

IT'S YOUR VOICE



Internal Newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

ubuntu diplomat

Issue 3, 30 April 2021



THE YEAR OF:

CHARLOTTE
Mamoya
MAXEKE

THE MEANING OF FREEDOM
UNDER COVID-19

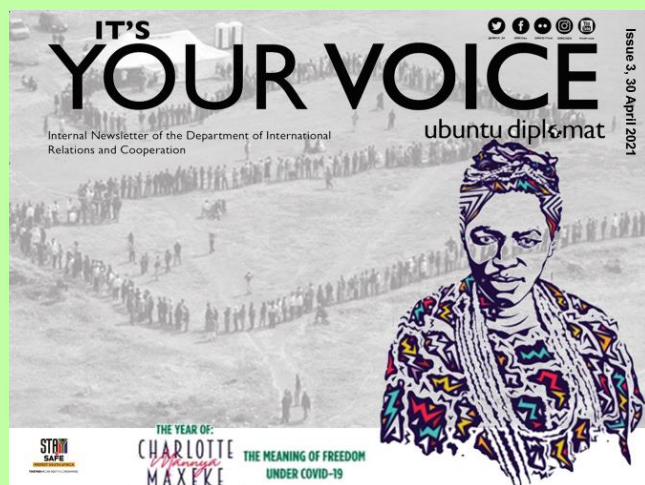
STAY
SAFE

PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS

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The year 2021 marks the 150th anniversary of struggle icon and human rights campaigner, Charlotte Maxeke. Through her sacrifice, we now live in a country which recognises women as equal citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities. The celebration of Freedom Day reminds us that our freedom was not free.

EDITOR'S

LETTER

April is Freedom Month in South Africa. It is a time when we all remember the excitement that enveloped the country when all citizens above the age of 18 were finally armed with the power to vote in the national elections for the country's leadership. For the first time in the history of South Africa, people across the width and breadth of the country rose early to stand in queues to cast their vote. For the first time ever, South Africans of all races stood side by side to make their voices and choices heard. For the first time, South Africa would witness the election of a president in a democratic state.

As we commemorate this significant milestone in its 27th anniversary, we dare not forget the many forebears who made incredible sacrifices to ensure our freedom today, with all the basic human rights enshrined in our Constitution.

We remember indomitable leaders such as the democratically elected President, the late Tata Nelson Mandela, Mme Dulcie September, Mama Adelaide Tambo and Tata Oliver Tambo, Mme Ruth First, Ntate Solomon Mahlangu, Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, and Mme Charlotte Manna-Maxeke, to name but a few.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of struggle icon and human rights campaigner, Charlotte Maxeke. She and other selfless women of her generation fought against oppression at a time when such defiance was met with unrelenting force. It is celebrated under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: The Meaning of Freedom under COVID-19".

With COVID-19 still very present globally, celebrations across the board were held on digital platforms. The various South African embassies and high commissions abroad hosted commemorative events and activities virtually, with several sharing recorded messages from the Heads of Mission on their social media pages

In this edition, read and watch some of the Freedom Day celebrations hosted and shared by our missions across the world.

The Government of South Africa is preparing to roll out the next phase of its COVID-19 vaccine strategy over the next few months, having already begun phase one earlier in the year by administering to healthcare/frontline workers all over the country. The next phase is now aimed at citizens over the age of 60 and those who have comorbidities. While this happens, South Africa and India are leading a campaign to have the World Trade Organisation waivers The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. This temporary waiver would apply to certain intellectual property on COVID-19 medical tools and technologies until herd immunity is reached.

The South African Permanent Mission in Geneva, Switzerland, held a discussion on Freedom Day, titled: "Making Access to Vaccines a Global Public Health Good: A Call for Global Solidarity and Cooperation", touching on a number of issues around access to the vaccine, including the waiver. Read about it on page 17.

Over the past 27 years, as Government, we have made massive progress in improving the lives of people and restoring their dignity.



However, more must still be done to ensure that we create an inclusive and prosperous society for all.

We must continue to respect and embrace our diversity as a nation and endeavour to realise a society where all who are part of it feel safe and free.

Here's to Unity in Diversity!
Here's to Freedom!

NEM

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The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, leads a South African delegation to the Southern African Development Community Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ, Maputo, Mozambique.



Minister Pandor meeting with her Tanzanian counterpart, Ms Liberata Mulamula.



Deputy Minister Alvin Botes meeting with Ambassador Oleg Ozerov, the Ambassador-at-Large and Head of the Secretariat of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum, at OR Tambo Building, Pretoria.

Minister Pandor meeting with the United Kingdom High Commissioner to South Africa, HE Nigel Casey, Pretoria.



Deputy Minister Botes hosts the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain, Ms Cristina Gallach Figueras, for the 13th South Africa-Spain Consultations.



Minister Pandor signing an agreement with Sheik Dr Ahmed Nasser Al Mohammed Al Sabah, Kuwait Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for State for Cabinet Affairs, during a bilateral meeting in Kuwait City.



Deputy Minister Botes embarks on a community outreach programme in George, Western Cape



COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME



Mr Alvin Botes
Deputy Minister: International Relations and Cooperation

8 APRIL 2021
GEORGE, WESTERN CAPE



Ms Liubov Abravitova
Ukrainian Ambassador to South Africa

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mr Alvin Botes, will embark on a community outreach programme at three schools in George, in the Western Cape. The Deputy Minister will be joined by Ukrainian Ambassador to South Africa, Ms Liubov Abravitova.

George High School

Imizamo Yethu Secondary School

Tyholorha Primary School

#DIRCOOutreachProgramme



The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Mr Alvin Botes, made a follow-up visit at the three schools in George, in the Western Cape.

The Deputy Minister visited the town in 2020, in his capacity as the area's District Development Model champion and interacted with local communities and identified certain needs.

During his visit on 8 April 2021, Deputy Minister Botes was accompanied by the Ukrainian Ambassador to South Africa, Ms Liubov Abravitova, and donated certain goods as part of the response to pleas made by the communities during his last visit.

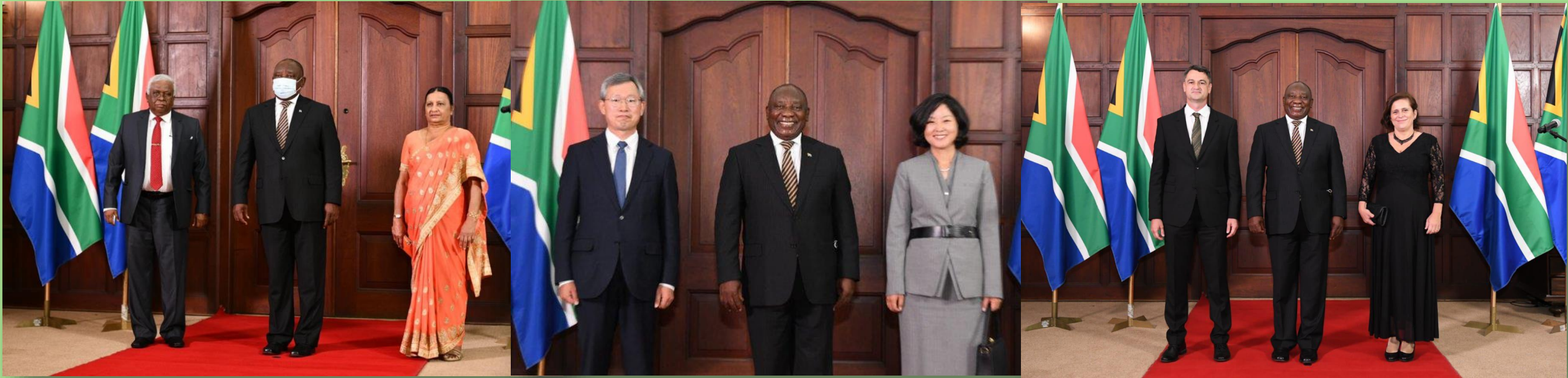
In his remarks, Deputy Minister Botes said the efficacy of the District Development Model was dependent on the ability of government to listen to communities, partner with them and make interventions.



Letters of Credence Ceremony

President Cyril Ramaphosa received Letters of Credence from Ambassadors and High Commissioners nominated by their respective governments to serve in diplomatic missions in South Africa on 14 April 2021.

The Heads of Mission from the nine countries will serve at missions in South Africa with the aim of advancing diplomatic relations.



The High Commissioner of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, HE Mr Sirisena Amarasekara and Mrs Abeywickrama Dissanayaka Hemalatha Amarasekana.

Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, HE Mr Chull-Joo Park and Mrs Jung Im Song.

Ambassador of Hungary, HE Mr Attila György Horváth and Mrs Ágnes Horváthné Réffy.



Ambassador of the Federative Republic of Brazil, HE Mr Sérgio França Danese and Mrs Angela Tisani França Danese.

High Commissioner of the Republic of Kenya, HE Catherine Muigai-Mwangi.

High Commissioner of the Republic of Cameroon, HE Mr Anu'a-Gheyle Solomon Azoh-Mbi and Mrs Mercy Azoh-Mbi.

Welcome Ambassadors and High Commissioners



Ambassador of the Republic of Panama, His Excellency Mr Jorge Ricardo Silen Santacoloma.



Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, HE Mr Nirmal Kumar Bishokarma.



Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania, HE Mr Dainius Junevičius



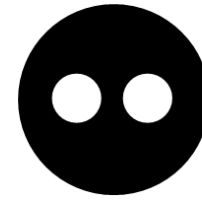
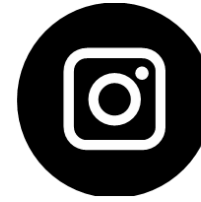
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED





international relations
& cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



CONGRATULATIONS!

South Africa's Consul General in New York, Mr. Motumisi Tawana has been elected Chairman of the African Consuls General Group in New York.



The South African Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organisations in Switzerland commemorate the 27th anniversary of Freedom Day 2021

By: Balanganani Masia
Third Secretary, Geneva, Switzerland

The South African Permanent Mission to the United Nations (UN) Office in Geneva and other International Organisations in Switzerland held a successful webinar to commemorate Freedom Day on 27 April 2021. The webinar was held under the theme: "Making Access to Vaccines a Global Public Health Good: A Call for Global Solidarity and Cooperation".

It was widely attended by permanent representatives and other diplomats based in Geneva, notably from African missions, members from various UN bodies and international organisations, civil society and academic institutions.

The webinar was moderated by South Africa's Permanent Representative to the UN and other International Organisations, Ambassador Mxolisi Nkosi, and included four high-level panellists, namely, the UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Nada Al-Nashif; Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Norway, Ambassador Tine Mørch Smith; and the Assistant Director-General for Emergencies Response at the World Health Organisation, Dr Ibrahima Socé Fall.

Ambassador Nkosi recalled that 27 April was a watershed breakthrough moment that ushered in a new South Africa based on the principles of democracy, non-racialism and non-sexism. He noted the significance of the month of April, which celebrates the signing in law of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa in 1996, as well as the year 2021, which is the 150th anniversary of struggle heroine and pathfinder, Charlotte Maxeke. Ambassador Nkosi called for global solidarity and coordination in the fight against the scourge of COVID-19, in order to ensure access for all to vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics.

In their remarks, panellists commended South Africa for its commitment to the values and principles of democracy, human rights and justice.

The Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights described the 27th commemoration of post-apartheid national elections as a symbol of the great global aspiration for a world free from racism and racial discrimination; and one that resonates strongly with today's realities, reminding us of this moral imperative and collective responsibility.

The panellists acknowledged the health and non-health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which includes exacerbated poverty, hunger and inequality, has reversed valuable gains made towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. They collectively reiterated the call for global solidarity and collaboration in the fight against the pandemic.

To attain higher global public health standards, they also called for equitable access to vaccines for all. The establishment of the vaccine pillar, COVAX, and the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator as mechanisms aimed to support access to vaccines, are examples of global cooperation and exemplary leadership.

South Africa was also lauded for actively calling on the World Trade Organisation to waive certain provisions of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Agreement during the pandemic in favour of saving lives. President Cyril Ramaphosa was commended for his inspirational leadership and contribution to saving lives and livelihoods of many on the African continent during South Africa's Chairship of the Africa Union (AU), and his current role as the AU Champion for COVID-19.

The Mission is grateful for the support it received from the Branch: Public Diplomacy and the Information Communication Technology business unit in hosting this well-subscribed webinar.

Watch the discussion here:
<https://bit.ly/2RLGAni>



Ambassador Mxolisi Nkosi moderating over the webinar



Top left: Ms Nada Al-Nashif; Top right: Amb. Mxolisi Nkosi; Bottom left: Amb. Tine Mørch Smith; Bottom right: Dr Ibrahima Socé Fall



Freedom Day Celebrations: South African Embassy in Brasilia, Federative Republic of Brazil

By: Denisha Reddy
First Secretary Political
South African Embassy in Brazil

The South African Embassy in Brasilia marked Freedom Day with a video message from Ambassador Vusi Mavimbela. Unfortunately, this important event for South Africa was commemorated in a week when our host country, Brazil, registered over 400 000 deaths and nearly 15 million infections since the beginning of the pandemic. International organisations and analysts have described the current situation as a humanitarian crisis. The pandemic continues to ravage the South American region, even in those countries which have had successful vaccine roll-out programmes. This is a reminder that the worst is not behind us and that we must remain vigilant and not let our guards down.

However, even in these trying times, we must pause and reflect on what is a joyous occasion for all South Africans, and for many others from across the world who continue to share in our nation's journey. In the absence of a national day reception, and with an appreciation that there is growing weariness around virtual events, Ambassador Mavimbela settled on a short video message, with suitable images, as the most appropriate way to celebrate Freedom Day in Brazil in 2021.

In his message, Ambassador Mavimbela noted that Freedom Day was an opportunity to honour the memory of all those who paved the way for democracy and equality in South Africa. He acknowledged Charlotte Maxeke and the many other remarkable men and women who fought against oppression, even in the face of unrelenting force, and in doing so, paved the way for the South Africa that we see today. Our new nationhood manifests itself in many ways, not least of all in its rich culture and heritage, a diverse people, spectacular landscapes and highly developed tourism infrastructure offering an unrivalled wealth of experiences to any traveller. We are also proud of our excellent infrastructure and diversified economy, which includes traditional sectors like mining and agriculture, but also a highly developed and globally recognised financial services sector and business environment.

Ambassador Mavimbela recognised the critical role played by many countries and communities across the world in the fight against apartheid and the birth of our constitutional democracy, with our much lauded Constitution informing and guiding South Africa's foreign policy.

In this regard, he remarked that relations between South Africa and Brazil remained robust and continued to strengthen and broaden, with the celebration of the 10th anniversary of our Strategic Partnership and our excellent cooperation in sub-regional and multilateral organisations, in 2020. Current levels of bilateral trade and economic cooperation will be strengthened through a greater focus on the priority sectors of agriculture, defence, infrastructure and energy.

Reflecting on the South African Government's COVID-19 response, Ambassador Mavimbela noted that the strategy was focussed on saving lives, while being mindful of the importance of protecting livelihoods. He paid tribute to all the dedicated frontline workers, particularly hospital staff, who still work tirelessly to save lives.

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Mavimbela called on all like-minded nations of the world to join South Africans as we continue on our journey to champion democracy, peace and human rights across the globe.

Watch the video: https://fb.watch/5aFguS0_2C/

Felicitações

Data Nacional da África do Sul



Escritório de
Assuntos Internacionais



Mister Ambassador,

The General Commander of the Military Firefighters Corps of the Federal District, Colonel William Augusto Ferreira BOMFIM, and the International Advisory Office congratulate Your Excellency for the National Date of your country.

We express our good wishes for well-being and prosperity.

cbmdf.internacional@cbm.df.gov.br



Today, as we remember the heroes of past, we realise that it is in our decision to add to our society that we honour their memory.

To this commemorative effort and exercise, we are duty bound. Therefore, my hope is that today inspires you to know that wherever you are you can make a difference.

So, what is the meaning of freedom under COVID-19? It is the responsibility to know that no matter how small we all can be Active Citizens.

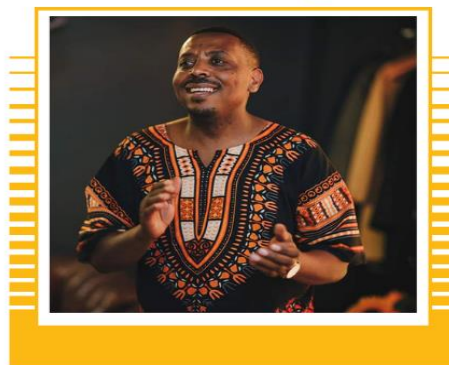
SELAELO RAMOKGOPA

South African Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, accredited to the Republic of Iceland



MUSIC PERFORMANCE BY
ZWAI MBULA

Marimba Legend

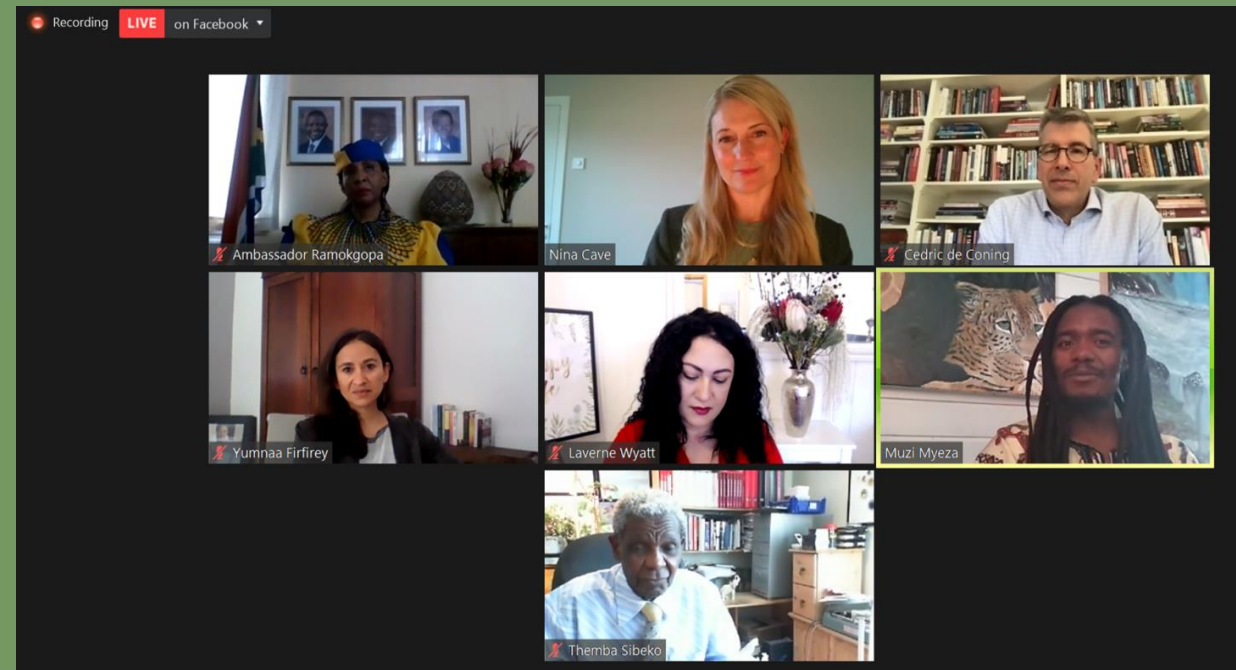


LIVE DURING
THE SA EMBASSY IN OSLO'S VIRTUAL
FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS

www.zwaimbula.co.za

Oslo Mission celebrates Freedom Day 2021

By: Linn Isaksen
Oslo, Norway



Amid the social lockdown in Norway's capital city, the celebration of Freedom Day under the theme "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: The Meaning of Freedom under COVID-19", was duly moved to cyberspace. Close to 90 people tuned in when the Oslo Mission's Freedom Day celebrations kicked off for an hour filled with inspiring speeches, interesting insights and experiences from active citizens, music from the Mother City and videos showing the stunning diversity of South Africa and her citizens flying the South African flag high in their communities and on a global scale.

In her opening speech, Ambassador Selaelo Ramokgopa emphasised the importance of honouring the heroes of the past by adding to our society, and that wherever you are, you can make a difference – active citizenship is for everyone. HE Ramokgopa also highlighted the strides made by the trailblazing female freedom fighters and that we were indeed standing on the shoulders of giants: "Charlotte Maxeke, among other selfless women, all left an indelible mark on our nation, having laid the foundation for a united, non-racial, non-sexist, prosperous society. Through their sacrifices, we now live in a country that recognises women as equal citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities".

Thereafter, the panellists took to the virtual stage, proudly representing our country in Norway and beyond as active citizens, all implementing Ubuntu and their South African backgrounds and culture in their respective careers. Laverne Wyatt, a Marketing and Communications Strategist, highlighted the power of media as a tool for inclusion, whereas Research Professor, Cedric de Coning, uses South Africa's transition experience in his research and work with peacebuilding. Yumnaa Firfirey, a Sustainability Manager at Norwegian Scatec Solar, spoke passionately about Scatec's South African solar operations and their contribution to not only the renewable energy revolution but also to social development. Muzi Myeza has employed 10 indigenous staff at his restaurant in the village of Valdalen in Norway and makes use of mainly local produce, whereas Themba Sibeko created an incredible community for South Africans in Norway, as the founder of the South African Society in Norway (SASN) in 1992. His legacy remains strong, as SASN is still a social haven and home away from home for a great number of Norwegian-based South Africans.

After the panel concluded, Marimba artist Zwai Mbula and the band brought the beats, and gave a wonderful musical performance live from Cape Town. This was followed by a video of global South Africans and a beautiful photo montage of SASN's gatherings throughout the years, bringing the South African warmth, braai and companionship to the woods and shores of Norway.

Ambassador Ramokgopa concluded with a message of gratitude for the panellists' and performers' passion and dedication to South Africa and highlighted the vital role played by South Africans abroad when they share their experience and knowledge with their communities as active citizens

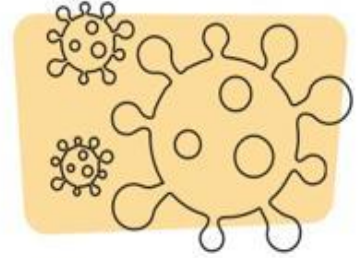


Embassy Staff celebrating Freedom Day together

Learning the Basics

What is Coronavirus?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus. 'CO' stands for corona, 'VI' for virus, and 'D' for disease. The COVID-19 virus is a new virus linked to the same family of viruses as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and some types of common cold.



What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms can include mainly:

Fever, cough and shortness of breath

In more severe cases, infection can cause:

Pneumonia or breathing difficulties



How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing). Individuals can also be infected from and touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and touching their face (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth).



Why should I wear a mask?

When a person infected with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or talks, they produce respiratory droplets that can travel about two metres and can land in the mouths or noses of those nearby, infecting others with the virus.

COVID-19 can also be spread by people who don't know they have the virus since they aren't experiencing any symptoms.

Because of this, wearing masks can help slow the spread of the virus.



Remarks by HE Mr Johannes Mahlangu, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the Republic of Kenya, during the Virtual Celebration of South Africa's 27th Freedom Day

- 27 April 2021, Nairobi

This year marks the 150th anniversary of our struggle icon and human rights campaigner, Mama Charlotte Maxeke, hence our Freedom Month is celebrated under the theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: The Meaning of Freedom under COVID-19". Charlotte Maxeke and other selfless women of her generation fought against oppression at a time when such defiance was met with unrelenting force. She was an activist and one of the first black women graduates in South Africa. Charlotte

Maxeke helped organise the anti-pass movement in Bloemfontein in 1913 and spearheaded the fight for social justice. Through her sacrifices, we now live in a country which recognises women as equal citizens, with equal rights and responsibilities. The "Mother of Black Freedom in South Africa" was how Charlotte Maxeke was fondly known.

The year 2021 also presents a significant landmark in our freedom, including the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the South African Constitution into law. The Constitution is widely acknowledged, not only as one of the most internally acclaimed and progressive constitutions globally, but also as the most transformative, with its primary concern being to facilitate change in political, economic and social relations in the country. As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of our Constitution, we also honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our country. We strive to promote the constitutional values of human dignity, to achieve equality and the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, to uphold the principles of non-racialism and non-sexism as well as to promote the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law. Although remarkable progress has been made since 1994, we acknowledge that the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment remain an impediment to South Africa's goal of national unity and social cohesion.

We are celebrating our 27th Freedom Day under the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is the same spirit exerted by our elder and freedom fighter, Charlotte Maxeke, that has guided South

Africa and its people in the fight against the pandemic.

The pandemic has brought about unprecedented challenges and has given a different meaning to our freedom, while also highlighting the imperative need for social cohesion and nation-building, in which our freedom is predicated. Our nation has stood together to confront COVID-19 in ways not seen since the early days of our democracy. It is my pleasure to inform that South Africa continues to roll out its national COVID-19 vaccine programme, which aims to vaccinate 40 million South Africans.

This programme entails procurement, distribution, vaccination, monitoring, communication and mobilisation; all the important elements towards ensuring that no one is left behind. It is in the same guided approach that in March 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that Aspen Pharmacare would produce Johnson & Johnson vaccines at its factory in Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth). Our COVID-19 response has consistently focussed on the respect, promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. This is the same approach demonstrated in our engagement within the African Union, World Health Organisation and with other partners.

The celebration for our Freedom Day takes place at a time when we are still reeling from the adverse economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a decline in liquidity; productive capacity; as well as the trade and investment flows for South Africa – and we assume many other countries are experiencing the same. This, indeed, has reversed the gains that have been made in attaining the economic freedom of our country.

As we reflect on ways to resuscitate our economies – not just to the levels that they were before – we do so through striving for strong economies that can withstand the future trials of and thrive in a new global reality. In this regard, South Africa is in the process of implementing components of its Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, whose focus is to bolster production and strengthen our



industrialisation and employment across a number of sectors. We believe that this plan will assist in dealing with the triple challenges already mentioned.

Allow me to highlight that South Africa was among the first countries to ratify the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, which came into effect on 1 January 2021. The early ratification illustrates our shared commitment to deepen intra-Africa trade through the integration of our markets while systematically dealing with non-tariff barriers. By working together with our African brothers and sisters, South Africa will deliver on the commitments made to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.

I arrived in Kenya in February this year and am committing myself to enhancing our bilateral relations with Kenya as well as advancing the environment and human settlements agenda through participation in the global system of governance and the deliberations of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

My government reassures its continued support to Kenya as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2021/22. We remain committed to realising peace and security in Africa, as recently articulated during our tenure serving as members of the Bureau of the African Union (AU). We are also looking forward to a return State Visit by President Uhuru Kenyatta to South Africa in the near future, which will most certainly contribute to deepening of the relationship between the two countries. These commitments are made to show that South Africa highly values its relations with the Government and the people of Kenya; and the importance of this UN headquarter, which is the only one in the developing world and Africa. If fully supported, the agenda of the UN-Habitat and UNEP have the potential to move our people away from discrimination and want; and would realise the highest attainable standard of living for all people. As South Africa, we remain committed to fast-tracking the implementation of our obligations towards the eradication of poverty and inequality as outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the AU's Agenda 2063, as well as our own 2030 National Development Plan.

To fellow South Africans,

As we celebrate our freedom and Constitution, let us remember that the past injustices may have scarred us, but they did not consume us. We have in the times of COVID-19 experienced a terrible hardship. However, let us find motivation in that we will rise again and continue to make progress in improving the lives of people and restoring their dignity. The celebration of Freedom Day reminds us that our freedom was not free. We must continue to build on the significant progress made in the past 27 years of freedom and democracy. I look forward to knowing and learning from you and remain committed to being of good service to you.

Niluthokozele usuku lwenu lenkululeko!

I thank you!
Asanteni sana!

Ambassador of South Africa in the Kingdom of Jordan congratulates it on its Centenary

South African Embassy, Amman, Jordan

Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa (Ebrahim Saley) stressed the importance of the role that His Majesty King Abdullah II plays in defending the Palestinian cause, and referred to the tireless efforts of His Majesty to promote peace and dialogue in a world dominated by tensions, insecurity and conflicts. This came during an interview conducted by Al-Rai with the Ambassador on the occasion of his country's National Day.

Ambassador Saley congratulated the Kingdom on the passing of 100 years of its independence and the passing of two decades of the rule of His Majesty King Abdullah.

Below is the interview:

Al Rai: How do you view Jordan's foreign policy and its implications for the bilateral relations?

Since the founding of Jordan, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has progressed from achieving full independence to becoming a regional oasis of stability and peace in the Levant. Despite the various challenges that the Hashemite Kingdom has faced since independence, Jordanians can feel proud to have achieved a high level of stability and progress that, in no small measure, can be attributed to the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II and his forebears.

Similarly, the Republic of South Africa gained its liberation from apartheid on 27 April 1994 (Freedom Day). It was in the same year that South Africa and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan opened their respective embassies in their capitals of Pretoria and Amman. In the nearly three decades of diplomatic relations, South Africa and Jordan have developed a relationship that continues to strengthen and deepen each successive year.

South Africa sees the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as a friendly country that espouses the principles of moderation, tolerance, stability and development due largely to the efforts of its leadership. His Majesty King Abdullah II has continued to steer Jordan on the course set by his late father, King Hussein (may Allah have mercy on his soul), who was renowned for his wise stewardship of the Kingdom during turbulent times in the region.

Al Rai: How do you see Jordan's role and efforts to achieve peace in the region?

His Majesty King Abdullah II is internationally respected and highly regarded for his tireless efforts to promote peace and dialogue in a world rife with tensions, insecurity and conflict. The message that His Majesty conveyed to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, calling for a truly global, inclusive system that leaves nobody behind, is the same message that His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa continues to advocate inside South Africa and internationally. South Africa puts a lot of weight on multilateralism, international legality and a rule-based international order. It is therefore consistent with the Hashemite Kingdom's undertaking to act as custodians of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem. His Majesty's King Abdullah's efforts to preserve and maintain the holy sites under his custodianship are well appreciated.

The position of South Africa on Palestine is well known and consistent with international legality as provided for in the applicable UN resolutions on Palestine. South Africa supports the two-states solution within the pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital of the Palestinian State. South Africa has a fully accredited Ambassador from Palestine based in Pretoria and has an Embassy in Ramallah.

Al Rai: How do you view the importance of visits at the leadership level of the two countries to enhance bilateral relations ?

The exchange of high-level visits has traditionally symbolised the expression of importance and high regard between nations. In 1996, late King Hussein paid an official State Visit to South Africa and was received by late President Nelson Mandela. In October 1999, the late President Mandela visited the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. President Mandela was received by His Majesty King Abdullah II after the tragic demise of his late father King Hussein (may his soul rest in peace) earlier the same year. That visit sealed the importance of the Hashemite Kingdom and its people to the sisterly "newly" liberated South Africa. His Majesty King Abdullah II visited South Africa in 2005 during which discussion on Palestine and expanding trade relations were discussed. One of the great achievements resulting from that has endured until today: the ease of movement of Jordanians and South Africans for business and tourism purposes without having to apply for a visa prior to departure for entry into either country for a period of 30 days.

Last year, the newly appointed South African Deputy Minister, Her Excellency Candith Mashego-Dlamini, was in the final stages of preparation for officially visiting Jordan to, among other things, sign the Agreement on Diplomatic Consultations. Unfortunately, the visit had to be postponed in view of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is a great pity that these days official visits are becoming more difficult to undertake as we continue to collectively battle the scourge of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, we should look for alternative means to showcase the strength of our bilateral relations. Perhaps technology could help bridge the temporary hurdle but I am confident that our diplomatic work will continue soon in the familiar traditional manner that we have come to know prior to the pandemic. Inshallah.



Amb. Ebrahim Saley in conversation with Al-Rai

Al Rai: What about coordination and consultation between the two countries on bilateral issues and issues of common interest?

Both South Africa and the Hashemite Kingdom have always sought common purpose on the international stage. The process of coordination and consultation has become routine. Mutual positions are regularly reinforced whether through multilateral congruence or speaking out in solidarity on a number of issues, be it climate change or human rights.

South-South cooperation remains one of the cornerstones of South Africa's Foreign Policy. It is in the collective interest of the global South that we all strive for a rules based global order. In that respect, it is vitally important for Jordan and South Africa to call for the necessary reforms of the United Nations and its Institutions to insure for a much more equitable and representative international order than what it has been since it came into existence in October 1947.

Al Rai : What about economic and trade cooperation between the two countries?

The potential for bilateral trade between South Africa and the Hashemite Kingdom is high even though the actual trade exchanges are modest. There is a vast range of products that were traded in 2019 that accounted for just under R1 billion (not including the defence sector).

Apart from the well-regarded South African meat and foodstuff in the Jordanian market, I was pleasantly surprised to have met a young entrepreneurial couple who inform me that they wished to startup their own exotic bird breeding facility in South Africa. They informed me that they had been importing hand-reared parrots and other exotic birds from South African breeders to an average value of 120 000 Jordanian Dinars monthly. The birds arrive in Jordan fully CITES-certified and are then mostly re-exported to countries in the region. I mention this example to highlight the inexhaustible number of possibilities that exist for entrepreneurship in both countries.

There are numerous instances of cooperation between the business sectors in the two countries. South Africa and Jordan have significant levels of cooperation in the defence sector whereby the joint venture for the production of some military equipment in Jordan seems to be successful and ongoing.

A notable feature of inward investment for Jordan is often driven by naturalised South African of Jordanian origin. A number of these South Africans Jordanians, who have established successful businesses in South Africa, return to Jordan as investors in the Jordanian economy.

One of the key indicators of the close bilateral relationship is the freedom to travel between countries, of course outside of required COVID-19 travel regulations in place across the world, at the moment. In the case of South Africa and Jordan, there are no restrictions between the two countries. Just as South Africans are issued visas on arrival in Jordan, so too, are Jordanian nationals free to travel to South Africa without visa formalities prior to their departure – a 30 days visitor's visa is issued on arrival in South Africa as is the case for South Africans arriving in Jordan. I think that this positive factor needs to be developed further by both countries in seeking opportunities in their respective countries.

South African Embassy in Athens celebrates Freedom Day

On 27 April 2021, the South African Embassy in Athens, Greece, celebrated Freedom Day virtually. HE Ambassador Beryl Sisulu delivered a key message, with this year's theme: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: The Meaning of Freedom under COVID-19". The video included traditional songs and promoted South Africa as a tourism destination.

The video was forwarded to friends of South Africa, all local Embassies and Honorary Consulates, businesspeople, etc. It was further shared on the Embassy's Facebook page.

The South African Freedom Day could not be deterred by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Click on the below link to watch:

<https://bit.ly/2RJiUQ5>



THE YEAR OF:
CHARLOTTE
Maxeke
THE MEANING OF FREEDOM
UNDER COVID-19

#FreedomMonth2021
#2021YearOfCharlotteMaxeke

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PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA



25th-year anniversary of the South African Constitution

Globe at a Glimpse



BERLIN, GERMANY

Ambassador Stone Sizani's video message on the occasion of Freedom Day, 27 April 2021: "The Year of Charlotte Maxeke: The Meaning of Freedom under COVID-19".

Watch here:
<https://fb.watch/5pcSjpaIc/>



KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

A video message from the South African High Commissioner to Malaysia, David Malcomson, on this special occasion as we celebrate this Freedom Day

Watch here:
<https://fb.watch/5pd0xj2gSj/>



ACCRA, GHANA

The South African First Secretary Political at the High Commission, Mampeete Nkoame, in conversation with Reginald Robertson on AM Ghana about our history and culture.

Watch here:
<https://bit.ly/3ezCSWP>



HARARE, ZIMBABWE

Let us commemorate it with the spirit of unity to achieve full prosperity. A message from the South African Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Watch here:
<https://bit.ly/2R8sdcC>



"This Constitution, with its Bill of Rights, is the mirror of South African society. It reflects both the history from which we have emerged, and the values we now cherish – human dignity, equality and freedom. It proclaims to the world that we are a society committed to democracy, to the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

"It proclaims to all South Africans, the landless, the homeless, the women, the workers and the children of this country, that their basic needs and aspirations matter enough to be included in the country's Constitution. It celebrates the richness of the diversity of cultures, religions and beliefs of South Africans, and affirms that all belong as equals in our one nation.

"It commits the State to respecting, protecting, promoting and fulfilling the rights in the Bill of Rights and acknowledges that it is not enough for the Government simply to refrain from violating people's rights."

– *President Cyril Ramaphosa, Adoption Day, 1996*

Voices from DIRCO

Golf Club supports the caddies of the Services Golf Club

By: Douw Vermaak
Deputy Director
Directorate: United States of America and Canada



A wise man was once asked to describe the game of golf. After thinking it over for some time, he stated: "Move a bumpy little sphere from Point A to Point B as efficiently as possible. Try it over and over. Go home, have nightmares about the ordeal and come back excited to fall short of perfection yet again. Do this for the rest of your life."

Here in DIRCO, we are in the fortunate position to have a well-functioning golf club consisting of members who know exactly what this wise man was talking about. The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, completely changed the way we will look at many aspects of our daily lives, including, the game we all love. During this pandemic, hundreds of thousands of people lost their jobs while many more suddenly had to work from home, frequently in circumstances which were a long way from ideal. Virtually everyone was cut off from friends and family for months while almost every other aspect of normal life that would have been taken for granted at the start of the year was turned on its head. Social activity stopped, and of course, thousands of people got sick with far too many losing their lives.

The various phases of lockdown announced under the South African State of Disaster had a devastating impact on the golf clubs in South Africa with an estimated 25% of the national clubs having been forced to close their doors. The golf industry contributes close to R49 billion per annum to the South African economy and offers employment to approximately 60 000 people of whom 85% come from the vulnerable sector.

According to Chris van der Merwe, Chair of the Golf Club Management Association of South Africa, the spread of COVID-19 has had a severe impact on the game of golf across the globe, and has hit the vulnerable informal work sector of the industry very hard.

There are estimated to be between 12 000 and 18 000 golf caddies working at just over 450 clubs in South Africa. According to Mr van der Merwe, a survey conducted in May 2020 in which 190 golf clubs (of the 450) participated, 3 700 caddies had basically lost all their income. For the majority of caddies in South Africa, it's a matter of no play, no pay.

It was with this in mind that the members of the DIRCO Golf Club decided to forego their end-of-the year club function and rather use these funds to support the caddies of the Services Golf Club in Thaba Tshwane. The club, in cooperation with SPAR Queenswood Corner, bought food hampers for the caddies and their families and formally handed these over following the last round of golf for the year played on Sunday, 11 December 2020, at the Services Golf Club.

With this small gesture, the club ensured that these amazing individuals who form an integral part of the enjoyment of the game could provide sustenance for their families.

The DIRCO Golf Club currently has a membership of 27, which is restricted to current and retired DIRCO employees. Membership amounts to R200 per annum. The club plays once or twice a month at the various excellent courses around the capital. Colleagues who are interested in joining and sharing in the frustrations and jublations of the game and meeting their colleagues outside the confines of the DIRCO Campus are encouraged to contact the Club Secretary, Mr Colin Pillay, or the Club Captain, Ms Antoinette Rademan, on rademana@dirco.gov.za

UBUNTU CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR JOYINI



UBUNTU RADIO

SOUTH AFRICA'S
PUBLIC DIPLOMACY
IN ACTION

#UbuntuRadioImbizo

#UbuntuRadioConversations



Ambassador Mathu Joyini recently commenced her term as South Africa's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, USA. Tali Munzhedzi spoke to the Ambassador about this appointment and much more, including:

- the recent election as Chair of the UN Commission on the Status of Women
- women and SA foreign policy
- South Africa's role as member of the UN Peace Building Commission.

Watch the conversation here:

<https://bit.ly/3oaOJOc>



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Preventing and managing chronic diseases

- DIRCO Employee Health and Wellness

"If one wishes for good health, one must first ask oneself if he is ready to do away with the reasons for his illness. Only then is it possible to help him." – Hippocrates

Chronic diseases are generally slow in progression, are of long duration and do not typically spread from one person to another (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2013). Statistics SA indicates that chronic diseases were responsible for 57,8% of all deaths in South Africa in 2017.

Common chronic diseases in South Africa

- Cardiovascular diseases - 19% of all deaths in South Africa in 2016 (WHO, 2018)
- Other chronic diseases - 11% of all deaths in South Africa in 2016 (WHO, 2018)
- Cancers - 10% of all deaths in South Africa in 2016 (WHO, 2018)
- Diabetes – 7% of all deaths in South Africa in 2016 (WHO, 2018)
- Respiratory diseases - 4% of all deaths in South Africa in 2016 (WHO, 2018).

What are the causes of chronic diseases?

1. Changeable contributors to chronic diseases
 - Behaviours that can be viewed as damaging to health such as;
 - sedentary lifestyle or lack of physical exercise
 - unhealthy eating habits.
 - the use of tobacco.

2. Non-changeable contributors to chronic diseases

- age
- heredity/genetics.

What are the risk factors for developing chronic diseases?

- alcohol abuse or misuse
- excessive use of salt/sodium
- obesity
- physical inactivity
- raised blood glucose
- raised blood pressure
- raised cholesterol.

Preventing chronic diseases

- STOP smoking!
- Limit your intake of alcohol.
- Regular health screenings (during the COVID-19 era, most medical aids, as part of the plans, ensure that screening can be conducted at most pharmacies).
- Exercise regularly.
- Eat healthy.
- Get enough sleep.
- Know you family history and share this with your doctor.

Living with chronic diseases

- Adhere to your medication.
- Know that painful emotions following the diagnosis of chronic disease are normal.

gems
Government Employees Medical Scheme

INVEST IN YOUR WELLBEING
BY ATTENDING THE UPCOMING ONLINE DISCUSSION:
Preventing and managing chronic conditions

- Learn as much as you can about the disease, however, avoid pre-occupation with the disease as this can lead to distress. The following sources of information can be helpful:
 - your healthcare provider (doctor and/or nurse)
 - support groups for people living with the disorder
 - your Medical Aid might have disease management programmes that may provide support.
 - referrals to specialists such as dietitians, physiologists etc. are meant to better manage your disease.

Chronic illness and mental health

The diagnosis of a long and life-threatening disease can lead to fear, distress and uncertainty. While some people may find it easy to resolve these thoughts, other people may struggle with these thoughts and emotions, and anxiety and depression may develop. It is important to consider the following:

- understand and accept your diagnosis
- allow yourself to release the painful emotions
- work closely with your healthcare provider and Medical Aid in order to access benefits that may control the disease.
- in the event that mental illness develops, mental healthcare specialists such as psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and psychiatric nurses are equipped to deal with health-related mental conditions.

Should you need support to deal with your chronic disease/s please do not hesitate to contact Employee Health and Wellness practitioners.

Your Guide to the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS)

citizens aged 60 years and above need to register for their COVID-19 vaccination through the EVDS self enrolment platform

6 steps to register for vaccination if you are 60 years or older:

STEP 1



Make sure you have internet access

STEP 2



You will need a smartphone, a tablet or a computer

STEP 3



Connect to the internet and go to <https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za/#/>

STEP 4



The welcome screen will tell you what to do next.

STEP 5



Follow the instructions Put in all the details the system asks for

STEP 6



When you are done the system will send an SMS to the phone number you provided. This SMS will tell you that you are registered. This means that the system now has you in the queue.

When it is your turn to be vaccinated, the system will send you another SMS with a date and the venue for your vaccination.

If you put in the correct address, you will be sent to the vaccination centre that is closest to your home

#IChooseVacciNation

Why are Vaccines important?

Lowering the possibility for a pathogen to circulate in the community protects those who cannot be vaccinated (due to health conditions, like allergies, or their age) from the disease targeted by the vaccine.

#VaccineRolloutStrategySA



What details do I need to provide for registration?

The registration information will include the location of your workplace and the EVDS will assign you to a vaccine centre close to that location and communicate that back to you once that is determined.

Do you need to register if you have health insurance?

Regardless of whether someone has health insurance or not, people who'd like to get vaccinated must use the EVDS to receive an appointment to be inoculated. Those with medical aids will be able to register via their medical aid website.

IT'S YOUR VOICE



Internal Newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

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For contributions to the magazine, submit your article to internalcomms@dirco.gov.za



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