images more closely.

Importantly, our realisation was not a technological or methodological advance. Instead, it was a conceptual development that occurred by turning our attention to a well-known site and viewing it again in the light of everything we have learned so far about San rock art.

Our re-investigation allowed us to arrive at a new understanding of specific elements of San belief.

Deeply religious art

Two sources of San ethnography are especially important in rock art research and our understanding of the ceiling panel. In the 1870s, the German linguist, Wilhelm Bleek, and his co-worker and sister-in-law, Lucy Lloyd, interviewed a series of |Xam San people, some of whom had been brought from the Northern Cape to Cape Town as convicts.

Remarkably, Bleek and Lloyd recorded over 12 000 pages of texts in the |Xam language, which is no longer spoken, and transliterated most of it line-by-line into English. Much of this material remains relevant to our understanding of the art.

More recently, in the 20th century, a number of anthropologists worked with San groups in Namibia and Botswana with a focus on a range of topics from hunting and gathering to folklore and childcare. The Kalahari ethnography complements the Bleek and Lloyd archive.

We know from the ethnography that the San believe in a universe with spiritual realms above and below the level on which people live. Decades of research have shown that the rock art is deeply religious and situated conceptually in the same multilevel universe.

Re-reading the ceiling

In San rock art, the eland is a connecting element. It is the most commonly depicted antelope in the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg paintings. It features in several San rituals and was believed to be the creature with the most !gi: – the |Xam word for the invisible essence that lies at the heart of San belief and ritual.

At RSA CHI1, there are many depictions of eland, but we focussed on the one with its head sharply raised.

Depictions of this posture, though not common, recur in other sites. The eland's raised head suggests that it is smelling something, most probably rain. Both smell and rain are supernaturally powerful in San thought.

The unique feature in this paintings is, however, the way in which a line runs up from an area of rough rock, breaking at the eland's front legs, and then on to another area of rough rock. The painter, or painters, must have depicted the eland first and then added the line to develop the significance of its raised head. We argue that both the raised head and the line emphasise contact with the spirit realm, though in different ways.

The way in which the painted line emerges from and continues into areas of rough rock is comparable to the way in which numerous San images were painted to give the impression that they are entering and leaving the rock face via cracks, steps and other inequalities. But what lay behind the rock face?

Behind the rock face

We have noted already that the San universe is divided into different realms. Contact between these often interacting realms is sometimes depicted in the art by long lines that link images or sometimes appear to pass through the rock face. San shamans or medicine people (called !gi:ten in |Xam) move along or climb these "threads of light" as they journey between realms to heal the sick, make

rain and perform other tasks. The |Xam called these out-of-body journeys |xãũ. They obtained the power needed to accomplish them by summoning potency from strong things, such as the eland.

The inter-realm nature of the line is further evidenced by the three creatures depicted moving along it. The two moving upward are quadrupeds or four-legged animals: one is non-specific and one has a tail and human arms. These images may depict the sort of bodily changes that !gi:ten say they experience during out-of-body journeys.

The faint white creature moving down the line was for us the climax of our work. It is clearly birdlike (!gi:ten often speak of flying). But closer inspection revealed that, though faint, it has a rhebok antelope head with two straight black horns, a black nose and mouth.

It also has two "wings" emanating from its shoulders. In short, it is a hybrid form – part bird and part buck. In addition, it has two white lines coming out of the back of its neck. It was from this spot that !gi:ten expelled the sickness that they drew out of the bodies of sick people.

For many people, the detail and the complexity of the images at this site come as a surprise. Yet, they are typical. San rock art ranks among the best in the world if we consider its beauty, its intricacy and the rich sources of explanation on which we can draw. 📖

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.



Flying the FLAG

Wits archaeologist named 2021 National Geographic Explorer



Archaeologist and biological anthropologist, Keneiloe Molopyane, is recognised as a trailblazer by the prestigious National Geographic Society.

Molopyane was announced as part of the National Geographic Society's 2021 Emerging Explorer cohort recently. "The Emerging Explorer cohort comprises individuals breaking through in their respective fields with big ideas," a statement from the National Geographic Society explains. "They are nominated by the National Geographic Society to become a part

of the global National Geographic Explorer community of changemakers."

"It's been overwhelming," said Molopyane about the honour of being named a National Geographic Explorer. "Since I found out, I've had little time to sit back and realise what it all means. I think it's still sinking in!"

"Keneiloe was selected as a member of this cohort because she exemplifies what it means to be a National Geographic Explorer," said Alex Moen, Chief Explorer Engagement Officer at the National Geographic Society. "Through her work as an archaeologist and biological anthropologist, and her focus on inspiring the next generation, Keneiloe is advancing our understanding of the world and all that's in it."

As an explorer, Molopyane has the opportunity to work with National Geographic to pursue new projects, collaborate with other explorers, amplify her work to National Geographic audiences, and do educational outreach through the society. She will also participate in public speaking and media training.

Molopyane joined the Rising Star Cave research team in 2018 as a junior underground

astronaut. She completed her PhD in Biological Anthropology at Wits in 2020, and then became involved in the UW105 Cave excavations, where she took on a leadership role in the expedition. Molopyane has since become the first postdoctoral research fellow at the Wits Centre for Exploration of the Deep Human Journey, which is headed up by fellow Witsie and National Geographic Explorer at Large, Professor Lee Berger. Molopyane's postdoctoral research will entail deep exploration of the famous Gladysvale Cave system, which is located at the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site.

Molopyane joins a group of 14 other scientists, educators and storytellers in the 2021 Emerging Explorer cohort – a group of people whose fields of expertise are as diverse as culinary history and marine biogeochemistry. "They're amazing people, phenomenal!" said Molopyane of her cohort. "I feel proud to represent Africa, and hope to see more Africans receiving the same recognition in the coming years."

www.wits.ac.za

Praise for local company

The Department of Small Business Development has commended local brand, Bathu, for being named as one of the most admired African brands.

"In our pursuit of intra-Africa trade, we are excited that our fellow Africans in other parts of the continent love our brands. This is in line with our Small, Medium and Micro-Enterprises Focussed Localisation Policy Framework and Implementation Programme, supporting local brands and buying local campaigns," the department said on Tuesday, 8 June 2021.

Bathu has been named number 10 of this year's most admired African brands by the Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands.

Bathu, meaning shoes in Kasi slang, is a proudly South African sneaker brand that was founded in 2015 by Theo Baloyi, a qualified accountant who quit his job for a fulfilling

journey as a manufacturer of a "global brand in the making".

"The ranking is the most authoritative survey and analysis on brands and underlying businesses in Africa. The survey was conducted between March and April 2021 and yielded over 80 000 brand mentions and over 3 500 unique brands.

"The list boasts some of the biggest corporates across Africa such as MTN, DStv, Shoprite, Vodacom and Tiger Brands," the department said.

SAnews.gov.za



Chauke joins Laureus Ambassador ranks



Dumisani Chauke, assistant coach of the South African netball team, has been announced as the latest Laureus Sport for Good Foundation Ambassador.

Chauke joins a prestigious group of South Africans, including Banyana Banyana coach Desiree Ellis and star Amanda Dlamini, Olympic gold medallist Wayde van Niekerk and Springboks Jean de Villiers, Schalk Burger and Bryan Habana.

Born in Limpopo, Chauke played basketball and soccer before getting involved in netball around the age of 10. She completed her Postgraduate Diploma in Sports Management at the Tshwane University of Technology and went on to play for the Proteas for several years.

She retired from international netball in 2014 to focus on her coaching at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, where she was a player-coach before being made head coach. In 2016, she was appointed assistant coach for the baby Proteas and is currently the SPAR Proteas assistant coach.

Chauke has made a tremendous impact both on and off the court. She launched her Netball Foundation at Mangangeni Primary School in Malamulele. The foundation aims

to empower young girls through netball coaching, life skills training, as well as various community-based programmes. She decided to give back to her community by establishing the foundation at her alma mater, where she nurtured her talent. The foundation has been a great success, reaching more than 500 girls across Limpopo and Gauteng provinces.

"I am thrilled and humbled by this amazing gesture. This is a remarkable opportunity and I understand the power of sport and the immense impact it has on uplifting our communities. It is an honour to be part of this amazing organisation that continues to do incredible work using sport as a tool for change to help those in need," said Chauke.

Laureus Ambassadors are a select group of both current and retired sportsmen and women who have achieved sporting greatness or made significant contributions to the sporting community during their careers. They are recognised as role models and icons of success and volunteer their services to support the work of Laureus Sport for Good.

www.teamssa.co.za

Algoa Bay declared a Whale Heritage Site



Algoa Bay in the Eastern Cape was declared a Whale Heritage Site recently for its more than 90 species of whales, dolphins and porpoises. The World Cetacean Alliance in Brighton, England, declared the city of Gqeberha in which Algoa Bay is found, a whale heritage site recently.

The organisation's mission is to protect and conserve whales, dolphins and porpoises through a global network of partners. The accolade is a coup for the town as it further

bolsters tourism and officially reveals to the world something many whale watchers already knew – that it is a marine life gem.

Algoa Bay has 90 species of whales, dolphin and porpoises. The city is renowned for its southern right, humpback, brydes and killer whales. Whale-watching season in Algoa Bay occurs in June through January with, June, July, November and December being peak observation periods.

South Africa is one of the few countries apart from Australia to have two whale

heritage sites. The other Whale Heritage site is in Bluff, Durban.

Lloyd Edwards of Raggy Charters and a member of the Whale Heritage Site's steering committee, said that this accolade was huge for Algoa Bay and translated to sustainable tourism.

"We have people from all over the world coming to see our whales and dolphins. It's nice that they know there are organisations showing off our beautiful marine life. The diversity [of whales] is absolutely huge here and this is one of the reasons they awarded this certification to us," said Edwards.

"Becoming a Whale Heritage Site will ensure that visitors to the Algoa Bay marine area are contributing to destinations that celebrate natural heritage, protect marine wildlife and build a connection between residents and sea life," he said.

Residents can now bask in the knowledge that their town is to receive further recognition on the tourism map.

www.thesouthafrican.com



South Africa's Triggerfish wins Mifa Animation Industry Award at Annecy 2021

(*Despicable Me*); the co-founders of Aardman, Peter Lord and David Sproxton (*Wallace & Grommet*); Marc Bonny, the creator of Gebeka Films (*My Life as a Courgette*); Eric Beckman, founder of GKIDS (*Wolfwalkers*); and Women in Animation.

Handing over the 2021 award to Triggerfish CEO Stuart Forrest, Encrenaz celebrated the studio's animation, which she said had "already earned a constellation of prizes". Triggerfish's first two films, *Adventures in Zambezia* and *Khumba*, sold nine million cinema tickets globally. Triggerfish also produced the upcoming 2021 feature *Seal Team* and animated the Academy Award-nominated Roald Dahl adaptation, *Revolting Rhymes*, as well as much-loved Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler adaptations such as the 2021 Annie Awards winner, *The Snail and the Whale*, 2020 International Emmy winner, *Zog*, the BAFTA-nominated and Annecy-winning, *Stick Man*, and the Rose d'Or-winning *The Highway Rat*, all produced by Magic Light Pictures.

Encrenaz praised the way Triggerfish had helped with "structuring an industry to give all its professionals support", playing key roles

in setting up crucial pillars of the animation industry in South Africa, like the industry association, AnimationSA; the showcase and networking event, AnimationXchange; and The Cape Town International Animation Festival, originally called Kunjanimation. She also pointed to their support of the Triggerfish Academy, both through bursaries and in taking on so many of their graduates.

"I'm feeling so proud," says Mike Buckland, head of production at Triggerfish, after watching Encrenaz's video speech. "Sometimes you need a speech and a rabbit to remind yourself of how much you appreciate your partners and your team. Thanks to everyone who's helped get us where we are."

"We've been very fortunate to come of age in a time when the world really is looking for other voices," says Forrest. "We know animation has a unique ability to cross boundaries, so we're so excited to share the new wave of groundbreaking African creatives with the world."

www.goodthingsguy.com

roudly South African company Triggerfish has brought home another award from the international animation industry, adding to the growing number earned by the company.

The Annecy International Animation Festival has awarded Triggerfish the Mifa Animation Industry Award.

"This is to highlight the pioneering role that the company has played in animation in South Africa, and Africa most widely," says Véronique Encrenaz, head of Mifa.

Previous recipients include Christopher Meledandri, founder of Illumination



Cape Town Tourism shines at International Film Awards

Despite the doom and gloom during a year when tourism is struggling, Cape Town scooped several top awards at the international film awards.

The prestigious International Tourism Film Festival Africa (ITFFA) was recently held at the Labia Theatre in Gardens, Cape Town. The ceremony honoured and celebrated some of the top tourism films in both Africa and the International Category.

"We are extremely delighted to have walked away with five awards this year," says Enver Duminy, CEO of Cape Town Tourism.

"Our team worked exceptionally hard on these films to ensure that future visitors are inspired to visit Cape Town once again. So, to receive this recognition from such a prestigious film festival is an absolute honour."

Cape Town Tourism's *That Homegrown Feeling* and *We are Worth Waiting For!* claimed a gold and a silver award each, while the ever-handy *Pocket-friendly Cape Town Challenge* scooped silver in the destination categories. Entries were evaluated by an international jury made up of acclaimed professionals in the audiovisual production, marketing and tourism sectors.

The Table Bay Hotel at the V&A Waterfront walked away with a gold and silver award for their COVID-19 safety protocols film in the accommodation categories.

"We have missed many of our regular guests at Cape Town's best address during the pandemic, and once lockdown eased and allowed us to re-open, we put many measures in place to welcome them back in safety," said The Table Bay General Manager, Joanne Selby. "The video explains the hotel's COVID-19 protocols, which protect guests and provide them with peace of mind during their stay."

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Cape Town's Chinchilla named among world's best rooftop bars



Chinchilla Rooftop Cafe & Bar in Camps Bay, Cape Town, among their "Top 25 Best Rooftop Bars in the World".

The popular travel website named Le Perchoir in Paris at number one, but said that coming in at number five, Chinchilla put bars situated at the very top of some of the world's highest skyscrapers to shame.

According to *Time Out*, Chinchilla's position between the famous Camps Bay beach and iconic Table Mountain makes it a "laid back, resort-chic" paradise "that'll make you want to while away an afternoon".

"Though this rooftop is only two stories up, the views rival some of the tallest skyscrapers in the world," they said.

Time Out also said that Chinchilla's vast array of cocktails and seafood dishes, set to the tune of a medley of some of Cape Town's top DJs and performers, were well worthy of a place in their Top 25.

www.thesouthafrican.com

Time Out said that the Chinchilla Rooftop Cafe & Bar in Camps Bay, Cape Town, boasted spectacular views that placed it among the world's

best. *Time Out* recently listed two South African streets among the "Coolest in the World" – and now they've taken a fancy to one of Cape Town's many top-class restaurants, naming

Brad Binder signs new racing deal until 2024

South African Brad Binder – who won the 2020 MotoGP Rookie of the Year Award – says he is "super, super happy" to have signed a new contract that will see him remain part of the Red Bull KTM Factory Racing Team for the next three years and take him to 10 Grand Prix seasons in "orange" by the end of the 2024 MotoGP campaign.

Clearly, Binder's *Story of a Legend* (watch on Showmax) continues. He recently posted a new MotoGP milestone at the Gran Premio D'Italia by equalling the highest top speed in the history of the sport at 362.4 kmph during FP3 around the iconic Mugello track.

Of his new deal, the South African sports star said: "I'm super, super happy to have signed again for three more seasons with KTM and it will take us up to 10 years. It's incredible to have been with this manufacturer for such a long time now and we've always had a good relationship. I'm extremely happy in KTM colours, so it's extra satisfying to have a long contract signed up."

"It's cool to have that belief and support from a company. It's an honour. From here on, we can focus on building ourselves towards



the front. We are not terribly far away, and it would be really nice to do something great together. It's exciting to see what these next years will bring."

KTM Motorsports Director, Pit Beirer, said: "This was a very easy contract for us to do because we love Brad as a racer and what he brings to the team, the factory and the MotoGP class. He was also very enthusiastic

to make a big commitment to us and that says a lot for our progression and our potential in this championship. Sometimes you find a racer and a mentality that really fit with your own philosophy and the fact that Brad has come all the way to the top with us in a 10-year period is a very special story. We're really proud to continue racing with him and to keep setting new targets together."

www.sapeople.com

South Africa's Silo Hotel listed as third-best pool in the world



The Silo Hotel in Cape Town has landed a top tree spot among the best swimming pools globally. The proudly South African hotel shares

the podium with Italy and Western Australia. The Silo Hotel at the V&A Waterfront is one of Cape Town's newest highlights in travel. The hotel is built into an old grain silo, and the architecture

is unbelievable. The hotel is starting to earn accolades around the world, and the latest is for the third-best pool in the world as voted by Big 7 Travel.

Some 1.5 million people from 60 countries take surveys for Big 7 Travel and vote for the best travel accolades worldwide.

The Silo Hotel pool boasts some incredible views, which is why the pool has earned a top-three spot.

"Located in Cape Town on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, the Silo Hotel occupies the grain elevator portion of a historic grain silo complex above the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa. The hotel bills itself as 'a celebration of art, style, architecture and design'. Its spectacular rooftop pool has glass sides and unrivalled views of Table Mountain and Lion's Head as well as the Atlantic Ocean and city skyline. Sunsets from here are mesmerising and memorable." – Big 7 Travel.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Labia Theatre named among the best in the world



The Labia Theatre in Orange Street, Gardens, Cape Town, has been recognised on *Time Out's* top 50 most beautiful cinemas in the world list. It's number 14 on the list.

Located beneath Table Mountain, South Africa's oldest indie cinema prides itself on marrying modern tech with an olde-worlde charm a world away from the gleaming modern multiplex.

According to *Time Out*, cinemagoers purchase their tickets from an ornate ticketing booth (or online). In recent years, the rich and famous like John Cleese, Werner Herzog, Matt Damon and Salma Hayek have popped by for a movie.

According to its website, this gem was opened by Princess Labia in May 1949 as a theatre for the staging of live performances. For the past four decades, it has been operating as a cinema on the alternative circuit, appealing mainly to the more discerning viewer who enjoys its quality product and the charm of its old-world ambience.

Thanks to the assistance of Crowd Funding and the Digital Gold Fund, the Labia was able to convert to digital projection and boasts superior picture and sound quality while retaining its unique charm.

In addition to the conversion to digital projection, the Labia has been able to continue slowly upgrading her facilities to make one's experience an even more memorable one.

The top three are:

1. Pathé Tuschinski, Amsterdam
2. Le Grand Rex, Paris
3. Village East Cinema, New York.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Made By Africa, Loved By The World short films feature South African designer Laduma Ngxokolo



Facebook highlighted creatives in Africa as part of the global celebrations for Africa Month, and a South African designer was featured in the short films.

As part of its celebration around Africa Day and Month, Facebook launched a global campaign, titled: *Made by Africa, Loved by the World* – a series of short films unveiling the stories of eight phenomenal creatives and small business owners from across the continent who are breaking ground across the world.

South African fashion designer Laduma Ngxokolo was featured. His clothing brand, "MaXhosa", has been worn by global names

such as Beyonce and Alicia Keys, and most recently had his designs featured in the film *Coming to America 2*.

Available to view on a dedicated *Made by Africa, Loved by the World* microsite and the official Facebook Africa page, the films provide a glimpse into the global successes of African creatives and businesses hailing from Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. The series aims to showcase, hero'ing and honouring the people who are impacting the continent and the world through their music, arts and crafts.

"At Facebook, we're deeply invested in the creative industry in Africa, and nowhere is it more exciting to witness this vibrant creative

scene than here on the continent. These people and businesses are changing the way Africa is seen, not just in Africa, but around the world, and are cementing our position as leaders in innovation and the creative industries. We know that Africa is the future, and in honour of 'Africa Day' and the AU's 2021 celebration of African 'Arts Culture and Heritage', *Made by Africa, Loved by the World* is our way of recognising just some of these remarkable individuals who continue to inspire the world," said Nunu Ntshingila, Regional Director, Facebook Africa.

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South Africa's Lerai Rakoditsoe becomes first African to host Nickelodeon show



She is the first African to host a show on the Nickelodeon platform. The daily weekday show premiered on 17 May 2021 and features music from across the African continent and the world.

The newly enlisted presenter is also a change-maker who has previously worked with youth and female empowerment groups. An elated Rakoditsoe, whose latest career move has made history, had this to say about being a part of Nickelodeon's advancements on the continent:

"I am excited to be part of the Nickelodeon Africa family and to be the first young African host for the channel. Having grown up watching the channel myself, I know how important it is for young minds to see someone like themselves on screen. Authentic representation is really important and to see myself on the channel is mind-blowing. I'm

extremely grateful and looking forward to interacting with viewers across Africa and to show off some of my NickMusic moves."

Dillon Khan, VP for Nickelodeon at ViacomCBS Networks Africa, says the channel stands by its commitment to grow local relevance and content for kids across the African continent. "In our commitment to always celebrate and recognise the power of youth culture across Africa, we welcome Lerai to the Nickelodeon Africa family and encourage kids and parents to put on their dancing shoes and get ready for *NickMusic*."

The 18-year-old hails from Bassonia, south of Johannesburg. A self-defined storyteller, Rakoditsoe has been previously lauded for giving women a voice on her social media platforms.

www.creativityweek.africa

UCT Prof becomes seventh South African to be elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society



A University of Cape Town (UCT) professor has been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society, the world's oldest scientific academy.

William Bond, Emeritus Professor at the university's Department of Biological

Sciences, is the seventh South African to be awarded the honour.

The university said Bond was recognised as a global authority on open ecosystems and his research into the forces that shape global vegetation, including wildfire, CO2 levels and herbivores, is credited with transforming the understanding of how these systems materialised.

Prof. Bond said his sister was the one who inspired him to become an ecologist.

"I was inspired to become an ecologist by my older sister who read widely as a journalist and always portrayed ecology as an important field, but I only appreciated its scope and scientific fascination decades later," he said.

He said he also looked up to other fellows from the society and specifically Charles Darwin.

Prof. Bond said Darwin had always been his hero because he was a wonderful guide to travelling the world as a biologist and such an astute observer of human society.

"Science has given us a way to test new human ideas and that is something to be treasured. Reason has been such a powerful tool for us humans, but logic alone is not the answer. In fact, science requires the imagination to make connections that lead to new discoveries and this creativity comes from all sorts of sources, including art, music, myth and poetry. I think that's where South Africa and Africa have much to offer: our perspective is unique and valuable; it leads to new ways of seeing," said Prof. Bond.

He said at this moment when misinformation was a real danger and the biomes that he had spent his career studying were under threat, it was a great honour to be recognised by an institution such as the Royal Society, which promoted the role of science.

www.goodthingsguy.com

South African gin brand wins three awards at 2021 International Spirits Challenge



South African gin brand Flowstone Gin has earned three awards at the 2021 International Spirits Challenge (ISC), boosting its accolades to a total of 21.

The brand was launched four years ago and has since earned a total of 21 awards, including the three newest ones. The brand has earned two silver awards and a bronze for the Bushwillow, Snuffbox and Wild Cucumber Gin.

"We are honoured to be recognised again by the International Spirits Challenge judging panel", says Flowstone Gin representative, Mark French.

"We always feel truly proud to not only be representing our continent of Africa, but also to wake up every morning and know that as the sun rises, we are foraging and harvesting in one of the most remarkable and beautiful regions in the world, the Cradle of Humankind."

Of the ISC Challenge, Pieter de Bod, KWV Master Distiller, says: "KWV regards ISC as one of the most prestigious competitions of its type.

The rigorous judging process is second to none and it is a remarkable achievement to garner ISC trophies and medals as it signals not only supreme quality but also consistent dedication to the craft of creating world-class spirits."

www.goodthingsguy.com



Pretoria fourth-most "Instagrammable Neighbourhood" in the world

Travel-Lust recently released a list of the most popular and most tagged Instagrammable neighbourhoods in the world. It compiled a list of 50 neighbourhoods from around the world based on the number of hashtags the areas garnered on Instagram – and Pretoria has made the top 10.

Instagram has over the years turned into a key driver when it comes to travel trends, with more than a third of the platform's users choosing to visit a destination after seeing it on the app.

While travel is still curbed in most parts of the world, Travel-Lust, in partnership with Stokemont, "wanted to find out which neighbourhoods around the world we typically lust over most".

The teams at Travel-Lust and Stokemont collected hundreds of the coolest most picturesque places before narrowing it down to a comprehensive list of 50.

Then, the various neighbourhoods, cities and locations were searched on Instagram to find out how many hashtags each place had.

Pretoria was tagged more than 1.4 million times on Instagram, preceded only by Wynwood in Miami, Shinjuku in Tokyo, and Astoria in New York.

Other cities and neighbourhoods to make it to the top 10 list include Silver Lake in Los Angeles, Hongdae in Seoul, Champs-Elysees in Paris, Chefchaouen in Northwest Morocco and Surrey Hills in Sydney.

While Pretoria came fourth, it was no match for Wynwood in Miami, Florida, which had more than 3.8 million photos tagged. Wynwood is famous for its trendy street art and graffiti.

<https://citizen.co.za/>

South African soprano wins song prize at Cardiff Singer of the World Competition



"Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha performed with such assured technique and emotional power that the jury was unanimous in naming her the winner," said John Gilhooly, Wigmore Hall's Artistic and Executive Director, and Chair of the Judges.

The South African singer's prize was £10 000, as well as many fantastic opportunities to perform across the United Kingdom and internationally.

Rangwanasha impressed the judging panel with her diverse performances of Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade* – D118; BPJ Tyamzashe's song in Xhosa, *Isithandwa Sam*; Lizst's *Die Lorelei* – S273; and Betty Jackson King's *Ride Up In The Chariot*.

"I wanted to show the audience that they can enjoy both worlds: spirituals, the more standard Lieder repertoire and also my traditional South African Lieder," she said.

The Song Prize competition showcased the voices of 14 of the BBC Cardiff Singer of

the World 2021 contestants in performances of Lieder and art songs – partnered by internationally-renowned pianists and took place over four rounds.

The event took place at St David's Hall in the Welsh capital, without an audience in attendance, and in strict compliance with COVID-19 regulations.

According to a BBC press statement, Rangwanasha started singing at school and church at an early age. She completed her postgraduate diploma at the University of Cape Town, studying with Virginia Davids, and took a BTech in Vocal Art (Performance) with Kiewit Pali at Tshwane University of Technology.

In a few months' time, she will join the ensemble of Bern Staatsoper for two years.

www.sapeople.com

These two South African streets named among the coolest in the world



one neighbourhood in their city with the biggest buzz about it right now.

This is the second time that the *Time Out Index* has lauded 7th Street for its abundance of pubs, clubs and restaurants, as well as its strong sense of community.

"There's always a discernible buzz. And that's probably because pretty much the entire street is filled with restaurants, pubs and clubs," the guide said.

"The main road in suburban Kalk Bay is just magical. Head past all the historic sea-facing homes, just beyond the train station, and you'll find the dream spot for an afternoon mooch in the sun. On a warm day, it's habitual to start with a swim at Dalebrook tidal pool, where locals and visitors lay out towels on the rocks."

Topping the list is Smith Street that's located in Melbourne, Australia.

Number two on the list is Barcelona's Passeig de Sant Joan.

South Bank, London, best known for its buzzing Thameside pathway, is the bronze medalist.

www.goodthingsguy.com

The 30 coolest streets have been revealed, and 7th Street in Melville, Johannesburg, and Main Road in Kalk Bay are among the hippest.

The 30 coolest streets in the world have been named by the *Time Out* guide ... and 7th Street, Melville, Johannesburg, has been awarded the number 12 spot and Main Road, Kalk Bay, Cape Town, number 22.

As part of their *Time Out Index* 2021 survey, the publication asked more than 27 000 city dwellers around the world about the best, most overrated and most undervalued neighbourhoods in their home town.

Then, armed with their opinions, they went to the experts – *Time Out* editors and contributing writers who know the city like nobody else – and asked them to pinpoint the

Boulders Beach named one of the best beaches in the world



Now, Boulders Beach has earned a top spot on the Big 7 Travel 50 Best Beaches in the World.

"Using aggregated scores from previous media results, official Blue Flag locations and contributions from the Big 7 Travel editorial team, these are the most amazing beaches to visit this year.

"It's a diverse list, with black sandy shores, city beaches and plenty of islands. From Myanmar to Mauritius, consider this your essential vacation guide.

"Boulders Beach has something you won't find anywhere else in the world – you can get close to African penguins, who nest by the beach. Summer is prime time to visit Boulders, and it's when you'll see the most penguin action.

"The cool, clear False Bay water and rock pools are an added bonus."

www.goodthingsguy.com

Boulders Beach in Simon's Town has landed 12th spot on the "Top 50 Best Beaches in the World" list from Big 7 Travel.

The famous Boulders Beach is having a great PR year. First, the beach was the setting for the Netflix series, *Penguin Town*; and now it is topping international travel lists as one of the best beaches globally.

Big 7 Travel has a list for everything and South Africa is often featured on their Top 50 lists. Cape Town was even voted onto one of the best destinations of the decade list.

Some 1.5 million people from 60 countries take surveys and vote for the best travel accolades around the world. Big 7 Media shares several lists, which promote global travel.

South Africa's Kgothatso Montjane makes history reaching Wimbledon final



female athletes. There's no limit to what you're capable of," said Montjane after receiving the wild card in 2018.

Montjane wrote her name in the history books by becoming the first black South African woman to reach the final at Wimbledon.

"I am just so happy to have made my first-ever Grand Slam singles final," Montjane said after her match.

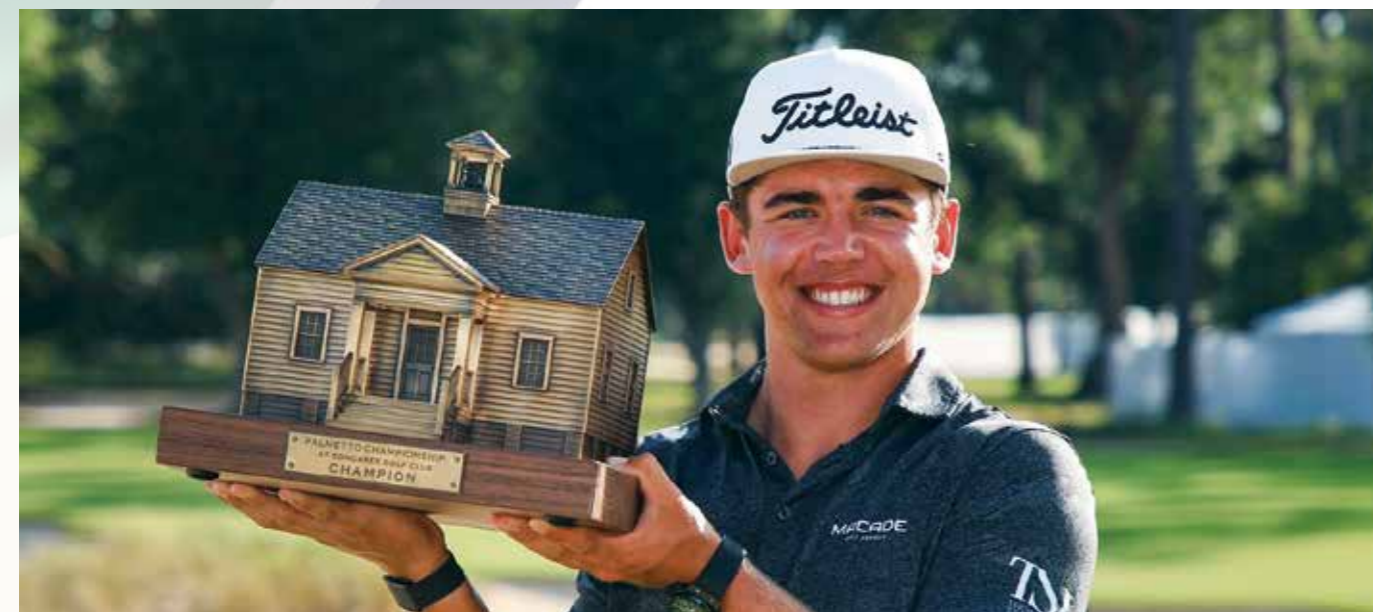
President Cyril Ramaphosa tweeted a special message to South Africa's wheelchair tennis star, KG, before the match:

"YOU'VE ALREADY MADE US PROUD" – PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA

President Ramaphosa said: "Kgothatso Montjane plays her first grand slam singles final @Wimbledon today. @KGMontjane1 may the serves be sound and the forehands flow as you continue to fly the flag. You will have your coach and the entire country with you. You've already made us proud. Let's ace this one!"

The Dutch player wrapped up the match to win 6-2, 6-2.

www.sowetanlive.co.za



Garrick Higgo earns maiden win on PGA Tour

South Africa's Garrick Higgo earned his first victory on the PGA Tour in just his second start on Sunday, 13 June 2021, edging late leader Chesson Hadley to capture the Palmetto Championship at Congaree.

Higgo chased down Hadley on the back nine, shooting a three-under 68 for the round to finish at 11-under overall.

Hadley blew a two-shot lead with bogeys on his final three holes, finishing with a 75 at the South Carolina golf course.

The 22-year-old Higgo, of Johannesburg, earned US\$1.31 million (R18 million) in prize money and an exemption on the tour until 2023.

He is the second South Africa to win this season, joining Branden Grace.

"I worked so hard with my coach on my short game and my putting and I guess all this has paid off," Higgo said.

The tournament at Congaree filled in for the Canadian Open, which was cancelled for a second straight year because of the global pandemic.

www.news24.com

World no 5 wheelchair tennis star Kgothatso Montjane ousted Momoko Ohtani 7-6(3) 4-6 6-4 to reach her first Wimbledon final at the All England Lawn Tennis Club in London on Friday, 9 July 2021.

In a big-hitting and big-serving affair, it was Montjane who created more opportunities to edge past Japanese world no 6 Ohtani.

It was a first Wimbledon final and a first Grand Slam singles final for the Limpopo-born star, who faced top seed and world no 1 Diede de Groot from the Netherlands in the final.

The 35-year-old from Seshego became the first African woman to play at Wimbledon in 2018 after she was awarded a wild card and reached the semifinals. "I am proud to be blazing the trail for the next generation of



Clifton is an affluent suburb of Cape Town. It is an exclusive residential area and is home to the most expensive real estate in South Africa, with dwellings nestled on cliffs that have sweeping views of the Atlantic Ocean. Clifton lies just beyond Bantry Bay, between Sea Point and Camps Bay, in one of the most superb settings against the backdrop of Table Mountain.



Young female South African architects reinvent Serpentine Pavilion in London

News of the choice of Counterspace was greeted with enthusiasm. Three women run the interdisciplinary Johannesburg practice. They are the youngest architects to land the Pavilion commission in its 20-year history.

By **Matthew Barac**
Reader in Architecture, London Metropolitan University

The arrival in London of a new Serpentine Pavilion is a design diary highlight every year.

Each commission sees a new temporary garden building – a pavilion – created by a selected international architect. It is organised by the Serpentine Galleries in Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, regularly attracting over 1.2 million visitors a year.

In 2020, the prestigious Serpentine Pavilion was awarded to South African studio Counterspace. Soon afterwards, the organisers decided to delay and extend the commission over two years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, finally, it is emerging into public life.

News of the choice of Counterspace was greeted with enthusiasm. Three women run the interdisciplinary Johannesburg practice. They are the youngest architects to land the

Pavilion commission in its 20-year history. Past designers include architectural superstars such as Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind and Peter Zumthor.

The Serpentine Pavilion, a free-to-access destination and venue for cultural gatherings, has been seen as a vehicle for innovation. But, detractors argue it has become a platform to celebrate “starchitects” and host paparazzi-friendly parties.

Recent attempts to diversify the message by selecting “up-and-coming” designers have met with mixed reviews, but the choice of Counterspace ups the ante. Here’s why.

Diverse alternatives

The Counterspace trio are not the first female appointees. Celebrated British-Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid designed the inaugural pavilion, and women followed in 2009, 2015 and 2018. But Counterspace represents a new, forward-

looking and timely attitude to inclusion, diversity and creativity.

Responding to the news, Lesley Lokko, African Futures Institute director and RIBA Annie Spink Award laureate, said:

“As the world grapples with issues of race, identity and inequity in the built environment, this is an opportunity for a young African practice to show that the imagination is the most powerful tool for change.”

Named for its belief that “every space has an equal and opposite counter-space”, Counterspace operates as a collaborative studio in which a culture of questioning is fundamental.

Who is Counterspace?

Founding partners Sumayya Vally, Sarah de Villiers and Amina Kaskar established the firm in their twenties. They want to change architectural knowledge just as much as they

The Counterspace trio are not the first female appointees. Celebrated British-Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid designed the inaugural pavilion, and women followed in 2009, 2015 and 2018. But Counterspace represents a new, forward-looking and timely attitude to inclusion, diversity and creativity.

want to make buildings. All three teach while practising professionally.

Projects in the Counterspace portfolio include performances, installations, choreography and curating, as well as research investigations and building designs. Works include *Folded Skies*, a large-scale mirror sculpture in Cape Town, and the Brixton Mosque in Johannesburg, a scheme to wrap an existing church reused as a mosque in a new envelope that speaks the architectural language of Islamic geometry.

In contrast with the object-oriented architecture of most pavilions to date, Counterspace emphasises process. It wants to steer and gather the Serpentine Pavilion into being over time.

Time and the city

The act of building will extend beyond the opening date, spreading across the summer months. So, the pavilion you see in June may change by the time you return for a second look in September.

This aligns with the Serpentine Gallery’s view too. According to artistic director, Hans Ulrich Obrist, the silver lining of the pandemic is an “opportunity to take more time”. A range of events and research activities have been initiated, reframing the official opening date as a milestone on the Pavilion’s journey, rather than its destination.

Eminent architect David Adjaye counselled the pavilion’s trustees to: “Accept the slowness reshaping society today and utilise it to develop a deeper relationship with the architects.”

The Counterspace ethos will allow the pavilion to accommodate difference, even conflict. Vally, the only architect on the 2021 *Time100 Next* list, recently told me of her aspiration to deliver a space meaningful to Londoners near and far. It should reach out to those at the periphery, and reach in to the city centre.

The pavilion

A lofty circular roof defines the extent of the pavilion. It is both cosmological – a canopy of stars – and childlike in its symbolism of centrality, reminding us of the circle of play we make by joining hands.

Rising columns and wall fragments echo other histories, borrowing bits of the city and bringing them together in a bricolage of recombined and recycled fragments. Connections to other buildings, moments and places across London are suggested.

This architecture of visual quotations recalls the postmodern theories of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown. The approach superimposes memories represented by design motifs. A cut and paste detail from a Notting Hill Caribbean café that was a hub for anti-racist activists in the 1960s might appear on the pavilion alongside an element drawn from the South London offices of the *West Indian Gazette*, a major black newspaper founded by activist Claudia Jones in 1958.

This accumulation of elements and influences is filtered through Vally’s artistic processes of interpretation: “Any work that I do is about how I am shaped by the people

that I work with, about ingesting as much as I can from a place and its people and then translating that into form.”

Architecture of invitation

To date, the Serpentine Pavilion has provided a passive setting for people to meet. But Counterspace aims to actively engage with communities and sites of marginalised history across London – to draw people in.

This is an architecture of invitation. The design does not attempt to deliver insights but rather foster understanding, absorbing conflict by providing a context for bringing differences together.

It captures something of an emergent creative spirit – influenced but not defined by wokeness and related cultural controversies – in which the space to be flawed and unsure, to be real, is claimed as a stage for belonging.

This approach, which resonates with Robert McCarter’s reformulation of “place-making as resistance”, reminds us of the need to reclaim our capacity for human relationships. The pavilion invites us to rediscover public life and meet again, after our long confinement, in a space made for us and with us.

The 2021 Serpentine Pavilion opened on 11 June 2021 in London.

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.





An Oscar for *My Octopus Teacher* is a boost for South African film. But ...

The story of a man and his relationship with an octopus in the cold, cold water off Cape Town's Peninsula triumphed over a number of heavy hitters. These included an exposé of hospital deaths caused by corruption in the Romanian Government (*Collective*) and the Obama-produced story of the battle for disability rights in the United States (*Crip Camp*).

By Liani Maasdorp, Senior Lecturer in Screen Production and Film and Television Studies, University of Cape Town (UCT) and Ian-Malcolm Rijdsdijk, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Studies, UCT

The Best Documentary Feature gong for *My Octopus Teacher* at this year's Academy Awards has been seen by many critics as the type of underdog story Oscar loves. The film, directed by Pippa Erlich and James Reed, was – like the other South African-themed documentary to wow the Oscars, *Searching for Sugarman* – the feel-good choice.

The story of a man and his relationship with an octopus in the cold, cold water off Cape Town's Peninsula triumphed over a number

of heavy hitters. These included an exposé of hospital deaths caused by corruption in the Romanian Government (*Collective*) and the Obama-produced story of the battle for disability rights in the United States (*Crip Camp*).

So, what carried the underdog to victory? And what does this mean for filmmaking in South Africa? Will this sensational viral hit spawn "a trail of comparable works in its wake?"

The answer to why it won lies in a series of interconnected factors: the power of Netflix; the zeitgeist of the global COVID-19 lockdown; the Academy's idiosyncratic nature when it comes

to voting; and the power of a well-made film with a simple and life-affirming story.

The answer to what impact it will have is more complicated: we think it could lead to wonderfully positive outcomes. But only, if marginalised South Africans have agency and power in front of and behind the cameras.

A tide of "the feels"

My Octopus Teacher follows documentary filmmaker Craig Foster as he dives in the ocean near his home on the southern shores of the Cape Peninsula to observe, document,

My Octopus Teacher shows viewers that meaningful engagements with the natural world can happen right outside your door.

touch and be touched by a common octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*). Foster is on a sabbatical from documentary filmmaking after suffering from burnout on his previous production. While free-diving, he "meets" an octopus, and returns to her every day, documenting most of her life cycle, which spans about a year. He forms a strong emotional attachment to her, and relates the healing effect it has on him.

The critical viewer can object to the anthropomorphising of the octopus – the applying of human attributes to an animal. And for following the well-trodden path of privileged white males documenting and representing the exotic other.

Even the surliest of critics were touched by the story of man and octopus.

But, as it shot up the rankings on Netflix, it became clear that these flaws were not an obstacle to millions of viewers around the world who embraced the film wholeheartedly. Indeed, while the film's unabashed sentimentalism and Foster's somewhat self-indulgent narration invited both parody and critique, even the surliest of critics were carried away on a tide of "the feels".

Secrets of success

Key to the film's success has been its word-of-mouth emergence during lockdown in 2020. It was the very definition of a viral sensation, the

perfect film for Netflix's audience, which spiked sharply because of COVID-19 restrictions in many countries.

The film's introspective and understated approach is also an important factor. Foster's short walk to the cold-water kelp forests is the antithesis of Planet Earth's globe-trotting aesthetic, where each exotic, remote location reveals the natural world at its most dramatic and spectacular. *My Octopus Teacher* shows viewers that meaningful engagements with the natural world can happen right outside your door.

And, as the title proclaims, you don't have to be an expert to gain something wonderful from the flora and fauna that you see every day, if you look a little closer.

In terms of the Oscar documentary outcome this year, there was a perfect meeting point of Netflix's penchant for producing cinematic and sensational documentaries, pandemic audiences' appetite for small, solitary stories of individuals overcoming obstacles, and the Academy's preference for entertaining, escapist documentaries. Think no further than previous winners, *20 Feet from Stardom*, *Searching for Sugarman* or *Free Solo*.

What it means for the industry

There is an argument to be made that the documentary's win is important for film in South

Africa because it has focussed attention on a local story and the quality of local productions. It demonstrates that it's possible – working from home with a relatively low budget and a small crew – to reach a massive global audience from the tip of Africa and win one of the most influential awards in the film world.

But, there's also a counter point to this: that the film was only possible because Foster is a well-established and well-resourced filmmaker living on a particularly scenic part of the South African coast.

To say that *My Octopus Teacher* is a model for all filmmakers in South Africa would ignore the situation of emerging filmmakers living in very different circumstances. This includes, for example, black female filmmakers living far from the filmmaking centres in South Africa. They might have brilliant stories to tell and amazing access to the people and places involved. But, they are unlikely to have access to a digital cinema camera. Or the time to devote exclusively to a project of this kind.

Nevertheless, there are likely to be positive spinoffs from the win. For one, streaming platforms' interest in local documentary is increasing.

And interest from international platforms and distributors in African film will undoubtedly spike in the coming months.

The hope is that this leads to more international co-production treaties being signed. There are currently only eight with South Africa – with three more in the works – that allow two production companies to claim tax rebates





for work done in their respective home countries, making international co-productions more desirable and profitable for both parties.

And the benefits could extend to under-resourced and emerging filmmakers, for whom an international co-producer could foot the bill for that expensive camera, and their time.

What needs to happen

There are dangers too.

There's a risk that an increased international desire to see South African stories will result in

what is being called extractive filmmaking – when international production companies come in to film the country's stories, bypassing its local storytellers.

What South Africa needs more than anything in the film and television industries are stories told by South Africans, not about them; told by filmmakers coming from inside communities, events and experiences, not by outsiders.

My Octopus Teacher centres on a white male experience. But the story is told from the inside, by the very person it's about. At a time

in global filmmaking history when "nothing about us without us" is both a rallying cry and a commissioning brief, one hopes that this will not be the only personal story from South Africa that makes it big on a global stage. [U](#)

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.



Cape Town's Great African Sea Forest has been crowned as one of "world's new wonders".

This after seven "new" wonders of the world have been chosen by Bloomberg and the underwater enchanted Kelp Forest, 16 kilometres south of Cape Town, ranks among them.

The Kelp Forest is also known as the Great African Sea Forest. The forest's profile was raised after its feature in the Academy Award-winning documentary, *My Octopus Teacher*.

My Octopus Teacher reached global plaudits after its release on Netflix in the year 2020. It tells the heartwarming story of how filmmaker Craig Foster finds solace in the Kelp Forest and befriends an octopus where the two form a unique bond.

Here are the full "seven new wonders of the world":

- Sigiriya, Sri Lanka
- San Agustin, Colombia
- Kelp Forests, South Africa
- Top End Rock Art, Australia
- Nahanni, Canada
- Baalbek, Lebanon
- Antequera Dolmens, Spain.

www.goodthingsguy.com

WE, THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA,

*Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.
We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this
Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to -*

Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;

Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;

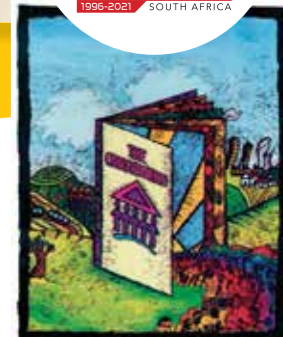
Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

*May God protect our people.
Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.
God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.
Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.*

(Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa)

ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE NATION



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Remembering Zim Ngqawana 10 years on, a singular force in South African music

“The true purpose of great music should lead us to silence ... from sound to silence.”

By Lindelwa Dalamba, Music Lecturer, University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and Phillipa Yaa de Villiers, Poet and Lecturer in Creative Writing, Wits

Zimasile “Zim” Ngqawana died unexpectedly and too soon – on 10 May 2011 at the age of 51 – leaving bereft a family and a musical community that spanned the globe.

A flautist and saxophonist, composer and teacher, Ngqawana was born in New Brighton township in then Port Elizabeth, South Africa. After a university music education, he became known on the jazz and dance theatre scenes. It was Ngqawana who was chosen to present music – a 100-piece ensemble – at the inauguration of President Nelson Mandela in 1994. He released his debut studio album, *San Song*, in 1996. He would tour the world with his band Ingoma and work with the likes of Wynton Marsalis, Abdullah Ibrahim and Hugh Masekela, in turn mentoring a new generation of South African musicians. He later established a school, the Zimology Institute.

Ngqawana’s biography and his achievements are well known.

Recalling him on the 10th anniversary of his death is to remember how a South African jazz musician’s life and death, in a country that

generally treats the arts – and especially jazz – as an inconvenience outside of Heritage Day, could resonate so widely.

Ngqawana’s sound – indebted to Xhosa traditional musical, Western art music and jazz – fills the silence that destruction leaves. Committed to creativity as healing, Ngqawana’s legacy continues long after his death.

A long line of saxophonists

In the mid-1800s, Belgium’s Adolphe Sax invented a strange instrument made of brass but which, because of how it produced sound, was classified as a woodwind instrument: the saxophone.

The hybrid instrument was adopted by jazz, a genre that has always embraced hybridity. For jazz scholar Chris Merz, the saxophone in South African jazz became prominent from the 1930s, part of the American Swing craze.

The 1950s saw the global decline of big bands and rise of smaller jazz combos. So began the reign of the alto saxophone in South African jazz, despite some growling intrusions from tenor saxophonists like Winston Mankunku. This is why South African jazz can speak of Ntengi Piliso, Kippie Moeketsi, Gwigwi

Mrwebi, Barney Rachabane, Duke Makasi, Robbie Jansen and Dudu Pukwana, to name but a few.

It is also why it can speak of Zim Ngqawana.

A self-made brand

We may consider Ngqawana as a “self-made” brand. Through his creations like *Zimphonic Suites*, *Vadzimu*, *Zimology*, *Aphorizims*, Zimphony Orchestra and the Zimology Institute, he crafted his own public persona in such a way that the culture industry had to follow rather than shape it for him.

Ngqawana’s making of the self was playful, but not superficial. He also resisted the label “jazz”, which he considered at once “too limiting and too all-encompassing”. Confronting the controversial view that there was no word for “music” in African languages, he correctly grasped that this was because, historically, music in Africa was part of life’s sacred and profane rituals. It was *ingoma* (the drums). In his sleeve notes for the 1999 album, *Ingoma*, he wrote:

“*Ingoma* is a tour de force of committed conscious kultur warriors, blowing a national

clarion to draw the concerned listener’s attention to the fire that is engulfing our house as a nation in a state of emergency.”

Antiquity and modernity

The call for commitment of the artist as cultural worker and warrior, and for the recognition that people’s lives could and must improve, suggest why Ngqawana is important for those who insist on the transformation of our society and refuse to relegate African cultural knowledge systems to the dustbin of the past.

He wrote in 2001’s *Zimphonic Suites*, that it’s all about “harmony between antiquity and modernity”.

For Ngqawana, this clarion should be heard and acknowledged by all. This explains his visibility on South African TV in the 1990s (especially with the hit *Qula Kwedini*) and his ubiquity on the airwaves and the live scene and, most importantly, as a teacher.

Meeting Zim

I first met Ngqawana when I was invited to Rhodes University, where he had studied. As a student, I was privy to a jazz workshop he held. It was an odd, discomforting jam session.

Ngqawana made us play endless rounds of the standard *Stella by Starlight*, pushing us to the limits of our tolerance of its melody, chord changes and prior interpretations. That’s the point: to push through the given script until you find yourself on the other side. That used to be the point of jazz.

But, my most important encounter was when I ran into him at the University of KwaZulu-Natal as a postgraduate student. Avuncular as ever, he declared his pleasure that those he had known as youngsters were continuing to blow the clarion.

When I said I was no longer blowing the saxophone, now determined to be a jazz musicologist, he promptly went to his office and returned with a copy of every single one of his albums, along with a copy of Amiri Baraka’s *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*. This generosity was an assertion of community, possibly the only impulse that has assured jazz’s endurance in this country. The gift is my memento mori: Ngqawana’s mortality, beyond death and vandalism, continues to inspire and to teach.

The moment of annihilation

Indeed, in 2010, Ngqawana’s studio was vandalised by scrap metal thieves. To gouge the metal from the grand piano’s legs, it was turned on its side. Windows, the toilet and light fittings were broken. A saxophone was smashed.

At the moment of annihilation, perhaps, our true voice is heard – we scream, sing, respond. In improvising its hesitant future, the artist’s voice is born; informed by all it has ever been and seen. The sound bears witness, exhaled into the impassive air.

“This vandalism,” says Ngqawana in *The Exhibition of Vandalizim*, a documentary created by the African Noise Foundation, “shows the extent of what has happened to them ... A vandalism of the soul, vandalism of the heart, vandalism of the mind.”

Committed to creativity as healing, Ngqawana left an extensive archive of published and unpublished music. It is important, therefore, that 10 May 2021 also marked the resurrection of the Zimology Institute, the project he initiated as a holding space for his philosophy and music.

Principles of poetics

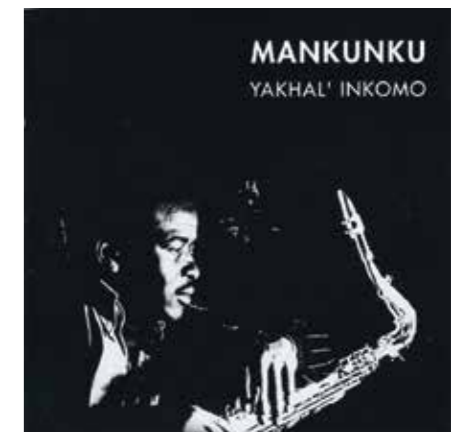
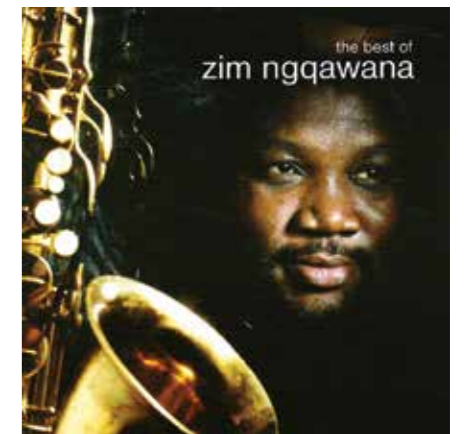
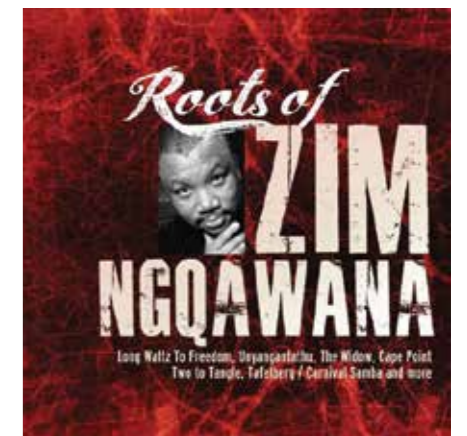
His legacy is also one of poetics, the principles – conscious or intuitive and understood in retrospect – by which the artist articulates their style. In the film, a stubbornly resilient Ngqawana sits in the rubble left by the vandals and plays a percussive solo on the broken cistern. “We are condemned ... to move into the unknown,” he says. Moving beyond the palpable pain in seeing his instruments and studio destroyed, he insists that the vandals are victims of the barbarism of colonisation. He makes art of the carnage. In filmmaker and writer Aryan Kaganof’s film *Legacy*, he stresses Ngqawana’s interest in the conscience.

Conscience and consciousness formed themselves through artistic discourse in the 1970s and 1980s, where culture was an inextricable aspect of, and outlet for, the political in music. Ngqawana always went beyond the political postures and personalities of the day, cutting through to the meaning of human events and their impact on the experience of freedom.

For us, Ngqawana’s enduring lesson is how art is able to contain, in its creation, its negation:

“The true purpose of great music should lead us to silence ... from sound to silence.”
– Qula Kwedini. [U](#)

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.





South African female film director answers Hollywood's call

De Pontes is becoming known for her desire and aims to create films with diverse and inclusive voices to tell female and African stories that impact the ways people think about their approach to each other and the world.

By Brent Lindeque
www.goodthingsguy.com

Marian de Pontes is on a mission to tell inclusive and diverse African female stories in Hollywood.

The South African native film director is taking the international film festival circuit by storm with the mission to tell impactful African female stories that are inclusive and diverse.

Currently residing in Los Angeles, California, she is being mentored by Cassian Elwes, producer of titles such as *Dallas Buyers Club* and *Mudbound*, and shadowing television director Tucker Gates (*Homeland* and *Bates Motel*), all while working as a director in the heart of Hollywood. This female director is passionate about using the medium of film to tell thought-provoking stories that create

the space for important conversations. De Pontes most prominent film, *Etana*, a story inspired by a *New York Times* article on child soldiers in South Sudan, is her greatest international triumph to date and has earned her a finalist position at the renowned 2021 USA Film Festival and an official selection of the Oscar-qualifying Cleveland International Film Festival.

De Pontes is a University of the Witwatersrand Film Production graduate who qualified top of her class and received a fellowship to one of the top four film schools in the world, Chapman University. While at Chapman, she was selected as a Woman of Chapman Scholar and was mentored by renowned Hollywood producer Edward Saxon (*Silence of the Lambs*). She is following in the footsteps of other prominent South African



directors working in international mainstream cinema, including Gavin Hood (*Tsotsi*, *Wolverine*), Neil Blomkamp (*District 9*, *Chappie*) and Jann Turner (TV's *Castle*, *Teen Wolf*) with the winning of the prestigious Horizon Award in 2021, which partners with the Sundance Institute, HBO and the Adrienne Shelly Foundation to recognise female filmmakers.

De Pontes is becoming known for her desire and aims to create films with diverse and inclusive voices to tell female and African stories that impact the ways people think about their approach to each other and the world. Her ambition is to create films with diverse and inclusive voices.

"I love to make films about the most inspiring people I know, badass women."

Born and raised by two highly scientific and hardworking parents, science was an "every day" for Marian, but art and film always snuck their way in. Following an unpredictable career in the arts is a very brave and intimidating path, especially when you're in South Africa and a long way from the heart of filmmaking in Hollywood.

De Pontes owes her success to taking calculated risks, not being easily deterred, and her love for a challenge. She has politely ignored the people who have tried to convince her to take the easier road – "The best response to someone who tries to obstruct you is to smile sweetly and make your kick-ass movie."

With Hollywood mentors backing this South African director and with multiple awards and nominations under her belt, it is easy to say that her approach and perspective are paying off.

"The ability to believe in yourself and say, I want to find out if I can actually do this or not. These are the mindsets that really helped me." With science fiction as her genre of choice, she is most interested and excited about the evolution of the genre with real science for the future. She is working on two science-fiction features, one set in South Africa and one set in space. When filming opens again in Los Angeles, De Pontes will be prepping and filming another short film towards the end of the year.

Keep a lookout and stay tuned for compelling stories directed by a bold voice through the powerful medium of film on the world-class Hollywood stage – Marian de Pontes is just getting started. [U](#)



"The ability to believe in yourself and say, I want to find out if I can actually do this or not. These are the mindsets that really helped me."



THE MAGNIFICENT MABI THOBEJANE master SOUTH AFRICAN DRUMMER

As a proper *morena oa lefatse* (king of the earth), Gabriel Mabi Thobejane revealed the inner character of the people of the land in both musical expression and force of personality. He entered so many of our lives in unique modalities that enriched our worlds forever.

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

Winter chokes the highveld in Johannesburg, South Africa, and takes from me, from our entire culture, a mighty mountain. Gabriel Mabi Segwagwa Thobejane, the diminutive tower of rhythmic power, has left us: a man who did not so much play the drums, but became The Drum.

He reportedly suffered a stroke at the age of 74 and passed on on 3 June 2021.

Even though he was both master and a creator of South Africa's indigenous sonic archive, Mabi, as we all came to call him, was also a showman and a collaborator. He could and would play in support of almost anyone, from jazz musicians to poets to mainstream artists. He was artistically intimidated by nothing and no one.

The young Gabriel

Mabi was raised in the township of Mamelodi near the capital city, Pretoria, where he

absorbed the rural, neo-traditional, urban folk and Sepedi jive drum and dance-song forms that commingled in the streets and backyards.

The young Gabriel had no calling to blow his horn in a church and defied his mother who insisted he become a priest. Her tendency to break up his makeshift drum kits led him to hang about the tanneries and artisanal workshops, collecting materials he fashioned into high-quality hand and mallet drums for which he later became so famous. From early on, Mabi pursued whatever "arrested" (*bopha!*) him full force without equivocation or compromise. And he was to serve a life sentence in the total reinvention of the highveld's African percussion.

This single-minded pursuit of a fading musical patrimony from the ancestors ran in the family. Gabriel's uncle, Philip Thabane, was already doing so on the electric guitar, forming the Malombo Jazzmen with flautist

Abbey Cindi and afro-percussionist Julian Bahula in the 1960s.

Philip's uncompromising indigenous originality led to a break-up. Before the end of the decade, Abbey, Julian, guitarist Lucky Ranku and mbaqanga vocalist Hilda Tloubatla had reformed as the Malombo Jazz Makers. For Philip, only one young performer made the grade: Gabriel Thobejane. They went on to gain local success and world fame as the duo Malombo.

The power of Malombo

Given the extent of his contribution and influence, there is pitifully little written about my former bandmate Mabi. In my book, *In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre*, I wrote about Malombo:

"This duo revolutionised progressive indigenous music in South Africa from 1965 to 1977. Their first recording appeared in 1968,

and in 1971, Philip and Gabriel travelled to the United States (US) where they appeared at clubs and concerts around the country for two years, playing with Miles Davis, Max Roach, Pharoah Sanders, McCoy Tyner and other first-rank jazz musicians ... In 1973, (they) returned home to perform for and learn from their own people in the Transvaal townships."

Malombo's 1976 album *Pele Pele* and their 1977 appearance at the New York Newport Jazz Festival continued to build their international reputation. Their recordings, I wrote in the book, could not hope to capture the electricity and spellbinding virtuosity of their live performances. I had the privilege of performing with Malombo as a percussionist at many of their South African appearances at the time. I wrote:

"Philip and Gabriel kept up a constant, almost competitive musical dialogue on guitar, kalimba (hand piano), flute, pennywhistle and drums. The intensity of Philip's guitar solos and melodic poetic recitation, and Gabriel's percussive power and dynamics with drums, dance, and ankle rattles kept black and white concertgoers alike jumping and shouting on the edges of their seats. Truly innovative creative departures in black South African music tend to create their own trends and offshoots, and this was certainly true of Malombo."

Mainstream bands such as Siphon Mabuse's Harari and later Ray Phiri's Stimela

were influenced by Malombo. As were the "alternative" black consciousness ensembles that often included spoken and sung poetry that appeared in the late 1970s, such as Dashiki, led by the soon-to-be-exiled poet and artist Lefifi Tladi, Thabang Masemola's Batsumi, and the Malopoets, precursors of rappers like Prophets of Da City.

A musical comrade

In some ways, Mabi Thobejane's great initial achievement was his ability to partner with the introverted, crusty Philip Thabane for so long. Quite the opposite, Mabi was unsurpassed as a joyful jester and musical comrade. He loved and accepted his unpredictable fellow musos. I witnessed many a musical showdown between Thabane and Thobejane on stage. After a difficult return tour to the US in 1977, they went their separate ways.

By the 1990s, Mabi had started to find an outlet for the sounds that had stayed with him from the Bronx. He continued being involved in some of the most exciting collaborations – with bassist Siphon Gumede and saxophonist Khaya Mahlangu, guitar master Madala Kunene, and percussionists Amampondo. For a decade, he toured and haunted the electronic, eclectic studio sessions with United Kingdom act Juno Reactor, who released the legendary acoustic/electronic percussive remixes of *Conga Fury*.

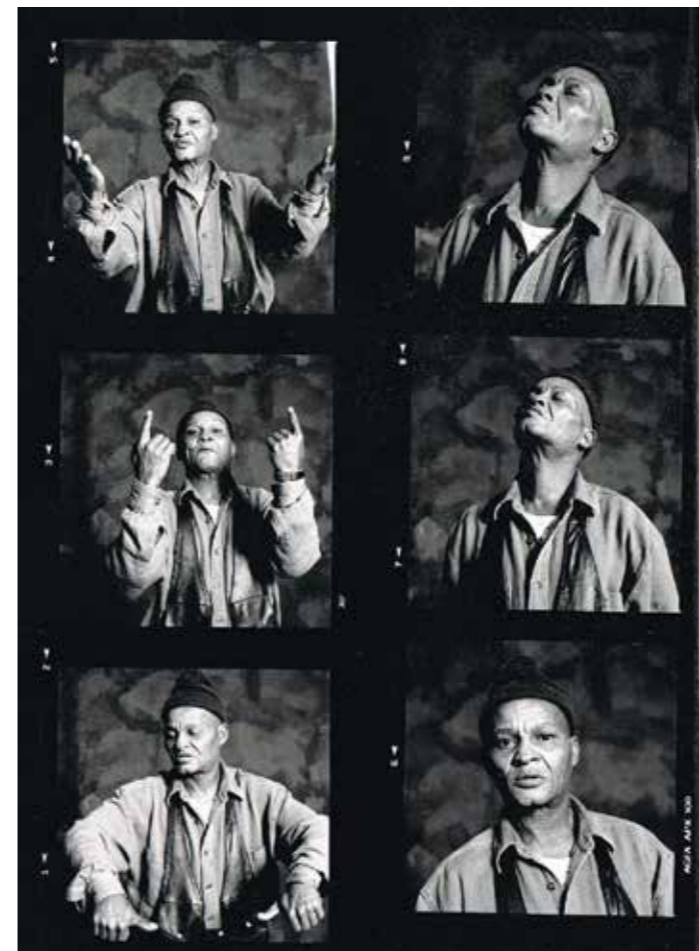
Artist and showman

Mabi was as much a showman and a performance event as he was a musician. He not only built his own drums, but created his own costumes of beads, antelope and cattle hides and distinctive body paint. Characteristically, he would perform stripped to the waist, his face painted half chalk white and half charcoal black, his compact brown torso covered in white spots like a reverse-image leopard. His intention was to conquer his musical world as a drum guerrilla representing himself and his deeper Tshwane origins, without hybridity, without borrowing. And in that guise, what a lender and a collaborator he turned out to be.

As a proper *morena oa lefatse* (king of the earth), Gabriel Mabi Thobejane revealed the inner character of the people of the land in both musical expression and force of personality. He entered so many of our lives in unique modalities that enriched our worlds forever.

I cannot do better, before returning to shocked silence at his passing, than to share a new poem by the musical commentator and scholar Sam Mathe. In *For Gabriel Mabi Segwagwa Thobejane*, Mathe refers to Mabi as *segwagwa*, the frog, the creature he physically resembled that became Philip Thabane's musical praise name for him (See below). [u](#)

This article first appeared on *The Conversation*.



Segwagwa
The bullfrog that croaks in the streams and lagoons inhabited by ancestral spirits the elusive amphibian that greets springs with the gravel voice and tone of a groaner

Segwagwa
The showman with deft magical hands whose rumbles are like a distant thunder The shaman who plays healing sounds on baobab drums crafted by the gods

Segwagwa
In the south the cold season is upon us the rains are gone, rivers have dried up it is time for you to go into hibernation farewell grandmaster of the percussion Till we meet again when the rainclouds gather.



The idyllic Letaba Rest Camp is situated on a sweeping bend of the Letaba River, midway between the southern and northern boundaries of the Kruger National Park. The name means "river of sand", and the sandy riverbed is an excellent location for game viewing, particularly elephant, which thrive in the area.



Learning from the story of pioneering South African writer Sindiwe Magona

She reminds us that it is not in loving our neighbour that we become better human beings – the challenge before us is in learning to understand and perhaps one day to love our enemy.

By Puleng Segalo
Professor of Psychology, University of South Africa

The African proverb, “Until the lion can tell its own story, the story of the hunt will always glorify the hunter,” speaks to the importance of telling one’s own stories. For a long time, African stories and realities were told by colonisers in ways that painted a picture of Africa as backward and uncivilised. It is for this reason, that many literary scholars tell the story of colonialism and apartheid through personal autobiographies.

One such scholar is Sindiwe Magona. Magona has published over a dozen books for adults, from critically acclaimed novels – like *Beauty’s Gift* – to poems, plays and biographies. She has written over 130 children’s books. But it is her two autobiographies that drew my attention as a psychology scholar. In these, *To My Children’s Children* (1990) and *Forced to Grow* (1992), Magona narrates her story

of memory, remembering, class, belonging, home and identity.

In a conversation with anthropologist and activist Elaine Salo in 2009, Magona said: “I experienced incredible anger about others writing about us, I asked myself, ‘How dare they write about you?’ I told myself that shouldn’t stop me from writing about myself ... There is value in those like me writing about our experiences, who did not study apartheid but lived it.”

So, I conducted a critical review of *To My Children’s Children*, which covers the first 23 years of Magona’s life. My aim was to bring attention to the importance of self-storying as a form of protest, of knowing oneself and of healing.

Who is Sindiwe Magona?

Magona was born in 1943 in the small town of Gungululu, just outside an area called Mthatha,

in what was then known as the homeland of Transkei, in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. She was born five years before colonial Britain handed over power to the Afrikaners. Apartheid was officially introduced in 1948 and with it a series of oppressive and racist laws such as separate living areas and the Bantu education system. It was within this context that Magona grew up.

In her work and her public talks, she tells of poverty and of making a living as a domestic worker while she schooled herself through distance learning. She would go on to be a teacher, mother, wife and community leader, complete postgraduate studies and spend two decades in civil service with the United Nations.

Magona’s work reflects the fact that she grew up during apartheid, when black people were treated as second-class citizens. As a child, she had to navigate her way through a

Magona’s autobiographies offer us an avenue for reflection, remembering, reimagining and dreaming. Future generations, the children’s children, carry the burden and responsibility of reshaping the country and the world – and they can do this only if they know and understand where they come from.

system that relegated her to the periphery and treated black people as sub-human.

However, she was one of the many black women who found a way to resist this oppressive system that aimed at dictating her way of being in the world. According to literary scholar and author Barbara Boswell, Magona is one of the writers who transcend their received identities as labourers and reproducers of labour for the apartheid nation, to become authors of their own lives and works.

Magona refused to be muted and instead spoke back through writing about her lived experiences.

Home: here today, gone tomorrow

In her self-storying, Magona tells the narrative of the violent ways in which the state apparatus functioned to uproot people from their homes and resettle them elsewhere. People’s homes were literally here today and gone tomorrow.

Home is a multilayered and multidimensional concept that’s about more than just physical space. Home for Magona cannot be divorced from place, birthplace, belonging, deprivation, alienation and also the mixing of cultures. In *To My Children’s Children* she writes:

“When I say place, that means less a geographical locality and more a group of

people with whom I am connected and to whom I belong. This is a given, a constant in my life.”

In telling her story, Magona weaves together not only her personal lived reality but the collective story of growing up under apartheid. Her whole childhood involved bearing witness to the inequalities and injustices that were rampant in society. She reflects:

“Who drove cars? Whites. Who wrote books? Whites. Who owned shops? Whites. Who lived in houses as distinct from shacks? Whites. Whose children always wore shoes to school? Who bought toys? Who bought butter? Who had meals to sit at table for and tables to sit at? Who had servants and who were never servants?”

Resilience and hope


But Magona’s autobiography can also be read as an attempt to connect this past to the present and a possible future. Her self-storying shows us that it is not just the suffering that can be passed on from one generation to another, but also resilience, love, compassion and hope. As she articulates in her conversation with Salo:

“But we do need to fetch the good of traditions that we left behind in our haste to be



‘civilized’. Now is the time for Africa to be truly African through critical self-examination, self-healing, to a wholeness that we can hold up. If you respect yourself, then you will respect others because you will see yourself in others. Wholeness starts with the self and radiates outwards. This self-respect is all about the wholeness of healing and the wholeness of being.”

She reminds us that it is not in loving our neighbour that we become better human beings – the challenge before us is in learning to understand and perhaps one day to love our enemy.

Magona’s autobiographies offer us an avenue for reflection, remembering, reimagining and dreaming. Future generations, the children’s children, carry the burden and responsibility of reshaping the country and the world – and they can do this only if they know and understand where they come from. 

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.





Kruger Shalati: The Train on the Bridge

High above the riverbanks, aligned with the floor level of the train, are the deck and pool, offering a swimming experience unlike any other – with crocodiles, hippos, buffalos and elephants greeting guests metres below.

KRUGER SHALATI

One of the most anticipated and exciting new offerings of the iconic Kruger National Park is Kruger Shalati – a perfect combination of Africa’s most breathtaking natural splendours with well-deserved luxuries aboard a newly refurbished train that’s reminiscent of African excellence.

Permanently stationed on the historically-rich Selati Bridge above the Sabie River, Kruger Shalati offers the most unique luxury accommodation in a re-envisioned train, which pays homage to the guests who explored the park nearly 100 years ago while welcoming new explorers from near and far. The train celebrates where the first visits to the iconic park were allowed in the early 1920s – the train

would park overnight in the exact spot where Kruger Shalati is positioned.

The train consists of 31 rooms, comprising 24 carriage rooms and seven bridge house rooms, all of which provide a deeply visceral experience, tailored for immersive comfort. Whether you’re looking for a one-of-a-kind adventure, an enthralling break or to simply immerse yourself in earth’s finest creations,

Kruger Shalati looks forward to welcoming you on a journey of discovery with nature in the most extraordinary way imaginable.

The glass-walled, large train rooms allow for infinite views along the length of the majestic Sabie River, while the style of the train is a celebration of African design in collaboration with local art and crafting skills. High above the riverbanks, aligned with the floor level of the train, are the bespoke deck and pool, offering a swimming experience unlike any other – with crocodiles, hippos, buffalos and elephants greeting guests metres below.

The hotel offers guests a view of the majestic Sabie River, and if you are lucky, some animals that congregate on the banks of the river. Head to the lounge carriage for some incredible landscapes.

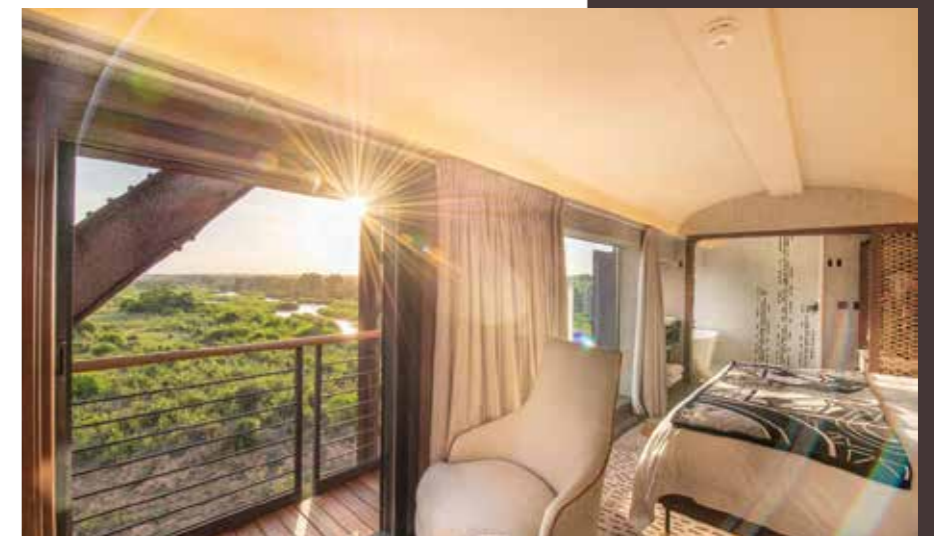
The hotel is a birder’s dream location. Guests of the hotel are noticing that some rarely sighted birds are being spotted in and around the Shalati area. This includes a crowned eagle that one guest managed to see from his room. Other birds often seen in the area are dark capped bulbuls, tawny flanked prinia, blue waxbills and the majestic bush shrike.

As the hotel is elevated, guests don’t even have to leave their rooms to spot some game as the animals flock near the river below. If you do though, only a small group of people is allowed to go out on game drives at a time with strict COVID-19 prevention measures in place.

Kruger Shalati has already been featured in many prestigious best-of lists:

- The Best New Hotel Openings of 2021 – Best New Hotels
- Best New Hotels Opening in Europe, Middle East and Africa in 2021
- The Most Extraordinary New Hotels Opening in 2021
- The 50 Best New Luxury Hotels to Visit in 2021
- The New Lodges to Plan a Trip for as South Africa Reopens
- The 20 Best Places to Travel to in 2021: Where to Go Next. 🇺🇦

<https://www.krugershalati.com>





VISIT
LIVE
WORK
PLAY
INVEST

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 rank among the world's top destinations to visit and have all the attributes that appeal to people looking for a great city in which to live, work, play and invest.

Cape Town is a proudly inclusive city, welcoming all who can join us in our vision to create a safe, sustainable, vibrant urban environment for generations to come.

We are 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 crowned 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 Travellers by Lonely Planet in 2017, Skytrax voted our airport the Best in Africa and international real estate company Savills ranked the Cape Town amongst the world's Top Tech Cities in a 2017 report.

VISIT

Cape Town is a must-visit destination. Cape Point, Groot Constantia, Kirstenbosch, Robben Island, the Table Mountain Cableway and the V&A Waterfront are the iconic destinations that form the core of the true Cape Town experience, and a trip to the city will not be complete without a visit to each Big 6 attractions. Cape Town also has the highest number of Blue Flag beaches in South Africa. Seven of the city's most popular beaches and three Cape Town marinas have been recognised for meeting the globally-acclaimed Blue Flag standards.

Beaches awarded the prestigious status include: Bikini Beach, Mnandi, Strandfontein, Llandudno, Camps Bay, Clifton 4th and Silwerstroom.

Cape Town has a number of world class museums that offer up 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 top cultural destination - is the latest addition to the Cape Town landscape and the first major museum in Africa dedicated to contemporary art. The museum, housed in the historic Grain Silo at the V&A Waterfront, comprises over 9,500 square meters (102,000 square feet) placing it among leading 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 mixture 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 and sales transactions have exceeded Johannesburg's and continue to attract international property investors. The city and surrounds is also home to four public universities, two globally recognised business schools and a number of trustworthy private and public institutions. Educational institutions situated in the city include the University of Cape Town, University of the Western Cape and the Cape Town University of Technology. Cape Town is also fast becoming the most digitally connected city in Africa. The City's public Wi-Fi service and other digital inclusion projects are part of a broader Digital City Strategy, which aims to make Cape Town the most digitally connected city in Africa. Other elements of the strategy include investment in digital infrastructure, digital business initiatives, and a focus on digital government.

WORK

Cape Town's favourable lifestyle 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, Foord, Coronation, Sanlam, Prescient and Sygnia. Most of these companies' staff and top executives live in the city. Top employment sectors in Cape Town include community and social services, the financial and trade sectors. The financial services sector employed the largest number of skilled individuals in 2015 (274 087) and the manufacturing sector employed the largest number of semi-skilled and unskilled individuals (111 213).

Cape Town is also home to over 200 companies in the Information Technology (IT) and software industry employing 7 500 people. Our large retailers have extensive distribution channels into Africa opening up the possibility of collaboration in moving products within the continent. Cape Town also has a booming film and media industry. It's a sector that has created more than 35 000 jobs, contributing about US\$ 92 million to the economy in the last 3 years.

Cape Town is home to the only Hollywood style film studio complex in Africa. Coupled with exceptionally skilled film crew and post-production services, our facilities are winning awards and attracting a growing number of productions and stars to our shores. We also act as a gateway to Africa with several companies running their African operations from our city. The City of Cape Town is making sure that our infrastructure investments support key sectors, like the tech industry. An extensive open source fibre optic network has been installed with plans to extend the footprint over the forthcoming years.

PLAY

Cape Town hosts a wide range of local and international events - from concerts and community-based events to business conferences and international sports tournaments. The city is a creative hub with arts, heritage and cultural sites, activities and opportunities for all. We have a lively arts and culture scene where creativity and heritage are explored through theatre, live music, dance, visual arts and more. Both day and night in Cape Town offer you exciting cultural spaces to visit and events to be a part of. Explore galleries and museums, cultural precincts, attend signature events and explore our top cultural venues.

INVEST

Cape Town is South Africa's oldest city, its 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 biggest economic hub. The Mother City produces 9.8% of South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) and accounts for more than 71% of the Western Cape's economic activity (Global Insight, 2016). The City has a diversified economy, and the three biggest sectors are: finance, insurance, property and business services. Cape Town is attracting thinkers, innovators and design led entrepreneurs 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 information technology sector, with more tech start-ups than anywhere else on the continent.

Cape Town has been chosen as the African headquarters of innovation by companies such as Barclay Rise and Thomson Reuters. The city is also the home to many of South Africa and Africa's financial institutions and, coupled with the national headquarters of many legal and consultancy firms, offer 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 process outsourcing (BPO) sector, with many global call centres and online retailers like Amazon choosing to conduct their operations from our shores.

www.capetown.gov.za/visit
www.investcapetown.com
www.capetown.travel



Making progress possible. Together.



The Stellenbosch wine routes have a coordinated network of more than 150 wineries, each offering a unique cellar-door experience for the wine-lover and tourist. There are five sub-routes and each has its own characteristics in terms of prominent wine styles, climate and geographical location. As part of the Cape Winelands, the Stellenbosch wine routes are part of the six most popular tourist attractions in South Africa and are also connected to the global Great Wine Capitals Network.