



**Continuing the Legacy:**  
**Working for a Just and Peaceful World**  
South Africa – Candidate for Non-Permanent  
Membership of the United Nations Security Council  
2019 – 2020



## Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World

### South Africa in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 2019 – 2020

South Africa is a founding member state of the UN. Owing to international opposition to the unjust apartheid regime and following the declaration of the policies of apartheid as a crime against humanity, South Africa's membership of the UN was suspended on 12 November 1974. Subsequently, the liberation movements obtained observer status at the UN and continued to mobilise international solidarity in the fight against the apartheid regime.



Nelson Mandela (African National Congress) addresses the Special Committee Against Apartheid in the General Assembly Hall, 22 June 1990, United Nations, New York

The end of apartheid and the democratic elections in South Africa in April 1994 paved the way for the complete normalisation of South Africa's international relations, including with the UN. It used the multilateral platform to break away from the isolationism which characterised apartheid South Africa, both in its immoral basis and its detraction from the advancement of humanity. At its inception, the new, democratic South Africa was motivated to become a more meaningful and positive influence in the world. The role of the UN and the international community during the fight against apartheid instilled a firm belief in South Africans of the value of multilateralism and the UN system.

Democratic South Africa remains a strong proponent of multilateralism and global governance with the UN system at its centre. These institutions serve to combine the international community's strength to maintain international peace and security, the promotion of the economic and social well-being of all nations and the advancement of all peoples.

Given the increasingly interdependent and global nature of the world, South Africa is also of the view that the UN remains best placed to address major international issues such as food security, climate change and natural disasters, refugees and migration, international crime and terrorism as well as cybercrime and disarmament in a collective manner.



President Thabo Mbeki at the 62nd Session of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council, held in New York

South Africa regards the UNSC as the primary international platform to help promote multilateralism and for the rule of international law as the most appropriate means of achieving global political stability and international peace and security.

In October 2006, South Africa was elected by the General Assembly to serve, for the first time in history, as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for the period 2007 – 2008. South Africa's membership of the SC provided South Africa with the opportunity to elevate to a global level the African Agenda of achieving peace, security and development, including the promotion and respect for human rights.

South Africa returned to the UNSC for the period 2011 – 2012. The country's second tenure on the UNSC built on its achievements and experiences of its first term and focused on the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa and the world; the promotion of the importance of the development of strong and effective partnerships between the UN and regional organisations in maintaining international peace and security; highlighting peace and security needs on the African continent; promoting the rule of law within multilateralism; and advocating for the improvement of the SC's working methods.



A MONUC paramedic (South Africa contingent) during a medical evacuation of Busurungi victims

South Africa has presented its candidature for the non-permanent seat on the UNSC for the period 2019 – 2020. The country's candidature for the African non-permanent seat on the UNSC was successfully endorsed by the African Union (AU) at its 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in January 2018. Guided by its values and commitment to the multilateral system, South Africa remains dedicated to strengthening and maintaining international peace, security and stability in a constantly changing global environment.



UN Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-Moon, with President Jacob Zuma, chairing the UN Security Council on AU-UN cooperation at the UN Security Council Chamber. President Zuma is accompanied by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkomo-Mashabane

### Principles of South Africa's foreign policy

South African foreign policy is aligned with the principles of the UN and is focused on forging an African continent that is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united and contributing to a world that is just and equitable.

In the conduct of its foreign policy, South Africa upholds and is guided by the following principles, namely a commitment to achieving:

- international peace and regional and internationally agreed-upon mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts
- justice and international law
- the promotion of democracy and democratic values
- the advancement of human rights
- the sustainable development of the African continent.

### South Africa's achievements in the field of international peace and security and the UN system

Since its return to the international fold, South Africa has taken on its international responsibilities with great energy and enthusiasm – motivated by a firm belief in multilateralism; a global governance system that is fair, equitable and representative; the promotion of peace and security through global disarmament, the pacific settlement of disputes and the promotion of good governance; the promotion of

human rights; and the fight against poverty through the promotion of sustainable development.

South Africa has served two terms on the UNSC (2006 – 2007 and 2011 – 2012) in which it successfully advocated for closer cooperation between the UNSC and the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC). This was done to achieve greater strategic coordination between the two councils, based on the belief that this would enhance the effectiveness of the UNSC in addressing challenges to peace and security on the continent of Africa.

These efforts culminated in the adoption of the landmark Resolution S/2033/2012, which makes specific recommendations on strengthening the cooperation between the UNSC and AUPSC, including through effective annual consultative meetings, the holding of timely consultations and collaborative field missions of the two councils in order to formulate cohesive positions and strategies.

A further illustration of South Africa's commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security is our strong and sustained contributions to UN peacekeeping operations.

### South Africa's approach to the UNSC: 2019 – 2020

- Guided by its own national experience of peacefully dismantling apartheid and achieving a negotiated settlement, South Africa will utilise its experience in the prioritisation of diplomacy, mediation, the pacific settlement of disputes, conflict resolution and peacebuilding through inclusive dialogue and negotiations with the ultimate aim of supporting parties to achieve sustainable peace, national unity and reconciliation.
- South Africa will actively contribute to achieving an Africa at peace by 2063 by pursuing and promoting Africa's goal of "silencing the guns by 2020", but also to promote and achieve peace in all the regions of the world.
- It will continue to promote effective partnerships between the UN and regional and subregional organisations.
- The country will promote the African Agenda, including highlighting the continent's priorities in the area of peace and security.
- South Africa will continue to work together with all the members of the AU and UN in pursuit of effective global governance, multilateralism and reform of the UN system.
- It will work towards improving the working methods of the UNSC to make it a more legitimate, representative and effective body.