

# IT'S YOUR VOICE

Internal Newsletter of the Department of International  
Relations and Cooperation



ubuntu diplomat

Issue 4, 29 May 2019



**Celebrating 25 Years of Democracy:**  
**BUILDING A BETTER**  
**AFRICA**  
**AND A BETTER**  
**WORLD**

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# Editor's Letter

*Dear Diplomats,*

I must admit, I am super excited for the opportunity to be the editor of this issue. From my school days, I have always read through editors' letters with so much interest and enthusiasm, and today I am in awe having to put my signature at the end of one! Working on an internal publication of such a tremendous department has been challenging, yet empowering and enlightening. It is such an honour to be part of something so big. Let me introduce myself: I am a proudly DIRCO intern and I welcome you to the month of May. This is one of the most gorgeous months of the year where bees are buzzing, birds are chirping and gardens are growing, but over and above, May is the month when we celebrate the achievements made in the development of Africa.

Before we can celebrate Africa Month and enjoy the fruits of African unity, let us take a brief look at our history. The conference of the independent African states, which was the first gathering to be held on the continent and brought African countries together for the first time, was hosted by the President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, on 15 April 1958. On 25 May 1963, leaders from 32 African countries met to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), where the leaders also agreed to change Africa Day from 15 April to 25 May. It was then that the month of May was declared as Africa Month, to celebrate the founding of the OAU.

However, let us not forget the many initiatives that were taken by Africans prior 1963. The speech made by Pixley ka Isaka Seme in 1906 when he said, "I am an African, and I set my pride in my race ..." must always be embedded in our hearts, for we must forever take pride in being Africans.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) hosted a number of public participation programmes in celebration of this month. This issue highlights Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's visit to Winterveldt where she encouraged the local community to live together in harmony as Africans, following reports of the unfortunate attacks on foreign nationals from 24 to 30 March 2019.

As late President Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world", DIRCO had an honour of congratulating Deputy Minister Reginah Mhaule on her much-deserved PhD obtained at the University of Fort Hare, and she encouraged the youth to pursue an academic profession.



The year 2019 is indeed historical as South Africa held its sixth democratic elections on 8 May and thousands of South Africans participated in the democratic process of voting for a political party of their choice that will govern the country in the next five years. The election results saw President Cyril Ramaphosa being inaugurated on Africa Day, 25 May, as the sixth democratically elected President. South Africa prides itself on the peaceful elections held nationally, and at missions abroad.

As I conclude, I send a big shoutout to all DIRCO interns. I wish you prosperity, success and a life full of "congratulations". I hope the world is ready for the greatness that is in you. Here's to achievements, and the year ahead.

**BK**  
**Busisiwe Kubheka**

# #SAElections2019



Dear Team DIRCO,

## Message of appreciation on the 2019 national and provincial elections

The proceedings of South Africa's 2019 national and provincial general elections culminated in the announcement of the results at the Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC) Results Operations Centre on Saturday, 11 May 2019.

The sixth general elections marked the consolidation of our evolving democratic project. The plurality of these elections was signified by a record participation of 48 political parties, reflecting the openness and diversity of our political landscape. We are proud of the IEC, which managed and conducted the elections process with admirable professionalism and thoroughness, thus ensuring its integrity.

We would like to express our profound gratitude specifically to the Pan-African observer missions attending these elections, namely: the African Union (AU) Election Observation Mission, led by His Excellency, Mr Jakaya Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania; the Observer Mission of the Election Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa, led by His Excellency, Mr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Election Observer Mission, led by Honourable Joseph Malanji, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia.

We thank the observer missions for their diligence and objectivity, and are appreciative that they were part of the electoral process. The recommendations contained in the preliminary statements of these missions will no doubt contribute to the improvement of the management of future elections and the consolidation of democratic governance in South Africa consistent with relevant SADC and AU protocols. We look forward to receiving the final reports of the SADC and AU election observer missions.

Once more, and on behalf of our government, I would like to thank all our diplomatic and consular missions and our dedicated staff abroad for contributing to the overall success of these elections by facilitating the special overseas voting that took place on 27 April 2019. The conduct of this special ballot is a reflection of the maturity and sophistication of our democratic dispensation.

The success of these elections is further evidence of political stability and the deepening of electoral democracy in South Africa. This places our country in a better position to further expand bilateral economic relations and cooperation in diverse fields of human endeavour, and enhance our stature in regional, continental, multilateral and global intergovernmental organisations.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all our dedicated staff to redouble your efforts in promoting our national values and interests at your various stations abroad.

In this age of renewal and unity, let us work even harder to contribute to the development and prosperity of our country!

LN Sisulu, MP  
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

13 May 2019



## *Congratulations*

The **Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, Deputy Minister Luwellyn Landers** and the entire **Team DIRCO** heartily congratulate **Dr Reginah Mhaule** on obtaining her **Doctorate in Public Administration** at the **University of Fort Hare** on **17 May 2019**.

The title of **Dr Mhaule's** doctoral thesis is: *The Implication of Teacher Development in the Improvement of Learner Achievement in the Kwa-Mhlanga sub-district of the Mpumalanga Province.*

“We join your family in sharing this special day with you. Your great achievement is an inspiration to all of us. You made us all very proud,” said **Minister Sisulu**.



# AFRICA MONTH



**It is every citizen's right to use their language and to celebrate their culture. Protecting our indigenous languages will ensure everyone in our country is free to fully communicate and express themselves effectively.**

# DIRCO AFRICA MONTH OUTREACH PROGRAMME

By Mmakgotso Chuene

Cabinet approved the Community Outreach Programme initiative, previously known as Imbizo, at its meeting of 24 March 2010. The approach seeks to reinforce accountability to citizens through continuous (ongoing and sustainable) community outreach events throughout the year by members of the Cabinet, rather than limiting this interaction to only two weeks in a year, as was the case with the Imbizo programme.

As per the Cabinet Directive through the Community Outreach Programme, principals are expected to conduct at least 10 public engagements per year, including repeat and follow-up visits, as part of representative and participatory democracy. This will afford the department an opportunity to inform the South African public and various stakeholders about South Africa's foreign policy positions, achievements, objectives and goals.



Following reports of the unfortunate attacks on foreign nationals from the continent in the week 24 to 30 March 2019, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, hosted a Community Outreach Programme in Winterveldt, Pretoria, on 12 May 2019.

The community outreach aimed at mobilising people to oppose attacks on fellow Africans, as a sign of unity and a pledge against the sporadic violent attacks against some foreign nationals in parts of our country. The programme formed part of the department's build-up activities to Africa Day on 25 May, which was part of the Africa Month initiatives.



## DIRCO's ICT Branch hosts a Mother's Day celebration



ICT Mother's Day celebration was about honouring someone's mom and motherhood and acknowledging the influence of mothers in our working environment and in the society they are part of. ICT ladies took time to recognise the value of the mothers in their business unit. The responsibility on the shoulders of today's working mothers is enormous. ICT felt it's time to applaud and appreciate all those moms who have a significant contribution in our lives in the working place. Nowadays, women are playing dual roles of CEO at home and at work.



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

— PRESIDENTIAL —  
**INAUGURATION**  
— 2019 —

Together celebrating democracy:  
Renewal and growth for a better South Africa

South Africa has inaugurated Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa as its sixth democratically elected President. The Presidential Inauguration took place on Saturday, 25 May 2019, Africa Day, in Pretoria at Loftus Versfeld Stadium. The President wanted it to be the people's inauguration and therefore hosting the inauguration in a stadium allowed for greater public participation in this important national event.

The theme for the inauguration was: "Together Celebrating Democracy: Renewal and Growth for a Better South Africa". It reinforced that everyone had a role to play in building a brighter tomorrow. It emphasised that we must build on our achievements and work even harder to tackle poverty, inequality and unemployment. The inauguration took the form of a formal ceremony to mark the beginning of the President's term of office. During the inauguration, the President delivered an address to inform South Africans of his vision and intent during his term of office.





## MALAWI HOLDS TRIPARTITE ELECTIONS, 21 May 2019

By Cheryl Zwane



The South African High Commission in Lilongwe, Malawi, observed the country's tripartite elections that took place on 21 May 2019. Mission officials were deployed to 13 polling stations in Lilongwe (administrative city, central region), Mzuzu and Blantyre.

High Commissioner Thenjiwe Mtintso was part of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions team from South Africa, United States of America, Germany and Japan that visited polling stations in Mzuzu (north region) and Mangochi (south region). The delegation visited three polling stations in Mzuzu, and three polling stations in Mangochi.

The Counsellor Political and the First Secretary Political visited five voting stations spread across Lilongwe central, west and southeast of which two were large centres, two medium and one small.

There was consensus among political parties, civil society, the Diplomatic Corps and observers that the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) did a sterling job in preparing Malawi for these tripartite elections. The MEC had regular briefings and public awareness programmes and its general conduct was characterised by transparency and accountability.

Mission election observation included the counting process and a visit to one of the tally centres in Lilongwe.

Some of the Mission's observations are the following:

- Voting stations were opened from 06h00 to 18h00,
- The voting process took place outdoors and not inside classrooms.
- The polling booths were facing the voting streams and public, not away from the audience. Officials explained that this was customary for Malawi as a show of transparency and to prevent accusations of intimidation and rigging.
- The voting process was all manually done.
- The voters' roll had names and photographs of voters
- Voters were presented with three ballot sheets (Presidential, Parliamentary, Local Councils) to be deposited into three different ballot boxes.
- Long queues were observed at the opening of polls i.e. before dawn as voters opted to start at the polls as it was a working day in Malawi. During the afternoon, it was quiet (due to hot weather) and queues started picking up after 15h00.

The electoral process was characterised by calm, peaceful and organised voting without any incidents of violence or intimidation. Voting was transparent as the whole process was conducted outdoors (school grounds) while counting was done in the presence of observer missions, political party monitors and MEC officials. There was no sign of any political party signage nor party colours (t-shirts etc.) by either voters or party members.

The presidential elections were a close-fought affair between the three main candidates, the incumbent Peter Mutharika, Rev. Lazarus Chakwera of the main opposition and former deputy president Dr Saulos Chilima.

International observer missions comprised of SADC, EU, AU, COMESA and the Commonwealth, of which the latter was headed by the former President of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki.

On the evening of 27 May, the MEC, after the Malawi High Court lifted the injunction brought earlier by the main opposition Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and allowed the MEC to release the results of the Presidential race.

The incumbent, Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika, secured his second and final term as leader of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) with 38.5% of the vote. The opposition leader, Dr Lazarus Chakwera, (MCP) came a close second with 35.41%. Malawian elections are characterised by a simple majority.

President Mutharika has since been sworn in at a ceremony in the city of Blantyre on Tuesday, 28 May, and inaugurated on 31 May 2019. Heads of mission resident in Malawi were invited to the ceremony.

### Fast facts

Registered voters: 6,859 375 million (56% = women and 54%= youth)  
 Within the number of youth (those aged below 35 years of age) registered, 57% account for women

Registration of voters took place in eight Phases (26 June to 9 November 2018)

The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) announced 74.27% voter turnout with 5,070,948 voters who cast their votes. A total of 4,967,774 were valid votes and 103 174 were null and void, which represents 1.51%.



Election observer missions (left to right): Mr Linford Andrews, Commonwealth Observer Group, former President Thabo Mbeki, Head of the Commonwealth Observer Group, and former President of Ghana, Mr John Mahama, Head of the African Union Election Observation Mission)

**Minister Lindiwe Sisulu and Director-General Kgabo Mahoai met with the head of the African Union Observer Mission, former Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete onn 11 May 2019, after the successful Sixth South African democratic elections.**



## PASSPORT DC 2019 AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON DC

By Zama Ngwane

On Saturday, 4 May 2019, the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in Washington DC opened its doors to the greater Washington DC community as part of the annual Passport DC festivities. Passport DC is an annual month-long celebration of the rich international community in DC and is organised by Cultural Tourism DC. Passport DC is also DC's premier cultural event, in which over 75 embassies participate and give a rare opportunity to the residents of the city to step into an Embassy, as well as experience the food, art, music, dance and heritage of each the respective countries.

The South African Embassy has been a participant in Passport DC for the last 10 years and this year welcomed a whopping 5 163 visitors through its doors, some of whom had been eagerly queuing from 8h30am, before doors opened at 10h00 am. Some of the offerings on display at the Embassy included: an *Invest South Africa* exhibition organised by the dti, a *Visit South Africa* tourism promotion exhibition supported by materials from South African Airways and South African Tourism; arts and crafts by South African crafters and designers, including internationally acclaimed fashion designer Thulare Monareng.

The Embassy also opened a food and drink garden, showcasing traditional South African food and wines from several leading wine estates, including Lubanzi, Spier, Quintessential and Kysela wines.



The Embassy's participation in Passport DC is one of the key ways in which the Embassy builds South Africa's public image within the United States and promotes awareness of the country's tourism and investment opportunities

# Travel Smart with DIRCO

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International relations  
& cooperation  
Department of International Relations and Cooperation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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## SOUTH AFRICAN HIGH COMMISSION IN ISLAMABAD CELEBRATES ITS 25<sup>TH</sup> FREEDOM DAY

By Christo Janse Van Noordwyk



The South African High Commission in Islamabad hosted its 25th Freedom Day Reception on 29 April 2019.

The event was well-attended, with around 350 guests representing the Government and business community of Pakistan and the diplomatic community in Islamabad. Important guests included Mr Ali Muhammad Khan, Federal Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs (as Guest of Honour), various members of Parliament, former ministers, the Mayor of Islamabad, as well as senior members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries. The small South African community in Pakistan was also present.

The proceedings started with the national anthems, followed by welcoming remarks by the Acting High Commissioner, Christo Janse Van Noordwyk. The remarks highlighted South Africa's 25 Years of Freedom and Democracy, as well as celebrating our Silver Jubilee in diplomatic relations with Pakistan. In continuing to build a better country, and contributing to a better Africa, South Africa cooperates with Pakistan in key strategic areas – agriculture, education, satellite technology, trans-national crime and defence production, to name a few.

The two countries also share a passion for cricket, illustrated by the series of matches during May in South Africa between our two national women's cricket teams.

The size and growth of Pakistan's economy provide real opportunities for expanding trade, investment and economic relations, with the figure of \$1 billion in total bilateral trade achieved during 2018. South Africa is also delighted that foreign direct investment from Pakistan is growing steadily, as part of Pakistan's "Look to Africa Strategy".



This was followed by an inspired short speech by the Guest of Honour, during which he highlighted the respect his country has for the values and legacy of President Nelson Mandela, as well as the importance of South Africa as a strategic partner in Africa and in multilateral issues. Both the welcoming remarks and speech were well received. Several local newspapers quoted from both at length in their reporting on the event.

The traditional “cutting of the cake”, by the Acting High Commissioner, Guest of Honour and other VIP guests who joined him on the stage (the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, the Africa Group of Ambassadors and High Commissioners, and the Palestinian Ambassador) signalled the opening of the buffet and bar service. Guests enjoyed South African wines and typical South African dishes on offer, including chakalaka salad, beef bobotie, “Durban chicken curry”, “boereboontjies” and lemon meringue pie, apart from other local Pakistani dishes.

The venue was decorated with approved branding for the 25 Years of Freedom and Democracy and photo exhibitions about the life and times of Nelson Mandela. The guests were inspired by videos on big screens about the tourism highlights of all of the nine provinces of South Africa during the first part of the evening, while a medley of South African music got some of the guests dancing later during the evening. The reception was successful in raising the profile of South Africa in Pakistan, and many guests expressed their appreciation for an enjoyable and well-organised event.



# LANGUAGE IS THE GOLDEN THREAD THAT BINDS PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

by Cecelia Colarossi

Foreign language competency has been identified as one of the core critical skills of diplomacy and a soft power tool used to promote South Africa's foreign policy objectives. The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) further recognises the need for its officials to learn relevant foreign languages prior to posting and whilst posted in a mission. In support of the Foreign Service Training and Development Strategy of the Branch: Diplomatic Training, Research and Development, the Directorate: Language Services and Training trains and empowers officials from DIRCO and other government departments with language skills that help them to perform optimally and efficiently during their political, economic and administrative engagements in foreign environments and within the diplomatic community.

Additionally, the Language Directorate's long-term vision is to ensure that each official in the department masters at least one foreign language offered by the Department because language competency breaks cultural barriers and allows for enhanced political and economic cooperation and communication that help to refine and reinforce dialogue, debate and discourse during diplomatic engagements. Recognising foreign language competency as the golden thread that binds people of the world, the Language Directorate renders training services in various diplomatic foreign languages such as French, Portuguese, Spanish, Mandarin and Swahili.

As the official language of communication in the department, English plays a prominent role in capacitating South African diplomats with the necessary communication skills required for international engagements with their counterparts. Therefore, the Language Directorate renders customised English language training programmes that respond to specific needs of departmental officials who are at different stages of their careers.

Through its English for Diplomatic Purposes curriculum, the English Sub-Directorate in the Language Directorate runs various English programmes that are targeted at officials on junior and middle management levels, as well as cadets and interns.



The Sub-Directorate also runs assessments whose objective is to ascertain the English language competencies of departmental officials, particularly those who intend on applying for residential programmes offered by the Diplomatic Academy.

Apart from rendering language training services, the directorate also provides translation services as well as proofreading and editing of translated documents. Liaison interpreting services are also provided in French, Portuguese and Spanish. Additionally, requests for simultaneous and consecutive interpreting services are facilitated and coordinated by the directorate.

Former President Nelson Mandela once said: "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart".



## SOUTH AFRICA ATTENDS FIRST IBSA SHERPA MEETING OF 2019 IN COCHIN, INDIA

By Letlhogonolo Mashilo



*Ambassador Anil Sooklal addressing the first IBSA Sherpa Meeting for 2019*

India hosted the first India, Brazil, South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA) Sherpa meeting of 2019 from 3 to 5 May in Cochin, Kerala. The delegation was led by Professor Anil Sooklal, Deputy Director-General: Asia and Middle East in his capacity as IBSA Sherpa.

The Sherpa meeting, following the revitalisation of IBSA by IBSA foreign ministers in October 2017, is part of an annual process to develop and maintain momentum. As part of the process of sharpening focus on key areas of technical cooperation moving forward, the Sherpas emphasised the need to

advance their interests in fostering strengthened and renewed multilateralism, particularly with regard to the reform of the United Nations Security Council, as well as to address the challenge of trade protectionism.

With regard to technical cooperation, South Africa will maintain the lead on the following working groups: Tourism and Human Settlements, while generating a concept note on the Blue Economy.

Brazil will maintain the lead on the Defence and Trade and Investment working groups, while India will maintain the lead on the Energy and Traditional Medicines working groups.

Additionally, India will develop concept notes on the cooperation potential in agriculture, energy and women's empowerment. The Sherpa's agreed also to resuscitate the IBSA Women's Forum and address science and technology as a cross-cutting issue.

The IBSA Dialogue Forum is a strategic regional partnership established in 2003, comprising three vibrant democracies from three continents that share common values and a commitment to advance and safeguard the mutual political, economic and social interests of countries and groupings of the developing South in pursuit of a just and equitable development agenda and global order.

IBSA is celebrating its 15th year anniversary, with the inaugural IBSA Gandhi-Mandela Freedom Lecture having been delivered by President Cyril Ramaphosa during his State Visit to India on 25 January 2019 to kick-start the celebration programme of events.

The IBSA Fund is celebrated as one of the main achievements of IBSA as a model of South-South cooperation. ▶



India additionally hosted the Sixth IBSA Academic Forum from 3 to 4 May. South Africa's delegation comprised academics from leading higher learning and research institutions, namely the Universities South Africa, the Human Sciences Research Council, Wits University, Tshwane University of Technology and the South African Institute of International Affairs.

The academics conducted discussions under the following themes: i) trade and cooperation ii) IBSA and South-South cooperation iii) education cooperation and, iv) the way forward – the next 15 years.

Presentations were made thereafter to the Sherpas on substantive matters affecting IBSA states. For example, South African IBSA Fellow, Karin Kritzinger, presented on “IBSA Energy Transformation Outlook: The Role of Rooftop Solar”. The Academic Forum issued a declaration that, among other things, reaffirmed that IBSA continued to be a vital and important geopolitical construction of the Global South and that it represented an opportunity to galvanise stronger South-South cooperation. India will host an IBSA Summit later in 2019.



**INDIA  
BRAZIL  
SOUTH AFRICA  
FORUM**

## DIRCO AND THE INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY HOST WORKSHOP IN PRETORIA

By Magdeline Setumo

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation, in partnership with the International Seabed Authority and the Government of the United Kingdom, hosted a workshop on the ISA from 16 to 18 May 2019.

The objective of the event was to foster international and regional cooperation to promote the sustainable development of Africa's deep seabed resources in support of the continent's Blue Economy. The workshop provided an opportunity to discuss capacity-building strategies that could help the African continent benefit fully from their blue economies.

The workshop brought together representatives from the Southern African Development Community, which included South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi. Two other African countries also participated i.e. Liberia and São Tomé and Príncipe.

The representatives from the Department of Mineral Resources and other stakeholders in the mining sector made presentations at the workshop.

Hosting this event provided an opportunity for South Africa to showcase its innovative approaches and the different focus areas of Operation Phakisa.

### International Seabed Authority Workshop on Standards and Guidelines for the Mining Code

13 – 15 May 2019  
Pretoria, South Africa



### International Seabed Authority Workshop for the Promotion of Sustainable Development of Africa's Deep Seabed Resources in support to Africa's Blue Economy

16 – 18 May 2019  
Pretoria, South Africa



# ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE



DIRCO employees are encouraged to conduct themselves ethically in line with the Constitution of Republic of South Africa, Chapter 10; Public Service Act, 1994; Public Service Regulations, 2016 (Chapter 2); and in particular the Code of Conduct.

Being ethical allows you to distinguish between right and wrong. Ethics is generally defined as moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of any activity.

The Public Service Code of Conduct (Chapter 2, Part 1 of the Public Service Regulation, 2016) provides guiding principles and direction for appropriate workplace behaviour. Employees are expected to conduct themselves ethically in their individual conduct and their relationship with fellow employees and the general public.

## What are good workplace ethics?

- ❖ Stay positive and professional
- ❖ Be accountable for own actions
- ❖ Take initiative
- ❖ Stay productive
- ❖ Be punctual.

## What are poor workplace ethics?

- ❖ Ignoring procedures and policies
- ❖ Illegal practices
- ❖ Abusing government resources and other privileges
- ❖ Always arriving late at work and poor attendance
- ❖ Unauthorised removal of state assets.

## What are the benefits of good ethical behaviour in the workplace?

- ❖ A desirable work environment
- ❖ Loyalty
- ❖ High office morale
- ❖ Good work performance
- ❖ Recognition.

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