



international relations & cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



“As we celebrate our Freedom Day, we remember our national heroes, among them Comrades Solomon Mahlangu and Chris Hani, for their ultimate sacrifice. Another tribute must go to the founders of the OAU. They ensured that the apartheid question was amongst the important resolutions adopted by the inaugural Summit of the OAU. These courageous African leaders were convinced of the imperative and urgent necessity of coordinating and intensifying their efforts to put an end to the criminal policy of apartheid. For this immeasurable contribution to our struggle for liberation, today we must take a moment, pause and look back at what this glorious organisation, the OAU, and its leaders have contributed to the struggle for liberation in our country...”

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane

Dear Diplomats,

South Africans come together every year on 27 April to celebrate Freedom Day. We celebrate a heroic and selfless struggle that was fought over more than three centuries. The freedom which we enjoy in this beautiful land is what many in other parts of the world still dream of.

The struggle was fought by women for their rights and dignity, and we recall how they fired the first salvo of protest against pass laws in Bloemfontein in July 1913. It was fought by rural communities for land, as the 1913 Land Act systematically took away 87% of the land from the African people. As Lillian Ngoyi said at the third Federation of South African Women Conference in 1961, "Freedom does not come walking towards you - it must be won". It has indeed been a long walk from the days of the Master and Servants Act, where long hours of work, child labour, and unpaid labour were the order of the day.

This year's Freedom Day was celebrated under the theme: "Working Together to Build Unity and Prosperity". It takes into account our strong focus on boosting inclusive growth and prosperity.

On page 8 of this publication we feature our Minister's Budget Vote Speech for 2012/2013 which she delivered under the theme "Africa is rising" on 25 April 2012. The speech outlined our achievements and progress registered in the process of executing the departmental mandate.

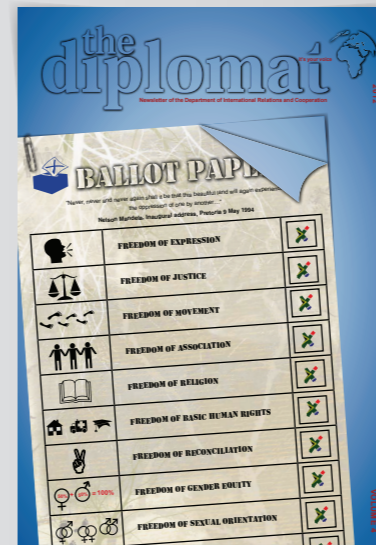
As part of the Freedom Month theme our DIRCO colleagues in the Voices Section share their views on what freedom really means to them. Thank you for your contribution and please continue to share your thoughts with us on this platform.

As we celebrate our freedom our department continues to strengthen relations with stakeholders and engage them through a number of Public Participation Programmes around the country and internationally. The aim of the programme among others is to popularise South Africa's foreign policy and the mandate of the department. This is to ensure that South Africans can link the country's domestic priorities and the department's international engagements. Read more on page 10.

SB

Salome Baloi - Editor

the cover



What lies beneath the cover:
Transcending the boundaries of traditional political symbolism to a more liberal outlook to our political emancipation...

Dear Colleagues
I would like to commend *the diplomat* team for a splendid job. Since joining the department in 2009, I have seen the publication grow and transform into an interesting newsletter. The covers on specific themes indeed propel readers to pick up the publication and page through. Few of the features that I look forward to reading include *Globe at a Glimpse*. This section gives us a small window with which we can peek through and see what our missions are doing. *The Conversation With* section allows us to understand what our colleagues are doing in their different directorates and missions. DIRCO is a big department and it is not easy to keep up with everything that happens. *The diplomat* sums it all up in an interesting and light fashion. Looking forward to your next edition.

Regards

Tshireletso L Nkaletse
Operations Centre

diplomatic mail

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Functions of the Branch: Asia & Middle East

Every recognised socio-political and economic research institute, every governmental institution, universities and non-governmental organisations worldwide agree on one major global trend that is dominating contemporary reality: the undisputed advance of the East. Of the five largest economies by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) today, three are located in Asia: China (2nd), Japan (3rd) and India (4th). By 2020, emerging economies will rise in global importance and China will have overtaken the United States of America (USA) by GDP measured in purchasing power terms. In 2010, Japan, the USA, China, South Korea and Germany were the global leaders in patents registered. Approximately 40% of the world's population lives in Asia. Thus, the region presents itself as a potentially lucrative market for South African goods and services, and also an important potential source for rare skills and technologies that could be of great benefit to South Africa.

The Middle East, too, is of geo-strategic interest to South Africa. Saudi Arabia and Iran are the two major suppliers of crude oil to South Africa. In the case of Iran, the interruption of the flow of crude oil, without substitute

sources, would have a detrimental effect on South Africa's economy. The financially strong oil-rich Arab Gulf States are also important investors into South Africa and such investment plays a role in the alleviation of poverty and the creation of jobs.

However, Asia and the Middle East is also a region tormented by political instability, which could have adverse implications for global peace and stability if not managed very delicately. The 'Arab Spring' and the Israel-Palestine issue, Afghanistan, Iran, the threatening collapse of governance in Pakistan, the North Korean dilemma, the existence of several nuclear states operating outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty as well as the serious competition for strategic resources in the South China Sea remain sources of instability.

Against the backdrop of the above, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) was compelled to adjust its priorities to align itself with the significant developments in Asia and the Middle East over the past two decades.

Therefore, DIRCO now maintains 30 diplomatic

missions in the region and is also accredited to 22 countries on a non-residential basis. In order to manage these missions, the Branch: Asia and Middle East is divided into three Chief Directorates, Central and East Asia; South-East Asia and Oceania; and the Middle East. These Chief Directorates in turn, are divided into five Directorates that are responsible for the day-to-day management and guidance of our diplomatic representations in Asia and the Middle East.

Added to the above, there is the Directorate: Economic Affairs and Regional Organisations. This Directorate resorts directly under the Office of the Deputy Director-General. As the name suggests, it has a dual function:

- a) It is responsible for outreach initiatives in the provinces whereby it cooperates with them to encourage foreign missions stationed in South Africa to attend seminars and investment promotions in identified provincial capitals. These seminars are designed to inform about the trade, investment and tourism potential offered by the respective provinces.
- b) South Africa's membership of several regional organisations is a clear indication of our country's growing status as a global player, particularly in the advancement of the African Agenda and South-South cooperation. Participation in the BRICS bloc (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), and the IBSA partnership (India - Brazil - South Africa), the New Asian African Strategic Partnership (NAASP) and Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) as well as observation of Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) developments are carefully managed by this strategic Directorate.



IBSA is an established trilateral forum and South Africa's membership has provided the country with an important platform to advance its national interest as well as that of Africa with two of the major emerging economies.

South Africa's membership of BRICS provides another unique platform in building a new geography of cooperation through the commonality of ideas and contributing a new dimension to global multilateralism.

There are several important areas of attention that the Branch : Asia and Middle East also attends to, albeit not necessarily in a line responsibility. Over the past years, as the East increasingly has begun to attract greater attention of South Africans – both in terms of tourism and immigration – there has been a growing number of South Africans that end up requiring consular assistance.

The Branch cooperates closely with the Chief Directorate: Consular Services to seek maximum support for the needs of South Africans travelling to or residing in the East.

There is no doubt that the strategic shift of global economic and political significance to Asia and the Middle East is only the beginning of a major trend. Branch: Asia and Middle East will need to position and equip itself adequately in order to reap maximum benefits for the advancement of South Africa's national priorities.



AN OVERVIEW OF THE MINISTER'S BUDGET VOTE SPEECH

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane stresses the importance of local government in foreign policy implementation

On Wednesday 25 April 2012, the Minister presented the department's Budget Vote Speech for the year 2012/2013 before the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation. In the speech, the Minister touched on five key elements which defined the framework and purpose of the department's work.

Whilst she also focused briefly on some of the key aspects of foreign policy, the Deputy Ministers reflected in detail on the issues as highlighted by the Minister. This overview, therefore, also covers the Budget Vote Speeches by the Deputy Ministers.

The first key element which the Minister highlighted was accountability. In this regard, the Minister moved from a premise that the Budget Vote Speech should be seen as an act of accountability. It was an act of accountability in that the department reported on its activities to Parliament and the nation on how its finances were allocated and managed through its various activities.

The department's mandate is derived from Outcome 11 on creating a better South Africa and contributing to a better and safer Africa in a better world, and the Budget Vote Speech was aligned to this mandate.

The Minister made a case for the funds and human resources the department required to carry out its mandate and implement assigned activities. In the context of Outcome 11, the speech made an explicit link between the department's activities, the country's national interest and annual domestic priorities established through the President's State of the Nation Address (SONA) and other State mechanisms.

The Budget Vote Speech explored in detail the outputs of Outcome 11 – that is; (1) enhancing continental development and integration, with a focus on South Africa's



Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane addressing delegates during Morning Live's breakfast broadcast

role in consolidating the African Agenda; (2) Southern African Development Community (SADC) integration and the promotion of peace and security in Africa; (3) advancing South Africa's national interests through the enhancement of South-South Cooperation; (4) enhancing North-South Cooperation; and (5) advancing South Africa's national interests through participation in institutions of global governance.

The third key element was impact evaluation. An account of the department's overall performance was made, highlighting some of the key activities and the impact these have made internationally and domestically.

The fourth key element was about foreign policy positions and pronouncements. In this regard, the Minister reaffirmed the core elements of the country's foreign policy; as well as its solidarity with Cuba, Palestine, Western Sahara, and South Sudan. Contentious issues such as, amongst others, developments in Iran and Syria were highlighted.

The fifth and final element was on the

plans for the year ahead. The Minister outlined the department's key activities for the budget period, notably the African Diaspora Summit.

In addition to these key elements, the Minister also had an opportunity to reflect on the following:

(a) The United Nations (UN) and its Security Council

During South Africa's presidency of the UNSC in January 2012, a high-level debate was convened on strengthening the relationship between the UN and regional organisations, in particular the African Union (AU), in the maintenance of international peace and security. President Jacob Zuma presided over this debate which concluded with the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2033 (2012), which South Africa sponsored. Resolution 2033 also enjoyed the endorsement of the AU.

(b) Developments in the SADC region

The Minister reflected on successful elections in the region including the

Seychelles, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Developments in this region are pointing in the right direction for the political future of SADC. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane also declared the commitment to continue working with the leadership and people of Zimbabwe within the SADC-determined framework for the full implementation of the Global Political Agreement.

(c) Developments in the Sahel Region

The Minister observed with great concern developments in this region, and that countries in the Sahel region such as Chad, Niger, Mauritania and Mali, were at the receiving end of the impact brought about by the disappearance of arms from the Libyan crisis and the forced return of migrants from that country. Accordingly, South Africa responded to the call made by countries of the Sahel Region by providing humanitarian relief to those countries. South Africa was also working on a framework of implementation for further assistance in the medium term.

(d) South-South cooperation (focus on BRICS and IBSA)

The holding anchor of the South-South cooperation strategy is the BRICS partnership mechanism with Brazil, Russia, India and China. The Minister announced that South Africa would be hosting the Fifth BRICS Summit in early 2013.

South Africa's membership of BRICS has three objectives, namely: (1) to advance South Africa's national interests as outlined in the SONA; (2) to promote the regional integration programme and related continental infrastructure programmes; (3) and to partner with key players of the South on issues related to global governance and its reform.

As the host of the next BRICS Summit, South Africa has a contribution to make to the realisation of the objective of establishing the BRICS Development Bank. The establishment of the Bank is in line with national and continental priorities as outlined by President Zuma, particularly infrastructure development in South Africa and the broader African continent.

(e) Intra-Africa Trade

Infrastructure development is a major focus of the AU as the continent seeks to improve trade amongst African states. The theme



Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane with Deputy Ministers Ebrahim Ebrahim and Marius Fransman

for the AU this year is "Promoting Intra-African Trade". In this regard, President Zuma has been appointed by the AU to champion infrastructure development on the continent. The SADC - East African Community (EAC) - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (SADC-EAC-COMESA) tripartite formation is testimony of how regional economic communities (RECs) can serve as building blocks for the unity and integration of the continent.

(f) African Diaspora Summit

The Minister announced to the Portfolio Committee South Africa's honour of hosting the historic African Diaspora Summit which will take place next month on Africa Day (25 May). The Minister noted that this Summit would be placed under the theme, "Towards the Realisation of a United and Integrated Africa and its Diaspora".

The Summit was expected to help create sustainable partnerships between the African Diaspora and the African continent through a realisable Programme of Action; create sustainable dialogue, partnerships and strengthen Pan-African solidarity; and promote South-South cooperation in the betterment of the African continent and the Diaspora.

(g) South Africa's Candidature to the AU Commission Chairperson

One of the main foreign policy issues for this year is the candidacy of Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma.

As a strategy for highlighting this candidacy, the Minister placed a lot of emphasis across the Budget Vote Speech on continental responsibilities.

By taking this approach, South Africa seeks to: (1) reinforce the centrality of Africa in its foreign policy; (2) highlight challenges of continental integration, especially in the area of infrastructure; (3) recognise the necessary urgency with which continental integration should be addressed; (4) focus attention on the importance of strengthening continental institutions, particularly the AU; and (5) highlight the importance of strengthening and enhancing the capacity of African institutions to ensure delivery of its adopted projects and programmes.

It was clear from the Minister's Budget Vote Speech that South Africa, seeks to, once more, reaffirm the meaningful role it plays in creating a better South Africa and contributing to a better and safer Africa in a better world.

The letter and spirit of the speech was indicative of the country's unwavering support for the promotion of its foreign policy principles as outlined in the department's Annual Performance Plan. The Budget Vote Speech sought to build trust with the ordinary people of South Africa, and inspired hope to many who are committed to ensuring that South Africa's foreign policy remains on course. □

BY: THE DIPLOMAT TEAM
Pictures: Unati Ngamntwini

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN FOREIGN POLICY

Public participation programme by Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane stressed the importance of the local government sphere in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy on 21 April 2012.

Addressing an audience comprising of representatives of local government, the business sector as well as independent research institutions in Buffalo City, East London, the Minister said "rapid urbanisation across the world requires cities to play a more effective role in the implementation of foreign policy, and that better coordination across the three spheres of government (i.e. national, provincial and local) will bring much-needed alignment and synergy when implementing international treaties as well as bilateral agreements signed between South Africa and its diplomatic partners across Africa and the world."

The Minister also noted that various South African cities had signed bilateral agreements with other cities across the world. In this regard, she reiterated that the growth and prosperity of the African continent was a key pillar in South Africa's foreign policy.

The Minister encouraged South African cities to explore possibilities for cooperation with fellow African cities, as Africa's economy was growing at a rate second only to that of Asia.

Furthermore, she stated that there was a need to pursue the country's foreign policy within the broad framework of creating a

better South Africa and contributing to a better and safer South Africa in a better world. The Minister further reiterated that the foreign policy needed to address the country's domestic priorities and ought to help address the legacy of apartheid as well as defend and protect the Constitution. Emphasis was also placed on promoting values, especially Ubuntu and also the Pan-African principles of foreign policy, including unity, integration and prosperity of the African continent. In addition, the Minister said that "South Africa remains committed to working bilaterally with fellow African countries and collectively through the South African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU). In this regard, we believe that a

part of the solution lies in strengthening our Pan-African institutions, notably the AU and its Commission; expanding our relations with key countries of the South, especially China, Brazil and India, in the context of South-South relations."

The Minister concluded by saying that, "we continue to work towards the consolidation of our traditional relations with countries of the North as well as with other like-minded countries for the strengthening of multilateralism in the context of globalisation, where no single nation can successfully deal with global challenges on its own, and intensify the call for the transformation of institutions of global governance to reflect our contemporary geo-political realities".



Delegates attending the Minister's Public Participation Programme in Buffalo City, East London

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane addressing delegates in Buffalo City, East London



Deputy Minister Fransman receives an award



Deputy Minister Marius Fransman and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu receiving an award of the Order of Vasco de Balboa under the Great Cross Decree

Relations between South Africa and Panama were strengthened with the signing of an agreement between Deputy Minister Marius Fransman and his Panama counterpart, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Francisco Alvarez de Soto. Mr De Soto's visit to South Africa was the first by the government of Panama since 1994. The agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding, regulates cooperation between the two countries' diplomatic academies and focuses on language training in English and Spanish. The visit coincided with Deputy Minister Fransman, along with Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu receiving the Order of Vasco Nunes de Balboa, under the Great Cross Degree in Cape Town on 19 April 2012. This award is the highest order bestowed on foreign citizens by the Republic of

Panama for enriching contributions to community development, human rights, social justice and international diplomacy. The Deputy Minister said that he received the award on behalf of the Government and the people of South Africa. He added that he dedicated the award to the generations who fought against colonialism and apartheid, great leaders such as OR Tambo, Chris Hani, Ashley Kriel, Anton Fransch, Solomon Mahlangu, Steve Biko, Ahmed Timol, and Imam Haroun, to mention but a few. "The free and democratic State that we created in 1994 after the demise of the apartheid regime is a product of the struggles of the South African people, African people and millions of anti-apartheid activists across the world i.e. a product of international solidarity as well. As I receive this award I do so humbly

in the hope that we can continue with the legacy of these leaders and in particular Comrade Chris Hani as he said, "Our struggle does not end when we become a democracy and bring down apartheid. Our struggle for transformation will be about changing the power relations in order to build a just, non-racial non-sexist and equitable society." Deputy Minister noted that South Africa was today proudly seen as a liberated land amongst the international community and not as a pariah, but as a shining example of a country where we could help to make this world a more equal and a better place, based upon the principles of equality, non-racialism, non-sexism, human solidarity and social justice. "With this acknowledgment it is hoped that South Africa and Panama will now strengthen relations at political, social, cultural and economic level that seeks to benefit our two countries where it matters most, using international economic diplomacy to change the power relations of our people," Deputy Minister Fransman said.

news flash

South Africa, Ghana strengthen ties



Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe paying a courtesy call to Ghana's President John Atta Mills at Castle Osu in Accra Ghana

Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe concluded a successful visit to Ghana on 20 April 2012. The visit focused on strengthening the political and economic relations between the two countries which hold enormous trade and investment potential. "There is great potential for cooperation in mining, energy, transport,

telecommunication, electricity generation, nature conservation, tourism as well as sharing in technology. As the headquarters and the current chair of the African Physical Society, Ghana plays a pivotal role in Africa's astronomy and astrophysics community, which will broaden skills exchanges and promote shared Research and Development programmes between

the two countries," said Mr Motlanle. South Africa views Ghana as one of the strategic partners in the continent and will support its newly established petroleum industry in order to promote economic growth by amongst others:

- Strengthening cooperation between the national oil companies, the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation and PetroSA;
- Committing to long-term investment in Ghana through PetroSA and other state-owned enterprises as well as private corporates;
- Sharing technical capabilities and skills exchanges, drawing on the international track record of PetroSA in Upstream Oil and Gas beneficiation; and,
- Establishing a PetroSA office in Ghana to give effect to the cooperation with the Ghana National Petroleum Corporation.



AN ASSESSMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S PRESIDENCY OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

South Africa's UNSC Presidency advanced the objectives South Africa sought to achieve during its second tenure in the council

On 1 January 2012, just seven days ahead of the momentous centenary celebrations of the African National Congress (ANC) on 8 January, South Africa took its seat as President of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the month of January. This coincidence was once in a lifetime and spurred our spirits as we braced ourselves for the huge responsibility of presiding over this august body. The council's Presidency is a huge responsibility as the President

facilitates the work of the council on behalf of its members, and it also provides the opportunity to highlight the Presidency's priorities as they pertain to international peace and security. Indeed, in addition to the daily contributions that South Africa continues to make in the work of the council through myriad diplomatic vehicles, the Presidency was an opportunity to make an important and critical mark in pursuit of our foreign policy objectives.

By a great measure, South Africa's Presidency became a tool to advance the objectives we sought to achieve during our

second tenure in the council. Essentially, these objectives are: contributing to achieving peace and stability in the continent and in the regions of the world; continuing to promote the importance of developing effective partnerships between the UN and regional organisations and sub-regional organisations in maintaining international peace and security; promoting the African Agenda, including the highlighting of the continent's priorities in the area of peace and security; continuing to work together with all the members of the Southern African Development

Community (SADC), the African Union (AU) and the UN in pursuit of effective global governance, rule of law within multilateralism and the reform of the UN system and working towards improving the working methods of the Security Council to make it a more legitimate, representative and effective body.

In line with our objective of advancing the African Agenda in the Security Council, and cognizant of the importance of the role of regional organisations when the Council deals with regional conflicts, South Africa pioneered a resolution on enhancing strategic and political coherence between the UN and the AU. Despite positive progress that has been achieved in the AU/UN relationship, the pressing rationale for a resolution was the glaring disconnect between the two organisations in the wake of the Libyan and Ivorian crises as well as differences on the situation in Sudan. In this context, on 12 January South Africa hosted a high-

level Summit meeting which was presided over by President Jacob Zuma, wherein the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) and the Chairs of the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) participated.

The outcome of this meeting was the unanimous adoption of an important Security Council Resolution 2033, whose strategic thrust is the promotion of political and legislative coherence between the UN Security Council and the AUPSC in dealing with African peace and security challenges. Importantly, the resolution calls for the Security Council to hold timely consultations and formulate cohesive strategies in coordination with the AUPSC when dealing with conflict situations in Africa.

In advancing the same issue, during our previous term in the council, South Africa spear-headed the adoption of Resolution 1809 in 2008. Resolution 1809 paved the way for greater cooperation between the UN and the AU including the holding of the annual consultative meetings between

the AUPSC and the UNSC to deliberate on issues of peace and security in Africa. Resolution 1809 was also significant as it led to the UN increasing its support to AU mandated peacekeeping operations. The AU and the UN are also actively working together in key peacekeeping missions and conflict situations including in the Sudan (UNAMID) and Somalia (AMISOM). This cooperation is the embodiment of the kind of cooperation that both Resolutions 1809 and 2033 seek to institutionalise. The AU Commission and the UN Secretariat have also made tremendous strides on many fronts including long term capacity building.

In strengthening the relationship between the UN and the AU, we are guided by the philosophy that regional organisations, by their very geo-political location and proximity to conflict situations, have a better appreciation of the dynamics that obtain in a given conflict in comparison to actors that are far removed from the conflict, including the Security Council. All this does not negate the fact that the Security Council has the primary responsibility in the maintenance of international peace and security, including on the African continent.

Full implementation of Resolution 2033, will certainly ensure that both the UNSC and the AUPSC develop a constructive political relationship in order to avoid denigrating tendencies that led to the undermining of the African positions in dealing with the Libyan and Ivorian crises. More importantly, the political dynamism in this relationship should provide an opportunity for the promotion of the Pan-African narrative within the Security Council. In his speech during the Debate, President Zuma reiterated that, "...the strengthening of the strategic relationship between the AU and UN is critical if we are to rid our continent of the scourge of conflicts that has scarred Africa for decades". In an effort to demonstrate just how the strategic partnership between the UNSC and AUPSC could work, on 11 January Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane presided over a meeting of the Council to receive briefings from the UN Secretariat, the AU Commission and the Troop Contributing Countries to AMISOM. The strategic objective of this meeting was for the UNSC and the AUPSC to share views on how to deal

with the question of Somalia. The Minister put it aptly when she said, "this meeting is a practical demonstration of the close cooperation we seek to enhance between the UNSC and the AUPSC in matters related to peace and security in Africa. We are convinced that the Security Council and the AUPSC could benefit significantly from such political engagement which should assist us in developing a greater strategic approach to developments in Somalia". At the meeting the members of the Security Council stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy in Somalia to address the political, humanitarian and security challenges. The outcome of this dialogue paved the way for the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2036 enhancing the force strength of AMISOM to 17731 uniformed personnel as recommended by the joint AU-UN Joint Assessment Team.

Further, at the initiative of South Africa, the Security Council held an Open Debate on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security in conflict and post conflict situations on 10 January. A Presidential Statement (S/PRST/2012/1) was unanimously adopted as an outcome of this debate. Among others, the Statement emphasised the need for universal adherence to and implementation of the rule of law and that the promotion of the rule of law and justice was an indispensable element for peaceful coexistence. The discussions underscored the inextricable link between the promotion of justice and the attainment of peace in conflict and post-conflict situations. During the debate, a significant number of UN member states also raised the importance of the UN itself adhering to international law. This concern was highlighted in the context of the UN (Security Council) controversial interventions in Libya and Cote d'Ivoire.

This Presidential Statement will also be an important contribution to the General Assembly High-Level Debate on the rule of law at national and international level to be held in September 2012. In light of the ongoing discussions in the Council about the much controversial implementation of resolution 1973 by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces in

(continues on page 14)

Libya, and the call by Brazil Russia India China and South Africa formation (BRICS) members to hold NATO accountable for abusing the Resolution 1973 for its regime change agenda and the loss of civilian lives it was meant to protect, South Africa invited the Libyan government and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Navi Pillay to brief the Council on the current developments and the findings of the Commission of Inquiry on human rights abuses in Libya respectively. In her briefing, the High Commissioner recommended that NATO, "should disclose information about all such events (killing and injury of civilians) and about remedial actions undertaken". Holding NATO accountable for violating a UNSC Resolution would ensure that the mandates of the Council were implemented within the ambit of international law and not abused in pursuit of self-interests as evidenced in Libya. In addition, it should be noted that the manner in which NATO implemented resolution 1973 has the potential to erode the credibility and put to doubt the impartiality of the UN in particular the Security Council.

On the Middle East, we broke new ground when we facilitated two meetings on Palestine with one focusing specifically on the humanitarian impact of the illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and one being a quarterly Open Debate with non-Council members participating. The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ebrahim Ebrahim presided over the Open Debate on the situation in the Middle East including the question of Palestine. By having two meetings in one month on such a critical issue, we saw the council uncomfortably breaking away from the tradition of having one meeting a month on the situation in the Middle East.

On the last day of South Africa's Presidency, 31 January, we convened a meeting on the situation in Syria wherein the council received a briefing from the League of Arab States (LAS) representatives on the outcomes of the Observer Mission. At the same meeting, the LAS requested the council to support its transitional plan on Syria. Council members expressed concern about the deteriorating situation in Syria, called for a peaceful solution and also registered their support for the LAS efforts aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the Syrian



President Jacob Zuma accompanied by Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane chairing the UNSC on AU-UN cooperation

crisis. South Africa facilitated the meeting but also – in its national capacity – welcomed the LAS efforts and cautioned against foreign interference in the Syrian crisis. South Africa further stressed the need for the council and the rest of the international community to facilitate a Syrian-led political process that would lead to a peaceful resolution of the current crisis.

This meeting once again underscored the import of the UNSC collaborating more strategically with regional organisations as pronounced in Resolution 2033.

During this critical time and perhaps due to the interminable business of the council, South Africa intensified its public diplomacy efforts. Although the role of the president is to communicate in greater part the work of the council to the media, we were able to communicate the national positions (in response to media questions) including highlighting the historic centenary of the ANC. Being in the Presidency also gave us the opportunity to communicate our positions to other media that we would not have reached otherwise. South Africa continued the practice of updating non-council members about the work of the council including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). We also kept our regional constituencies such as SADC and the African Group informed about developments in the council. Our communication through social media on the various initiatives helped inform the technologically savvy – in real time - about

our work. Beyond the Presidency, we continue to use all relevant media to inform the South African and other publics about our efforts to contribute to the attainment of a better world for all humanity. South Africa facilitated 11 public meetings and 13 closed consultations. These meetings and consultations were on issues that serve on the agenda of the council, mainly on the resolution of African conflicts, namely: Guinea Bissau, Libya, South Sudan, UN/AU Mission in Darfur, UN Office for West Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, impact of the Libyan crisis in the Sahel region, Cyprus, Iraq, the Middle East including Palestine, Yemen and Syria, Children in Armed Conflict, nuclear non-proliferation, Afghanistan and the International Court of Justice. The council also adopted two resolutions, one Presidential Statement and eight press statements.

Whereas South Africa's Presidency ended on 31 January, the country continues to play an active role in all the structures of the council with a view to making a positive and meaningful contribution towards the achievement of a peaceful and prosperous world. South Africa will continue to prioritise Africa but still play an active part in addressing peace and security challenges elsewhere in the world. When our term ends on 31 December 2012 we hope to come out of the council triumphant and proud of our achievements in this majestic body whose main responsibility is the maintenance of international peace and security. ☐



CELEBRATING THE FREEDOM CHARTER



Batho Molapo
Directorate:
NEPAD, ARF,
Programme
& Info
Management

When I think of this month's theme "Working together to build unity and prosperity for all" which is in line with our Freedom Day celebrations theme, something immediately came to my mind - the adoption of the Freedom Charter by the Congress of the People (COP) in Kliptown in 1955.

I believe the story of the adoption of the Freedom Charter is a momentous account. It was a novel occasion in its right, one that had many firsts and many stories that in my view should be told for generations, not only in South Africa but to the world at large. It is a story that can be used to inspire millions of oppressed people in the world, engaged in different struggles for freedom and democracy.

The 1950s was characterised by an escalating State oppression and exploitation which manifested itself in the State denying people their basic freedoms, including political freedom, economic freedom, the right to vote, freedom of speech, freedom to intermarry across races etc.

The people gathered in Kliptown in June 1955 to denounce the apartheid system and to formulate their own vision of an alternative society. The Freedom Charter is a unique document in that for the first time ever, the people were actively involved in formulating their own vision. It has repeatedly been observed that the Freedom Charter is "a people's document" created through a democratic process, unprecedented in this country and probably in most other countries of the world. More than 2500 delegates from of all revolutionary formations in the country and people across racial lines, blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians gathered in Kliptown on 25 and 26 June 1950 to discuss and later adopt the document.

It is clear that the organisers of Kliptown understood the fundamental principle that the destiny of any society should be determined (and is best be determined) by that society itself working together in unity to determine what modalities they want to employ to secure for themselves the basic human freedoms, which includes importantly economic freedom and prosperity.

It has been indicated that the Congress of the People was not a single event but "a series of campaigns and rallies, huge and small, held in houses, flats, factories, kraals, on farms and in the open". The process of gathering the people's views was that a National Action Council enlisted volunteers to publicise the COP, educate the people, note their grievances and embark on a "million signatures campaign". In this regard, it has also been proudly asserted that every demand made by the people at these gatherings, however small the matter, was recorded and collected for consideration by the COP for inclusion in the Freedom Charter. In this way, the Freedom Charter became, not only in principle but also in actuality, became the charter of the people, the content of which has its source in their homes, in the factories, mines and rural reserves.

The Charter reads in part:

- We the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know:
- that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the People;
- that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;
- that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;
- that only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief;

In the main, the above constitutes the fundamental principle of our Constitution and to a large degree of our foreign policy. Following from this, the principles underpinning our South African foreign policy includes among others, our commitment to the promotion of human rights and the promotion of democracy as well as justice and international law in the conduct of relations between nations. These principles, as outlined, are a set of commitments and line with our perception of the kind of country we seek to be and the kind of world we wish to see evolve. This clearly illustrates the authoritative manner in which the Charter has been, with such far reaching influence not only to our domestic policy but also the approach with which we want to conduct our foreign relations. It is important to note that there are many documents that have been formulated pre 1994, also outlining the wishes on the kind of world South Africa should be. These have not been as influential and authoritative as the Freedom Charter, simply because they were formulated under the banner of individual organisations, whereas the Freedom Charter is widely regarded as the People's document.

The chosen location for the signing of the Freedom Charter is also significant. While inter-racial settlements were banned in South Africa at the time, like other infamous 'grey areas' in South Africa, such as Sophiatown and District Six, Kliptown was a place where different cultural and racial groups lived together: African, Indian, Malay, Chinese and European. It was therefore envisaged that the documents that was going to come out of Kliptown would be as representative as Kliptown was.

The spirit of Kliptown was that of patriotism, of unity, of service and responsibility where each of them resolved to pitch in and work harder not only for themselves but for each an every one of their generation and generations to come, both in South Africa and the whole world. This is the sprit that should continue to inspire all of us to continue to be advocates of unity, participatory democracy and development as the fundamental necessities for achieving human freedoms in any society.



Mogotsi Maleka
Sub-Directorate: Development, Strategy & Legalisation

In the name of freedom, blood was shed. Thousands lost their lives and their loved ones, all in the name of freedom. The segregation of basic services such as water, electricity and housing etc. was eminent as it was imposed to the previously disadvantaged group.

After 1994, South Africa gained its right as a sovereign country. Its people were thus liberated. Such liberation brought freedom. In this regard, freedom implies independence. It is imperative to note that through freedom, one can express oneself

hence enshrined in the Bill of Rights in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996.

Freedom means opportunities, thus citizens of South Africa, particularly those previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may have the privilege of advancing economically and academically. Freedom in this regard means rectification of the past imbalance by ensuring equity. Thus everyone is equal before the court of law.

South Africa comprises of diverse cultures. Freedom therefore brings unity in our diversity. This is complemented by the preamble of the Constitution that South Africa belongs to those who live in it united in our diversity. The South African national anthem also outlines that "sounds the call to come together and united we shall stand, let us live and strive for freedom in South Africa our land".

Freedom means responsibility for us and the country. We have to act responsibly at

all times. This means that citizens have the responsibility to minimise the spread of HIV and AIDS, crime, unemployment etc. Through freedom, the citizens have to ensure that they cooperate and work hands-in-glove with government to reach the vision of a transformational country and to ensure that the blood that was shed, indeed shall nourish the tree that shall bear fruits of freedom.

"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended" - Nelson Mandela.

In this regard, the people of South Africa have a mandate to utilise freedom in a manner that will ultimately benefit the country, and we dare not linger, for with freedom comes unity, peace, prosperity, opportunities, equity and responsibilities.

and creating a better life for all. As we celebrate Freedom Day, we can be proud of the resilient and maturing democracy that we have built together as a nation. This is a time to remember that we have come a long way together, from our divided and bitter past, to a society based on equality, dignity and respect for human rights.

On Freedom Day, together, we should commemorate the heroism and sacrifice over years of struggle to win our freedom, with the solidarity of people from across the globe. We celebrate the continuing hope and resilience of our people, working together to achieve the vision in our Constitution. Millions of lives have been transformed since 1994 and government has broadened access to basic services previously denied to most and made sure that many more people can participate in

the economic mainstream. During the dark days of apartheid, to have basic necessities like water and electricity was like a dream, but the Freedom Day has brought about a major shift.

However, the struggle is still on, and there is hope that as we continue the struggle against unemployment, poverty and crime, there is hope that we shall continue until we win. Since the first democratic elections in 1994, as a South African citizen, I take pride in knowing that South Africa continues to play an important role and taking her rightful place on the international scene.

From 1994, our country continues to play host to many international events, including the biggest show ever on earth in 2010, the 19th FIFA World Cup; and more recently, the COP17/CMP7 Conference in December 2011.

During a recent church sermon the priest spoke about freedom and referred to an advertisement where the question was asked "are you free or are you dom?" He then went further to state he would rather wish to change freedom to wisdom.

I would like to bring that into context on the question above. It is time that we gain wisdom to use our freedom wisely and move forward because freedom is nothing without wisdom.

If freedom has left us without wisdom then what will happen to our country?



Terence Tshisevhe
Sub-Directorate: Lesotho & Swaziland & Botswana

The meaning of freedom in post-apartheid South Africa has been a topic for debate among a number of scholars in the country, and it remains a highly contested topic in many ways. However, for the purpose of this article, freedom should encompass a principle of self-control, also known as self-ownership. In a free democratic society, each and every person has legal control or ownership of their own body and mind. As such, the concept of freedom refers to a certain type of political empowerment. It refers specifically to equal empowerment. In other words, a free society is one with an equal distribution of legal rights and in which each and every person has as much legal rights as possible. Because freedom entails political equality, freedom can only logically entail as much legal rights as compatible with the same legal rights in others. In a free society, any one person cannot have so many legal rights that all other people could not logically have the same amount of legal rights.

On 27 April 2012 South Africa celebrated Freedom Day in commemoration of the first ever democratic elections held in the country 18 years ago. President

Jacob Zuma along with Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe and Malawian President Joyce Banda joined thousands of South Africans who had gathered at the Union Buildings in Pretoria to celebrate this special day. The 18th annual Freedom Day was marked under the theme 'Working Together to Build Unity and Prosperity'. In his address President Zuma noted that "the past 18 years have seen huge progress towards building a truly non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and free South Africa." Indeed South Africa has made significant strides in terms of governance and competitiveness at an international stage.

It is also important to draw parallels between freedom and the ability of the state to address our national interest: that is the development and upliftment of our people; emphasis on human development and human security within and beyond our borders. A state that also gives priority to protecting and promoting human rights of its people; enabling them to live free from fear and want; and eradicating poverty. In short building a society in which every citizen has access to adequate shelter, health care, education, security, work and opportunities to generate an income.

In celebrating this freedom, one should also reflect on the current wave of protests action across most provinces. The primary reason, it would appear, is dissatisfaction with the delivery of basic municipal services such as running water, electricity and toilets, especially in informal settlements, where there are high levels of poverty, poor infrastructure, and the lack of houses which add to the growing

dissatisfaction in these and other poor communities. Without dwelling too much into this, collective leadership is needed in this instance, to ensure that these issues are addressed so that people do not feel left behind. When those who are left behind ask "Where is this freedom that we have been jointly fighting for?" the answer is always: "Be patient comrades. You all know how the white minority government damaged this country. We are trying to solve these problems now but it will take time.

Depending on your social standing in society, you may not be fully aware of what it means to live in poverty and what it would then mean to be free from poverty. Freedom from poverty may not greatly stir our emotions but to those who experience poverty on a daily basis, the possibility of freedom from that poverty would stir the deepest of longings. In conclusion, at the Freedom Day celebrations in 2008, former President Thabo Mbeki reminded South Africans about "the brutalities of the past - detentions without trial, disappearances of our people, deaths in detentions, hangings of those opposed to apartheid, imprisonment, exile, massacres, assassinations, forced removals, banishments, the Group Areas Act and many more laws that made the lives of black people unbearable - are testimonies that our freedom was never free. Although today we walk tall because our collective efforts culminated in 27 April being our Freedom Day, we all still carry scars that remind us that our freedom that is at times taken for granted was never free..." Long live our freedom! And long live the Republic of South Africa!

country. Freedom is being able to have a voice and let it be heard. It means the right to education, access to information, health care service, adequate housing and have my own voting ballot. To me, freedom means having the right to make my own decisions and choices. Freedom allows me to pray to and worship my God. Freedom is waking up in the morning with no fear of the unknown. For me, freedom is many things but in the highest realm, it is my freedom to live in the democratic South Africa. Freedom is all the possibilities for me and every citizen of South Africa because of our countrymen and women who have sacrificed, bled and died for it. To me freedom means the right to remember all of those who have given their lives for how we live today. I realise that my freedom

came with a great price. To me, freedom is a promise that I can live my life.

"I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.

I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" - Nelson Mandela.



Colonel Hlaliso Qomoyi
Directorate: South Asia

This is a time for reflection to reflect on what our country has achieved and what we as the people of South Africa have experienced since the democratisation of our country in 1994.

27 April 1994, South Africans from all walks of life celebrate this historic day, which commemorates the country's first democratic elections. The country can celebrate the achievements that have been made in entrenching democracy



Sherene Sampaio
Chief Directorate: Human Rights & Human Affairs



Nthabiseng Ramatshela
Directorate: Media Liaison

I remember freedom as the day of the first democratic election in South Africa on 27 April 1994.

I remember people talking about voting, liberty, equal rights and being free - "it all started with a vision". Today, to me

freedom is about the ability to choose from options.

The more options in my awareness, the more free I feel, and this includes the ability to choose nothing, or none of the above, or the default. For me freedom is more about my inner peace more than what the world can offer me, it's about the fact that I have a clear conscience, that I go to bed at night knowing I have done my very best in all the day's activities and events. Believing that my cup is half full rather than half empty, My freedom means everything to me.

The freedom that I enjoy today has not always been free. It has been made possible by the pathfinders, the forbearers,

the fighters who made tremendous sacrifices for our country. Even more than sacrificing for our country, our veterans gave so much of themselves - hundreds of thousands even giving their lives - for the cause of freedom.

Moving forward let us take the initiative to commit and demonstrate through our actions our gratitude to those who have left a legacy of service, of sacrifice, and of freedom. Let us dream of South Africa, which is in peace with itself and let us all say "never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful country will again experience the oppression of one by another" as said by former President Nelson Mandela.



Imran Simmins
Directorate: USA

All too often I hear South Africans complaining about how bad things are and some would commit sacrilege even and compare our country to the dregs of apartheid. All of this pains me to no end because those who commit these heinous acts have absolutely no idea of what our freedom really means to us.

It was around September in 2005, a few months after I had joined the department when I realised what freedom means to me. I was standing on the 7th floor of 110 Hamilton Street, I looked down Proes Street, naturally, admiring the rows of Jacaranda trees going as far down the street as all four my eyes could see, but then I looked in the opposite direction and I saw it for the first time... The Union Buildings.

I saw the Sir Herbert Baker's design masterpiece for the first time as a symbol that belonged to South Africa and all who

lived in it. I knew that a few days before that moment I was in there rushing to deliver a submission for urgent signature. I was in that building, a building that I would never have been allowed to enter 15 years before that day because of an over active pineal gland (the gland in the human body that allows my God ordained permanent tan). But now no-one could stop my entry because I worked there for that building.

I was working for my people not as a tea boy or gardener but gainfully contributing to our foreign policy (even it were just a simple comma or full stop in a document) on behalf of my people; this is in sharp contrast to my father (from whom I inherited my over active pineal gland by the way) who would pass away seven months later and would never have had the privilege that I enjoyed.

If he were allowed into any government building at all it would only be for some menial tradesman job as an upholsterer, but here I was looking proudly up at the Union Buildings. Imagine that hey! Looking proudly at the Union Buildings with my over active pineal gland... Think about that. Celebrate that for it deserves celebration not condemnation. Criticise it but never ostracise it. Sure we are not perfect nor do we profess to be but, never say we are like the horror and crimes of

apartheid. That is a slap in the face of a right ordained to me, to you, to us, at birth to us by the Almighty. That is a slap in the face of our freedoms, freedoms costed by blood and rape and, in my own personal life, mental degradation.

Only people who have never known what the absence of freedom is can say we are worse than people formerly known as the South African government.

Those who do this, do this because they don't know the humiliation I had of having to watch how my father who was renowned for his football skills on the streets of Fietas, die a bitter angry depressed man, because he was not free to express these skills on behalf of his country and was instead prisoned in a trade which he despised but he had a family to feed and so he accepted his prison. Or worse yet, the humility of knowing my father's brother who was equally famed in Fietas as a great rugby player, become an alcoholic and on the day when South African Rugby Union(SARU) came calling for him to collect his Springbok Blazer no one could find him because he was a hobo lost in the streets of Hillbrow.

You ask me what freedom means to me? It's simple: it means being proud to with my over active pineal gland, look upon the Union Buildings, because I AM FREE!

UNITY: SOUTH AFRICA'S PILLAR OF PROSPERITY, AFRICA'S RAY OF HOPE



Thoteng Nkhumane
Directorate: NEPAD, ARF, Programme & Information Manageme

There is Pedi proverb that says "ditau tsa hloka seboka di ka shitwa ke nare e hlotsa". This overlooked and at some point disdained and scorned wise African saying (and there are many of them in various African languages) might as well have been the preamble of the constitution of the African Union (AU), to emphasise unity. Interpreted in English, it means that unity is power, but its direct translation is that even the strongest lions might be outrun by an ailing buffalo should there be no unity and coordination among them. If animals need unity to prosper and enhance their food security, how much more about humanity.

As far as unity or "seboka" is concerned, no South African will have to think of 27 April 1994 without a sense of pride, patriotism, responsibility and a ray of hope. This was a day in which the prophecy of the Afro-

pessimists that no transition in Africa was plausible without disunity and bullets was not fulfilled. This historic day saw the dream of the afro-optimists that transformation through unity and ballots was probable. This was a period at which the people of South Africa allowed the burdens and the blessings of common citizenship, that bind them together, to unite them rather than permit their differences to sunder them. This was a period at which the unity of the people of South Africa, across their differences eclipsed any other unity that took place in the history of this nation, including 1910 when the Union of South Africa was proclaimed.

But 1994 did not come through a linear path or smooth route, as the early 1990s was a period which no South African who was alive and politically conscious at that time would have to think of without shuddering. This was a period at which our great, beloved, tried and tested nation, poised to become the greatest nation, not just in the Southern African region, not just in Africa but in world affairs, was on the brink of catastrophe. This was a period at which the potential to plunge our nation in a civil war, which would have not meant a mere national humiliation but a national annihilation, was higher than any other period (1600-1990) in the history of this diverse, united and prestigious

people. Nevertheless, unity spared our nation from that needless massacre. The spirit of unity spared our nation from an imminent danger that would have been unsurpassed in the catalogue of disasters that befell our soil since the Infecane, the battle of Isandlwana or the Anglo-Boer War. In spite of the bitterness and seemingly irreconcilable differences that existed among not just blacks and whites but also between the Pan-Africanists and the African National Congress (ANC) in terms of policy orientation, those who were at the vanguard to decide South Africa's fate chose unity. Despite the bitter contest between the Communists and those believing in laissez-faire economics, the difference between the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC, the former Bantustans leaders such as Lucas Mangope of Bophuthatswana and Dr K Matanzima of Transkei, the providential political leaders of South Africa chose to obey prudence, which urged them to reconcile their diverse people. While the loss of Chris Hani, the then prospective leader of South Africa was irreplaceable, his assassination by Clive Derby Lewis could not divert the attention of South Africa's transition leaders from the fact that unity was essential if South Africa was to be saved from a nightmarish civil war that might have been perennial.



Thabisile Ncayiyane
Sub-directorate: State Protocol Lounge

Freedom means the realisation of the Freedom Charter - political and economic Freedom. The Freedom Charter states what we have fought for, and we must continue to do so.

As South Africans we have attained political freedom, which gives us muscle to make or amend policies that will allow implementation of all clauses as enshrined in the Freedom Charter. We can say we are free, but are we

really free? What do we have to show that indeed we are free, where is our economy and land? To whose hands does this all belong? As the ruling party celebrated its 100 years of existence and having tried to better the lives of South Africans at large, it is still evident that we still have a long way to go.

This organisation was formed at a time when South Africa was changing very fast. The discovery of diamonds and gold in 1867 and 1886 resulted in a huge demand for labour. Certain laws and taxes were designed to force people to leave their land.

The most severe of these laws was the 1913 land Act, which prevented Africans from buying, renting or using land, except in reserves. Many communities or families immediately lost their land because of the Land Act, millions of other black people found it very difficult to live off the land.

The Land Act caused overcrowding, land hunger, poverty and starvation.

This will be the 99th year of existence of the Land Act. What is it that is stopping our legislative bodies to change or amend this Act? We are told when it was proposed it was on a state of emergency, to be implemented as soon as possible.

We now have political power that our fore-fathers fought for, to change or amend such Acts in favour of our freedom charter clauses.

We still have battles to fight, we are now in a struggle to attain economic freedom. This is not a dream of the generation of today, but it is enshrined in the Freedom Charter. We need to fight for our land to be bestowed to its rightful hands.

The Freedom Charter states that, "People shall share in the country's wealth. The land shall be shared among those who work it."



By: Karabo Mothoa
Chief Directorate: Consular Services

TOTAL FREEDOM (PART 1)

On 27 April 1994 our beautiful country South Africa (popularly known as Mzansi among us, its proud nationals), entered a new era; a very important moment in the calendar of our country. Today, we can proudly say that we are free and have been for the past 18 years. But the question is, are you totally free? Could it be that in some areas of your life, you are still colonised? What if some parts of the inner you are still under apartheid? You can be free with-out but are you free with-in?

The fact of the matter is that Mzansi is free; however, there are so many people in our country which are still not totally free. "How is that possible?" – You may be asking.

As you read my thoughts on "freedom" below, I want you to understand that the Government is not entirely responsible to bring you total freedom. I want you to be aware that the political and economic freedom which you are afforded is largely a "stored" freedom – if I can say so. It is an accessible freedom though; and it is accepted rather than imposed. Total freedom in your life is your responsibility. You must choose and be willing to be totally free. And you must do something to gain this total freedom.

It is important for you to discover that freedom cannot be imposed on anyone and that it happens to us area by area, when we tap into it. We must consciously accept that we are indeed free. Also remember that to be free does not mean that you must be a liability forever. Yes you can depend on Government or certain people in the beginning but you must learn to be on your own. Learn the "DIY" principle (which is Do It Yourself). I must be careful not to omit the truth that,

although I recommend that you adopt a "DIY" attitude, we are still interdependent. But then, when you depend on someone, always ask yourself how the other party can depend on or benefit from you as well. For an example, Black Economic Empowerment is a government initiative to empower certain people who were previously disadvantaged. But those beneficiaries must be willing to be honest on tax returns and they should look for opportunities to uplift other people in the form of creating decent employment for fellow South Africans.

Please understand that freedom is not automatically eternal. One day you may think that you are free and the next day you may wake up un-free - again, if I may use that word. You must make sure that you do not relapse into bondage subconsciously. You must sharpen your skills, up your game; learn as much as you can and make sure that when you are free, you are free indeed and forever. So, please work on your gained freedoms and from time to time check if your freedom is still valid through constant evaluation. Let me ask you a quick question, which should also serve as an example; how many people were excited to be employed but then they are now enslaved employees? Not slaves in a very bad way but then, now that they are employed, they find themselves bound by mountains of debts. Even if it is not debts to some, they simply lost appetite or zest for the work they are employed for. And it is not always about the money/ pay. It might be that their hearts constantly tell them that they served their purpose with where they are and that there is something more exciting out there. To some, this relapse comes in a form of midlife crisis.

Freedom in one area can also produce bondage in another area of your life.

While on your way to gaining total freedom, always make sure that in areas where you are free, you do not become bound in other areas. For an example, we have people who received(Rural Development Programme) RDP houses but then since some don't have any means of income, they become destitute in that they cannot afford food, to pay for water and electricity bills. Most of them were living with their parents, grandparents, aunts and so forth; and they never knew that they were covered in those areas. All they wanted was a house but now that they found it and they moved in, they wake up to a reality that groceries are not freebies. That water and electricity, clothes, cosmetics are not automatically flowing in our lives. So, we can say that such people's freedom in one area made them bound in another area. Be careful.

You are not free because of a declaration only. The question is, when a declaration for freedom was made, did you accept the declaration? What are you doing to ensure that freedom does not remain a philosophy? You see, to others freedom is still a dream which is still to be realised.

Remember these seven points which were mentioned above in order for you to obtain total freedom:

- Freedom cannot be imposed on you (you must want it)
- Freedom happens to us if we consciously accept it (you must accept it)
- Freedom is not a one-time event; it unfolds in stages, depending on our awareness (it is a process)
- You can be free in one area and still be bound in another (you must be totally free)
- Freedom is not meant for you to be a liability (you must adopt a "DIY" attitude)
- Freedom in one area can produce bondage in another area of your life (you must be balanced)
- Freedom is not automatically eternal; therefore, it must always be maintained and periodically validated (you must constantly evaluate it)
- You can be free to become whatever you want, because all things are possible now. ☑

Please check out part 2 of this topic on the next issue of the Diplomat.



Voices from the department

WHAT DOES FREEDOM MEAN TO YOU AND OUR COUNTRY?



Lindiwe Seshoka
Directorate
ICT Head
Office
Operations

Freedom day is an annual celebration of South Africa's first non-racial democratic elections that took place on 27 April 1994, which marks 18 years of democracy in the country. In celebrating the 18 years anniversary of our freedom we should not neglect to pay tribute to heroes and heroines who fought for freedom and democracy in South Africa.

It would be an injustice if one does not mention the role played by Dr Nelson Mandela the first democratically elected President of South Africa, not forgetting fallen revolutionaries who fought apartheid, an oppressive system in South Africa until the last drop of their blood,

such as Oliver Tambo, Chris Hani, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Solomon Mahlangu, Steve Biko, Lillian Ngoyi and many other sung and unsung heroes and heroines.

Today everyone is enjoying equal rights as dictated by the Freedom Charter which was adopted in Kliptown in 1955. Tremendous progress has been registered in dealing away with a patriarchal system to establish a more equitable lifestyle and opportunities. Women today have the opportunity to serve in high positions in politics and business.

The increase in women and traditionally low cast people occupying responsible positions of power and influence both in politics and business has been phenomenal compared to other countries. To continue to achieve this empowerment means women must be prioritised in job-creation, business development and in the broad-based black economic empowerment.

There has been great progress towards equality and empowering women, however much still needs to be done.

The reports of sexual and physical

abuse of women and children are a thorny and disturbing matter which need urgent measures to be taken against perpetrators.

As we celebrate our freedom much, much more still needs to be done, to defeat poverty and underdevelopment. We want to see our country prosper and provide basic services to all. Our country can never be complete or democratically stable unless the basic needs of our people are met.

Through the media, we saw lots of anger through protest over a lack of service delivery. As South Africans today we are paying the much-deserved tribute to the heroes like Andries Tatane (22 Feb 1978 – 13 April 2011) who died during a service delivery protest in Ficksburg. His death could be drawn with comparisons to that of Hector Pieterse and Steve Biko at the hands of police during the height of apartheid.

We should refuse to be part of abuse against women and children. Clearly, we cannot proudly proclaim that we are a free nation while women and children are not free to enjoy our freedom.



Lusanda Dube
Branch:
Asia and
Middle East

It was not an easy road to be where we are today as a people, a nation and a country.

Many lives were lost and many souls violated.

It is therefore paramount that those of us, who enjoy the rewards of these selfless souls, who gave their lives for a better future for this country and its people, realise that this freedom comes with responsibilities.

It is our responsibility to ensure that as a people we do not fail the Legacy left for us. It is our responsibility that as a people we carry the torch of transformation for the next generations of our land and the

transformation of all societies within our Country.

It is our responsibility to work hard and build ourselves as a people. As individual characters, we must build our societal pride. Let us not be a people who demand to be spoon-fed by the Government, and be dependent on grants. We must let our pride as a nation rise. It is our responsibility to love and value the freedom that our forefathers gallantly fought for. Freedom is a responsibility of the entire Nation to preserve and honour.

FREEDOM POEM

I stand on foreign soil today
To celebrate South Africa's Freedom Day
In a country where there is some that pray
To say freely, what they want to say
Our democracy and Constitution is clear
We are privileged, all can live without fear
And that's why we should keep it so dear
And protect it, all of us, far and near
Let us remember the road behind
Forgive and forget and look for things

that bind
And keep us together- a future to find
A light and example to all mankind
This, Dear Lord we pray with all our might
Give us and our leaders the courage and insight
To move with compassion, transparency in
Your light
To a future for all, sufficient and bright.



Mr T Nieuwoudt Harare
Corporate
Service
Manager,
DIRCO

A LAND OF PROMISE TO A FEW, AND A PLACE I CALL HEAVEN ON EARTH

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void. Darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of waters. And God said, let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light: that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness. *The book of Moses (Genesis 1)*

Can we argue that we have never been to heaven because we are still alive, or better still, could it be that there is perhaps heaven on earth, and we just don't know it?

If I were, for one reason or another, to be given an opportunity to respond to this question, I would pronounce it in my sleep that the Eastern Cape province is to me heaven on earth. It is a province that characterises the elements stated on Genesis 1. It is a place where the heavens meet the earth, which God created in the beginning.

If the story of Adam and Eve finds inspiration from an unspoiled and serene landscape, you can be sure that the Eastern Cape was home to the Garden of Eden. Many may disagree with this assertion, but if they visited this province, only then would poetry be possible. As they say, the Eastern Cape has deep roots.

I however still find it ironic that many talk about this province as their place of birth, yet very few talk about its unparalleled beauty. Could it be that they too are not aware if there is heaven on earth whose manifestation is in a form of their province?

Just before my first visit to this province, I had a chat with a friend and colleague about my impending visit. I was well aware that his roots were in this province - born and bred in East London - King Williamstown to be precise. All he said to me was that: could you not have chosen a better place to visit?

His comment immediately reminded me of George Moore's well known inspirational



quote: "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it". Even though this quote is all about love, what George Moore is trying to share with us is that many people believe that what they are looking for in life is out there at some place and often spend their entire life looking for that something, when they may eventually realise that what they thought they were looking for has always been right there the entire time. This could be anything that makes you happy and gives you reason or meaning to live life.

For me this was a clear indication that my colleague did not find time to explore his own province to the fullest. I would be forgiven to think that he was amongst the many who only spoke about this province as their birth place and not as a preferred tourism destination. Like many who have travelled the world, he too did not realise that this province is much more than his place of birth - it is heaven on earth!

Because I know that most people cannot spot the Eastern Cape province on the Map, except the writer of this article, I will do the honourable thing and help them spot it. But again, I don't think it is such a bad thing not to spot it considering the fact that most amongst our ranks struggle to spot a place through a map.

In brief, the Eastern Cape, lying on the southeastern South African coast, is a region of great natural beauty, particularly the rugged cliffs, rough seas and dense green bush of the stretch known as the Wild Coast. The province's diverse climates and landscapes range from the dry and desolate Great Karoo to the lush forests of the Wild Coast and the Keiskamma Valley. The fertile Langkloof, renowned for its rich apple harvests, and the mountainous southern Drakensberg region around the town of Elliot. It's main feature is a spectacular coastline, lapped by the temperate Indian Ocean. With long stretches of unspoilt sandy beaches, rocky coves, secluded

lagoons and towering cliffs.

The coast is undeniably the province's main tourist attraction.

It is a common mistake for most South Africans, including visitors from other countries, to ignore the southern part of our country, and instead head north to find the big five. This is a mistake I almost did when I was contemplating to steer my work schedule and visit towards the north, and turn my back on the south.

Lying in Algoa Bay is Port Elizabeth, the largest city and an important harbour. Other major towns include Bisho, the capital; Uitenhage, which has important motor vehicle manufacturing and related industries; King William's Town, rich in early settler and military history; Grahamstown, also known as the City of Saints because of its more than 40 churches; as well as Umthatha, Graaff-Reinet, Cradock, Stutterheim, Aliwal North, East London and Port St Johns, the largest town on the Wild Coast.

In the Eastern Cape, various floral habitats meet. The long curve of coastline, large area and the considerable east-west and north-south distances it covers give the province extremely varied vegetation. Along the coast, the northern tropical forests intermingle with the more temperate woods of the south, creating an interesting forest habitat of various species endemic to this region. Ancient forests are found around Keiskammahoek, Dwesa, Port St Johns and Bathurst, dune forests near Alexandria, and mangroves along the Wild Coast - what a paragon of beauty!

Rolling grasslands dominate the eastern interior of the province, while the western central plateau is savanna bushveld. The northern inland is home to the aromatic, succulent-rich Karoo habitat. This is to me heaven on earth!

The metropolitan economies of Port Elizabeth and East London are based primarily on manufacturing, the most important being automotive manufacturing.

The province is the hub of South Africa's motor industry. With two harbours and three airports offering direct flights to the main centres, and an excellent road and rail infrastructure, the province has been earmarked as a key area for growth and economic development. Without doubt, all these offerings projects this province as a land of promise! My travel started in East London where I found my humble abode at a relatively small, yet peaceful hotel next to the east coast beach. Even though my room was not one of those facing the sea, I had a peaceful evening reflecting on what needs to be done the next day.

My second day started with what was meant to be a short visit to a friends' family home in King Williams Town, a few minutes' drive from East London. This was my first visit to a town fondly known as KWT. But I must say, my entire stay in this province that I call heaven on earth, was total bliss. I encourage everyone to visit this place, at least once in a lifetime. ☺

Q&A

with Bongani Siyo



The Senegalese are family orientated and traditional family values are a central part of society

You are stationed at the South African Embassy in Senegal, tell us what are your favourite things about living in that country?

Senegal is a vibrant country full of activities, from music festivals to international conferences. It is considered the "pearl" of West Africa. The capital Dakar is a coastal city with an admirable sea view, so it affords one the opportunity to take long walks along the beachfront. Senegal has excellent internet connectivity, and very low mobile communication tariffs.

Describe a few of the major tourist attractions in and around the city and their significance.

One of the major attractions in Senegal is Goree Island, located 3km off the Senegalese coast. It is comparable to Robben Island in terms of historical importance, having been used as a slave-shipment point to the Americas. It is now

used as a tourist destination to illustrate the horrors of the slave trade throughout the Atlantic world. The latest attraction for visitors to Dakar is the African Renaissance Monument, which depicts a man, a woman and a child emerging from a mountaintop. Although it has been a subject of criticism and controversy it continues to draw the attention of visitors and passers-by.

What adjustments did you have to overcome to live in Senegal? And what are the day-to-day barriers that make living as a foreigner difficult there?

My first adjustment was to understand the local currency (CFA Francs) vis-à-vis the Euro or the Rand in order to understand the value of a coin or note. One adjustment that is still a challenge even after three years of living in Senegal is the climate. Dakar experiences two major seasons: dry and rainy. The temperature throughout the year averages 25°C and usually peaks at 40°C. The day-to-day barriers that I have encountered relate to

rendering of services e.g. electrical fault or plumbing problem. Some local service providers generally tend to be sluggish when it comes to time management and follow-through. There's little or no sense of urgency and this can be very frustrating if you are on the receiving end.

What do you miss most about South Africa?

I miss the whole South African vibe - the carefree, easygoing and "laugh-out-loud" spirit of South Africans. I miss the food variety, the music, and the humour which is really unique to South Africans. I also miss taking trips out of the big cities to the rural parts of the country. Even after all these years, there's always something new to discover.

What do you do when you are homesick?

The South African community in Senegal meets from time to time for a braai and some fun. Apart from these occasional get-togethers one makes use of every opportunity when visiting South Africa (usually once a year) to bring back to Senegal a part of South Africa (music, books, biltong, pap etc.) in order to fill the void during those nostalgic moments.

How many people work at the South African Embassy?

The South African Embassy in Dakar has 10 transferred officials and 14 locally recruited personnel (LRPs).

What is the one characteristic or attribute about the Senegalese that you think we as South Africans can learn from?

Senegalese are family orientated and traditional family values form the central part of the Senegalese society. Meals are shared with immediate and extended family members, as well as visitors. Elders are highly respected. I believe that South Africans can learn some lessons about the importance of preserving traditional family values, in order to safeguard against the erosion of such values within our own society. □

THE SPIRIT OF SPORTS COMES ALIVE

On Monday, 16 April 2012, the spirit of sports came to life at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation when the DIRCO officials elected their 2011 / 2012 Sports Council Executive.

The elections ran smoothly under the watchful eye of Mr Deon Seals who was the Presiding Officer of the day. Prior to the actual voting, Ms Given Mashigo, from the Employee Wellness Centre (EWC), a body the Sports Council accounts to, expressed her wishes that every sporting code be represented on the council and that the new leadership should usher in unity and have a clear vision.

The voting process ran successfully and the new leadership was elected democratically. The executive was reminded to always stay true to the core objectives of the sports council.

Mr Prince Masilela, the new chairperson, thanked the outgoing executive and promised to unite the sports council. In his



From Left to Right: Mr Jabu Sithole (Special Projects Officer), Ms Mpho Lekalake (Deputy Chairperson), Mr Prince Masilela (Chairperson), Ms Glory Maloma (Deputy Secretary General), Mr Jerry Sibanyoni (Deputy Public Relations Officer), Mr Kholofelo Masia (Secretary General)

subsequent address to the new executive, the chairperson reminded the new leadership that they have been elected in order for them to serve the Department and that would require much commitment and sacrifice. Ms Mashigo closed the

proceedings and wished the new executive every success during their term. Please look out for the Calendar of Sports Events at DIRCO which will be made available on the intranet, and subsequently, published in *the Diplomat*. □

1. Where do you live and who do you stay with?

I live in Eersterust together with my spouse and two children.

2. What is your routine like in the morning leading to you being in the office?

In the morning I'm awake at five o'clock to get myself ready for work, my daughter for preschool and the baby ready for granny who is currently looking after him. Then I prepare breakfast because breakfast is the most important meal of the day. After breakfast I give them their lunch and we're off.

3. What is your current position now at DIRCO?

I'm an Assistant Director: Human Resources(HR).

4. Please give me detailed information about your day at the office

In the morning I come in and check my e-mail because I deal with the Missions' statistics. The Subdirectorates: Placements assist with the transfer of officials to Missions and back to Head Office. They issue transfer directives. I need to check in order to keep my Missions statistics up to date with regard to the movements of officials, either going on relief duty, transferred or being inter-mission transferred. My statistics

are provided to the Management, Auditor - General, Head Office Auditors and to all the various desks.

5. How does your work impact on your family?

It does not really have a big impact on my family because when I leave work, I leave my work at the office in order to spend time with my family.

6. What are your future plans in DIRCO? I would like to do the Corporate Service Manager training at Diplomatic Training Research and Development (DTRD) in order to be a Corporate Service Manager at a Mission.

7. Any other personal achievements or milestones which you would like to add?

I started in the Department, 22 July 1996, just after Grade 12 and I must say I had a good journey in the Department. I have worked in all Directorates in the HR Branch. I went on Attaché training in 2004 because HR was not allowed to go on training. On my two week training at the Mission in Abidjan, I went with a fellow trainee (Ms N Bawuti), the war broke out. The rebels bombed a camp where there were six French peace keepers. We were evacuated to Ghana and then to South Africa an experience neither one of us would like to experience again.

We cried, we panicked, we went into hiding and we survived. I would just once again like to thank the Mission staff for taking such good care of us and assisting with our evacuation. I was then transferred to the South African High Commission in Gaborone, Botswana as an Attaché from 1 February 2007 until 1 February 2011. The best years of my life, I enjoyed every moment at the Mission and learned a lot. I would just like to thank all my colleagues for the assistance and guidance as it was my first posting. Returning from Botswana in February 2011 I was asked to be the face of the Department in a career magazine that was issued with the Sunday Times in 2011. I was then promoted to Assistant Director: HR in November 2011. I must say 2011 was a good year for me. I would also like to thank all the people that had faith in me and took a chance on me. I promise to make them proud. **8. And other information which you would like to share with us?** I would like to do the Corporate Service Manager training and be posted again to a Mission to learn and gain more experience. □



conversation with...
Ms Chantell Murray



Freedom Day Celebrations 27 April 2012



Ambassador Reverend Makhenkesi A Stofile with from Left to Right Abraham Hendricks, Captain (South African Navy) Lisa M Hendricks, Defence Attaché, Joseph Mokone, Minister Plenipotentiary Cassandra Mbuyane-Mokone

The Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in Berlin celebrated South Africa's Freedom Day on 27 April 2012, under the theme "Working Together to Build Unity and Prosperity for All".

This year's celebration was a truly exceptional one, as it took place in the year of the Centenary of the ruling party, the African National Congress. It therefore not only celebrates the glorious history of a selfless struggle by millions of ordinary

South Africans who defeated the apartheid regime, but most importantly it summons new courage and energy to face the future with confidence.

Ambassador Makhenkesi Stofile, in his remarks in commemoration of Freedom Day reaffirmed the strong and strategic relations between South Africa and Germany. He also acknowledged the support by Germany in the struggle for the freedom of South Africa and recognised the many heroes and heroines who brought South Africa where it was today.

The solidarity between South Africa and Germany has grown into an important strategic partnership of equals. This strategic partnership was also strengthened when the 7th Session of the South Africa – German Binational Commission with its joint committees in key areas of economy, trade and investment, science and technology, development cooperation, defence, culture, environment, social and labour affairs convened on 7 and 8 May 2012 in Berlin.

Germany remains a key partner for South Africa. The South Africa-German Year of



Science was launched in Cape Town by Minister of Science and Technology Naledi Pandor and her counterpart Minister Annette Schavan. The Year of Science is a year-long research cooperation initiative between the two countries that aims to foster local skills development and provide a platform for further joint ventures in science.

South Africa and Germany continue to cooperate as non-permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations to address issues to advance the African Agenda and post conflict programmes to restore peace and development.

After the FIFA World Cup 2010 the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in Berlin has taken the colour green from the soccer fields towards the future. The successful hosting of the UN Climate Conference COP17/CMP7 in Durban in November 2011 was the "kick-off". The Embassy is ready to lead through our actions and deeds to ensure that we are going green as well and has embarked on several initiatives to create a greener work environment. ☐

Embassy wins top award - Mafikizolo's song alive in the Philippines



Ambassador Nyamande – Pitso meets with the Philippines Secretary of Tourism, Ramon Jimenez at the opening of the latest Philippines Tourism Brand

The pavilion of the South African Embassy in the Philippines, a collaboration with Aerotel (local agent of South African Airways) and the Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism, won the "Best International Performance Award" at the recent Travel Tour Exposition (PTTE). This top prize was given for the vibrant music and dance by singer Baby M, whom

the Embassy invited to showcase African song, rhythm and dance. "Ndihamba Nawe" by Mafikizolo was a hit with the crowds going wild dancing to this "Proudly South African" song.

The PTTE is the biggest Filipino travel indaba organised by the Travel and Tour Association (PTTA) with 250 booths attracting over 80 000 visitors over a three day period. The Philippines Secretary of

Tourism Minister Ramon Jimenez opened the show and used this opportunity to launch the Philippines Tourism Brand.

The Mission's participation in this event continues to bear fruit as shown by the statistics of inbound tourism to South Africa, which has grown significantly over the past two years. Inbound tourist growth was the highest in South East Asia in 2010 at 184 % compared to the previous year.

The subsequent nine months data, end of September 2011 (South African Tourism Index) showed a sustained growth trend. It is the second time that a Northern Cape delegation participated in this event and the first time a Tourism Seminar was held parallel to the event. The Seminar profiled tourism to South Africa with a special focus on the Northern Cape, while also informing tourist operators on the visa requirements. ☐

Embassy in Vienna facilitates return of human remains of Khoi-San couple to South Africa



Klaas and Trooi Pienaar, from indigenous Khoi-San community, were removed illegally from their graves on a farm near Kuruman (Northern Cape Province) shortly after their death in 1909. They were taken to Austria in order to be used for racial research by Austrian anthropologist and ethnographer, Rudolf Pösch.

In conjunction with South African anthropologists and sympathetic Austrian stakeholders, including the former anti-apartheid movement Southern African Documentation and Co-operation (SADOC) the Embassy in Vienna has since 2008 been negotiating with the Austrian Academy of Science and the Austrian Government for the remains of the Pienaars to be returned to South Africa.

These negotiations culminated on 19 April 2012 in a ceremony at the Embassy to mark the official hand-over of the remains of the Pienaars to representatives of the Khoi-San Community and the South African Government, represented by the Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Joe Phaahla, the Northern Cape MEC for Sports, Arts and Culture, Ms Pauline Williams, and South Africa's Ambassador to Austria Xolisa Mabhongo.

The remains of the Pienaars were received by the Minister of Arts and Culture Paul Mashatile and Deputy Minister Joseph Phaahla at OR Tambo International Airport on Friday, 20 April, and was flown by military aircraft to the Northern Cape for reburial.

"The Pienaars are truly getting their freedom today" said Minister Mashatile said after receiving the remains. "They are our ancestors and they are part of our heritage. For us that is very significant. They are free, they will now rest in peace among their people, we are very proud today because we are restoring their dignity. The Pienaar family and relatives said they felt privileged to be part of this process: "We have big appreciation for the South African Government for what they did to return the remains" said Francis Pienaar. "When they landed it was emotional, but just the fact that the remains are back, makes us overjoyed."

The Embassy in Vienna and DIRCO is also proud to have made this repatriation possible, as it forms an important contribution to Government's projects of national reconciliation and nation-building. This project was another step in the national project of reconciling all sides affected by the shared legacy of colonial exploitation, and served as a starting point to heal the indignity that was suffered by the Pienaars and their community.

Ambassador Mabhongo referred to this also in his remarks: "We understand the pain and trauma that this community went through, the violation of dignity not just of Klaas and Trooi, but of the entire nation, who came to be negatively objectified in the name of scientific research. By this process we are therefore giving the Pienaars and the whole community back its dignity. We are also affirming that today we live in a world in which such acts are



Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo speaking at the repatriation ceremony

no longer tolerated. Indeed the remains of Klaas and Trooi Pienaar are returning to a South Africa that is different from the one they left in 1909. It is a South Africa which is going through an important historical phase of nation-building and reconciliation."

The repatriation of the Pienaars has also made a significant contribution to South Africa's policy on repatriation that is currently being developed and also has relevance for neighbouring countries, such as Namibia, where similar practices took place. It is no coincidence that the Pienaars have come home during Freedom Month. As we celebrate our freedom in a democratic South Africa, the Pienaars' return act as a reminder that the Government of South Africa is committed to redressing the injustices of the past, and in uniting the country through the process of reconciliation. ☐

Uruguay: Freedom Day Celebrations 2012



Over 300 guests from a broad spectrum of the Uruguayan society attended the Freedom Day celebrations in the prestigious Golf Club of Uruguay in Montevideo, co-hosted by Ambassador Tony Leon (resident in Buenos Aires) and Ambassador Dawie Jacobs, Head of Mission/Charge D'Affaires in Uruguay. Since Freedom Day attracts an influential and diverse audience, the Embassy utilised the event to reflect the diversity of South Africa and its peoples. Freedom Day posters prepared for the event were very effective to portray the meaning and spirit of the Day. The multifaceted event also had an African focus, in view of the

upcoming Global African Diaspora Summit in South Africa, with displays of paintings and sculptures by two leading Uruguayan artists of African descent. The Uruguay-Africa Chamber of Commerce also had a display with information on their activities. Additional features were ongoing projections of diverse South African images on a large screen; a banner on South African wines together with a display of a selection of top South African wines served at the event; a colourful banner of roses and rose gardens of South Africa together with pamphlets on the upcoming World Rose Convention in South Africa that will be attended by ladies of the Uruguayan Garden Clubs; various

banners focusing on tourism, industry and agriculture; and a banner reflecting images of Embassy events at the "Republic of South Africa School" in a less privileged suburb in Montevideo. The number and level of guests, over the whole spectrum of Uruguayan society, once again reflect the healthy bilateral relationship and the high standing of South Africa in Uruguay. Positive feedback has been received, also from the wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the quality of the guests and on the organisation and displays. The event enjoyed positive media coverage. ☐

