



July 2008

dfa **INow**

Your voice to be heard



**Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and
Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad at a Bricklaying
Ceremony of the new Foreign Affairs
Headquarters, Pretoria**

DEAR COLLEAGUES

Welcome to the July issue of *dfa Now*. We want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the contributors who take their valuable time to volunteer inputs for the newsletter and those who respond positively every time they are requested to contribute. It is through your commitment that this newsletter continues to meet the information needs of the staff at Head Office and in Missions abroad. For this reason, we are very grateful for your support. Please keep it up!

This month we bring you report back from the recently held SADC Ministerial Meeting chaired by Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma as well as the first SA-EU Summit that took place in France. In addition we keep you informed with the following: Media Briefing by Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad, facts about the *dfa*'s new headquarters building, South Africa's donation to Seychelles, understanding depression from EWC, and a report on culture and customs around the world from our Mission in Lebanon, not forgetting our regular 'Where were you...?'

We trust that you enjoy this informative issue. As it is the norm please don't forget that we rely on your assistance in meeting the printing deadline. Therefore, in future to ensure the *dfa Now* is released on time please assist us by meeting the submission deadline for articles. Please forward your letters and articles to the Editor before the deadline, because this publication is your voice!

Happy reading!

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Culture and Customs around the World - Report from Beirut, Lebanon

On the afternoon of Thursday 5 June 2008 the mission was informed by our Honorary Consulate in Beirut that Ambassador Dangor had to present his credentials to the newly elected President. The secretary to the Honorary Consul informed the mission that the Ambassador was to present his credentials to President Michel Sleiman at his office in Baabda on Thursday 12 June 2008 and that the dress was "white suit". Having been in the foreign service for some time I decided to call the secretary on the Friday to confirm the "white suit" issue with the Lebanese Protocol, as I thought she may have been confused with "white tie" which is something totally different in Diplomatic Protocol. The reply was clearly that the suit had to be white, with white shirt, grey or dark grey tie with black shoes and socks. According to Lebanese protocol white is used in summer and black is for winter use when meeting the President.

Contributed by: Rudi Janse van Vuuren



From left to right are: Rudi Janse van Vuuren, First secretary Corporate Services, Ms Marie Majdelani-Sefri Secretary to the Honorary Consul in Beirut and Ambassador Mohammed Dangor

FACTS ABOUT OUR NEW HEADQUARTERS

'I have been resisting looking at this site. The last time I looked at it, it was still earthworks. I decided I wasn't going to look at it for some time, so that when I do, it would be a pleasant surprise. And indeed I've kept that promise to myself that I'm not going to look. Indeed when I approached it today, it was a pleasant surprise'. – Minister Dlamini Zuma at the Bricklaying Ceremony.

In those words Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma summarised the thoughts of all those who attended the Bricklaying Ceremony of the new Foreign Affairs Headquarters held on Friday 11 July 2008. Employees representing all sections within the DFA, the relevant stakeholders and all the contractors and workers on site attended the ceremony on one of the coldest days in July. The ceremony was followed by a guided tour of the building site for all the invited DFA officials and other stakeholders. The afternoon ended with a luncheon served at the premises to mark this significant day.

A long process

In the Minister's first address to the senior management of Foreign Affairs, after she was re-appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs for a second term in 2004, she gave the Department four tasks. One of these tasks was to establish a new Head Office. The Minister commented, at the time, that this task was very critical and would require much energy of all those involved. The Minister then put into action a process that has been talked about in the DFA for the past 20 years. The project naturally attracted a lot of comment from long-serving DFA officials and was understandably met with some scepticism.

In initial discussions with both the National Treasury and the Department of Public Works, the Department soon realised that a project of this size and nature is an involved and



Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and Director-General Dr Ayanda Ntsaluba at the Bricklaying Ceremony of the new Foreign Affairs Headquarters, Pretoria

complex process, necessitating expert resources. The Department therefore appointed a transaction advisory team to assist in developing the concept of the project as well as giving guidance through the procurement thereof. This transaction advisory team was se-

lected for their knowledge and experience in the financial, legal, technical, empowerment, human resources and project management disciplines.

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With this transaction advisory team, the Department embarked on a Feasibility Study in 2004 that had as its aim defining the needs of the Department, considering various options to service the need, identifying potential land and buildings, defining the scope of the project and the funds available for its execution.

Probably the most significant decision the Department took at the inception of the project was not to only focus on the acquisition of a new building, but to ensure that this will be a serviced and well-maintained office environment for a significant period after construction. For this reason, the Department decided to procure the project as a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and registered it as such with the National Treasury. In the context of the decision to procure the project as a PPP, the process of defining the needs of the Department did not focus only on deciding on immediate needs, but challenged the Department to take a long-term view on its future.

The Feasibility Study was approved by the Treasury in November 2004, at which time the scope of the project was fixed. The project consists of the following elements:

- a) the provision of office accommodation for its full head office staff complement (current and future), together with appropriate staff wellness facilities necessary for the Department to fulfil its mandate;
- b) a training facility to replace the present Diplomatic Academy;
- c) a conference centre to host 400 conference delegates; and
- d) the construction of a new guesthouse.

A project of this magnitude cannot be completed without the energy, buy-in and ideas from all the staff in the Department of Foreign Affairs. Staff has been involved in this project from the conceptual stages and are, to this day, still involved in layout of the various floors. Without this involvement, the project would not have been possible.

SADC Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security

Minister Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, at the request of the Chair of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, hosted the Ministerial Meeting that took place at the Durban International Conference Centre, from Friday – Saturday 18-19 July 2008.

The meeting chaired by Angola seek to consolidate all the work of the Organ regarding political and security issues in the region, and also to prepare a report for the Chair of the Organ to present it to the SADC Summit that is scheduled to take place in August in Sandton, Johannesburg.

The Ministerial Meeting deliberated on progress made by the police, defence, public security and state security sectors within the region as part of the Interstate Defence and Security Committee. The operationalisation of the SADC Brigade, that was launched last year, was also discussed as well as a Regional Early Warning Centre that is scheduled to be launched in December 2008.

The Ministers also spend time to discuss the political situation in Malawi, the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the mediation process in Lesotho and the post-electoral situation in Zimbabwe.

WELCOME MESSAGE BY MINISTER NC DLAMINI ZUMA AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SADC MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE OF THE ORGAN, DURBAN, 18 JULY 2008

I feel greatly privileged and honoured on behalf of President Thabo Mbeki, the Government and people of South Africa, and on my own behalf to extend a very warm welcome to you all, to this the great Kingdom of KwaZulu-Natal, the home of great Zulu kings, warriors and African patriots.

We meet here at the Chief Albert Luthuli Convention Centre which is named in honour and in recognition of an outstanding leader and great son of our continent who was the first African recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

As we gather here today, to deliberate upon matters of regional importance, we cannot but join with the rest of humanity in celebrating a life that has come to epitomise the struggle for peace, freedom democracy and justice – Nelson Mandela.

We do so not for glory or distinction but primarily because as we strive to improve the lives of our peoples and struggle to rid our region and indeed our continent of the scourge of poverty, under-development and challenges of infectious diseases, we can only be inspired in these efforts by the ideals and values that have sustained so many of

our leaders, heroes and heroines such as Mwalimu Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda and Nelson Mandela, amongst others, for so many years.

Accordingly, on the occasion of his 90th birthday, it is only appropriate, if I may humbly propose Chairperson, that we as the SADC Ministers of the Organ, send our collective best wishes to this illustrious son of our region and continent - Nelson Mandela - and wish him a very happy birthday and express the hope that he will indeed have many more.

Chairperson, as we willingly and with open hearts host this meeting at the request of the Chair of the Organ, we have tried to put at your disposal within our modest means, facilities which would allow the work of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ to proceed smoothly and produce the outcomes which would make our region more stable and secure. We hope that the hospitality extended is to your satisfaction.

May I, therefore, once again take this opportunity to welcome you to Durban and wish us all fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.



President Thabo Mbeki is welcomed by France's President Nicolas Sarkozy and European Commission President Manuel Barroso at the start of the SA - EU Summit in Bordeaux, France

First South Africa-EU Summit

The inaugural South Africa-European Union (SA - EU) Summit took place on 25 July 2008 in Bordeaux, France. The meeting was held in the framework of the SA-EU Strategic Partnership, which was established in May 2007, elevating SA-EU relations to the same level as those the EU has with its most important partners, namely, USA, Russia, Canada, India, Brazil and China. One of the cornerstones of the Strategic Partnership is the enhancement of political dialogue including interaction at Heads of State level at regular intervals.

The South African delegation was led by President Thabo Mbeki, supported by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Dlamini Zuma; Minister of Science and Technology, Mr Mangena; and Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mr van Schalkwyk. On the EU side, in the Troika format, the delegation was led by President Sarkozy, President of the Council of the European Union; and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. They were accompanied by the European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, Louis Michel and the following French Ministers: Bernard Kouchner (Foreign Affairs), Jean-Louis Borloo (Ecology, Energy and Sustainable Development) and Alain Joyandet (Secretary of State for Cooperation and Francophonie).

The Summit was preceded by the 7th Ministerial Troika meeting, which took

stock of progress in the implementation of the Joint Action Plan of the Strategic Partnership. In turn, Ministers presented their report at the Summit where Heads of State welcomed progress made in the existing areas of cooperation, including Science and Technology, Environment and Development Cooperation and mandated officials to finalise the establishment of new cooperation areas currently under discussion, namely: Customs, Transport, Migration, Energy, Social Development, ICT and Space.

The Heads of State also deliberated on the ongoing Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations between the SADC EPA Group and the EU. They underscored the urgency to bridge the existing differences with a view to reaching an outcome that promotes development and regional integration in Africa, particularly in SADC and SACU. In the context of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and NEPAD, the presidents agreed to support initiatives aimed at developing the private sector in Africa. In this regard they pledged support for the role played by the European Investment Bank, the EU-Africa Trust Fund for Infrastructure, the African Development Bank as well as the IDC in driving investment in Africa. Other regional issues discussed were the peace and security situation in Darfur and Zimbabwe. The presidents also discussed global issues of common concern such as the WTO negotiations, migration and food security. In

addition both parties issued a joint declaration on climate change.

The presidents further took note of the successful organisation of the "Water Research for Sustainable Development" seminar, which took place the day before the Summit. The seminar, jointly organised by the South African Department of Science and Technology, the European Commission and the French Institute of Research for Development (IRD) – on behalf of the French Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and of Higher Education and Research brought together more than 40 leading South African, French and other European water researchers. The participants discussed new water research priorities in areas such as water and food security, water and public health, water and industry as well as water and climate change. The seminar outcome was the formulation of very specific recommendations for new research projects, which will now be implemented through various instruments for SA - EU cooperation.

The Summit was a historic moment in relations between South Africa and the EU as it was the first time that South Africa interacted with the European Union's highest decision makers in a Troika format to discuss issues of common strategic importance, allowing both parties to unlock the full potential of the Strategic Partnership.

Media briefing by Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad



Terrorist attacks in India

The South African Government very strongly condemns the recent terrorist attacks in Bangalore and Ahmedabad where at least 16 bombs exploded, killing 39 people (it is expected that this number will rise quite substantially) and leaving 110 wounded.

We would like to once again, reiterate the position of the South African Government, that terrorism can never be a justification for any so-called cause and that we will again do everything possible, through the United Nations, African Union and the forthcoming Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial meeting, to ensure we can move faster to cooperate internationally to deal with these acts of terrorism that seem to be growing in numbers.

We would like to, on behalf of the South African Government, offer our condolences to the families of those who were killed and injured.

President Thabo Mbeki to host Egyptian counterpart

President Mbeki will host his counterpart Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday 29 July 2008 where there will be major discussions on political, economic and other related issues between the two Heads of State.

President Mubarak will be in South Africa from Monday 28 – Wednesday 30 July 2008. He will be accompanied by seven Ministers namely Foreign Affairs, Intelligence, Trade and Industry, Communications, Transport, Agriculture and the Minister in the Presidency; President Mbeki will therefore be supported by the counterparts of these Ministers.

This is a historic State Visit – it is the first time that an Egyptian Head of State has visited a sub-Saharan coun-

try – we believe this is a very important visit, given the fact that Egypt plays a major role, not only in Africa but as you are aware, in the Middle East and indeed, in the Gulf area.

Egypt is not only a key player in the African Union, the United Nations but also in the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Unity (OIC) and will host the Non-Aligned Movement Summit next year.

As you are also aware, in France, the Mediterranean Conference was held recently, which is trying to bring about cohesion amongst the countries of the Mediterranean. Egypt also participated in this Summit and the State Visit to South Africa will be an important occasion to understand from President Mubarak where this process is expected to go.

Coming so soon after the African Union Summit hosted by Egypt in Sharm El-Sheikh where major decisions were taken on many issues, this will be an important opportunity for our two Heads of State and their delegations to review these decisions and to see how we can cooperate to ensure that these decisions are implemented which will also ensure that the African Union is strengthened financially, politically and otherwise.

The African Union government debate will be high on the agenda because as you know, this was discussed at the Sharm El-Sheikh Summit. This debate is reaching a very important stage and we will have the opportunity to deliberate on how to take the Sharm El-Sheikh decisions further.

Egypt is currently on the African Union's Peace and Security Council and we will therefore get a sense of all the conflict situations but especially the situation in Darfur and the situation in Sudan generally because of its impact on Egypt. We will also



seek to understand the status of the Chad – Ethiopian and Djibouti as well as the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflicts.

It will also be important, because as you know, Egypt brokered the ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel, and is therefore an important player in the Middle East. It will also be an opportunity to get a sense from the Egyptian delegation, not only of how the ceasefire agreement is holding, but what is the way forward towards achieving the Annapolis agreements towards a two-state solution.

Economic diplomacy will again be prominent in the discussions. Our political links have been developing quite strongly in the last 14 years but it is quite clear that our economic relations have not achieved full potential. We have also signed the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investments and on Trade which were concluded in 1998.



President Thabo Mbeki hosted his Egyptian counterpart President Hosni Mubarak for bilateral political, economic and trade discussions at the Union Buildings

A Memorandum of Understanding on Economic Cooperation is currently under consideration. An Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation entered into force in 1998. Other agreements include cooperation in the field of tourism, science and technology and air services. An agreement on Maritime Transport will be reviewed later this year. Agreements on cooperation in the field of environmental management and information and communications technology are currently under consideration.

Our economic relations at the moment amount to approximately R500 million annually. I must say that for two major powers in Africa – one in North Africa and another in sub-Saharan Africa, this figure is not what one would expect. The only good thing about this is that in 2007 South Africa had a posi-

tive trade balance of R260 721 000. This is still too little.

Minister Dlamini Zuma to Lead South African Delegation to NAM Ministerial Meeting

As you know, the Minister of Foreign Affairs following the inaugural SA - EU Summit in Bordeaux, France will be travelling to Iran to attend the NAM Ministerial meeting scheduled from Tuesday – Wednesday 29 – 30 July 2008. The theme of the Conference is “Solidarity for Peace, Justice and Friendship,” and it will be an opportunity to prepare for the NAM Summit to be hosted by Egypt next year.

It is our view that more than ever, the Non-Aligned Movement now has to understand the important role it plays in world politics. The vast major-

ity of the countries in the world representing all continents are members of the NAM and the G-77 + China and given the new challenges that we experience in the international arena, the recent developments like the rising fuel crisis, the increase in food prices and the whether we will achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This will be a very important NAM Ministerial meeting.

Of course, you cannot have a NAM meeting where we do not discuss the major threats to international peace and security and as we will discuss it in South Africa with the Egyptian delegation. Minister Dlamini Zuma will discuss it in Iran within the context of the NAM – this relates to the Palestine-Israel situation, the Iraq situation, Afghanistan, the Iranian nuclear issue and high on the agenda is how we co-

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Minister Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma meeting with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad during her visit to Iran

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operate to fight terrorism and the reform of the United Nations.

Minister Dlamini Zuma to co-chair 10th SA-Iran Joint Commission

Following the NAM Ministerial meeting Minister Dlamini Zuma will remain in Tehran to co-chair with the Acting Iranian Finance Minister Hoosein Samsani, the 10th South Africa-Iran Joint Commission scheduled from Saturday – Sunday 2 – 3 August 2008.

This Joint Commission has two legs – the Political and Social Affairs Working Group which deals with issues like the Middle East, Africa, disarmament and nuclear issues, human rights, global governance, regional cooperation, South Africa's Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative, education, health, environment, tourism, arts and culture, science and technology, sports and recreation and women's affairs. There is therefore quite an extensive programme under this working group. The Minister will be supported by key people from the various departments.

The Economic and Technical Working Group is the second group which deals with commerce, customs, oil and petrochemical, exhibitions, transport,

agriculture, housing, free trade zones, investment cooperation, banking, trade promotion, electricity and mining.

This Joint Commission comes at a time, as I have said, when Iran is crucial to developments in the region – in relation to Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Palestine-Israel situation. Nobody challenges the fact that Iran is fundamental to the way in which we work together to work to resolve all the issues to which I have just referred.

But more significantly, the Iranian nuclear issue is an important issue at this stage because as you are aware, the IAEA Board in June 2008 presented its latest report. The Director-General of the IAEA has stated that the Agency has been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran. However, the Director-General felt that there was not sufficient progress on the issue of the possible military dimensions related to the so-called "Green Salt" project, the high explosive testing and the missile re-entry vehicle elements which could or could not have a military dimension. These documents were given to Iran only in December last year and we do hope that they will be able to resolve this final issue so that we can get the issue of Iran's nuclear weapons programme finally resolved so

that we can stabilise the situation in that region. As you know, the G-5 + 1 have now proposed new initiatives to Iran on this issue. It is a matter that we have not been fully briefed on – i.e. the content of this proposal but we do believe this initiative to which the Iranians have in principle reacted positively to and we do hope that our own discussions will enable us to get a better understanding.

As you know, Ambassador Minty is our representative on the IAEA and he has been endorsed by the African Union, in the event of the present Director-General Dr ElBaradei not standing for re-election, to be the African candidate for the Director-General of the IAEA. Ambassador Minty will be part of the Minister's delegation and we hope that we will get a better handle on this alleged Iranian nuclear weapons programme so that we can deal with it effectively. It is also important for us to get movement on this issue because the continuing threats of military action against Iran is destabilising the region and therefore we do hope we can find some solution.

Criminal court's request for President El-Bashir's indictment

Finally, as you remember, in my last briefing I expressed my view that



Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad at the media briefing, Pretoria



Deputy Director-General Ambassador Abdul Minty, representative at the IAEA

there was growing concern about the International Criminal Court's request for President El-Bashir of Sudan to be interdicted. Since then, you know that the Foreign Ministers of the Arab League have met in an Extraordinary meeting and have expressed their concern about the indictment and have indicated that they would take the necessary measures to ensure that we can deal with this issue in a better manner.

However, more important for us: the AU Peace and Security Council met on 14 July 2008 and I believe they have now taken a decision that binds us all in how we should approach this issue: I will just give you elements of this decision of the AU:

"The AU reiterated its unflinching commitment to combating impunity and promoting democracy, the rule of law and good governance throughout the entire continent, in conformity with its Constitutive Act, and, in this respect, condemns once again the gross violations of human rights in Darfur.

However, the "Council reaffirmed its statement of 11 July 2008, in which it expressed its strong conviction that the search for justice should be pursued in a way that does not impede or jeopardise efforts aimed at promoting

lasting peace and reiterated the AU's concern with the misuse of indictments against African leaders, in conformity with its decision on the Abuse of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction, adopted by the 11th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on 30 June and 1 July 2008.

It went on to say, "in accordance with the Rome Statute, the ICC is complementary to national criminal jurisdictions, which have therefore the primary responsibility of investigating or prosecuting cases over which they have jurisdiction."

It also recalled the "principle of the presumption of innocence, as a general principle of law which is enshrined in the Rome Statute of the ICC."

It "stressed the need for international justice to be conducted in a transparent and fair manner, in order to avoid any perception of double standard in conformity with the principles of international law, and expressed concern at the threat that such developments may pose to efforts aimed at promoting the rule of law and stability, as well as building strong national institutions in Africa."

It went on to "express its conviction that in view of the delicate nature

of the processes underway in Sudan, approval by the Pre-Trial Chamber of the application by the ICC prosecutor could seriously undermine the ongoing efforts aimed at facilitating the early resolution in the Sudan as a whole, and may lead to further suffering for the people of the Sudan and greater destabilisation with far-reaching consequences for the country and the region."

It has now decided and has requested the "United Nations Security Council, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the Rome Statute of the ICC, to defer the processes initiated by the ICC."

This is what will guide most of the African countries in dealing with this request for the indictment of President El-Bashir and we hope now that the Security Council will consider very seriously the views of Africa and the Arab League and will take the necessary measures to defer this matter so that we can deal with this matter in a much better way that will not undermine the ICC and will enable us to deal with impunity in the broader context of reconciliation and finding solutions.

Note: The Media Briefing by Deputy Minister Pahad is edited for layout and length purposes.

UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

The EWC would like to make colleagues and their family members aware of the signs and symptoms of depression and provide some guidelines on dealing with depression effectively

What depression feels like

If you think you are depressed, you're not alone. No matter what you believe, people love and care about you, and if you can muster the courage to talk about your depression, it can — and will — be resolved. Some people think that talking about sad feelings will make them worse, but the opposite is almost always true. It is very helpful to share your worries with someone who will listen and care, especially a trained professional who can guide you towards feeling better.

Signs and symptoms of depression

It's hard to put into words what depression feels like, and people experience it differently. There are, however,

some common problems and symptoms that people with depression experience.

- You constantly feel irritable, sad, or angry.
- Nothing seems fun anymore, and you just don't see the point of trying.
- You feel bad about yourself - worthless, guilty, or just "wrong" in some way
- You sleep too much or not enough.
- You have frequent, unexplained headaches or other physical problems.
- Anything and everything makes you cry.
- You've gained or lost weight without consciously trying to.
- You just can't concentrate. Your grades may be plummeting because of it.
- You feel helpless and hopeless.
- You're thinking about death or suicide. (If this is true, talk to someone right away!)

What you can do to feel better

Depression is not your fault, and you didn't do anything to cause it.

"The first thing to remember is that almost everyone feels depressed at one time or another"

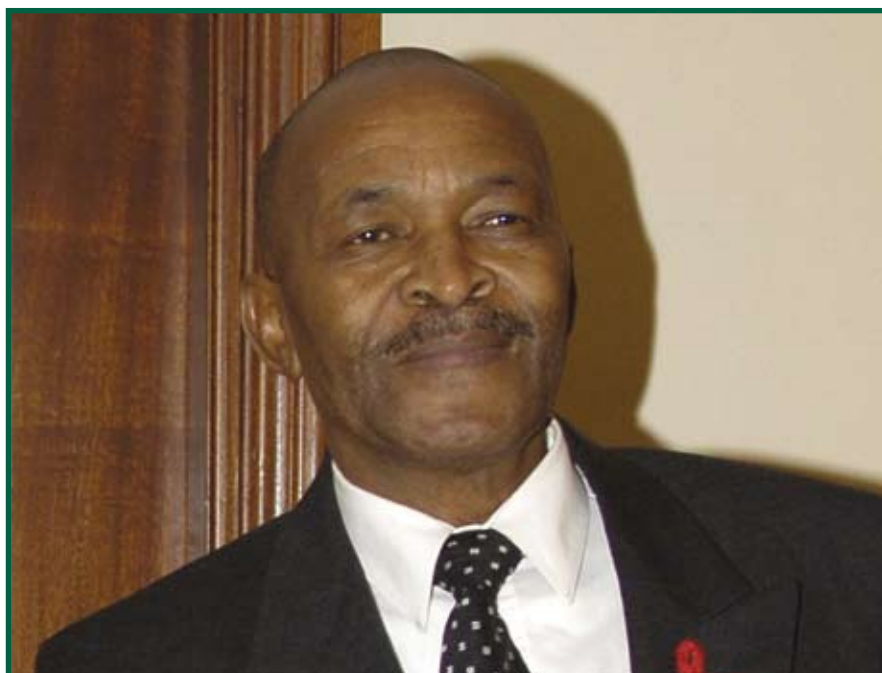
However, you do have some control over feeling better. Staying connected to friends and family, sharing your feelings with someone you trust, and making healthy lifestyle decisions can all have a hugely positive impact on your mood.

Try not to isolate yourself

When you're depressed, you may not feel like seeing anybody or doing anything. Just getting out of bed in the morning can be difficult, but isolating yourself only makes depression worse. Make it a point to stay social; even if that's the last thing you want to do. As you get out into the world, you may find yourself feeling better.

Remember that you are not alone

You are not alone, and neither is your depression a hopeless case. Even though it can feel like depression will never lift, it eventually will - and with proper treatment and healthy choices, that day can come even sooner? In



SOUTH AFRICA GIVES \$3,6M TO SEYCHELLES

Source - Seychelles Nation Newspaper dated 16 July 2008 -

South African High Commissioner Madumane Matabane yesterday presented a cheque for US \$3,6 million to Foreign Affairs Minister Patrick Pillay at Maison Queau de Quinssy in Mont Fleuri. He did so a few hours after presenting his credentials to President James Michel at State House.

South African High Commissioner to Seychelles Madumane Matabane

the meantime, you might need therapy and or medication to help you while you sort out your feelings.

Keep your body healthy

Making healthy lifestyle choices can do wonders for your mood. Things like diet and exercise have been shown to help depression. Ever heard of a “runners high”? You actually get a rush of endorphins from exercising, which makes you feel instantly happier. Physical activity can be as effective as medications or therapy for depression, any activity helps! Even a short walk can be beneficial.

As for food, it's true that you are what you eat. An improper diet can make you feel sluggish and tired, which worsens depression symptoms. Your body needs vitamins and minerals such as iron and the B-vitamins. Make sure you're feeding your mind with plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Avoid alcohol and drugs

You may be tempted to drink or use drugs in an effort to escape from your feelings and get a “mood boost”, even if just for a short time. However, substance use can not only make depression worse, but can cause you to

become depressed in the first place. Alcohol and drug usage can also increase suicidal feelings. In short, drinking and taking drugs will make you feel worse (not better) in the long run.

Dealing with depression

Everyone has or will experience feeling depressed in their lifetime. It is expected that at one time or another, you may feel sad or overwhelmed due to challenges in your life or, seemingly for no apparent reason at all. At times, these feelings of sadness can become intense and prolonged to such an extent that daily functioning can become difficult. Part of dealing with depression is the ability to spot the symptoms of depression as mentioned above.

What should I do if I feel depressed? The first thing to remember is that almost everyone feels depressed at one time or another. Take time to assess why you are feeling the way you are. In many cases, feeling down is an expected and appropriate reaction to a stressor or situation; however, when these feelings last for an extensive period of time, or significantly interfere with your ability to function, it might be wise to make efforts to change your situation. Try to:

- Build structure into your day. Set

- small daily goals and stick to them.
- Put pleasure and fun into each day. Treat yourself to something that you will enjoy and that will require you to expend some energy.
- Keep active – exercise, swim, jog, play tennis, etc.
- Get plenty of rest and sleep, but do not overdo it.
- Eat balanced and nutritious meals. Cut down on the junk foods.
- Allow yourself to experience your feelings. If you need to cry, do so. If you are angry, find a safe way to express that anger a little at a time.
- Keep a journal; write out how you are feeling and what you are thinking. It's a nice way to experience the feelings as opposed to keeping them inside.
- Challenge any negative self-talk or messages that you may be giving yourself. Stick with what you know is true, is real, and is observable, rather than jumping to conclusions or making assumptions. Do not focus on the negative.
- Develop a support system of positive people; anyone who will be supportive, encouraging, and uplifting.

This article was adapted from various articles written by the following healthcare professionals: Suzanne Barston; Melinda Smith (M.A.); Jael-line Jaffe (Ph.D.); Lisa Flores Dumke (M.A.); and Jeanne Segal (Ph.D.)

Mr Matabane said his government decided to give the money to Seychelles as an unconditional grant to help it overcome current economic problems. The money comes from his country's African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund, which was created in 2001 to support cooperation with other countries, particularly on the same continent.

The fund is also meant to finance socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian aid and human resources development. He said Seychelles was chosen to receive the substantial sum because of the hard work and accountability of its government.

“It shows the hard work of your government and its responsibility to transform the lives of its people,” he said, adding that his government was sure the money will not be wasted as has happened in the case of certain leaders and countries.

He described Seychelles' government as responsible and democratic and noted that both countries are co-members of such organisations as the South African Development Community and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. “We trust the leadership to decide what to do with the money,” he said when asked what the grant is for and if there were any strings attached to it.

Mr Pillay said that Seychelles asked for the money to buy goods from South Africa, but since the country is not imposing conditions it will be used through the Ministry of Finance according to government priorities and accounted for if necessary.

Mr Matabane said his talks with the President centred on the good relations between the two countries in which they have supported each other in the international arena. “We discussed how we are going to continue to live and work together,” he said, mentioning education as one area of cooperation and praising the manner in which Seychelles has looked after the environment.

Where were you..?

