



June 2008

# Now

Your voice to be heard



# 90<sup>th</sup>

## 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY TATA'

*A Tribute to a Peoples' Hero,  
Statesman and Leader*

Madiba Birthday Special: *Pullout Inside*

## DEAR COLLEAGUES,

**T**HIS EDITION OF THE DFA NOW brings a special tribute to Nelson Mandela as the world celebrates his 90th birthday. It also has interesting information on the Organisational Culture and Climate Change Process that is entering its implementation phase. The main goal of this process is to create the right culture and climate within the DFA conducive to optimal performance and satisfaction of both the employees and the Department as the employer. Read more about it inside. This edition also covers the media briefing by Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad and reports on the new Registration of South Africans Abroad (ROSA) software programme assisting South Africans and hopefully making the lives of our colleagues at Consular Services a little easier. The Language Unit provides us with an update from their section, and we have an article on the Diplomatic Academy's role as a training centre of excellence in the region. Our mission in Vienna reports on National Day celebrations held in Austria, Slovakia and Slovenia. The article from the EWC titled "Fostering an attitude of success in your child" is an insightful guide for parents, helping them guide their children to become confident and balanced adults.

Remember that the dfa Now is dependant on the inputs from all in the DFA to make this magazine a truly insightful read. Thus we need and value your views, opinions and inputs. Please help us to meet the printing deadline by forwarding your letters and articles to the editor before the deadline.

Enjoy!

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### Cover Picture

*Peoples' Heroes: Mr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela with the late Mr Oliver Reginald Tambo*

## News from the Language Unit

**T**HE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA in conjunction with the University of Strasbourg offered an Interpreter Training Course from 26 – 30 May 2008, at the University of Pretoria. This course was targeted at university language practitioners, lecturers, foreign language teachers from tertiary training institutes and the DFA's interpreters and translators. The course was offered by Benoit Delatre, from the University of Strasbourg ITI-RI (UMB) France, an interpreter himself with

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France...*

vast academic and technical experience in the field. A large number of foreign language practitioners and interpreters from the Western Cape, KZN and Gauteng participated with much enthusiasm covering nine languages (four European languages and five official languages). A forthcoming course is on the agenda for this year and we hope to target an even wider audience of language practitioners since "2010" shall require a strong contingency of highly qualified professionals.



## Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad's Media Briefing on Current International Issues

### **PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI TO LEAD SA DELEGATION TO AU SUMMIT, EGYPT**

**S**OUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI, supported by Foreign Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad and Foreign Affairs Director-General will lead the South African Government delegation to the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government from 30 June - 1 July 2008, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from Friday – Saturday 27 - 28 June 2008. The Summit will be preceded by the AU's Executive Council of Foreign Ministers which begin their deliberations on Friday.

In this regard, the Executive Council of Ministers meeting will consolidate preparations for the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government, to which President Thabo Mbeki will lead the South African delegation, scheduled from Monday to Tuesday 30 June – 1 July 2008. The 2008 Summit will be held under the theme: "Meeting Millennium Development Goals (MDG-s) on Water and Sanitation."

The South African delegation will participate in this session of the African Union Assembly and Executive Council within the context of South Africa's priority to strengthen institutions of governance on the continent with a view to achieving the political and economic integration of Africa.

### **THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** will prepare for this Summit. The key aspect of the agenda is that it will discuss all the stability issues on the African continent, as you know African issues take up most of the agenda of the Se-

curity Council. It will be an opportunity to review developments in our region since the last Summit and see what else we can do as a region to help bring about stability in our continent.

The Report of the AU Commission on the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF) has to be dealt with and decisions taken. We have made some good progress on the operationalisation of the African Standby Force. SADC has already launched its Standby Force but in other regions progress will be determined and see what can be done to accelerate the establishment of the regional brigades. In this context the meeting of the Ministers of Defence and Security took place two weeks ago as part of the Organ. All the reports relating to the stability issues on the continent will be tabled and discussed.

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*Therefore the Summit will be an important opportunity for us to get a coordinated approach to how those of our countries in Africa who are attending the G8 will be able to reflect Africa's collective voice.*

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At this stage we have to concentrate, this being the halfway stage, on what progress has been made to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The G8 will be meeting about a week after the Summit. Therefore the Summit will be an important opportunity for us to get a coordinated approach to how those of our coun-

tries in Africa who are attending the G8 will be able to reflect Africa's collective voice. Given the fact that human rights and good governance have become an important item on the agenda, we now have to, at this meeting, look at the Draft Single Legal Instrument on the merger of the African Court on Human and People's Rights and the Court of Justice of the African Union. We believe it's quite important now that we finalise this merger so that we have one instrument to deal with the whole issue of human rights governance on the African continent.

Obviously the Executive Council will receive reports on the situation in the Middle East and on other institutions such as the Pan African Parliament, the Standing Committee of ECOSOCC which is the civil society of the Pan African Parliament, the report on the African Court on Human and People's Rights and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. This is outside of the report on the merger of these institutions.

The most important discussion would have to be, I think, on the issue of the African Union Government. This is a matter that has been on the agenda of the Ministers' meetings as well as the Summits, and the Special Summit held in Ghana under the title "The Grand Debate" to deal with this issue of the African Government leading to a United States of Africa.

There have been many meetings. The Ministerial Committee of Ten has met at least five times. This was then taken over by the Heads of State Committee of Ten which met in Tanzania on 22 – 23 May 2008. They will make their report to Summit for it to take some decision on the processes of the establishment of the Union Government.

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There are basically two positions. The one position arguing for the establishment of the Union Government almost immediately and the other position arguing that it should be a process based on the development of the sub-regional groups and therefore this Summit will have to take a decision on the way forward in relation to the Union Government leading to the formation of the United States of Africa. As I said, there have been several meetings and this Summit has to take a decision on the way forward.

## **NEPAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE (HSGIC) AND AFRICAN PEER REVIEW (APR) FORUM**

**THE NEPAD HEADS OF STATE** and Government Implementation Committee will also be meeting on 29 June 2008 which will consider the following issues:

Progress regarding the implementation of the principle of rotation of members of the NEPAD HSGIC;

The status of AU/NEPAD integration process. There have been decisions taken that steps must be taken to ensure that NEPAD is fully integrated within the AU structures. We have to get a progress report and see what progress has been made and what needs to be done further;

We have to then decide on the CEO of NEPAD; and

Preparations for the G8 Summit scheduled for 7 - 9 July in Hokkaido, Japan.

This NEPAD Summit is quite crucial, and this NEPAD review, because if we want to get anywhere near the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and implement the regional reports of the Africa implementation group of the G8, we have to make sure that the NEPAD programmes are fully implemented.

Some good progress has been made on the NEPAD processes but we need to accelerate the progress of NEPAD. So, this meeting will take some important decisions on how to

accelerate the process of the NEPAD programmes.

Significantly too, the African Peer Review Forum will also meet on 29 June 2008 at Heads of State level to peer-review Uganda, Nigeria and Burkina Faso. It will be an opportunity for the signing of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for accession by Togo. Togo is the latest member that has joined the APRM.

I want to emphasise once again that Africa has taken a unique decision. It is the only continent in the world that has set up an instrument such as the APRM. Now that there is an increasing amount of members joining the APRM, we have already been reviewed as South Africa, and other countries have been pre-viewed. Now there is Uganda, Nigeria and Burkina Faso and we've got Togo joining. It's an indication of Africa's commitment to really collectively deal with issues of good governance, human rights, anti-corruption and the establishment of democratic institutions.

So it is an important meeting that is taking place and we believe that some important decisions will emerge from this Summit, which will enable us to move forward on the objectives that we hope to achieve in Africa.

## **INTER-STATE POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY COMMITTEE**

**THE INTER-STATE POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY COMMITTEE** Ministerial meeting took place in Luanda, we have just returned from there. Let me remind you that we have three institutions that are in SADC. That is the Committee of Ministers of the Organ, which has two legs. The one is the Defence and Security leg which I've just indicated of which the defence and security ministers met two weeks ago. On Monday in Luanda it was the turn of the foreign ministers to meet under the second leg which is the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee.

Later in South Africa we'll meet as a joint Defence, Security, Politics and Diplomacy Ministerial meeting.

The Ministerial meeting in Luanda, two days ago, discussed many issues. Let me deal with some of the key issues. The main issue was the situation in the region. We have an initiative in Lesotho through the SADC initiative. The SADC Troika has also been to Malawi, to help Malawi prepare for the elections next year. South Africa had to give a report on the recent attacks against foreigners in the country. The issue of Zimbabwe was also discussed.



The meeting decided that on the issue of Lesotho the facilitation of the Eminent Persons Group, led by the former President of Botswana, is moving quite well and we expect that we'll resolve all outstanding issues.

On the issue of Malawi, discussions are continuing to see how we can help the Malawians prepare for the elections.

On the issue of attacks against foreigners - there was a general agreement that the attacks cannot be seen as attacks carried out by the majority of the South African people, but are acts of a few criminal elements in South Africa, and that the South African Government and the South African people as a whole are committed to ensuring that those foreigners who are in our country, live among our communities. They welcomed the efforts of the government and the South African community as a whole in dealing with this matter.

On the issue of Zimbabwe - we had reports from both the Zimbabwean Foreign Minister and the Executive Secretary who had just been to Zim-



(from left to right) Tomaz Salamao, the executive secretary of SADC, Swaziland's King Mswati III and Tanzanian president Jakaya Kikwete look on during the South African Development Community (SADC) Troika summit held in Swaziland

babwe a few days previously. The meeting condemned the violence in Zimbabwe and called for urgent measures to be taken to end the violence. The meeting also recommended to the (SADC) Troika, that's at the Heads of State level, to make every effort to have a meeting urgently of the Troika and the facilitation and if need be extend that meeting to invite other members of SADC to join it.

## THE SADC TROIKA MEETING

**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, DR SALAMAO**, whom we were in contact with, is on his way to Swaziland today as part of preparations for the SADC Troika meeting.

But as the Inter-State Politics and Diplomacy Committee meeting stressed that what we expect and what we want the Troika to do, however extended it is, is to continue to support the efforts to get the Zimbabwean parties to meet and to come to agreements among themselves which will enable us to help resolve the situation in Zimbabwe so that we can move forward in dealing with the economic crisis.

We expect the announcement by the Executive Secretary, Dr Salamao, within a few hours as to when this extended Troika meeting will take place.

*The main thing in all our understanding is that efforts must be increased to get the two main players in Zimbabwe to meet and to come to some agreement on the way forward for the Zimbabwean people as a whole.*

You are aware of the Security Council consensus resolution and you are also aware that there was a statement put out yesterday and that generally there is an acceptance that we must all work together to put an end to the violence that is prevailing. Since one of the presidential candidates, Mr Tsvangirai, has announced his

withdrawal, he is apparently going to have a press conference at 10:30 this morning, we will then see how we can fast-track this process of dialogue between the two parties so that we can find some solution to this process.

The main thing in all our understanding is that efforts must be increased to get the two main players in Zimbabwe to meet and to come to some agreement on the way forward for the Zimbabwean people as a whole.

We will continue to be seized with this matter. As you know the facilitation is now based in Zimbabwe and they will accordingly report on what progress is being made in the next few days.

## ARREST OF TWO SOUTH AFRICANS IN ZIMBABWE

**WE ARE AWARE OF THE ARREST OF TWO SOUTH AFRICANS** who were rendering security assistance to Mr Tsvangirai. They appeared in court on Tuesday 24 June. Our embassy in Harare is trying to get consular visits to the prison and we'll report accordingly when that does happen.

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## UNITED KINGDOM FOREIGN SECRETARY TO VISIT SOUTH AFRICA

**FINALLY LET ME SAY THAT THE UK FOREIGN SECRETARY, David Miliband, will be coming to South Africa at the invitation of South Africa's Foreign Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma on 7 - 8 July for the SA-UK Bilateral Forum.**

This Forum has been established a few years ago. It will be an important occasion to discuss not only our bilateral issues but also all the major issues that are confronting us on the African continent and Europe.



Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma hosting  
United Kingdom Foreign Secretary  
David Miliband at the Presidential  
Guesthouse

## Registration of South Africans Abroad - ROSA

**THE CHIEF DIRECTORATE:** Consular Services, in cooperation with the Directorate: Information Planning & Integration (BIPI) at ICT, initiated and embarked on a change strategy to implement a project intended to re-engineer business operating processes and systems. It was decided to develop state of the art computer programmes to enable the Department to meet best practice standards as benchmarked against other foreign services and improve customer service, both locally and internationally. Processes and development procedures were extensively documented. The project and its applications are collectively known as the Consular Management System (CMS).

The launch of the ROSA application was announced during the Budget Speech of Deputy Minister AGH Pahad on 13 May 2008.

Sample: ROSA registration form

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the ROSA registration form. The form is titled 'ROSA (Consular Registration Form) - Microsoft Internet Explorer powered by IIS6'. It contains several sections: 'PERSONAL DETAILS' with fields for Title, First Name, Middle Name(s), Surname, Gender, Date of Birth, ID Number, Passport Number, Date of Issue, Expiry Date, and Place of Issue; 'YOUR CONTACT DETAILS' with fields for Telephone Number, Fax Number, Cellphone Number, Email, and Postal Address; and 'DESTINATION DETAILS' with fields for Country and City. A 'Click to Proceed' button is visible at the bottom of the form.

### What is ROSA?

ROSA is the acronym for the 'Registration of South Africans Abroad', a software programme developed in CMS allowing travellers to register online.

The information travellers register

on ROSA allows the Department of Foreign Affairs to assist South African citizens in events of emergency. The registration is a free, voluntary service provided by Government (through the Department of Foreign Affairs). ROSA is only available to South African citizens who are travelling, living or working abroad.

The vast numbers of our people who travel abroad every day do not encounter any difficulties. However, through our missions abroad, we have assisted a growing number of South Africans who have become victims of crime, accidents, illness, death, natural or man-made disasters, civil

unrest or whose family and/or next-of-kin needed to contact them in an emergency.

By registering online with ROSA, the Department is able to locate a South African citizen during an emergency, to verify his/her status and to liaise with the next-of-kin.

Registration is voluntary and free of charge. Travellers are encouraged to register as an integral part of their travel planning and security.

### **Where to register?**

The ROSA software is an online registration process available on the Department of Foreign Affairs' website. The address is <http://www.dfa.gov.za/consular/index.html>. Click on the (ROSA) button and follow the easy steps.

The ROSA software is unique. The software allows for a traveller to:

- register as an Individual Traveller;
- register as Group Travellers;
- register multiple destinations;
- update their profiles (Individual or Group); and
- deregister their profile from the system.

### **How will the information be used?**

ROSA will be utilised by Consular Officers at Head Office or at a South African Mission abroad in the event of a disaster, emergency or other crisis as outlined above.

Only authorised officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs have access to the information, which will only be used in the event of an emergency. The information will enable the Department of Foreign Affairs to be proactive in a crisis by, inter alia, contacting the next-of-kin to verify the status of a South African travelling abroad.

### **Registration and Privacy**

The Department of Foreign Affairs is committed to ensuring that any personal information received through the ROSA online registration process is safeguarded against unauthorised disclosure.

The Department will not disclose information provided through the registration process to any third parties (including family members) unless it has received written authorisation to do so. The internet site uses secure encryption to safeguard privacy and any unauthorised interception by third parties of the information sent is unlikely.

*Contributed by the Chief  
Directorate: Consular Services*

## Fostering an Attitude of Success in Your Child

**S**UCCESS ISN'T BORN, IT'S BRED. It lies in your attitude towards yourself and the world around you. You can instil an attitude of success in your child by making sure he has the skills, the opportunities and the support he needs to feel competent.

Henry Ford said it best, "If you think you can - or you think you can't - you're right." When it comes to success, attitude is key. But how can you foster an attitude of success in your child?

An attitude of success follows the experience of accomplishment, which means your child needs the skills and the opportunities to prove to himself he can be successful. To help your child achieve this, you need to provide:

### **A can-do attitude**

The more competent your child feels, the more motivated he'll be to stick with a difficult task or try something new. And in order to feel competent, your child needs to feel that he accomplishes something.

So resist the impulse to do everything for your child or help him too much. Let him come up with ideas and bounce ideas or solutions off you (no matter how silly they are). Let him make his own decisions, within reason, and give him room to make mistakes.

### **Don't push and don't hover**

The child who senses your faith in his abilities, will learn to trust his perceptions and judgments, and derive more satisfaction from his accomplishments and stay motivated. In the long run, he'll be better equipped to handle the typical rigours and disappointments of life without feeling like a failure.

### **Realistic expectations**

Children look mostly to parents to define their emotional reality. Your facial expressions, attitudes, praise and criticism forms his basis for ba-

sic judgments and confirmation about himself. This is why setting realistic expectations for your child, based on his abilities and interests (not on your own unfulfilled needs), is vital.

Remember that all children aren't superstars - and that academic performance or sports medals don't measure character and happiness. A sense of self-worth; knowing how to be kind and listen to others; a sense of humour; and the ability to learn from what's going on around him are qualities that will carry a child far in life.

### **Life skills**

Life skills are the "tools" we use to develop healthily and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. It enables us to adapt to different situations, behave positively, build healthy relationships, and live optimal lives.

There are three types of skills your child needs to learn, namely critical thinking skills/decision-making skills, interpersonal/communication skills, and coping and self-management skills.

*The child who senses your faith in his abilities, will learn to trust his perceptions and judgments, and derive more satisfaction from his accomplishments and stay motivated.*

### **Positive role models**

Your children take their cues from you, so pay attention to how you act and react to stress in your own life. Do you lose your temper when someone cuts in front of you in traffic? Do you drag work frustrations home?

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Are you critical about yourself, "I can't believe I did such a stupid thing" or "I can never do anything right"?

The stress you hand down to your kids manifests itself in various ways: physical symptoms, anger, whining, irritability, even a regression in learning and motivation. Making simple shifts in the way you perceive your world will help your child see his in a more positive light.

### **Recognition**

The feeling of being valued by others (friends, family and community) is key. You can exert a tremendous positive influence through the recognition you offer. Too quickly we forget how much it meant to us when we were

young — it meant the world to us, and to children today it still does. In order to enhance competence, compliment the effort your child puts in and the progress he makes, rather than performance. By doing so, your child will learn that it's not only "winning" that counts.

### **Support**

Your child needs to know that you're always there, cheering from the sidelines. He needs encouragement, positive and accurate feedback, an empathetic ear, and unconditional love. From an early age we learn to judge ourselves and the world around us. We quickly learn whether we can exert some control over our world and

whether we are capable of effecting change. If our environment tells us that we're not competent (such as mom jumping in and helping all the time), we never get recognition for our efforts, or we never learn the skills we need and so keep failing, we think that we are helpless and problems are permanent.

Although it's best to start young, it's never too late to instil an attitude of success in your child — any behaviour can be challenged and changed with a bit of work.

Give your child what he needs to succeed tomorrow, today!

Get this and many more such articles in the DFA e-care system. As we always say knowledge is power. Empower yourself.

*Author: HealthInSite*

## Living Our Values Together!

**I F YOU WANT TO BECOME ACTIVELY** involved in changing DFA culture, your opportunity has arrived! Gone are the days when dissatisfied employees sit on the sideline, waiting to see what is going to happen. Become involved in the journey to consistently embrace our values.

Through the culture and climate survey process that has been conducted during 2006 we have received wake-up calls for change in some dimensions of our organisational culture. At times wake-up calls are loud and insistent and at other times stable and at a low frequency. This time the survey results have shown that DFA employees are happy with some of the behaviours and processes in the Department but unhappy with others.

We are therefore challenged to respond to the gaps identified in the survey. Although all the challenges cannot be addressed at once, we can focus on a few critical areas for improvement. Some of these areas like leadership style, better communication and improving how we

consistently live DFA values, should be seen as a constant process of internalising the workplace excellence we aim to achieve.

Change, especially if it affects changes in behaviour and attitudes, is most certainly not easy. Sometimes it can be daunting but often exciting and exhilarating. You have participated in the diagnostics to determine what areas within the DFA require the most urgent attention, and now is your chance to be part of the process of accelerating our efforts of moving forward with pride in our journey to make our working environment more supportive of a challenging, rewarding and successful career.

You have probably participated in different personal and organisational change initiatives and programmes during your lifetime and some of them may have gone well while others in all likelihood did not achieve what it set out to accomplish. For successful change to happen we need to focus our mindsets and attitudes on the things that we are trying to improve or transform. That is

what the implementation of the various culture interventions is about. All of us can change: from managerial level to all levels; from head office to missions; from transferred staff to locally recruited personnel.

### **The change starts here**

It is time to implement the interventions proposed at all these levels. So you may ask how you can get involved. A Departmental Intervention Team will roll out different action plans where employee and management involvement will be spelled out. Branch and Mission Intervention Teams have been established. A number of the teams have developed proposed interventions while others are in the process of doing so. Discuss your involvement with members of these teams. Make sure you are aware of what changes are expected from your section, and do your bit required to help grow our organisational culture into the workplace of organisational excellence that we would like it to be.

Let's not say, "It won't work," but "How can I make it work?"

# Some Questions on the Organisational Culture and Climate Change Process

## *Why are the Organisational Culture Change Action Plans being implemented now?*

After the completion and compiling of the reports of the Culture and Climate survey, extensive consultation and feedback have happened throughout the Department. This phase represents the implementation of the interventions at Departmental, Branch and Mission levels. The interventions respond to the gaps identified in the questionnaires. The changes are necessary to respond to gaps identified in relation to work environment.

## *What dimensions were examined in the survey questionnaire?*

- Work Environment
- Institutional Arrangements
- Leadership and Management Style
- Equity and Diversity
- Stakeholder Management
- Competence
- Ethical Behaviour
- Corporate Image
- Engaged Workforce
- Organisational Excellence

## *What is the risk of not changing our culture?*

All organisations go through periods where they have to review and examine organisational effectiveness. If the Department does not improve the dimensions in which it has not scored particularly well, it risks impeding its effectiveness as an organisation. Leadership and management style together with a workforce that is not optimally engaged could lead to frustration, dissatisfaction in the workplace, low morale and low motivation.

## *If I wait long enough, will the culture change go away?*

It is important for both the Department and its employees that all participate in the Culture and Climate Interventions. This will encourage different viewpoints and perspectives in the culture change implementation. In many cases change goes ahead even in the face of resistance. It does not however imply that the change is bad. The aim of the culture change is to benefit both employees and the Department as an organisation.

## *What will the culture change mean to individuals in the Department?*

- A higher level knowing what behaviours to expect
- Improvements in performance feedback
- Improved communication
- A leadership style conducive to living our values
- Higher levels of morale and motivation

## *What if I disagree with some elements of the change?*

In all change processes there are always some level of disagreement. Discuss different perspectives with your Departmental Intervention Team. Keep an open mind and become involved in the change.

## *So what next?*

All DFA staff will be invited to participate in clarifying and refining the vision of the workplace we want to strive towards.

## *Our values at DFA*

- Patriotism
- Loyalty
- Dedication
- Ubuntu
- Integrity
- Batho Pele
- Equity

# The Diplomatic Academy Reaches Both the Region and The World Through Training

**S**INCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, 2008, the Diplomatic Academy (formerly known as the FSI) has completed a training programme for the SADC region and also introduced a new programme which reaches anywhere in the world, through e-learning. The Diplomatic Academy started its partnership with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

(UNITAR) in 2006 when a programme on “Conference Diplomacy and Multilateral Negotiations” was introduced for DFA officials. The programme has since been extended to the SADC region and the rest of the South African government.

The training course on “Conference Diplomacy and Multilateral Negotiation” focused on a wide range of issues and requisite skills important

to the modern diplomat in the field of multilateral diplomacy. The most successful aspect of the course is the provision of an interesting and innovative approach it has to developing skills and transferring knowledge, particularly about the United Nations, its organs and specialised agencies.

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*FSI training delegates at the Protea Hotel in Hatfield*

The programme also includes various levels of simulation of complex multilateral negotiations and panel discussions by experienced multilateral diplomats within the DFA who share their experiences and provides tips, on how to manage challenges, with the participants.

Another crucial aspect of this collaboration is that officials from the Diplomatic Academy have been trained by UNITAR as trainers. This has resulted in them updating the course material on this particular course to reflect the contribution made by developing and African countries and more particularly by South Africa in multilateral diplomacy.

To enhance its reach first and foremost, to our missions abroad, an e-learning course on the same topic was piloted during the months of April and May 2008. Because of the possible impact that such a course can have, the Mexican Foreign Ministry also joined the partnership in rolling out the e-learning programme.

Ten trainers/practitioners provided virtual training and advice from multiple locations in Canberra, Geneva, New York and Pretoria for the e-learning course from 5 May to 15 June 2008. Two hundred and thirty diplomats participated in the online programme

from over seventy two countries out of which three were African. Only five developed countries (Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan and New Zealand) were represented.

The majority of the course participants were from government ministries, particularly the departments of foreign affairs, but some were from a range of specialised ministries, including environment, trade, health, etc. A small number of participants also came from secretariats of international institutions and intergovernmental organisations and even from non-governmental organisations.

Of the two hundred and thirty participants, one hundred and four were above the level of Deputy Director or Counsellor, including three Ambassadors from Mexico in San Salvador, El Salvador, Nigerian in Beirut, Lebanon and the South African Ambassador in Asmara, Eritrea, the Executive Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, the Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, the Head of the Forest Service of Surinam, and the President/CEO of the Nigerian-based African Reform Group. Of the seventy two countries represented, twenty nine were African.

The course also provided the opportunity to forty five representatives from seventeen Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to participate.

Important benefits from the e-learning course was that it provided the DFA Diplomatic Academy, as well as the Mexican Diplomatic Academy and other developing countries with an important new training method to train more officials on certain foreign policy and practical issues that are essential to the skills and capacity profiles of our foreign representatives. It furthermore provided course participants with well-articulated insights into the positions, reasoning and contextual background behind positions and the application of domestic and country interests and their application in multilateral conferring and negotiations.

The e-learning programme was a pilot project and thus several lessons have been learnt. Although the main objective was to reach DFA officials in missions, none participated in the programme and the Diplomatic Academy will consult missions on their participation in future programmes. The challenges surrounding access to interactive online multimedia and video streaming will be discussed with ICT.

## The National Day Celebrations in Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia



1. National Day in Ljubljana, Slovenia: Ambassador Leslie Gumbi, Mrs Veronica Gumbi, Mrs Nevenka Pergar, and Honorary Consul Mr Janez Pergar. 2. National Day in Bratislava, Slovak Republic: Mrs Veronica Gumbi, Ambassador Leslie Gumbi, Honorary Consul Dr Milan Lopasovsky (l.t.r)



**T**HE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY in Vienna celebrated the National Day in the three countries of its accreditation namely Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia. The celebrations took place on 24, 22 and 25 April respectively. In all the three countries, the guest list included members of the diplomatic corps, members of civil society, representatives from the respective foreign ministries, as well as the business community. Ambassador Gumbi utilised the opportunity of the Freedom Day celebrations to thank all those in the areas of accreditation for their sterling contributions to the achievement of freedom and the consolidation of democracy in South Africa. He further invited these countries to contribute in South Africa's efforts to deal with

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the challenges ahead such as poverty alleviation and the Apex Priorities underscored by President Mbeki in his recent State of the Nation address.

# Where were you ...?

