

# UBUNTU



## NEWSFLASH

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## SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT CALLS FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE ESCALATING CONFLICT BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND UKRAINE

***The Republic of South Africa is dismayed at the escalation of the conflict in Ukraine.***

"We regret that the situation has deteriorated despite calls for diplomacy to prevail.

"Armed conflict will no doubt result in human suffering and destruction, the effects of which will not only affect Ukraine but also reverberate across the world. No country is immune to the effects of this conflict. As the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General has indicated, the conflict will have a huge impact on the 'global economy in a moment when we are emerging from the COVID pandemic and so many developing countries need to have space for the recovery'.

"South Africa calls on Russia to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine in line with the UN Charter, which enjoins all member states to settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace, security and justice are not endangered.

"South Africa emphasises respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states.

"As a nation birthed through negotiation, South Africa is always appreciative of the potential dialogue has in averting a crisis and de-escalating conflict. In line with our strong commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflict, South Africa urges all parties to devote increased efforts to diplomacy and to find a solution that will help avert further escalation.

"The door of diplomacy should never be closed even as conflict has broken out. We also urge all parties to approach the situation in a spirit of compromise, with all sides respecting international law. In light of the escalating conflict, we call on all parties to resume diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the concerns raised expressed by Russia.

“South Africa further calls on all parties to uphold and protect human rights and abide by their obligations in terms of international law and international humanitarian law.

“South Africa continues to support and encourage regional initiatives such as the Minsk Agreements, and we welcome the work of the Normandy Format, the Trilateral Contact Group and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

“South Africa calls on the UN Security Council to play its role in the search for peace. The Security Council remains the primary body tasked with the mandate to maintain international peace and security and it must exercise its responsibility fully in this regard. We also believe that the Good Offices of the UN Secretary-General could also make a positive contribution in finding a lasting solution to this conflict.

“The South African Embassy in Kyiv is monitoring developments closely and is also assisting South African nationals in Ukraine.”

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## **PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA PARTICIPATES IN 10TH HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE PEACE, SECURITY AND COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE DRC**



***President Cyril Ramaphosa was on a Working Visit to Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where he participated in the 10th High-Level Meeting of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework for the DRC and the region.***

President Ramaphosa attended this gathering at the invitation of the President of the DRC and current Chair of the Regional Oversight Mechanism, President Felix Tshisekedi.

President Ramaphosa represented South Africa as a signatory to the PSC Framework for the DRC.

Heads of State and Government of the signatory countries to the PSC Framework for the DRC, with the support of the Guarantor institutions, namely, the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) convened in Kinshasa on Thursday, 24 February.

The Regional Oversight Mechanism is the main oversight body under the PSC Framework agreement for the DRC and the region

It meets once a year at the Head of State and Government level to review progress in the implementation of national and regional commitments under the Framework agreement, signed by 13 countries and four Guarantor institutions (UN, AU, ICGLR and SADC) on 24 February 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The initial signatory countries were Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the DRC, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Kenya and Sudan joined on 31 January 2014, becoming the 12th and 13th signatories to the peace agreement.

President Ramaphosa is accompanied by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor.

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## AFRICA HAS FOUND A "NEW VOICE"

***President Cyril Ramaphosa says the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic have breathed new life into the cause for African unity.***



The President was addressing the nation through his weekly newsletter.

This month marks two years since the first COVID-19 case was detected on the African continent.

“Our experience of managing COVID-19 has emboldened the nations of Africa. It has shown us that resources and capabilities exist across our own continent to deal with emergencies of this magnitude. It has reminded us that we have world-class institutions like the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention that must be supported and capacitated to fulfil their mandates.

“It has given renewed momentum to the project of political and economic integration, which has been strengthened by the advent of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA),” the President said.

The continent has, to date, recorded at least 11 million cases of the virus with some 246 000 deaths occurring as a result of the infection. President Ramaphosa said although the numbers remained devastating, the African continent had defied “dire predictions” about the impact that the virus would have on the continent.

“Several reasons have been suggested for this ‘paradox’. These include the continent’s relatively young population, experience in fighting outbreaks of disease, exposure of the population to previous infections and limited travel connections in many countries,” he said.

The President highlighted that the unity shown by the continent while facing the deadly pandemic had also been crucial.

“Another reason that has been suggested is the rapid response of the African Union to the pandemic, driving a coordinated response and unified strategy. This strategy mobilised resources to fortify national health systems, set up an online platform to secure medical supplies, undertake a continent-wide drive to acquire vaccines and drive effective public health communication.

“At a time when decisive leadership was called for, the leaders of Africa stepped up,” he said.

### **Developed nations**

President Ramaphosa reflected that as the spread of COVID-19 accelerated across the world, the African continent realised that “our continent could not rely on the generosity of wealthy countries”.

He said many of these countries pledged support to Africa but then hindered recovery from the pandemic by, for example, imposing travel restrictions.

“[The pandemic] has shown us how fragile our global partnerships can be, particularly in a global emergency. Most importantly, it has strengthened our collective resolve to step up pressure on developed economy nations to give us not charity, but our just dues.

“But nowhere has this been more apparent than in the unacceptable practice of developed countries buying up and hoarding all available COVID-19 vaccine stocks in quantities far exceeding the needs of their populations. This as vast swathes of the so-called developing world struggled to access them for their people,” he said.

President Ramaphosa highlighted that the establishment of the mRNA technology transfer hub, based in Cape Town, was a vital step for the continent to manufacture vaccines for its own people.

“We will continue to make the case for building Africa’s capacity to produce its own vaccines, including through a temporary waiver of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights at the World Trade Organisation.

“Without being able to manufacture our own vaccines, an equitable recovery will not be possible,” he said.

President Ramaphosa emphasised that the continent was determined to solve its own challenges.

“We must uplift ourselves by making our own medicines to treat our people and save lives. We must develop our own economies through the AfCFTA, promoting investment and tourism within Africa, accelerating industrialisation and driving green growth and low-carbon development. We must end all conflict and entrench democracy and good governance.

“Africa has found a new voice. It is bold and unapologetic in its expectations of our partners. At the same time, we are determined that Africa’s challenges must be, are being, and will be, solved by Africans themselves,” he said.

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

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## PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA ADDRESS ARMED FORCES DAY CELEBRATIONS IN MPUMALANGA



***President Cyril Ramaphosa, as Commander-in Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), officiated at the annual Armed Forces Day at Barberton and Mbombela in Mpumalanga on Monday, 21 February 2022.***

**WATCH THE VIDEO**

Armed Forces Day commemorates the worst naval tragedy in the country’s history – the sinking of the troopship *SS Mendi* in the English Channel on 21 February 1917. More than 600 SA Native Labour Corps troops drowned when the ill-fated troopship was struck by the *SS Darro*.

Mpumalanga was the host in the current provincial rotation of Armed Forces Day.

The programme for the day commenced with the President laying a wreath at the World War Memorial in Barberton. This was followed by a parade in Mbombela.

This event featured a flypast of multiple SA Air Force aircraft. The South African Army, the South African Military Health Service and the Navy formed part of the parade.

President Ramaphosa hailed the contribution of the SANDF for serving the country with distinction during a “difficult, demanding and unprecedented” time in the country’s history.

“For your role as the SANDF in preventing the loss of more lives to the pandemic, in working with law enforcement agencies and communities to end the unrest and in helping civilians in the troubled regions of our continent, your country thanks you. For remaining ever vigilant and ever ready to answer the call of duty, we thank you.

“We honour you and we salute you,” he said.

The President explained the role that the SANDF has played over the past two years during which the country has hit some turbulent times.

“It is now two years since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The SANDF was there, assisting with the implementation and maintenance of the National State of Disaster.

On the continent, the SANDF has also been participating in humanitarian aid and military missions in Mozambique and peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

“According to our Constitution, the primary objective of the armed forces is to defend and protect the Republic. The SANDF has more than lived up to this task, particularly over the past year, when our country endured great tribulations.

“At all these moments of uncertainty, crisis and very real danger for our country, for our neighbours and for our continent Africa, the SANDF has been there,” President Ramaphosa said.

The President paid tribute to soldiers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

“Today, we pay homage to Corporal Tebogo Radebe, who was killed in Cabo Delgado late last year during a deployment as part of the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique. We remember all our soldiers who have fallen in the line of duty in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and Sudan.

“Their deaths remind us that our freedom, our way of life and the peace that we enjoy as a country comes at a price,” he said.

President Ramaphosa also acknowledged that the armed forces were “facing many challenges” in the face of the country’s limited resources.

“I commend the leadership of our military and all members of our armed forces for fulfilling their responsibilities even as we grapple with funding challenges that affect various defence programmes and development activities.

“We are looking, within these constraints, at ways to better resource our defence force with the tools they need to fulfil their mandate,” he said.

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

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## MRNA TECH TRANSFER HUB BENEFICIARIES ANNOUNCED



***Kenya, Nigeria, Tunisia, Senegal and Egypt have been announced as the first “spokes” or beneficiaries to receive the technology to produce their own mRNA vaccines.***

The countries will receive the technology from the World Health Organisation (WHO)-supported mRNA Technology Transfer Hub, based in South Africa.

This was announced in a joint press conference with President Cyril Ramaphosa, the WHO, the European Council and the French Presidency on the sidelines of the African Union-European Union Summit.

The mRNA Technology Transfer Hub is aimed at developing technologies and vaccines, which could change the face of healthcare on the African continent.

The WHO's Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus said the hub was already bearing fruit and the spoke countries were now expected to benefit from technology and knowledge-sharing.

“It has produced its own mRNA vaccine based on publicly available information about the composition of an existing vaccine. We expect clinical trials to start this year with approval expected in 2024.

“We expect the benefits of this initiative will extend far beyond COVID-19 by creating a platform for vaccines against other diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis and even cancer. So, this is a strategic investment not just for COVID-19 but for all the major health problems that we face. The hub is not just for South Africa, but for Africa and the whole world because the spokes will be distributed all over the world,” he said.

President Ramaphosa said although the transfer of technologies from the hub was a significant step for African vaccine production, intellectual property (IP) rights challenges continued to challenge the work done at the hub.

The President reiterated his long-standing call for the waiver of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreements, which prohibit self-manufacturing of certain vaccines based on the intellectual property (IP) rights placed on the technology and information needed to do so.

“Governments that are really serious about vaccine access ... should ensure that we approve the TRIPS waiver as we have put forward rather than hide behind IP [and] the profitability of the originators.

“We are facing a global pandemic that will stay with us for a long time and all that has been asked for is that the TRIPS waiver should be done within a set period of time so as to enable those countries that do not have easy access to vaccines to have access to vaccines. We are talking about the lives of hundreds of millions of people rather than the profitability of a few companies,” he said.

President Ramaphosa emphasised that while vaccine donations from other countries remained “appreciated” on the continent, African countries want to build its own resources and capacity in this regard.

“It is not acceptable that Africa is consistently at the back of the queue in relation to access to medicines. While we appreciate donations, they are not a sustainable way or mechanism to build resilience. Help to empower us. Let us tackle obstacles together and let us demonstrate to the world that Africa has the ability, the scientists and industries to provide the vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics needed to manage African health,” he said.

The President said African scientists and other healthcare practitioners were “willing, ready and prepared to work for their continent” and should be unleashed.

“All we need to do at this level is to do the TRIPS waiver, to empower them and to follow in the lead of the WHO and give them that energy and oxygen so that they can surge forward and do wonders for this continent.”

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

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## SA PARTICIPATES IN THE 58TH MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

***The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, participated in the 58th Munich Security Conference (MSC), which got underway in Germany on Friday, 18 February 2022.***



During the conference, Minister Pandor participated in and delivered the opening remarks at a roundtable discussion on pandemic preparedness. The roundtable aimed to explore what reforms should be introduced and new instruments or initiatives should be developed to make sure that the world is better prepared for the next pandemic.

The MSC, which concluded on Sunday, 20 February 2022, is an annual conference on international security that has taken place in Munich since 1963.

It is the world's largest gathering of its kind and is normally attended by heads of state, government and international organisations, Cabinet ministers, parliamentarians and high-ranking representatives of the armed forces.

Minister Pandor was joined on the panel by Karl Lauterbach, the minister of Health of Germany; John Nkengasong, the Director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention; and Sir Jeremy Farrar, Director of the Wellcome Trust.

Minister Pandor also attended a breakfast engagement with female foreign ministers, which was hosted by Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock of Germany and foreign Minister Marise Payne of Australia.

The breakfast engagement focussed on the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda.

South Africa and Switzerland are the co-chairs of the WPS Network for 2022.



Minister Pandor also had several bilateral engagements with other foreign ministers attending the conference.

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## TRADE AND INVESTMENT TOP SA-IRELAND JCC MEETING

***More needs to be done to strengthen trade and investment between South Africa and Ireland, says the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes.***



Deputy Minister Botes said this in his concluding remarks at the Second South Africa-Ireland Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) in Pretoria on Tuesday, 22 February 2022.

“The positive outcomes of the second JCC meeting is evidence of our joint commitment to work as equal partners in enhancing our good relations and by further identifying and moving into new areas of opportunity, such as tourism, energy, sport, arts and culture, as well as working together to end gender-based violence in South Africa and elsewhere in the world.

“Also, more work needs to be done in strengthening efforts for increased trade and investment,” he said.

Deputy Minister Botes co-chaired the JCC alongside the Irish Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora of Ireland, Colm Brophy.

The JCC was established in 2017 through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at the Sixth South Africa-Ireland Partnership Forum meeting. It represents a deepening of the commitment of both countries to strong bilateral cooperation.

The Deputy Minister reiterated the South African Government’s commitment to continue strengthening the important and historic partnership with Ireland.

South Africa has been a recipient of Irish development aid over many years, in areas which include education, health and agriculture.

“The Irish Government and its people remain friends to South Africa, and it is our hope that the relationship will flourish even further going forward,” said Deputy Minister Botes.

He noted that both regions faced political and social challenges.

“Both our regions face tremendous political and social challenges, and more often than not, these challenges also confront South Africa and Ireland as individual countries. However, through bilateral partnerships such as ours and political will and commitment, we will overcome these challenges,” he said.

– Source: SAnews.gov.za



## SA ADVOCATES FOR LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT ON PLASTIC POLLUTION



***South Africa will support proposals to address the issue of marine litter and plastic pollution at the upcoming Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2).***

“South Africa supports the proposal to mandate the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) under UNEA to negotiate an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution given the environmental challenges faced as a consequence of plastic pollution,” the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, said on Thursday, 17 February 2022.

The Minister hosted a virtual stakeholder engagement ahead of the UNEA 5.2, which has been scheduled to take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 28 February – 2 March 2022.

The high-level segment of UNEA 5.2 will take place on 2 March 2022 under the overarching theme, “Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”.

South Africa will also request the inclusion of the recognition of the special needs and circumstances of Africa and that any potential internationally legally binding global agreement on plastics pollution must include the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of national circumstances.

“We will also stress the need for new, additional and predictable finance, including technology transfer, development and deployment as well as capacity-building to support developing countries, in particular Africa, for its implementation,” the Minister said.

The draft resolution on the internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution constitutes a starting point for negotiations and contains necessary elements to be discussed under the negotiations at UNEA 5.2 to establish the mandate on a global plastics agreement for the INC.

The Minister said the current proposal went beyond addressing only marine plastic litter.

“About 80% of plastics ending up in the seas come from land-based sources, meaning that plastic pollution is not an isolated problem only relevant for our oceans.

“Addressing a life cycle approach should therefore take into account plastics ending up in all compartments of the environment and the resolution addresses land-based sources as well as sea-based sources, focussing on both upstream and downstream activities and measures,” the Minister said.

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

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## NELSON MANDELA'S ICONIC HOME TRANSFORMED INTO LUXURY HOTEL



*To preserve and honour the legacy of South Africa's iconic leader, Nelson Mandela, his home in Houghton, which was a symbol of his presidency and struggle against apartheid, has been transformed into a luxury hotel, which was opened in September last year.*

"Sanctuary Mandela", as it's now called, was Madiba's first home in Johannesburg after being released from his 27-year long imprisonment.

He lived on the premises between 1992 and 1998 and hosted the likes of former United States President Bill Clinton and supermodel Naomi Campbell.

Guests in the hotel can also taste meals inspired by Mandela's favourite dishes. And one of those preparing these dishes is Xoliswa Ndoyiya, who cooked for Mandela and his family for over 22 years. She's renowned for telling some of the best Mandela stories

She says he very much loved oxtail stew and would have it about three times a week (with samp and beans, known as "umngqusho"). Inspired by the oxtail stew, Sanctuary Mandela serves a ravioli.

Surrounded by lush gardens, the property has nine curated rooms that can accommodate a total of 18 guests.

The walls are covered in memorabilia, paying tribute to the global icon.

Room rates vary from over US\$260 a night to nearly US\$1,000 for the Presidential Suite, which was Mandela's bedroom during his presidential term.

– Source: [sapeople.com](https://www.sapeople.com)

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## WORLD'S LARGEST, MOST VALUABLE BLUE DIAMOND (FROM SOUTH AFRICA) GOES TO AUCTION

***The world's largest and most valuable blue diamond is set to go on auction in April. The diamond – known as the De Beers Cullinan Blue – is estimated to be worth more than US\$48 million and was found in South Africa.***



The rare blue diamond was discovered last April, at South Africa's famous Cullinan mine (one of the few sources in the world for rare blue diamonds). It will be offered in a single-lot live auction at Sotheby's Hong Kong on 27 April 2022.

Sotheby's said the 15.10-carat step-cut blue diamond was an "extraordinary natural treasure and one of the most valuable blue diamonds ever to be offered at auction".

According to Sotheby's, "blue diamonds of this importance are exceptionally rare, with only five examples over 10 carats ever having come to auction, none of which have exceeded 15 carats, making the appearance of this flawless gem a landmark event in itself."

It was an exceptional rough stone to start with, but has since been masterfully crafted by the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), re-emerging as the "largest vivid blue diamond ever to appear at auction and the largest internally flawless step-cut vivid blue diamond" that the GIA has ever graded, said Sotheby's.

Sotheby's Senior Vice President and Sales Director for Jewellery, Frank Everett, told Reuters the jewel was remarkable on many levels.

"It's rare because of the size. It's over 15 carats. It's a vivid blue. It's internally flawless. And really one of the most rare aspects of it is the cut," he said. "It's a step-cut, which really requires an exceptionally even saturation of colour to achieve that beautiful step cut rather than a brilliant cut."

He said its estimate at in excess of US\$48 million is the "highest estimate ever for a blue diamond at auction, and that is simply because of the size. There's never been one so big."

Bruce Cleaver, CEO of De Beers Group, said: "This diamond ranks as one of the best De Beers has ever seen. It is extremely rare and unique, and as the Home of Diamonds, De Beers is pleased to join together with Sotheby's to bring this diamond to the world."

– Source: [www.sapeople.com](http://www.sapeople.com)

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## **JOBURG NAMED ONE OF THE BEST CITIES IN THE WORLD FOR ARTS AND CULTURE 2022**

***In January this year, South Africa was named the sixth-best honeymoon destination by the Big 7 Travel readership.***



***According to 1.6 million international travellers from Big 7 Travel, South Africa is the place to be to celebrate your love, and now, it is also one of the best places to soak up the arts and explore other cultures.***

Johannesburg is a melting pot of cultures due to how central it is to every province and the main gateway for cultures coming from the surrounding Southern African Development Community countries.

Big 7 Travel created a list of the 50 best cities for art and culture and Johannesburg was listed as 38th on the list.

“Johannesburg is home to a whole host of cultural attractions, from downtown Newtown all the way to Soweto. The city is home to three theatres, four major concert halls and 281 heritage sites.

It’s also home to more than 76 art galleries, including the Johannesburg Art Gallery – the largest art collection in the country. Every year, the annual city-sponsored Arts Alive festival and Johannesburg Carnival celebrate the city’s diverse heritage too.” – Big 7 Travel

Cape Town also earned a place on the list at no 43.

“Home to 580 heritage sites, 35 art galleries and 14 national museums, Cape Town’s cultural offering is as diverse as it is abundant. The city also boasts a handful of design districts, home to institutions such as the Freeworld Design Centre and the Mutual Building in the CBD, and Etafeni Centre in Nyanga.”

– Source: [www.goodthingsguy.com](http://www.goodthingsguy.com)

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## **FOUR “TRAIN TIGERS” IN ARGENTINA MAY SOON HAVE A NEW HOME IN SA**

***Two tigers abandoned by a travelling circus, along with their two grown offspring, are due to soon get a new home in Bethlehem, South Africa.***



A rescue mission coordinated by Four Paws, a global animal welfare organisation, is preparing to rescue the family of four tigers from Argentina to relocate them to Lionsrock Big Cat Sanctuary, in Bethlehem in the eastern Free State.

Their team will travel to Argentina in the coming weeks at the invitation of the Argentinean Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The tigers will be flown from the northwest province of San Luis where they have been kept in a train carriage for 15 years, to OR Tambo in Johannesburg.

The big cats have been cooped up and limited to a 75-m<sup>2</sup> carriage for over a decade. "All those years in such a small space have affected their mental and physical well-being for sure. We have a window of opportunity now to rescue them, and we will," says leader of the rescue mission and Four Paws veterinarian, Dr Amir Khalil.

It was during an inspection by a representative wildlife authority, Fauna San Luis, in 2021 that they ruled the tigers living conditions to be unfit for the animals. "The train carriage was filthy with excrement and leftover meat and bones for a long time, but fortunately this [will be rectified]. Tigers need to move, run, play and bathe," says Dr Khalil.

In 2007, a travelling circus entrusted the then two tigers, a now 18-year-old male and 15-year-old female, to a local farmer, never to return. The farmer took care of the big cats as best he could but did not notify authorities immediately at the time due to the Argentinian law that forbids the private ownership of wild animals.

"By rescuing these four tigers in Argentina, we provide a better life for them individually and create awareness for all animals globally to be treated with respect, empathy and understanding," says Four Paws CEO, Josef Pfabigan.

The extraction of the tigers will be the organisation's first rescue in South America. Lionsrock, one of the many sanctuaries founded by the organisation, is home to over 100 big cats rescued from "war-ravaged zoos, circuses, private ownership and the canned hunting industry".

There are only some 3 900 tigers left in the world. With insufficient global regulations, there has been an increase in commercial tiger trade. Tigers are subjected to harsh cruelties with other big cats killed for their fur, skin, bones and teeth.

"Every single programme and project we run to reveal suffering and to protect animals is special, just as every one of our rescue missions is. All our efforts matter for animal welfare worldwide," said Luciana D'Abramo, Chief Development Officer at Four Paws.

– Source: [www.businessinsider.com](http://www.businessinsider.com)

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## **FIREFIGHTING HERO KYLIE PAUL FINALLY HEADS TO USA TO MENTOR TOP FEMALE FIREFIGHTERS**



***Firefighting hero and inspiration Kylie Paul is about to set off on a tour of the United States where she will learn skills and mentor fellow female firefighters.***

Kylie Paul was set to travel to the United States (USA) in 2020 before the pandemic but her plans quickly changed when the world went into lockdown. She was the first woman from Africa to be invited to the WTREX (a women in fire training exchange) in Virginia, USA. The training exchange is dedicated to skills development for firefighters.

Kylie will lead, mentor and learn from the top female firefighters in the USA.

Prior to the pandemic, Kylie was tasked to lead the first all-female wildfire crew in Africa in a successful partnership between NCC Environmental Services, Chrysalis Academy and the Western Cape Government.

This programme was called Team Juliet and focussed on empowering women out of poverty and disadvantaged communities while combatting wildfires in the Western Cape.

From there, Kylie went on to work with the Vulcan Wildfire Management and Vulcan Training where she continued to grow and solidify her position in the wildfire industry. Now with restrictions eased, she can embark on her long-awaited tour.

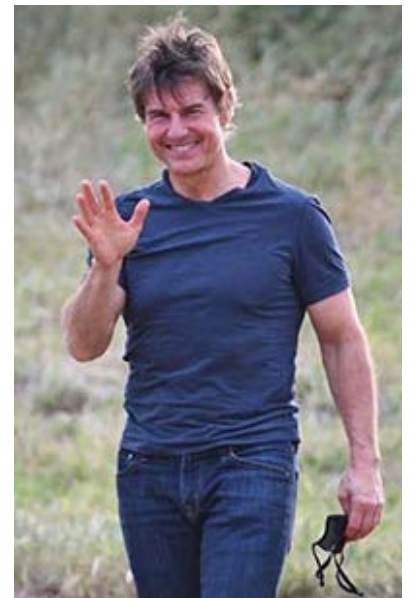
This journey is a huge one not only for Kylie, but also for South Africa as she will be coming back as one of the most qualified wildland firefighters in the country.

You can follow her journey via her Instagram account, the Sentimental Firefighter.

– Source: [www.goodthingsguy.com](http://www.goodthingsguy.com)

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## **TOM CRUISE SPOTTED FILMING MISSION IMPOSSIBLE IN LIMPOPO**



**According to reports, the “Mission Impossible” actor, Tom Cruise, is in South Africa filming the latest instalment.**

The latest pics, tweeted by Limpopo Tourism Agency, show Cruise piloting and landing a helicopter in Hoedspruit.

Cruise was also spotted flying over Oribi Gorge on the South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal recently.

According to reports, the *Mission Impossible* actor is in South Africa filming the latest instalment of the action spy film franchise and fans are loving it.

Smooth as ever, the *Top Gun* actor was photographed emerging from the helicopter with his shades and a face mask on, waving to those who had gathered to spot him.

In a second tweet, the agency thanked the actor “for choosing our iconic destination to feature in the movie”.

A source on the film’s production team told *Weekend Argus* that they will be “in Durban for three months as from 6 February for *Mission Impossible* and possibly a week in Cape Town”.

This comes after release dates for *Mission Impossible 7* and 8 were pushed back to 2023 and 2024, THR reported.

“After thoughtful consideration, Paramount Pictures and Skydance have decided to postpone the release dates for *Mission: Impossible 7* & 8 in response to delays due to the ongoing pandemic. The new release dates will be July 14, 2023, and June 28, 2024, respectively. We look forward to providing moviegoers with an unparalleled theatrical experience,” Paramount and Skydance said in a statement in January.

– Source: [www.news24.com](http://www.news24.com)

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## **HLE TAPS GLOBAL MARKET WITH MOTOWN GOSPEL DEAL**



***Gospel star Hlengiwe Ntombela has signed a deal with American-based recording company Motown.***

The giant label that is based in Nashville made the big announcement recently.

Signing with Motown Gospel means the singer, who is famously known as Hle, will reach a global market.

The announcement came after a whirlwind season of success for Hle that includes her debut album *Your Kingdom on Earth* that peaked at number one position on Apple Music's Gospel Albums chart in seven countries.

It further won the best Contemporary Faith Album at the South African Music Award last year. Motown Gospel, a division of Capitol CMG and Universal Music Group, has gospel stars like Kelly Price, Merry Clayton and Tasha Cobbs Leonard in their stable.

"Motown Gospel/Capitol CMG is a true giant of the industry, known for cultivating some of the world's greatest artists. I'm excited to become one of them as my music is taken across the globe," Ntombela said.

"When God trusts you with such a task, it means He wants you to take his gospel to the world. I have a responsibility now because there are more ears and souls that will be waiting for my music. Honesty, as much as I am a hard worker, I don't have a hand in this. It's all God's work. As much as I signed on the dotted line in November, I am still trying to process this."

According to Ntombela, she was approached by one of Motown Gospel executives in November 2020. She said the company spent the whole of last year trying to get her into their books.

The 30-year-old musician, who is a product of Joyous Celebration, comes from Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal.

"I still remember I was about to rehearse for a show in Cape Town when I saw the messages from one of the executives. The executive mentioned that he had been following me and had listened to my album and wanted to talk more.

"We had a Zoom immediately right there. We then had a follow-up meeting with my team. We communicated the whole year until I signed the contract. This means I will be spending months in America but some of the things will be done remotely."

Monica Coates and EJ Gaines, co-executive directors of Motown Gospel, said: "As a powerful multimedia presence, Hle seamlessly combines creativity and beauty with personal ministry. Hle elegantly transcends culture. We are delighted to partner with her in her vision to reach a global audience."

In addition to her thriving solo career and a good year, Ntombela recently landed a presenting job to host *VIP Invite*, an uplifting television series on Mzansi Magic Music on Channel 321.

– Source: [www.sowetanlive.com](http://www.sowetanlive.com)





## **BANYANA BANYANA QUALIFIES FOR 2022 AWCON TOURNAMENT WITH AGGREGATE WIN OVER ALGERIA**



***Banyana Banyana has qualified for the African Women Cup of Nations tournament after beating Algeria 3-1 on aggregate over two qualifying legs.***

After securing a 2-0 home victory in the first leg on Friday, 18 February 2022, Desiree Ellis' charges played to a 1-1 away draw at the Stade Omar Hamadi in Algiers on Wednesday evening, 23 February.

Algeria was desperate to get themselves back into the tie and thought they had done that in the 27th minute when they had the ball in the back of the South African net.

A foul on goalkeeper Andile Dlamini, however, saw the goal ruled out.

They did cut Banyana's advantage to a single goal in the 45th minute as Sylia Kouï scored for the home side to give them a 1-0 lead at the break.

South Africa, however, still had a 2-1 aggregate advantage.

In the 61st minute, Banyana was given a penalty after an Algerian player handled the ball in the box.

Linda Mothlalo calmly converted from the spot to level up the score at 1-1 and, more importantly, give Banyana a critical away goal.

That's the way it stayed till the full-time whistle as South Africa now will head to Morocco in July for the 2022 Africa Women Cup of Nations.

– Source: [www.news24.com](http://www.news24.com)





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