

UBUNTU

NEWSFLASH



Issue 470 | 8 April 2021

WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER * THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & COOPERATION

ubuntu diplomat

UBUNTU
MAGAZINE

UBUNTU
RADIO

STAY
SAFE

PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA

THE POWER TO
DEFEAT CORONAVIRUS
IS IN YOUR HANDS

PLAY YOUR PART



TRAVEL
SMART
WITH
DIRCO

www.dirco.gov.za



Tel: +27 12 351-1000 (24-hours)



#TravelSmartWithDIRCO

PRESIDENT ATTENDS SADC DELIBERATIONS ON SECURITY SITUATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

President Cyril Ramaphosa is attending an Extraordinary Double Troika Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Maputo, Mozambique.



The summit is deliberating on measures to address terrorism in the Republic of Mozambique.

SADC is deeply concerned about the continued terrorist attacks in Cabo Delgado, especially for the lives and welfare of the residents who continue to suffer from the atrocious, brutal and indiscriminate assaults.

The summit has been convened by His Excellency President Mokgweetsi Masisi of the Republic of Botswana in his capacity as Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation.

The summit was preceded on Wednesday, 7 April, by meetings of senior officials and ministers.

As the regional policymaking institution, SADC is managed on a Troika system that comprises the current SADC Chairperson, the incoming Chairperson and the immediate previous or outgoing Chairperson.

Currently, the SADC Double Troika comprises SADC Troika member states: Republic of Mozambique (current Chair of SADC), Republic of Malawi (incoming Chair), United Republic of Tanzania (outgoing Chair) as well as member states of the Troika of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, the Republic of Botswana (current Chair), Republic of South Africa (incoming Chair): and the Republic of Zimbabwe (outgoing Chair).

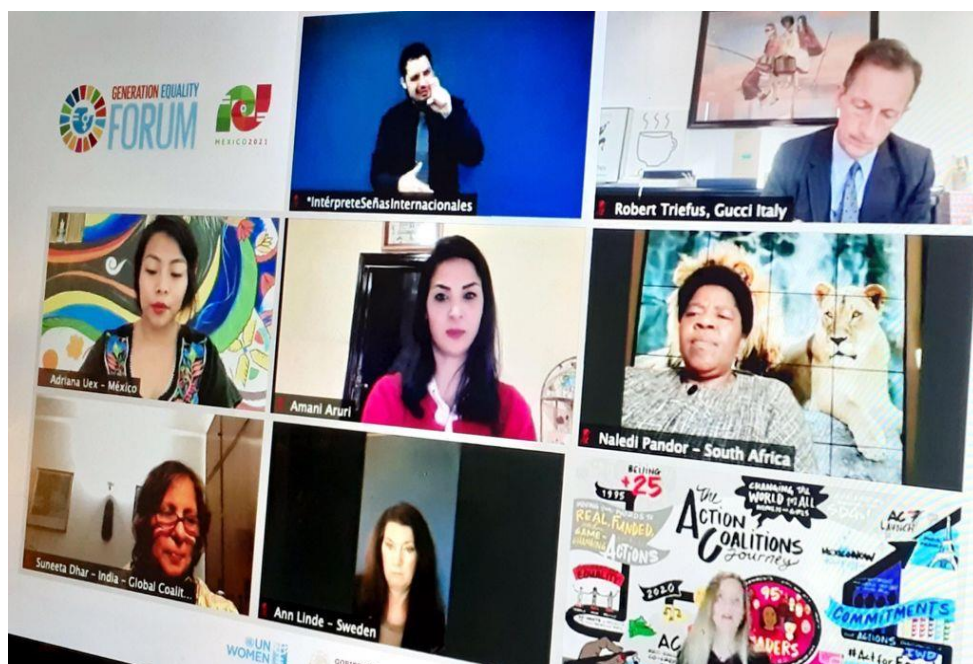
President Ramaphosa is accompanied by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor; Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula; and Minister of State Security, Ayanda Dlodlo.

DEPUTY MINISTER MASHEGO-DLAMINI PARTICIPATES IN GENERATION EQUALITY FORUM MEXICO CITY FORUM

On 31 March 2021, the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Candith Mashego-Dlamini, participated in a civil-society centred, multi-stakeholder global gathering for gender equality: the Generation Equality Forum (GEF).

COVID-19 has laid bare critical gaps in equality that have left millions of women and girls – particularly those who are most marginalised – behind. Aware of this critical time for gender equality and committed to building a more equal, inclusive and resilient post-pandemic world, UN Women, together with the governments of Mexico, France, and in partnership with civil society and youth-led organisations, has initiated a civil-society centred, multi-stakeholder global gathering for gender equality: the GEF.

Through co-creation and diverse and inclusive consultations, the forum brings together feminist advocates from across the globe to foster action and renew movements for gender equality, as well as to launch a set of global, innovative and multi-stakeholder action coalitions (ACs) and a Compact for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action.



The ACs have engaged governments, women's, feminist and youth-led organisations, international organisations, and the private sector to catalyse collective action; spark global and local conversations among generations; drive increased public and private investment; and deliver concrete, game-changing results across generations for girls and women.

Six specific themes are being addressed by the ACs, including:

- Gender-Based Violence
- Economic Justice and Rights
- Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Feminist Action for Climate Justice
- Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality
- Feminist Movements and Leadership
- Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action.

The GEF kicked off in Mexico City from 29 to 31 March 2021, hosted by the Government of Mexico and will be launched in Paris from 30 June 2021 to 2 July 2021, hosted by the Government of France.

Ahead of the official announcement of the ACs in Paris, the Mexico City Forum was an opportunity to:

- highlight the much-needed work and approach of the ACs
- profile the Global Acceleration Agenda for Gender Equality as drafted by the leaders of the ACs
- strengthen the international mobilisation around the ACs and allow additional stakeholders to join as commitment makers.

DEPUTY MINISTER BOTES MAKES FOLLOW-UP VISIT TO THE WESTERN CAPE

The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes, visited George, Western Cape, on Thursday, 8 April 2021.



The Deputy Minister visited the town last year in his capacity as the area's District Development Model Champion. During that visit, he interacted with local communities and identified certain needs.

Deputy Minister Botes donated certain goods as part of the response to pleas made by the communities during his last visit. 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.

The hand-over ceremony took place at the Tyholorha Primary School in George.

DULCIE SEPTEMBER COMMEMORATED

The South African Embassy in France, in partnership with the Dullah Omar Institute of the University of the Western Cape, hosted a webinar on 29 March 2021 to commemorate the life of Dulcie September, which coincided with the 33rd anniversary of her assassination in Paris in 1988.

A composite image featuring a presentation slide on the left and a laptop screen on the right. The slide has a green background and white text. The text on the slide reads:

Dulcie September
International Solidarity and the Struggle for Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy in South Africa

Dulcie September was a brave and fearless freedom fighter, human rights activist and ANC Chief Representative in France, Switzerland and Luxembourg, who was assassinated in Paris on 29 March 1988.

The laptop screen shows a Zoom webinar. The main window displays a man in a suit speaking. The background of the webinar has a blue and white design with the text "WELCOME" and "60 YEARS of hope, action & knowledge". A small inset window shows a woman, likely Dulcie September, in a black and white portrait.

Dulcie September was born in Maitland and raised in Athlone in Cape Town, South Africa. She was an educator by profession and was an anti-apartheid activist from a young age who was repeatedly detained by apartheid security forces, with five years of detention and a five-year ban between 1964 and 1973. In 1973, she left South Africa to serve in various African National Congress (ANC) structures in exile, including in the United Kingdom and Zambia. At the time of her assassination, she was the ANC Chief Representative to France, Switzerland and Luxembourg, and was the first high-profile anti-apartheid activist to be assassinated outside the southern African region.

In the latter role, she was based in the City of Arcueil in France from 1984 before she moved to Paris shortly before her assassination. During this period, she received much support from the people of France, including the Mayor of Arcueil, and other anti-apartheid activists and movements. As a result of her role in the struggle against apartheid and her impact, September has been posthumously memorialised in various ways throughout France, including the naming of two schools in her name in the department of Val-de-Marne (which includes Arcueil), the naming of a street ("Rue Dulcie September"), a square ("Place Dulcie September"); a scholarship named after her; annual commemorative events held by civil-society groups such as the

International Federation of African Women in France and Europe; and academic research, published books and public art in her honour.

Such endeavours are important examples of how September's memory can be kept alive. They are also a testimony to the importance of international solidarity not only in South Africa's struggle for freedom, but also for other important causes of the present day.

The Embassy builds partnerships for cooperation to strengthen relations between the peoples of South Africa and France to continue to promote the values she embodied and died for. Among others, these included democracy, human rights and gender equality.

Being held in the month of March, the event coincided with celebrations to mark International Women's Month as well as South Africa's Human Rights Month. In that regard, it contributed to broader conversations on human rights and gender equality, demonstrating to the world how South Africa has fought for and continues to promote these values.

The webinar was held under the theme: "Dulcie September – International Solidarity and the Struggle for Human Rights, Freedom and Democracy in South Africa", with the aim to achieve the following:

- celebrate the life of September and honour her contribution to the attainment of democracy in South Africa
- highlight the role played by women in the struggle against apartheid
- reflect on the contribution of the international solidarity movement in advancing the course of freedom and democracy in South Africa.

The webinar comprised three sessions: the first session was a plenary where speakers reflected on the essence of the theme; the second session was a panel discussion consisting of speakers who shared their experiences of working closely with September during her time in France; and the third session provided reflections on the work of keeping the icon's memory alive. The event was concluded with a vote of thanks by a family representative.

In addition to achieving the stated objectives, the webinar had a far-reaching impact that extends beyond the event. It was the basis on which the Embassy formed a partnership for cooperation with the City of Arcueil in the area of education, and facilitated the formation of new networks for academic research on Dulcie September. Furthermore, the use of a digital platform has enabled equal access to both South African and French publics (and beyond) who would not ordinarily have had access to the event. Importantly, the webinar provided a befitting tribute to a departed heroine whose story is not often told, giving her family a semblance of closure even though her murder remains unresolved.

A recording of the webinar is available on the Embassy YouTube Channel (SA Embassy in France) at: <https://youtu.be/H5SJp39iEDY>

MINISTER DLAMINI ZUMA LAUNCHES GROUND-BREAKING COGTA-UN PARTNERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL

The Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and the head of the United Nations (UN) in South Africa and Resident Coordinator, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, launched the ground-breaking COGTA-UN partnership on 6 April 2021 in support of the implementation of the District Development Model (DDM) in the OR Tambo District, Eastern Cape.

Minister Dlamini Zuma was joined by the MEC of COGTA in the Eastern Cape, Xolile Nqata, and the Executive Mayor of OR Tambo District, Cllr Thokozile Sokanyile.

The model will foster a "one plan" approach to local development that seeks to incorporate public, private and civil-society participation and investment in a joint effort to provide service delivery, localise procurement and create jobs.

The COGTA-UN partnership will initially focus on the three DDM pilot districts, namely:

Cooperative Governance
Traditional Affairs

United Nations

LAUNCH
COGTA-UN PARTNERSHIP
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MODEL
OR TAMBO DISTRICT, EC
TUESDAY 6 APRIL 2021

MEDIA ENQUIRIES:
LUNGI MTSHALI 082 088 5060

MINISTER NKOSAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA
Cooperative Governance
& Traditional Affairs

NARDOS BEKELE-THOMAS
Head of the UN in South Africa
& Resident Coordinator

OR Tambo (Eastern Cape), Waterberg (Limpopo) and eThekweni (KwaZulu-Natal). The partnership will give practical expression to the DDM principles, which are based on cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders.

This ground-breaking launch signifies the results of joint COGTA-UN extensive consultations in the three pilot districts to understand their development priorities. The partnership has identified specific areas of support that the UN can provide to the districts, building on existing work and addressing specific gaps by establishing business-solution centres and strengthening the Thuthuzela care centres and the Thusong centres to improve service delivery.

The partnership has developed district-specific implementation plans based on three interrelated pillars. These include the Unlocking Economic Value Chains pillar, which will provide opportunities for inclusive and sustainable growth and the Social Transformation pillar, which is intended to result in increased stakeholder commitment and advocacy in Gender-Based Violence and Femicide. The third pillar, Service Delivery Enhancement, will focus on resuscitating and restructuring entities such as the Thusong centres, which for decades have been strengthening platforms to give citizens access to public service and information.

MINISTER PATEL MEETS US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Trade, Industry and Competition Minister Ebrahim Patel has met with the newly-appointed United States of America (US) Trade Representative, Katherine Tai.



The virtual meeting on 30 March 2021 served as an opportunity for Minister Patel to meet Ambassador Tai for the first time, where a range of bilateral and multilateral trade issues were discussed.

These include the US Section 232 tariffs, agricultural market access, the African Growth and Opportunity Act and South Africa's continued eligibility for the preferential tariffs established under the Generalised System of Preference.

The proposed waiver on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights – which South Africa has championed at the World Trade Organisation to provide access to developing countries for COVID-19 vaccines development – and strengthening multilateralism for development were also on the table for discussion.

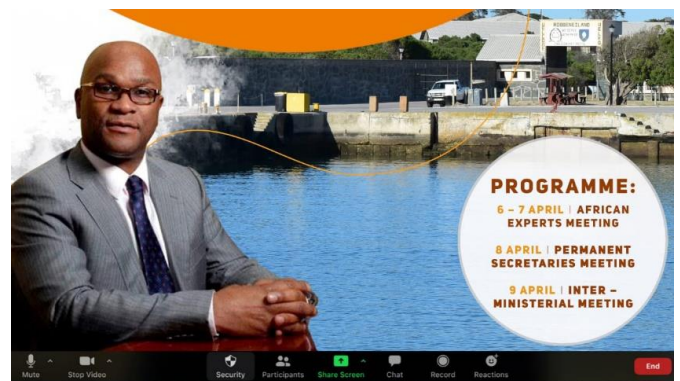
Ambassador Tai was sworn in on 18 March 2021 by Vice President Kamala Harris as the 19th US Trade Representative, following her unanimous confirmation in the US Senate. The US Trade Representative is a Cabinet-level position, responsible for trade matters.

Minister Patel and the Ambassador also discussed the strategic importance of the trading relationship in the context of the overall South Africa-US relationship. South Africa is the US' largest trading partner on the African continent, with R261 billion in bilateral trade between the two countries in 2020. Minister Patel and Ambassador Tai agreed to engage on a regular basis to raise and discuss key issues. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

ARTS AND CULTURE HOSTS SITES OF MEMORY AND WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION IN AFRICA

The events are organised and hosted by the National Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture on behalf of the Government of South Africa in partnership with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and encompass African ministers, government officials and experts involved in the management of cultural heritage in Africa.

In line with the declaration of the year, 2021, as the Year for Arts, Culture and Heritage at the 33rd African Union Summit of Heads of States and Governments, the Government of South Africa, led by the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture (DSAC) in partnership with the AWHF, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment as well as the Department of International Relations and Cooperation is hosting a virtual meeting on Sites of Memory and World Heritage Convention in Africa, culminating in an Inter-Ministerial Meeting from 6 to 9 April 2021.



#WorldHeritageInAfrica | #OurAfricanHeritage | #SitesOfMemory



In 2018, during the 42nd World Heritage Committee Meeting, held in Manama, Bahrain, divergent views and positions were presented on this issue within the world heritage community, including among African participants. Thus, following the growth of interest in sites associated with memory, and sites associated with memories of recent conflicts, it has brought into focus the need to clarify some aspects relating to their evaluation in the context of the World Heritage Convention. The main objective is to identify key actions forward to improve the current status and to further reflect on the operationalisation of the concept of sites associated with memories of recent conflicts within the framework of the World Heritage Convention in Africa.

The objectives of the planned four-day meeting are for the Expert Meeting on Sites of Memory and the World Heritage Convention in Africa and the Meeting of Ministers of Culture to further reflect on the operationalisation of the concept of sites associated with memories of recent conflicts within the framework of the World Heritage Convention in Africa, determine how best the attributes related to memory in Africa can meet the requirement of World Heritage and develop a practical framework about sites associated with memories of recent conflicts in Africa.

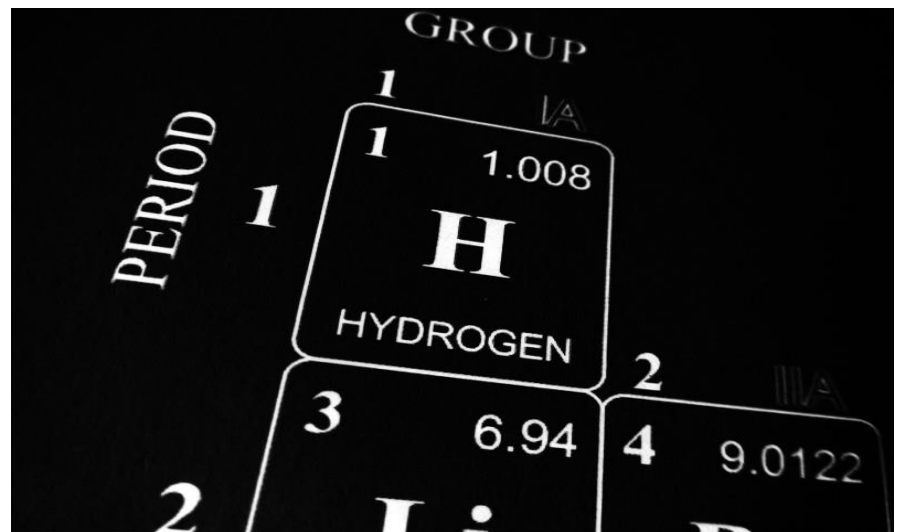
GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE SECTOR COLLABORATE TO BUILD SA'S HYDROGEN VALLEY

The Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) is collaborating with companies in the energy sector to carry out a feasibility study for the establishment of a Platinum Valley.

The collaboration agreement is led by the DSI, partnering with Anglo American, energy and services company ENGIE, and clean energy solutions provider Bambili Energy.

The feasibility study, which is the first phase of the Platinum Valley initiative, will drive the planning, design, construction and commissioning of projects related to the development of a Hydrogen Valley.

The project will be implemented through the South African National Energy Development Institute, which will also fund projects to take intellectual property through the Hydrogen SA (HySA) centres of competence to market in partnership with the private sector.



“The study will support plans to create a Hydrogen Valley along the Bushveld complex and larger region stretching from Anglo American’s Mogalakwena platinum mine near Mokopane to Johannesburg and Durban,” the DSI explained.

The study aims to identify tangible opportunities to build hydrogen hubs in this key economic and transport corridor, leveraging the regional platinum-group metals (PGMs) mining industry and exploring the potential for hydrogen production and supply at scale.

“PGMs play an important role in polymer electrolyte membrane electrolysis used to produce hydrogen, as well as in hydrogen fuel cells,” the DSI explained.

The DSI said the agreement had the potential of creating direct opportunities for economic and community development while contributing to decarbonisation efforts.

Meanwhile, the department believes that science, technology and innovation will play a key role in supporting the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan for South Africa.

The Hydrogen Valley is one of the first projects that will be implemented in partnership with the private sector to support the Platinum Valley initiative.

In addition, small, medium and micro enterprises will be supported to take advantage of opportunities in the green economy as part of the just transition to a green economy.

“The aim is to boost economic growth and job creation, drive the development of new industries, increase value-add to the country’s platinum reserves and reduce the country’s carbon footprint.”

Also, hydrogen and fuel cells offer several advantages to the transport sector – comparable refuelling times to internal combustion engine vehicles, longer ranges and space efficiency.

Anglo American is deemed as one of the leaders in initiatives to promote the adoption of hydrogen fuel cells vehicles for commercial use, facilitating the creation of consortiums of industry partners to promote the development of hydrogen freight corridors in the United Kingdom, South Africa and China, among others.

Anglo American's PGM business CEO, Natascha Viljoen, said: "The transition to a low-carbon world is an opportunity to drive the development of cleaner technologies, create new industries and employment, and improve people's lives".

She said the company was an early supporter of the global potential for a hydrogen economy, recognising its role in enabling the shift to greener energy and cleaner transport.

"Our integrated approach includes investing in new technologies, supporting entrepreneurial projects and advocating for policy frameworks that enable a supportive long-term investment environment for hydrogen to deliver that potential," she added.

Meanwhile, the department said Bambili Energy had played a pivotal role in ensuring that the HySA catalyst and membrane electrode assemblies developed by the HySA Catalysis centre of competence were integrated into commercial products through its partnership with global original equipment manufacturers.

ENGIE, a French company, aims to accelerate the transition towards a carbon-neutral economy through reduced energy consumption and more environmentally friendly solutions.

It has provided co-funding for the techno-economic analysis that will be conducted on identified hubs within the Hydrogen Valley corridor. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

KUSILE UNIT 3 ACHIEVES COMMERCIAL OPERATION

Eskom has announced that Unit 3 of the Kusile Power Station has achieved commercial operation status.



This brings to three the number of generation units that have achieved commercial status at the project, generating a maximum 2 400MW to support the South African power grid.

In a statement, Eskom said bringing the 800MW unit to commercial status meant construction activity had come to an end on half the eMalahleni Mpumalanga project.

The achievement of this milestone follows two years of rigorous testing and optimisation since the unit was first synchronised into the national grid in April 2019.

This also milestone marks the contractual handover of the unit from the principal contractors under the Group Capital Build project unit to the Generation division.

"Bringing this unit to commercial operation is a major milestone for Eskom and the employees involved in the project, who are working hard to ensure Eskom fulfils its promise of bringing stability to the power system," said Bheki Nxumalo, Eskom's Group Executive for Capital Projects.

The construction, testing and optimisation activities on the remaining three units, some of which are currently providing intermittent power to support the grid, are progressing well.

Commercial Operation status is conferred on generation units that have met the requirements for full technical, statutory, safety and legal compliance.

Eskom said it was proud of its team at Kusile who had delivered this third unit with "extreme dedication, and working under challenging conditions during periods of loadshedding and the COVID-19 restrictions".

It said the team had worked hard for long hours together with execution partners to ensure that testing activities were done thoroughly and successfully.

Kusile is the first power station in South Africa and Africa to use wet flue gas desulphurisation (WFGD) technology.

WFGD is the current state-of-the-art technology used to remove oxides of sulphur from the exhaust flue gas in power plants that burn coal or oil.

“Eskom is fitting WFGD to the Kusile plant as an atmospheric emission abatement technology, in line with current international practice, to ensure compliance with air quality standards and its commitments to some of the funders of the project,” said the state utility. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

WE MADE IT – MI CASA’S BIG INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Mi Casa has teamed up with Berlin-based production duo YouNotUs to bring us the fifth official single from the “We Made It” album, the long-awaited tribute to living well – “Chucks”.

Mi Casa is kicking straight back after the huge success of their smash hit *Mamela* with their first international collaboration since signing their international record deal with Afroforce1 Records/Universal Music Group.

Earmarked as an important song from the album, the single has been waiting in the wings for the right time to bring some of that Mi Casa spirit back into the party feels. And with the YouNotUs collaboration, the result is a dance floor’s dream.

Mi Casa frontman J’Something has always held a special place in his heart for the track, “It’s about making the most of every single moment because the future is not a given – all we have is right now, and that time needs to be lived”, he states.



Having the opportunity to collaborate with international, multi-platinum EDM front-runners YouNotUs, is an example of where Mi Casa’s musical ambition has seen them reach.

“Getting the YouNotUs touch to *Chucks* has completely transformed it, and we cannot wait to see how it lifts people’s spirits, and hopefully it will land on fertile soil”, adds J’Something.

Luckily for technology, the two acts were able to collaborate completely remotely during the lockdown and working with the Mi Casa track brought out all the summer feelings in the Berlin-based act.

“During the production, we were inspired by the longing for warm summer nights spent partying. We feel this song will guide us back into summer and a more carefree time”, Tobias and Gregor from YouNotUs state.

While *Chucks* is a springtime release in Europe, it catches the tail end of summer in South Africa, dragging out some good times as life starts to return to normal in venues and on dance floors around the country.

Chucks will be released in Europe, South Africa and parts of the African continent on 26 March, with the video due for release two weeks later. YouNotUs will be flying out to shoot the video alongside Mi Casa in Namibia. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

PROTEAS COMPLETE CLEAN SWEEP AGAINST NAMIBIA IN SPAR CHALLENGE TRI-NATIONS SERIES

South Africa took the shine from the Namibian Desert Jewels in the final game at the SPAR Challenge on Tuesday, 30 March 2021.

The SPAR Proteas claimed all three netball matches against Namibia in the SPAR Challenge Tri-Nations series.



Head coach Dorette Badenhorst made a few changes to her team, starting with players Tshina Mdau, Chantelle Swart and Nonsikelelo Mazibuko with some of the familiar faces on the bench.

South Africa dominated from the start and continued to increase their lead with every quarter. Simone Rabie, the SPAR Proteas goalkeeper, was named Most Valued Player.

“We knew they would come hard at us, but we stuck to the game plan and had the mindset to pull it through,” said SPAR Proteas assistant coach, Dumisani Chauke. – Source: www.thesouthafrican.com

WAYDE VAN NIEKERK FEELING CONFIDENT AFTER RECORDING SEASON’S BEST

Wayde van Niekerk masterfully displayed his world-class performance and crossed the line in the men’s 200m race at 20.10s (albeit with a +2.1m/s tailwind) tailed by Akani Simbine, the national 100m record holder at 20.29s and Tsebo Matsoso at 20.48s in the second leg of the ASA Athletix Invitation at Roodepoort Athletics Stadium on 30 March 2021.



The athletics meeting was in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics 2021.

“This definitely gave me the confidence I didn’t have before,” said Van Niekerk, the 400m world record holder, who recorded a season’s best. It’s one thing training well, but it’s a different thing executing it against such a quality line-up, guys I have the world of respect for.

“I just ran a terrible bend, but other than that, I’m happy with the race,” said Simbine.

The men’s discus was led by Werner Visser with a 60.88m throw. Johann Grobler, the former U-20 World Championships medallist, won the men’s javelin throw with a throw of 78.84m.

Acting Executive Director for Community Development in the City of Johannesburg, Mokomane Mekgoe, accompanied by the Director of Sport and Recreation, Siyanda Mnukwa, welcomed the athletes on behalf of the city.

“The city is proud to showcase its international sports facilities, and their use is of importance in driving social cohesion, development and excellence. This is a contribution to athletes, and we wish them well in their preparation for Tokyo,” said Mekgoe.

“We are particularly happiest that we were able to offer several athletes in both South Africa and from our neighbouring countries a chance to either seek qualifications or improve and test their level of performance,” said Aleck Skhosana, the president of Athletics South Africa (ASA).

“We are encouraged to have witnessed that some of the athletes are at an advanced level of preparation. We are extremely happy with the success of this event, our first since a lockdown was declared by the national government a year ago. This was a great return to athletics for ASA,” concluded Skhosana. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SENSATIONAL LLOYD HARRIS BREAKS INTO WORLD TOP 50

On Monday, 5 April 2021, South Africa's latest tennis sensation Lloyd Harris reached a memorable milestone of being ranked among the world's top 50 tennis players.

Starting the year in 81st position, the gangling Cape Town big server passed his previous best ranking of 72nd after three months of notable performances in which he beat current United States (US) Open champion and world fourth-ranked Dominic Thiem, 12th-ranked Denis Shapovalov, three-times grand slam winner Stan Wawrinka and Kai Nishikori, who has been ranked fourth in the world and is a previous US Open grand slam finalist.

In the process, Harris reached his first ATP 500 final in the Doha Open – his second ATP Tour final overall – before going down to the new rising force in world tennis, Australian Open semi-finalist, Aslan Karatsev.

Harris started the last ATP rankings two weeks ago two places outside the top 50 ranking positions and although withdrawing from his second round game in the 1000 Miami Open against Spain's Roberto Battista Agut, a first round win gave him the necessary points to reach the elusive 50 mark.

Harris credits the rising stature he has achieved in world tennis this year to adding Belgian former Wimbledon semi-finalist, Xavier Malisse, to his existing coaching staff.

"A lot of hard work and the experience of playing against and learning from some of the world's top players," Harris said.

"It's all very exciting," he added, "but there are still areas in which I will need to improve to make further progress in the ranking ladder – and I'm going to continue working hard with this objective in mind." – Source: www.news24.com



SOUTH AFRICAN GARTH HOLDEN HELPS CREW WIN ESTEEMED ANNUAL BOAT RACE

Garth Holden – a South African originally from Johannesburg – took part in the esteemed annual “Boat Race” and helped his crew take the win.



Perhaps one of the most famous sporting events the world over, and without doubt one of the most accessible rowing events on the British roster, the Boat Race has dazzled fans with high-octane drama for over a century, and this year, our very own Garth Holden took part and won.

The Boat Race is a side-by-side rowing competition between the University of Oxford (sometimes referred to as the “Dark Blues”) and the University of Cambridge (sometimes referred to as the “Light Blues”). First held in 1829, the race has usually taken place on the 6,8 km Championship Course, between Putney and Mortlake on the River Thames in south-west London. The 2020 event was cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United Kingdom (UK).

The 2021 race took place on the River Great Ouse near Ely, Cambridgeshire, between Queen Adelaide Bridge and Sandhill Bridge, Littleport, rather than the traditional Championship Course in London. The crews were announced on 25 March 2021. It was the first time in the history of the event that both the women’s and men’s races were officiated by female umpires, in Judith Packer and Sarah Winckless respectively. The reserve races are to be held at a later date in Ely.

Cambridge led the longstanding rivalry 84–80 and 44–30 in the men’s and women’s races, respectively.

Holden (a South African originally from Benoni) who matriculated from St Benedicts in 2015 and went on to study in the UK – currently from St Edmund’s – was selected for one of the eight seats in the men’s Blue Boat for the Boat Race. Before rowing for Cambridge, Garth represented South Africa at the World Rowing Championships in 2014, 2016, and 2017. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SOUTH AFRICAN SETS NEW WOMEN'S DEEP CAVE DIVING RECORD

Karen van den Oever recently broke the women's deep cave diving record.



Van den Oever descended to 236.04 meters at the Boesmansgat Cave – a deep submerged freshwater cave in the Northern Cape. Its altitude of over 1 500 metres makes this a particularly challenging dive, requiring a decompression schedule equivalent to a dive to 339 metres at sea level, but the determined South African managed to beat the previous women's deep cave diving record by over 15 metres.

The greatest depth ever attained was by Nuno Gomes in 1996, diving to a depth of 282.6 metres, which is currently the men's record, and on the 24th of November 2004, Verna van Schaik set the Guinness Woman's World Record for the deepest dive with a dive to 221 metres.

Van Den Oever started diving in 2001 while on holiday in the Eastern Cape; she later joined the Wits Underwater Club where she became an active member and committee member.

"It was here that I had the opportunity to meet Nuno Gomes and Verna van Schaik. Listening to the encounters of their expeditions and their journeys to become world record holders inspired me to move into technical diving; it was then that the seed was planted – maybe I too could one day attempt the woman's world record."

The dive lasted seven hours and 18 minutes.

"Getting to the point where I felt ready to attempt the record has been a very long journey to make sure my skills and knowledge where were they needed to be to ensure I came back alive."

Before the dive and the days leading up to the dive, Van den Oever was very nervous and anxious, but as soon as she entered the water and started her descent, her focus was on the dive.

"You are truly present only in that moment with complete focus on the task at hand."

The record-winning South African believes that hard work and discipline can help anyone reach their goals.

"For anybody that has a dream or goal – it takes a lot of hard work and discipline to make it a reality, but the journey is very rewarding. Don't give up, especially when things get tough; it's not meant to be easy." – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)



For enquiries:

0800-029-999

OPEN 24/7

Stay connected with us



For back issues of Newsflash,
visit: <http://www.dirco.gov.za/departement/newsflash.html>