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HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH 2022

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INVESTORS, ENTREPRENEURS URGED TO BE PART OF SA'S GROWTH STORY



As South Africa continues along the path of reconstruction and recovery, President Cyril Ramaphosa has called on investors, entrepreneurs and businesspeople to be a part of the journey.

President Ramaphosa said that investors needed to know that their investments were secure, that the operating environment was stable, and that they were supported by policy certainty and regulatory safeguards.

The President said this when he addressed the fourth South African Investment Conference (SAIC) on Thursday, 24 March 2022, at the Sandton Convention Centre, in Johannesburg.

The President initiated the SAIC annual event in 2018 in an effort to secure domestic and inbound investment of R1.2 trillion in investments over five years.

“You need to know that the measures we are taking to tackle crime and damage to infrastructure are having an effect. Your investments are making a difference in local economies and in people’s lives.

“We therefore invite you to be part of South Africa’s growth story. We invite you to be part of a young, dynamic, resilient nation positioning itself at the forefront of progress and change,” he said.

The President said that this fourth SAIC could not be taking place at a better time, just as the country was casting off the long shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic and embarking on a concerted and determined recovery.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, by the time that the third SAIC was held in 2020, R774 billion in investment commitments had been raised which were two-thirds of the way to reaching the R1.2 trillion target.

He said that government was not unaware of the challenges the country faced, and knew that the challenges were many and complex.

“I am here to say that as the Government of the Republic of South Africa, we are making progress along the difficult but necessary path of reform we embarked on three years ago; that we are starting to see the results,” he said.

Transforming the energy sector

On Eskom’s rolling blackouts, President Ramaphosa said that no economy could operate without a reliable supply of electricity.

He said that this resulted in the country having undertaken the most extensive transformation of the energy sector in nearly a century.

In December last year, Eskom met its deadline of establishing a separate transmission entity and was set to complete the process of unbundling into separate entities for generation, transmission and distribution by the end of this year.

“We are moving ahead to facilitate a competitive market for electricity generation, and the establishment of an independent state-owned

transmission company. We have a deficit of some 4 000 MW of energy supply,” the President said.

He announced that government was working with the private sector to fast-track investment to unlock a potential 4 000 MW of embedded generation.

“We have increased the licensing threshold for embedded generation projects from 1 MW to 100 MW. Last year, we launched bid window 6 of our Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme.”

The President said that this was going to add new generation capacity to the grid over the next two years, mainly through wind and solar power.

“And so, even as the country continues to experience intermittent load shedding, we are moving with pace and determination to bring new generation capacity online in the shortest possible time.

“We are doing so while undertaking the far-reaching reforms that will secure a reliable, affordable and sustainable supply of electricity well into the future,” he said.

Reforms

While the country undertakes a range of measures to improve operational performance, President Ramaphosa said that government was also implementing structural reforms to increase investment, introduce new technologies and skills and improve efficiency in the rail and port infrastructure.

He emphasised that for South Africa’s economy to realise its potential as a supplier of products to markets across the world, it needed roads, railways and ports that worked.

“The establishment of the Transnet National Ports Authority as a separate entity may not, at first glance, seem particularly transformational, but it is a long-overdue structural reform that will have a profound effect on investment in ports infrastructure,” he said.

The President said that Transnet would soon start the process of providing third-party access to the freight rail network, a development that would encourage more efficient use of some of the country’s most valuable infrastructure assets.

Spectrum, approach to SOEs

Last week, government concluded the first significant spectrum auction in close to two decades.

President Ramaphosa said that this was going to unlock a valuable spectrum for mobile communications that would have significant benefits for consumers and businesses and would facilitate the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the country.

“Soon, we will be completing the migration of our TV signal from analogue to digital, unlocking much of the country’s digital potential. Our state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have been a huge drain on the fiscus over the years. Our reform process is aimed at bringing this to an end,” he said.

Like many other countries, government is transforming its entire approach to SOEs so that they are better able to fulfil their vital social and economic functions.

“We have revised our Critical Skills List, which will enable us to attract skilled professionals to work and do business in South Africa.

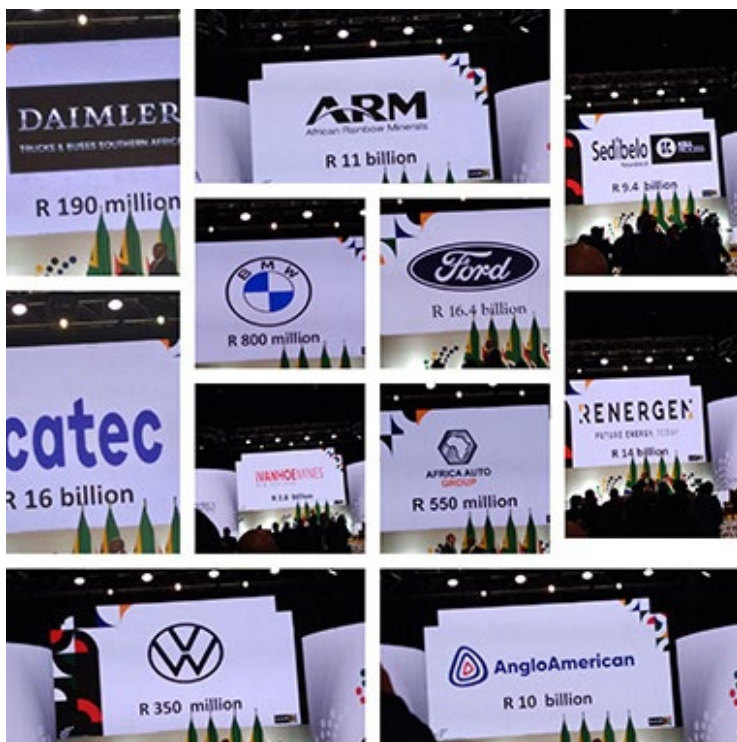
“It is our ambition to be an economy and a society that is open to global skills, that attracts talent, expertise and innovation,” he said.

The President reiterated government’s commitment to establishing a special unit in The Presidency to deal with bureaucratic red tape, to improve the operating environment for businesses and to reduce the cost of doing business.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)



SA RIPE WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTORS



Investors have once again affirmed South Africa as an attractive investment destination, as they have committed to investing in the country's economy at the fourth South Africa Investment Conference (SAIC).

With the many companies that made new investment commitments at this year's morning session of the conference, which was held on Thursday, 24 March 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa said they did so because they saw opportunity in the country.

"Despite the impact of the [COVID] pandemic, by the time of the third South Africa Investment Conference in 2020, we had raised a total of R774 billion in investment commitments," President Ramaphosa said.

Addressing the SAIC at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, he said government was two-thirds of the way to reaching its target.

The conference was part of government's investment drive to attract R1.2 trillion over five years.

"Of the R774 billion committed, around R316 billion has so far been invested. Of the 152 investment pledges, 45 projects have been completed. A further 57 are under construction.

"Fifteen have been put on hold, in several cases due to the impact of the pandemic. The investments that have been realised since our first conference have created job opportunities, increased localisation and expanded local value chains," the President said.

The investments have brought skills, technology and know-how into the economy.

"Whether it is a young person employed in a data centre, a worker at an auto plant, or a small business supplier to a renewable energy plant, these investments are changing people's lives.

"The chance to earn a decent livelihood is fundamental to the dignity and worth of every human being, and it is these investments that are making the difference," the President said.

At this year's conference, many companies across various sectors came forward to make new investment commitments.

South Africa attracted commitments across a wide range of economic sectors, including energy; automotive; mining and mineral beneficiation; healthcare and the pharmaceutical sector; as well as the creative and fashion industries.

In addition, commitments were made in the development finance institutions sector; infrastructure, property and logistics sector; as well as the food and beverages industry.

The first set of commitments from this year's conference are:

Investments in the energy sector:

- Scatec pledged R16 billion for solar photovoltaic (PV) cells and energy storage projects in the Northern Cape.
- Africa Rainbow Energy pledged R3 billion towards several renewable energy projects across South Africa for the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme.
- Polorium pledged R30 million in the establishment of a production facility for lithium batteries in the Western Cape.
- Bio2watt Purely Green Energy, a black industrialist company, invested R463 million in biogas facilities in Gauteng and the Western Cape.
- Seraphim New Energy pledged R437 million for the production of PV cells and solar PV modules in the Special Economic Zone

(SEZ) located in the Eastern Cape.

Investments in the automotive industry:

- Ford pledged R16.4 billion towards the manufacturing of the next-generation ranger in Gauteng and Eastern Cape.
- Africa Auto Group, a black industrialist company, pledged R550 million in a facility to supply automotive components in the Eastern Cape.
- BMW pledged R800 million for automotive manufacturing in Gauteng.
- Daimler Trucks & Buses Southern Africa pledged R190 million for new headquarters in Gauteng.
- Formex Industries (Pty) Ltd pledged R102 million for the automotive components sector in the Eastern Cape.
- Wheel Assemblers pledged R180 million for automotive tyre and rim assembly in the East London Industrial Development Zone.
- Volkswagen pledged R350 million for automotive manufacturing in the Eastern Cape.

Investments in mining and mineral beneficiation:

- African Rainbow Minerals pledged R11 billion for two new platinum mines in Limpopo.
- Anglo American pledged R10 billion in investment as part of expanding its R100 billion investment in its local business, over a five-year period. The company has made significant progress towards converting its open cast Venetia diamond mine in Limpopo to underground mining.
- Implats pledged R11.8 billion towards new expanded mining and processing in the platinum sector in Limpopo and Gauteng.
- Isondo Precious Metals pledged R140 million for the production of components for fuel cells and electrolyzer in the OR Tambo SEZ in Gauteng.
- Ivanhoe Mines pledged R2.8 billion for further expanding their mine in Limpopo.
- Sedibelo Platinum pledged R9.4 billion in investment in platinum mining.
- Renergent pledged R14 billion for the construction of a helium and liquid natural gas plant in the Free State.
- Kropz pledged R497 million for a phosphate mine in the Western Cape.

Investments in the healthcare and pharmaceutical sector:

- Afrigen has committed to invest R652 million towards a global mRNA technology transfer hub and training centre in the Western Cape.
- Aspen Pharmacare pledged R500 million for vaccine manufacturing in the Eastern Cape.
- Biovac pledged R2.5 billion for vaccine manufacturing capacity in the Western Cape.
- BT Industrial Group is investing R226 million towards the production high-density polyethylene water pipe and diversifying into medical products in Gauteng.
- Cipla pledged R150 million towards the pharmaceutical sector in KwaZulu-Natal.
- IMT pledged R20 million for the localisation of syringe manufacturing in Gauteng.
- NantSA pledged R3 billion towards vaccine and biologics production facilities in the Western Cape and Gauteng.
- Pfizer pledged R255 million for vaccine manufacturing in the Western Cape.
- Siemens pledged R484 million for educational software in the healthcare sector.

Investment in the creative industries and fashion:

- Warner Media pledged R350 million for television series production in the Western Cape.
- Netflix invested R929 million in new television and film production in Gauteng and Western Cape.
- Video Vision Entertainment pledged R7.5 billion towards the eThekweni film studio in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Compagne Mauricienne de Textile Ltée pledged R390 million towards a greenfield textile manufacturing plant in KwaZulu-Natal.
- PFN pledged R650 million for a second non-woven textile line in the Western Cape.

Investments in infrastructure, property and logistics sector:

- Cato Ridge Logistics Hub Consortium pledged R6.2 billion for dry port and railway infrastructure in KwaZulu-Natal.
- DSV committed R2.2 billion towards the transport and logistics sector in Gauteng and the Western Cape.
- Imperial invested R2.1 billion in the transport and logistics sector in South Africa.
- Collins Residential pledged R2 billion towards mixed used property development in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Waterfall Management Company has committed R18 billion to commercial and residential property and data warehouses in Gauteng.
- Telkom invested R7 billion in telecommunications and broadband infrastructure across the country.

Investments in the food and beverages industry:

- RCL Food committed R400 million towards expanding food and manufacturing capacity in Limpopo and Gauteng.
- Lotus pledged R170 million towards the manufacturing of food and confectionary in the Western Cape.
- ECP committed to investing R500 million in new Burger King outlets across the country.
- Equator pledged R2 billion towards a brewery in Gauteng.
- The South African Breweries committed R4.5 billion towards their brewery capacity in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape.

Investment in the development finance institutions sector:

- The New Development Bank pledged R21.7 billion towards projects in the country.
- The African Development Bank Group invested R42.5 billion towards projects in energy, transport, water, sanitation and financial services.
- Meridiam committed R3.3 billion towards projects for just energy transition and mobile and social infrastructure across the country.
- Norfuna pledged R2.25 billion towards projects in clean tech and agroprocessing.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA DELIVERS KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS DAY IN KOSTER

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Monday, 21 March 2022, delivered the keynote address at the 2022 Human Rights Day national event at the Reagile Community Centre in Koster, North West.

The Human Rights Day theme was: “The Year of Unity and Renewal: Protecting and Preserving Our Human Rights Gains”.

The day commemorated 62 years since the Sharpeville Massacre that occurred on 21 March 1960 when 69 anti-apartheid protesters were killed by the police.



This national day also honoured 35 people who were killed when police cracked down on community members at Uitenhage/Langa who had attended a funeral on 21 March 1985.

Human Rights Day is also an opportunity for South Africans to reflect on the human rights gains achieved since the advent of democracy and to recommit to upholding the rights of all who live in South Africa.

Human Rights Day is the focal day of the annual Human Rights Month programme of activities generated or supported by various sectors of society.

LESOTHO'S KING LETSIE III VISITS SA

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Friday, 18 March 2022, received a courtesy call from King Letsie III of the Kingdom of Lesotho at



the President's official residence at Mahlamba Ndlopfu, Pretoria.

In a statement on Thursday, 17 March 2022, The Presidency said the heads of state were expected to exchange views on bilateral relations and progress regarding the Southern African Development Community (SADC) facilitation process in the Kingdom of Lesotho.

In September 2014, then Deputy President Ramaphosa was appointed as SADC Facilitator to the Kingdom of Lesotho.

After assuming the position of President of the Republic in 2018, President Ramaphosa appointed the retired Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke to lead the SADC Facilitation Team to Lesotho

"The SADC Facilitation Team, as is the case with all visits and activities they undertake, apprised the President of the progress made in the reforms process following their visit to the Kingdom of Lesotho from 3 to 4 March 2022.

"It is envisaged that Basotho, through the facilitation of President Ramaphosa, will work in earnest to complete the reforms process before holding the next general elections scheduled for September 2022," The Presidency said.

President Ramaphosa was supported by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

UN SECURITY COUNCIL MUST BE OVERHAULED, SAYS PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA

President Cyril Ramaphosa has called for the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to be overhauled and for its composition to be representative of the global landscape

The President said this when he responded to oral questions before the National Assembly, in Cape Town, on Thursday, 17 March 2022.



He said the fact that Africa, a continent of 1.3 billion people, did not have a significant voice in the UNSC was something of great concern to the citizens of the continent.

“There is a tendency for the most powerful countries to use their positions as permanent UN Security Council members to serve their national interests, rather than the interests of global peace and stability.

“The Security Council needs to be overhauled so that there is equitable representation and a more inclusive mechanism for resolving international disputes.”

The President said the conflict in Ukraine showed a need for a multilateral approach when nations of the world dealt with issues of peace and security.

“It also demonstrates the weaknesses in the structure, practices and architecture of the United Nations.

“The composition of the UN Security Council, in particular, does not reflect the realities of the prevailing global landscape.

“We should also work to revitalise the Non-Aligned Movement, to ensure that those countries that are not part of the hegemonic contests between the big powers can work together to build peace across the globe,” he said.

The President called for the de-escalation, dialogue and a return to diplomacy with regard to the conflict in Ukraine.

“Additionally, the Secretary-General has called for an immediate ceasefire, respect for the UN Charter and international law and adherence to existing peace mechanisms, including the implementation of the Minsk Agreements, as part of multilateral efforts to end the violence.

“South Africa stands ready to support genuine multilateral efforts to end the conflict and achieve a lasting peace in the region.”

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

PRESIDENT UNPACKS SA'S STANCE ON UKRAINE CONFLICT



President Cyril Ramaphosa says government opted to engage in dialogue and mediation instead of taking a more “adversarial” position in the Ukraine issue so as to help South Africa contribute to the achievement of a resolution.

The President said this when he responded to oral questions in the National Assembly on Thursday, 22 March 2022.

“We support the principle that members should refrain from the threat of use of force against the territorial and political independence of other states,” the President said.

The President said this was the reason South Africa, at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, strongly urged all sides to uphold international law, including humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as the principles of the UN Charter, including sovereignty.

“While there are people within this country and elsewhere who want us to adopt a more adversarial position, our position seeks to contribute to the creation of conditions that make the achievement of a durable resolution of the conflict possible.”

The President said through this approach, South Africa was able to make its voice heard, not only publicly, but also to the parties that are involved in the conflict and by doing so, “... bring our influence to bare in the issue of dialogue, mediation and negotiations ...”.

Economic recovery plan will protect economy from conflict-related pressures

President Ramaphosa said, meanwhile, that the best way to protect South Africa from the external economic shocks, like the ripple effects of the Ukraine conflict, was to continue to implement the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

He said like other countries, South Africa was concerned about the direct impact of the conflict on its own economy through financial markets and inflationary pressures “that will come about through food price increases and fuel price increases”.

“As a small and open economy with significant debt levels, one of the most significant steps we can take to reduce its vulnerability to external shocks it to improve our macro-economic stability.”

The President said South Africa had many strengths, even as a small economy country.

“We have strengths such as the highly developed and well-capitalised financial and banking sector that adheres to internationally recognised frameworks.

“The depth of local capital markets reduces our vulnerability to foreign currency denominated debt.

“We benefit from having an independent central bank, a floating exchange rate regime and prudent capital controls,” he said.

The President said these strengths would be complemented by the work underway to stabilise debt and to reduce our deficit, alongside the far-reaching structural reforms that are now underway.

“In short, the best way to protect our economy and welfare of our people is to proceed with the implementation of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan,” he said.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA VISITS NETFLIX "PROJECT PANDA"

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday, 17 March 2022, visited Project Panda – the working title for Netflix’s live action anime series, “One Piece”, which is currently shooting on location at the Cape Town Film Studios.



The visit by the President allowed Netflix, as the world's leading global streaming service, and its local partners Film Afrika to showcase the *Project Panda* production and its contribution to South Africa's creative industry.

In September 2021, Netflix announced a commitment of US\$400 000 (approximately R5.5 million) to support black creatives in the South African film and television industry.

The Netflix Black Creatives Empowerment Fund will be implemented in a two-pronged approach: the first being a grant of around R1.4 million to the Independent Black Filmmakers Collective and the second of more than R4 million designated for fully-funded scholarships and student debt relief at higher education institutions in South Africa.

Project Panda is in production at the internationally renowned Cape Town Film Studios, which represents an investment since 2010 of over R1 billion to create a state-of-the-art film studio complex.

The studios are the premier film production destination in the southern hemisphere.

The complex has enabled more than 100 productions, with a collective budget of over US\$2 billion to anchor their productions.

These productions include blockbuster films and popular series on local and global platforms. The studios have had a positive impact on the economy since its opening, with more than 100 000 people being able to work on various productions over the years.

Cape Town Film Studios has been the catalyst over the past 12 years for the Western Cape to benefit from the significant multiplier offered by the film industry, generating an estimated R7 billion per year and totalling more than R100 billion to the region over this period.

Similar facilities are envisaged with the development of eThekweni Film City in Durban later this year.

The visit by the President highlighted the impact of this venture on the local economy.

The President was guided on an interactive tour that included visual effects and stunt demonstrations and a conversation with four (of the more than 30) trainees who are part of the massive project.

The aim was to give President Ramaphosa a deeper understanding of the impact of Netflix's investments in the creative industries and adjacent industries, including tourism, small business and supply chain economies.

The President was hosted by the Netflix team and Film Afrika during the hour-long set tour.

One Piece is Netflix's biggest production project in Africa to date – both in terms of scale and budget, covering South African labour, infrastructure and suppliers.

One Piece, which is set in Cape Town, involves more than 50 South African cast members; more than 1 000 crew member jobs (consisting of 67% previously disadvantaged individuals and 46% youth employees), as well an Academy of Creative Excellence mentorship programme for more than 30 young creatives and technicians in collaboration with the SA Film Academy during 2022.

One Piece is a live-action pirate adventure series, based on one of the best-selling manga series of all time. It is executive produced by Steven Maeda, Matt Owens, Marty Adelstein, Becky Clements and Eiichiro Oda, and stars Iñaki Godoy, Mackenyu, Emily Rudd, Jacob

Romero Gibson, Taz Skylar, Morgan Davies, Ilia Isorely's Paulino, Aidan Scott, Jeff Ward, McKinley Belcher III and Vincent Regan, among others to be announced.

SA'S INVESTMENT DRIVE SOLDIERS ON DESPITE COVID PANDEMIC



South Africa's investment drive has soldiered on, despite the devastating COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating slow economic recovery.

This was revealed on Wednesday, 16 March 2022, during a business breakfast as South Africa geared to host the fourth instalment of the South African Investment Conference (SAIC).

The SAIC spearheads government's investment drive of attracting R1.2 trillion investment in five years. The business breakfast was attended by business executives and investment envoys representing various African states and representatives of the South African Government.

"South Africa remains an investment destination of choice," said Ambassador Sadick Jaffer, Chief Director: Investment Promotion, InvestSA, Department of Trade, Industry and Competition.

"At the last SAIC, held in Johannesburg in 2020, about 50 entities made new investment pledges to the value of R109 billion, bringing the three-year total to 774 billion. Five of these projects, worth R4.3 billion, have already been launched and 21 others are under construction or being rolled out – these are worth R34 billion," Amb Jaffer reported.

Of the 71 projects announced in 2019, 24 projects had been launched and an additional 25 projects worth R199.4 billion were under construction.

In addition, he said seven projects worth R45.6 billion, accounting for 12.5% of investments made in 2019, were in the early stages of implementation.

"Against the backdrop of slow economic recovery exacerbated by a devastating COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted the global supply chain, our investment drive soldiered on.

"We adapted and adopted new ways of engaging with potential investors with one central message – South Africa remains an investment destination of choice," said Amb Jaffer.

The chief director said the investments were monitored until completion, saying this was with the aim of identifying challenges timeously and assisting when required.

Presidential Investment envoy, Jeff Radebe, said South Africa's strategic position within the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) placed it in good stead to benefit from opportunities presented by AfCTA.

"Africa offers investors access to a market of more than one billion people with a gross domestic product that exceeds US\$2.6 trillion," he noted.

The former Minister said historic trade barriers were coming down and economic activities were increasingly conducted seamlessly across the continent.

"Africa is growing fast into an integrated investment destination," he said.

AfCTA, which brings together 55 member states of the African Union, and came into effect in January 2021, aims to accelerate intra-

continental trade and boost Africa's standing in the global market.

"AfCFTA adds a new dimension to the 2022 Investment Conference," Radebe added.

"Now we can demonstrate the significant advantages of investing in the South African economy and how returns can be multiplied through access to a much larger market. South Africa is an attractive destination for investors located outside of the continent. Many such companies also prefer to locate their regional headquarters here because of the access to quality infrastructure and connections to global supply networks.

"Through our participation in AfCFTA, we have preferential access to African markets and a deep understanding of business conditions on the continent."

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

AFCTA TO BE CENTRE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**16-17
MARCH
2022**

THE CAPITAL
ON THE PARK
SANDTON

Inaugural Local Government
**AFRICAN CONTINENTAL
FREE TRADE AREA
DIALOGUE**

8 SALGA | **25 YEARS OF MACEA**

AfCFTA
Creating One African Market

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) has been welcomed as a progressive platform to stimulate the continent's wide inclusive and sustainable industrial development, amounting to US\$450 billion of regional income.

The development was welcomed during a two-day hybrid inaugural dialogue of the AfCFTA in Sandton. The dialogue was hosted by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

AfCFTA Secretary-General, Wamkele Mene; United Cities and Local Government of Africa Secretary-General, Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi; Gauteng MEC of Economic Development, Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development, Parks Tau; SALGA President, Cllr Bheke Stofile; and SALGA Gauteng PEC Chairperson, Cllr Jongisizwe Dlabathi, were among delegates at the event. Economists, policy and

trade experts, as well as local government representatives were also in attendance.

On the AfCFTA negotiations and implications for local government, Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), Chief Director, Niki Kruger, said the World Bank anticipated that the AfCFTA would boost regional income by 7% or US\$450 billion. It was also expected to accelerate wage growth for women and lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035.

Tau said the implementation of the AfCFTA treaty would take place at local government level.

Delivering the keynote address on Tuesday, 15 March 2022, Tau said it was “logical” that municipalities were “adequately capacitated and resourced to leverage the attendant opportunities from the Free Trade Agreement”.

He said: “Since this Free Trade Agreement signifies a game-changer, its impact rests in the integration of Africa into a single continental market for trade and exchange of goods and services with an accompanying free movement of entrepreneurs and enterprises.

“As the Gauteng Provincial Government, the objectives and intended outputs from the Free Trade Agreement certainly find practical expression through the Growing Gauteng Together 2030 (GGT2030) plan of action. This pragmatic provincial blueprint has specific action plans to expand intra-Africa trade, investment and commerce.”

Stofile said the agreement would “create a single market for goods and services, with free movement of businesspersons and investments across borders, which will strengthen trade and intra-African investment and cooperation”.

It was estimated that the agreement would boost intra-African trade by 52% by 2022, ultimately leading to the creation of an integrated African market and the realisation of the African Union Agenda 2063 towards an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

WORLD PARLIAMENTS CALLED TO ACT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE



South Africa's National Assembly Speaker, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, has urged the heads of parliament around the world to take all necessary steps to deal with climate change.

This, Mapisa-Nqakula said, could be done through oversight and other interventions with the constitutional powers of the institutions they lead.

Mapisa-Nqakula led a multiparty delegation of senior members of the South African Parliament to the 144th Plenary Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in Bali, Indonesia.

The IPU is a global organisation of national parliaments that facilitates parliamentary diplomacy and empowers parliaments and parliamentarians to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development worldwide.

Addressing the delegates on Monday, 22 March 2022, Mapisa-Nqakula said the 144th Session, themed “Getting to Zero, Mobilising Parliaments to Act on Climate Change”, enjoined the IPU to reflect on the question of “climate change” and the need to mobilise parliaments to act swiftly in reducing its negative effects.

The Speaker said tackling climate change had far-reaching implications for socio-economic development, production and consumption patterns.

She said climate change remained a serious global threat to national and international development, and its impact had continued to exacerbate at a time when the world was also dealing with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The poor and the most vulnerable, on the [one] hand, have borne the greatest brunt and suffered the most due to the impact of climate change. It is worth mentioning that the manner in which climate change affects us depends on where we are located on the global map,” Mapisa-Nqakula said.

As it could be expected, she said, the hardest hit population groups were poor people, who were in the main, inhabitants of developing countries and are predominantly farmers who depend on rain-fed and basic mechanisms for tilling the land and earning a livelihood.

She argued that the only way their conditions could change was through policy shifts.

“Critical to this is dedicated action on the part of policymakers and the people who represent them, like legislators and members of Parliament. Great changes throughout history have been born out of crisis – we should therefore not waste this moment,” Mapisa-Nqakula said.

The Speaker also confirmed South Africa’s appreciation of the outcome of the Glasgow Climate Change Conference, which called upon the international community to rally behind a shared objective to act with a greater sense of urgency, based on international equity and the latest available science.

She said South Africa’s main priorities remained focussed on securing an ambitious and progressive finance and adaptation package to support the African region and other developing countries to alleviate the negative impact of climate change.

“In South Africa, we support the Government’s view articulated by the President on the green recovery for our country. It is our view that the Rome COP 26 legislative prescripts can and must safeguard the planet’s ecosystems, reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and limit global temperature increases.

“In this instance, we call on the high-income countries to step up and take responsibility given the fact that they continue to benefit most from the use of fossil fuels. Tackling climate change had far-reaching implications for socio-economic development, production and consumption patterns,” she said.

The 144th Assembly of the IPU kicked off on Sunday, 20 March 2022, and concluded on Thursday, 24 March, with the adoption of a wide range of resolutions.

– Source: [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)



SOUTH AFRICA SELECTED AS ONE OF THE BEST “AFRICAN PAVILIONS AT EXPO 2020 DUBAI”



South Africa has been selected as one of the top African Pavilions at the Expo 2020 Dubai.

Standing alongside all the countries of Africa, South Africa was one of only seven mentioned in a recent article in *The National*.

Expo 2020 will see millions of people worldwide meet and celebrate their collective humanity. It is an opportunity to work towards a shared and sustainable future under the promise of "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future". Each country participating has a pavilion – a place to enjoy an immersive cultural experience and discover what makes each country unique.

Calling South Africa the "opportunity district", our country's pavilion is a melting pot of our culture and showcases how "innovation is informed by a keen understanding of the past and where culture is as important as commerce".

Think South Africa – think opportunity! Our excellence can be seen in our rich heritage, incredible wonders, our creativity and innovative thinking. Our one-of-a-kind country is a testament that excellence does breed opportunity.

"Since the opening day of Expo 2020, the South Africa Pavilion has been a hive of activity with concerts, culinary displays, and even a television studio for a variety show featuring South African celebrities such as Nomzamo Mbatha.

"The pavilion is laced with colourful geometric prints linked to the Ndebele ethnic group, and its spacious and uncluttered design allows you to take in all the exhibitions exploring South Africa's cosmopolitanism, sporting achievements and some wonderful images of pioneering former leader Nelson Mandela."

The other African countries who made the list were Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Senegal.

– Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

INVESTING IN SA PAYS OFF FOR PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY

Belief, determination and patience are the key ingredients that a pharmaceutical company invested in South Africa has consistently used over the years.

The recipe continues to work for B. Braun, which has found South Africa to be a profitable investment destination. The company, which is headquartered in Germany, has had a presence in South Africa since 1995.



“We believe in the future of South Africa. The main target is to produce products at the highest quality standards and to bring the cost down as much as possible merely through productivity and efficiency. This was the mission when we pursued this investment,” says B. Braun Managing Director for Southern Africa, Jens Papperitz.

His comments came ahead of the fourth South African Investment Conference (SAIC).

In 2019, B. Braun pledged to invest R300 million at the SAIC. This was to expand its capabilities, tripling its manufacturing volume, where a significant portion was to be produced for exports.

The investment was spent on the construction of a new state-of-the-art facility that has united the production of intravenous sterile products, dialysis concentrates and disinfectants.

Creating jobs

As a result, the company created employment for about 160 people at its integrated pharmaceutical plant, situated in the Longlake Business Park in Modderfontein, Johannesburg.

The construction of the plant saw the creation of between 500 and 1000 job opportunities.

The majority of the new employees, who live in the nearby township of Alexandra, were recruited through the Youth Employment Service (YES) programme.

YES is a business-led collaboration that seeks out ground-breaking ways, through innovation and technological best practice, to reignite the economy and give youth a dignified first chance.

As a proud participant of the YES programme, the company has improved the lives of young people employed at its Johannesburg plant.

Working for a better society

With continuous investments, the company has become one of the leading providers of dialysis services in Southern Africa.

As a leading global player in medical devices and pharmaceuticals, the company has in the last 20 years grown and reinvested its profits in South Africa – a country which boasts a business-friendly environment. The country also offers excellent infrastructure, a wealth of natural resources as well as a large resource base of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour.

Strategically located at the entry point of the continent, South Africa also offers access to a market of 1.3 billion people.

B. Braun Southern Africa employs about 920 people.

The company prioritises locally manufactured products and limits imports to only equipment that is critical for the success of the factory or has superior efficiency over locally sourced products.

B. Braun's piping and air-handling systems were manufactured locally.

– Source: SAnews.gov.za

SEVERAL SOUTH AFRICANS JUST MADE HISTORY AS BEING PART OF THE FIRST OFF-PLANET ART GALLERY



When the Northrop Grumman's NG-17 Cygnus spacecraft took off from NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia, United States, to deliver a payload to the International Space Station (ISS), it carried something truly unique.

Among the equipment was a small purple container, just about the size of a lunchbox, carrying 64 artifacts each no bigger than one cubic centimetre. While the package may be small, for a handful of South Africans as well as international artists it was a big deal, cementing their place in space history as being part of the first off-planet art gallery.

The project, called the Moon Gallery, is all thanks to a specialised research module provided by Nanoracks, a Texas-based space services company. Arranged in an eight-by-eight grid, the works of art vary in material and format, from 2D prints to 3D free-floating objects, as well as one AR (augmented-reality) engraving.

For Johannesburg-born artist Marcus Neustetter, it symbolised a decade's worth of work looking to the stars for inspiration.

"There was a moment when they were talking about the risks and the number of things that could go wrong ... even once it was in orbit, it was not yet guaranteed that it was going to meet the ISS. It was a great achievement to see it orbiting and then when it docked with ISS, then suddenly it hit. It was amazing."

His piece, titled "A Letter to SumbandilaSat", is all about sending a message to what remains of South African micro-Earth observation satellite Sumbandila, which launched in 2009, lost contact with Earth in 2011, and finally broke apart in the atmosphere in 2021

On a piece of folded acrylic plastic, Neustetter hand painted images taken by the satellite before it lost contact with Earth as well as etched a new message in morse code reading "lead the way again".

"It's amazing to think there is something out there [in space] that I've drawn. I'm secretly hoping that whatever is left of Sumbandila will pass the ISS at some point and notice that there's a letter for her and someone will read it out to her so that I can create a new connection once again."

There is more to the project than simply inspiring discussions. The astronauts intend to run tests on the materials to see how they behave in microgravity.

"The lessons we learn from this endeavour about containment, material dynamics and enhanced imagery will help in the design of future experiments and in implementation of The Moon Gallery's ultimate goal to establish the first art gallery on the moon," said Scott Rodriguez, Vice President of Government Programmes at Nanoracks.

This could be even more surreal thanks to another group of South Africans, including Neustetter, taking part in the project.

A collaboration piece brought together by a team of artists called the Imaginary Futures submitted "I Will BE ..." a collection of 23 abstract "jigsaw" pieces on a transparent acrylic paper finely cut with a laser.

The pieces will float freely in their 1cm cube, constantly creating new sculptural forms.

"The collaboration is really beautiful because it's all of these different voices, essentially ideas by this group of participants, that's now collectively on the ISS," says Neustetter.

The Imaginary Futures project was born in Bloemfontein from the idea of gathering stories and giving a voice to creatives. It started off in the form of an interactive planetarium show and eventually grew into an online immersive experience programme connecting unlikely collaborators and unearthing new narratives and speculations around our unknown future.

"My creativity floating into space, it's like a dream come true, it lights up my eyes like stars aligned with dreams and visions on the horizon. The art of the space I occupy," says Wendy Menong.

"I guess whoever said the sky is the limit was wrong. My idea is in space," says Reginald Milanzi.

"This is the most insanely epic imagining ... Wow everyone, a little bit of us all is orbiting this beautiful universe together," says, Aja Marneweck.

The Moon Gallery will orbit Earth for 10 weeks before returning to Earth. It serves as a prototype for delivering a similar gallery to the surface of the moon, which envisions leaving 100 artworks on the exterior of a Lunar Lander 5, in 2025.

"We hope that this mission will teach us a lot about the conditions in space and will inspire artists for our next mission – the Moon – as we seek to extend our cultural dialogue to the furthest reaches of human exploration," said the Moon Gallery's curator, Anna Sitnikova.

A full list of artists and artworks is available on the Moon Gallery website.

– Source: www.businessinsider.com

THE DHL VELDSKOEN WAS JUST UNVEILED IN LONDON – WITH ONLY 365 PAIRS MADE

DHL Express, the global logistics firm, has collaborated with South Africa's Veldskoен to release a limited-edition shoe.

In what has been described as an unlikely pairing, DHL, the German-headquartered logistics company that delivers more than 1.6 billion parcels around the globe each year, has sought out a six-year-old South African shoe company for its latest foray into the world of fashion.



It's not the first time DHL has collaborated with a fashion brand. Back in 2015, the deliveries giant teamed up with French fashion brand Vetements to debut a t-shirt on a Paris catwalk. The following year, DHL partnered with the online fashion store mybudapester.com to

produce a limited-edition sneaker.

In its latest fashion campaign, DHL has looked to South African shoemakers. The iconic leather veldskoek shoes are produced by hand at the family-owned Hopewell Footwear factory in Durban. Veldskoek Shoes, started in 2016, has since grown into a global brand, with footwear stocked by retailers in 32 countries.

The DHL X Veldskoek collaboration was unveiled in London on Thursday, 17 March 2022.

The leather veldskoek, with the red and yellow colours of DHL and hand-painted wedge sole, features artwork by local South African artist Reggie Khumalo.

Dubbed the "Dear Everyone" campaign, the shoe was created to celebrate individuality and unity recognised during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to Megan Collinicos, DHL Express' VP of Marketing for Sub Saharan Africa.

"Following our successful fashion collaborations across Europe, North America and Asia, we wanted to find an African brand for our next exciting collaboration," said Collinicos.

"Veldskoek created a modern take on an iconic South African shoe by adding a pop of colour to the soles and laces, and have built up an impressive customer base across the globe since their inception in 2016."

Only 365 pairs of the "Dear Everyone" shoes have been produced. To get a pair, buyers need to enter a drop lottery and hope they get lucky. Selected buyers will pay R4 476 for a pair.

– Source: [Business Insider SA](#)

SKINNY SBU TO KNOCK THE SOCKS OFF THE GRAMMY AWARDS



Fashion designer Sibusiso Ngwenya (better known as Skinny Sbu) has managed to get his brand of socks in this year's Grammy goodie bag on April 3 in Los Angeles, United States (US) – the 64th edition of the awards. His socks are to be the only African brand included in the gift pack.

The young Johannesburg-based designer was over the moon about this achievement, that will in theory see his brand exposed to some of the biggest names in global entertainment.

He has hoped for an endorsement of this magnitude since the inception of Skinny Sbu Socks. "From day one of Skinny Sbu Socks in April 2013, the goal has always been to build a global brand – a brand that has global appeal, but is still firmly rooted locally and still speaks to the needs of the local market.

"We've been trying to break into the American market since our very first CNN interview in 2014, so when the opportunity arose to work with a Los Angeles-based agency called Distinctive Assets – which has been organising the Grammy gift bags for over 20 years – we figured this might be the right time to start planting some seeds in the US."

Ngwenya had numerous meetings with the agency during the last quarter of 2021 and finally, two days before Christmas, a partnership was confirmed.

It is a happy coincidence that he should have his brand featured in the same year that DJ Black Coffee has been nominated for his first Grammy Award. Ngwenya is thrilled at having the deejay engage with his offering.

He says: “I look forward to our very own Grammy Awards host Trevor Noah and nominee Black Coffee being there. It’s a big moment for me to be one of the three South African boys representing our country at this prestigious event.”

Ngwenya is also using the opportunity to tell a part of our story that is usually downplayed in international narratives: the history of South African royalty.

He explained the design for the socks that will be included in this gift bag. “We had to go back to our 2015 hit collection called the ZAR Royalty Collection, where we went through history books to celebrate the spirit of three South African kings.”

The designs include the Zulu design, inspired by the spirit of Zulu King Shaka, Xhosa King uHinsa and Ndebele King uSobhuza.

As many readers will know, certain prestigious events – both globally and locally – include a goodie bag for attendees. Beyond providing a memento or two, these goodie bags give the brands they include the chance to be worn by celebrities who could talk about them, should they enjoy them.

That opportunity can shrink the gap between a brand like Skinny Sbu Socks and the international media and market.

– Source: www.news24.com

PROUDLY SOUTH AFRICA: SHUDUFHADZO MUSIDA SHINES BRIGHT AT MISS WORLD PAGEANT

Shudufhadzo Musida, unfortunately, did not make it to the Top 12 at the 70th Miss World pageant but she shined throughout the competition and has made all of us South Africans very proud.

Miss South Africa 2020, Shudufhadzo Musida, unfortunately, did not make it to the Top 12 at the 70th Miss World pageant, which was held at the Coca-Cola Music Hall in San Juan, Puerto Rico, recently.

Representing South Africa, 26-year-old Musida – who comes from Ha-Masia in Venda in Limpopo – was one of the front runners throughout the competition. Her win in the prestigious Beauty With a Purpose (BWAP) segment of the pageant fast-tracked her into the top 40 Miss World semi-finalists.

Musida’s BWAP win was based on her advocacy campaign that focussed on removing the stigma associated with mental illness. Miss World judges were impressed with the weekly IGTV Live sessions – *Mindful Mondays* – that she hosted with mental health experts, and these shone a spotlight on “taboo” subjects like depression and suicide. Musida also wrote a children’s book, *Shudu Finds Her Magic*, which told the story of how she overcame bullying as a child.

The glittering Miss World event was hosted by TV personality Peter Andre and one of Latin America’s top actors and singers, Fernando Allende.



"I am absolutely thrilled to have made it so far in the competition. This truly is a dream come true, and I am so very grateful to have had this wonderful opportunity. Congratulations to the newly crowned Miss World 2021 Karolina Bielawska and the other contestants who made this journey special. I am deeply thankful for the opportunity and to everyone who has supported and uplifted me," Musida said after the pageant.

Both Stephanie Weil, CEO of the Miss South Africa Organisation, and Miss South Africa Creative Director, Werner Wessels, were in Puerto Rico to support Musida.

"Although Shudu did not make it to the top 12, she definitely shined throughout the competition and made all South Africans very proud!"

On the final stage, Shudu was stunning in the magnificent evening gown designed for her by Cape Town designer Warrick Gautier. One of the leading influences in the fashion world who regularly travels between Cape Town, London and Paris, Gautier is inspired by art, music, architecture and his French heritage.

"Shudu's shimmering blush golden gown was inspired by Shudu's own unique beauty that radiates from within like an African sunrise at the start of a fresh magical day. It's a strong, modern, powerful and glamorously feminine gown like Shudu," Gautier said proudly.

– Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

PROTEAS SECURE WORLD CUP SF SPOT



The Proteas have qualified for the semi-finals of the Women's Cricket World Cup in New Zealand after their clash against the West Indies in Wellington was washed out on Thursday, 24 March 2022.

The match had been reduced to 26 overs per side after persistent showers, but South Africa only batted for 10.5 of those before another delay saw the umpire forced into calling the match off.

The Proteas, who lost the toss and were put in to bat, were in huge trouble at 22/4 before the experienced Mignon du Preez (38* off 31) helped spark a mini-recovery.

When play was abandoned, the Proteas were 61/4.

That was enough to guarantee their progression to the semi-finals of the competition, and they will finish second in the group stages behind Australia regardless of what happens in their final round-robin clash against India.

It means that South Africa will avoid the tournament favourites in the playoffs, and they will now play one of West Indies, India, England or New Zealand in the last four.

Their group game against India, meanwhile, takes place on Sunday in Christchurch.

– Source: www.news24.com

MEET NAOMI SCHIFF, THE INCREDIBLE “SOUTH AFRICAN” F1 PRESENTER

Naomi Schiff has joined the Sky Sports team to bring some “South African” flair to Formula 1 presenting.



Former W Series driver and Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador Naomi Schiff joined the Sky Sports team this year to cover Formula 1 and co-host a brand new F1 show called “*Any Driven Monday*” – a show focussed on a sport that she has been passionate about her entire life.

Schiff may have been born in Belgium, but her roots are deeply entrenched in South Africa, where she grew up and first started her racing career, karting, at the age of 11.

At the age of 14, she represented South Africa in the Karting World Championships for four consecutive years, 2008 to 2011, thereafter entering the domain of circuit racing, which took her around the world.

Since then, the incredible sportsperson has raced in prototype, GT and single-seater cars. Her successes include the 2014 Clio Cup Asia championship title, the 2018 KTM GT4 X-Bow Battle championship, and second place in the 2018 ADAC Zurich 24 Hours Nürburgring. In 2020, Schiff became W Series’ Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador.

Her role is to “not only to help spread the word about the unique role that W Series is playing for female drivers worldwide but also to attract the best drivers to us, whoever and wherever they might be.”

And now, the incredible race-driver – currently living in the United Kingdom – has joined the Sky Sports team!

Any Driven Monday will be a 60-minute live show streamed on Mondays after race weekends at 6 pm on Sky Sports F1’s YouTube channel and will be fans’ go-to for all things racing, bringing the best action, analysis, interviews and debate across not only F1, but F2, F3 and IndyCar series. Schiff will also join the presentation team at races, beginning in Bahrain.

Billy McGinty, Director of Sky Sports F1, said: “I’m delighted to welcome Naomi to our Sky Sports F1 team. I’ve watched Naomi’s career with interest; I’m excited she’ll be contributing to our coverage and co-hosting our new YouTube show *Any Driven Monday*.”

“Every year, we strive to push the boundaries of broadcasting, whether that’s technology and innovation or multi-dimensional storytelling, and this year will be no exception.”

– Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

MAIDEN EUROPEAN TITLE FOR SA'S SHAUN NORRIS

South African Shaun Norris shed tears after a three-stroke victory in the Steyn City Championship near Johannesburg on Sunday, 20 March 2022, gave him his first European circuit title.

In a roller-coaster final round showdown with compatriot Dean Burmester, Norris saw his four-shot overnight lead disappear. He trailed by two strokes with five holes to play.

Norris birdied 14 and 16 to draw level and the tournament was won and lost at the par-four 17th where Burmester strayed left into rough off the tee.

Burmester failed to find the green with his "blind" second shot and then three-putted for a double bogey six while Norris holed a birdie putt for a three-shot advantage.

Norris closed with a par four for a 70 and a 25-under total of 263 while Burmester carded a 69 for 266. South African Oliver Bekker (67) and German Matti Schmid (71) shared third place on 269.

Rarely has a tournament triumph proved so emotional as Norris, 39, held his daughter and stood beside his wife after winning at a course just north of Johannesburg.

"It is wonderful that my wife, daughter and brother (his caddie) are here to share this special day with me," Norris said. "No words can describe how wonderful I feel. This is absolutely beautiful."

Johannesburg-born Norris had won nine times on the South African, Asian and Japanese circuits, and finally succeeded on the European tour at the 114th attempt.

The Steyn City Championship concluded a three-tournament African swing with Chinese Wu Ashun winning the Magical Kenyan Open and Spaniard Pablo Larrazabal the MyGolfLife Open in South Africa.

– Source: www.news24.com





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