



international relations
& cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



"South Africa is proud to have been part of the establishment of this Human Rights Council five years ago and the General Assembly decision for its periodic review. We salute this Council and pay tribute to the important work it is doing. We indeed made strides in the last five years in establishing this body and putting in place the building blocks that ensured that a firm foundation was laid. However, the challenges that face this Council cannot be over-emphasised. Building from the Human Rights Commission is and will continue to be a formidable task. South Africa attaches great importance to the promotion of Human Rights. As Government, and working together with our people, we will continue to ensure the realisation and enjoyment of fundamental Human Rights that are contained in our Constitution".

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane



The **Branch State Protocol** is an instrument for facilitating the delivery of the Strategic Objectives of Government through the provision of unparalleled courtesies, in a way that is consistent with the spirit of all international agreements and legislations to which South Africa is a signatory.

The core business of the Branch is inter alia;

- State Protocol Policy formulation;
- The regularisation of Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities;
- Issuing of South African Diplomatic Passports;
- To serve as the custodian of Government diplomatic etiquette;
- To manage all State, Official and Working visits;
- Conferences and Events management;
- To oversee Signing Ceremonies;
- Management of Protocol lounges at OR Tambo International, Cape Town International and King Shaka International Airports;
- Management of Government hospitality infrastructure – including the Guesthouses;
- To provide Protocol services to the Presidency and the DIRCO Minister;
- To provide Protocol advice to National, Provincial and Local Government Departments
- To deliver on the strategic support plan of DIRCO.

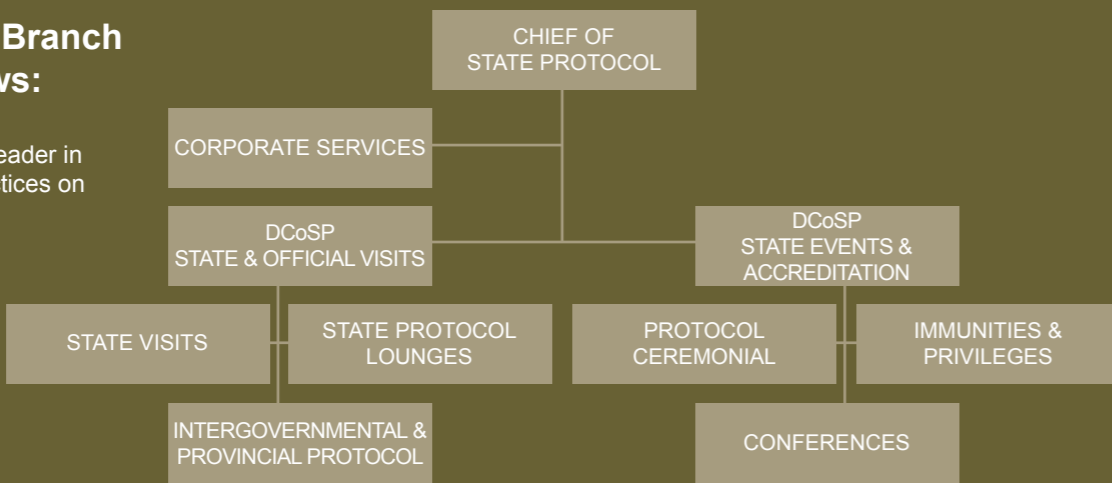
The Branch's clients include the President and Deputy President of South Africa, Foreign Heads of State and Government; Cabinet Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Special Envoys, the Heads of Regional and Multilateral Organisations, the Diplomatic Corps, National Departments (Advisory) and Eminent Persons.

In fulfilling its mandate, the Branch also liaises closely with other stakeholders including, the Presidency, other Branches within DIRCO, ACSA/Airport Management; the Department of Home Affairs, The South African Revenue Services (Customs); The South African Police Services, The State Security Agency; The Department of Health, The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the South African National Defence Force.

The work of the Branch is informed by the Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001, which incorporates into South African legislation, the various International conventions relating to immunities and privileges. South Africa currently has the second largest number of Diplomatic Missions, including International Organisations, the first being the United State of America.

The structure of the Branch is currently as follows:

The Branch aspires to be the Leader in exceptional State Protocol Practices on the Continent, and globally.



INSIDE


In this issue

- 8 | A Diplomatic fun fair
- 10 | The International Women's Day Celebrations

**the diplomat
NEWS FLASH**

- 12 | • SADC council of Ministers Meeting in Angola
- Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane meets Somali counterpart
- Deputy Minister Ebrahim visits the Egyptian government to consolidate bilateral relations
- 18 | E-Government :Beyond South Africa's 2011 population census
- 20 | The state of Human rights for the Roma people in Bulgaria

In every issue

- 14 | Voices from Diplomats
- 23 |  **IN MY TRAVELS** : Caught up in a Coup in Mali
- 25 | Globe at a Glimpse

the diplomat vol.3

"The Human Rights issue"

Editorial team
the diplomat is an internal newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation published by the Branch: Public Diplomacy

Editor-in-Chief:
Clayson Monyela

Editor:
Salome Baloi

Managing Editor:
Lebogang Maifadi

Creative Director:
Pumeza Albert

Sub-editor:
Mongezi Zithutha

Contributors:
Jerry Sibanyoni, Ray Sithole, Percy Makholwa, Ambassador Takalani Netshitenzhe, Ambassador Sheila Camerer, Laoura Lazouras, Serialong Chauke, Lebogang Maifadi and Mongezi Zithutha

Picture Editor:
Jacoline Schoonees

Photographers:
Jacoline Schoonees, Unati Ngamntwini and Yolande Snyman

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of **DIRCO** or the editors.

Contributions may be sent to thediplomat@dirco.gov.za

Editorial enquiries may be sent to Lebogang Maifadi - maifadil@dirco.gov.za and Mongezi Zithutha - zithutham@dirco.gov.za

Distribution enquiries may be directed to Thembakazi Zulu on Tel: (012) 351-1169 and Lincoln Mothibe on Tel: (012) 351 1616

Ed's letter

[Diplomatic mail]



Dear Diplomats,

March is Human Rights Month in South Africa. On 21 March 1960 the Apartheid Regime turned its guns on unarmed people in Sharpsville in a massacre which claimed 69 lives and left many more injured. On that day, all African men and women were called upon to challenge the apartheid pass law and surrender their pass books (dompas) by presenting themselves to the nearest police station for arrest.

The repressive pass law required every African male above the age of 16 living or working in and around Urban Centres/Town to carry the dompas with him day and night and produce it on demand by the police, failure to do so would lead to arrest.

This and other laws prompted political organisations in South Africa to stand up against apartheid and join the struggle for a nation in which all people, irrespective of race, colour, creed, religion or gender, can fully assert their human rights.

The achievement of freedom in 1994 led to our country formulating a foreign policy informed by the values we cherish as a nation; such as equality, justice, non-sexism, non-racism, democracy and multilateralism.

Fast forward to today South Africa is praised around the world as having one of the most progressive constitutions and legislative frameworks in the world. Recently at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, South Africa hosted the organisation's first-ever debate on the rights of sexual minorities. At the UN Commission on the Status of women in New York in February, South Africa co-sponsored a session on "best practice in sexual orientation and gender identity rights. On many of these issues South Africa had found itself isolated from other African countries who had opted to excuse themselves from the debates. However this did not deter South Africa from its efforts to fight for human rights even when it was not popular to do so, as a result South Africa continued to forge ahead and co-sponsored a new resolution calling on Navi Pillay the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, to investigate human rights violations against sexual minorities.

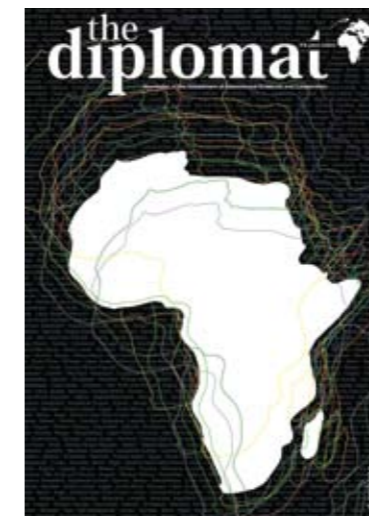
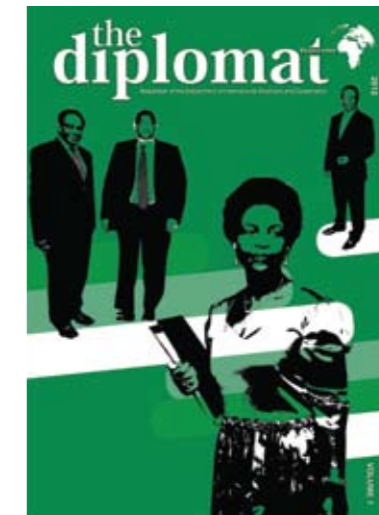
In continuing to reinforce our values in a global community, the Department hosted the Diplomatic Fair on 9 and 10 March 2012. Over 45 foreign Embassies participated. The Fair was held to give the foreign missions an opportunity to showcase their heritage and diverse cultures through language, food, literature, music, art and also reinforce cultural diplomacy. An even bigger Diplomatic Fair is being planned for later this year.

SB

Salome Baloi - Editor

Dear Colleagues

The diplomat team appreciates your support and contributions to the publication, we would like to take this opportunity to showcase previous diplomat covers, and also encourage team DIRCO to keep on sending contributions. The theme for the following edition is "Working together to build unity and prosperity for all" which is in line with our freedom day celebrations. In an effort to ensure that the publication reflects the thoughts and opinions of DIRCO, we request you to send us your contributions in the form of articles, opinion pieces and poems relating to the theme, please send your correspondence to thediplomat@dirco.gov.za before 26 April 2012.



DIPLOMATIC FUN FAIR

" The ability to dance and laugh whilst in the struggle was what strengthened people towards the fight for democracy and peace,"



Deputy Minister Fransman visiting various stalls during the diplomatic fair held at the Union Buildings



The Department of International Relations and Cooperation hosted a diplomatic Fun Fair on 9 and 10 March 2012 in Pretoria. The two-day event transformed the lower gardens at the Union Buildings into a mini United Nations gathering of music and dance and cultural exchange. In his official opening of the Diplomatic Fair, Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Mr Marais Fransman made reference to the 100 years of the ANC as a liberation movement which is entrenched in the interaction of different communities who appreciated the role of culture, music and dance in the liberation movement.

The dance and laughter whilst in the struggle was able to strengthen people towards fighting for democracy and peace, said Deputy Minister.

One of the many reasons the department hosted the event, is to strengthen Political and Economic relations. South Africa is strategically situated at the tip south of the continent and seen by many countries interested in trading with Africa as a gateway to this majestic continent which has an abundance of economic opportunities.

Embassies did not have to compete for the attention of curious attendees as each country presented and displayed its culture. Food became the means of communication as curious attendees moved from stall to stall tasting different foods. Different cultural groups performed in their different colourful traditional regalia. South African artists and radio personalities also graced the event and wowed the crowds.

Hosting the diplomatic fun fair at the Union Buildings was not by chance. The Union Buildings carry a rich history which forms part of the events which led to South Africa



becoming a democracy.

The buildings were designed by the architect Sir Herbert Baker, and in November 1910 the corner stone of the building was laid. The structure was completed in 1913 at a total cost of 1,310,640 pounds. It is of interesting note that the actual idea behind the two towers of the building represented the only two official languages English and Afrikaans at the time of the Union of South Africa.

The Union Buildings has over the years been

a theatre of a number of historical events. On 9 August 1956, 20 000 women marched to the doors of the Union Buildings chanting "Wathint, Abafazi, Wathint' imbokodo" (You strike the women, you strike a rock) to protest against the pass laws of 1950. To this day this event is commemorated by a public holiday on 9 August of every year. All democratically elected presidents of our country have been inaugurated in the Union Buildings. On 10 May 1994 the country's first democratically elected President Nelson Mandela as part of his inaugural address said.

"We know it well that none of us acting alone can achieve success. We must, therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation building, for the birth of a new world. Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all. Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all. Let each

know that for each the body, the mind and soul have been freed to fulfill themselves. Never, and never again, shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world"

It is then without doubt that it is this day which washed away all of which the Union Buildings once stood for, as head quarters of oppression. Today we are now as free citizens roaming the gardens of the Union Buildings as proud people not forgetting where we come from and celebrating our achievements. Pretoria has the second largest number of embassies in the world, after Washington DC, most of which are located in or near Arcadia, which means 'The play ground of Gods'. The Diplomatic community applauded the department for reviving the Diplomatic Fair and called upon it to host the event annually. ☐



THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

“Connecting Girls and Inspiring Futures”

Each year around the world, International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated on March 8. It is celebrated and commemorated in honour of women in different parts of the world who stood up for their rights to be equally acknowledged as those of their male counterparts. The celebration for the day began in 1910 at the second International Conference of Working Women which was held in Copenhagen, when a woman named Clara Zetkin (Leader of the 'Women's Office' for the Social Democratic Party in Germany) tabled the idea of an International Women's Day. She proposed that every year in every country there should be a celebration on the same day which will press for women's demands.

Thousands of events occur not just on the 08th of March but throughout March to mark the economic, political and social achievements of women. Organisations, governments, charities and women's groups around the world choose different themes each year that reflect global and local gender issues.

This was no different at The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), as the Chief Directorate gender in partnership with The Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities (DWCPD), and The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organised an event on 8-9 March 2012 in order to celebrate and commemorate this significant date on the calendar- under the theme “Connecting Girls and Inspiring Futures”. This theme sparked conversations and debate amongst delegates who were gathered at DIRCO. Among those gathered were young and matured women from political organisations, government

Above: Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko addressing delegates
Below: Delegates enjoying the debate and open session



structures, civil societies, and academic institutions who all met with one mission and goal, to discuss and implement matters which are near and dear to their hearts in an effort to also try, in any small or large way to make a difference in the worlds of many African women.

Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko opened proceedings on the occasion. The Ambassador spoke about the role of women in the African continent reiterating that as the world struggled to meet Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it became more difficult for women to survive, as this burden falls heavily on them. In addition she spoke of the young women who were in the trenches, exiled from their motherlands, all in the name of the struggle. She wondered whether the memory of those young women then who did not live to see democratic principles being delivered in South Africa and throughout certain areas of the African continent, was being celebrated enough

today. The Ambassador called on African organisations such as the African Union (AU) and The Southern African Development Community (SADC) to assist in celebrating African women who contributed in the liberation of women and those who still continue to do so today.

Dr Agostino Zacharius of the UNDP mentioned the importance of establishing true partnerships within the public and private sector environment, in an effort to develop programmes which will enhance and allow young women to thrive, in the world of business. He congratulated the South African government for the healthy representation of women Ministers in cabinet, he emphasised that it is even more pleasing that these female ministers are thriving in Ministries which are generally perceived to be better suited for their male counterparts such as that of International Relations, Defence, and Energy. This first segment of the programme closed off with interactive sessions which were entitled

“World Cafes” where different topics were up for discussion by delegates.

The second segment of the celebrations was in the form of a glittering gala dinner, where guests were welcomed by mesmerising sounds of an all-female band called the “Basadi, women of Jazz”, who's music resonates with women from all walks of life. The programme director, Gauteng MEC for Community Safety, Ms Faith Mazibuko, introduced Ambassador Agrina Mussa, High Commissioner of the Republic of Malawi, and also the Dean of Women Ambassadors. The Ambassador emphasised women empowerment and the need to plough back to communities. A young and aspiring poet, Ms Terry-Ann Simelane, who majors in English at the University of Pretoria, wowed the guests with her vibrant and daring poetry that touched on issues facing modern women.

In her keynote address, Gauteng Premier Ms Nomvula Mokonyane recalled significant historical events such as the 1956 march by women to the Union Buildings as a cornerstone for change. She urged young women to prioritise on education in order to emancipate themselves. She also announced that the Gauteng Provincial Government has initiated an educational trust for young maths and science schoolgirls in the no fee schools. She further mentioned her government's intention to establish an International Women Centre for women from around the world. The centre will seek to educate society about the struggles of women in South Africa and abroad. She declared this century, “the century of women.”



Right: Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane addressing delegates Left: Ms Terry-Ann Simelane a poet entertaining guests



Below : Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane addressing proud women delegates at the international women's day conference

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, gave the closing remarks in which she lamented that many women have heard about “Uhuru”, but have not tasted it.

She also reminded the mostly female audience that the job of emancipating women is never over and that woman

economic emancipation is yet to be realised. Finally, she cautioned women not to sell their emancipation through their questionable conduct and advised them that by working together, they can break the barriers that prevent them from success. After those words, the band resumed and brought the house to its feet as different women from different generations danced the night away.

The seminar ended off with a feedback session on March 9 where various committee representatives reported on pertinent challenges still faced by women in modern times. Some of the discussion points focused on women emancipation in patriarchal societies and the role of education and support in providing economic freedom.

However, to prevent the discussions from deteriorating into mere rhetoric, possible solutions to challenges discussed were also presented, with the promise that recommendations will be forwarded to relevant stakeholders. □



SADC Council of Ministers meeting in Angola

The bi-annual South African Democratic Community (SADC) Council of Ministers Meeting successfully concluded its business on 2 March 2012, in Luanda, Republic of Angola. South Africa was represented in the meeting by a delegation comprising of Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies and senior government officials.

Amongst other things, the SADC Council of Ministers Meeting noted that South Africa has provided some US\$4m for airlifting and shipping of the contributions from SADC Members States of

humanitarian aid to the people of Somalia. The contributions were made concomitant to the SADC Summit decision of August 2011 to show solidarity with the people of Somalia by providing moral, material and monetary support.

At least six SADC Member States, namely Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania and Zambia provided a total of 8073 tons of perishable and non-perishable goods, food stuffs and other relief supplies. The Republic of Angola is the current Chair of SADC after taking over from the Republic of Namibia during the 31st Ordinary Summit of SADC Heads

of State and Government held in Luanda, Angola, during August 2011.

SADC continues to serve as the primary vehicle for the South African foreign policy in relation to regional development and integration within Southern Africa. South Africa's future remains inextricably linked to the future of the African continent and that of its neighbours in Southern Africa.

SADC strives for balanced and equitable regional integration as a fundamental condition for sustainable development in the region and to free the people of the region from the scourges of unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment. □

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, meets Somali Minister of Foreign Affairs



Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane with Mr Abdullahi Haji Hassan Mohamed, minister of Foreign affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Somalia at a Signing Ceremony, Agreement on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Somalia.

Mogadishu. South Africa will also be happy to receive diplomatic representation from Somalia in the near future, which will not only enhance our bilateral relations and outreach to Somalia, but also serve the Somali nationals in South Africa.

South Africa remains concerned about the continuing violence and loss of life in Somalia. While we take cognizance of the significant strides made by the AU Mission troops together with the Transitional Federal Government forces in Mogadishu and outlying areas, we reiterate our view that lasting peace in Somalia can only be realised through negotiations. In this regard, we would like to call on all Somali armed opposition groups, including Al Shabab, to lay down their arms and to join the peace process that has already been embarked upon.

We are encouraged by the determination of the current Somali leadership to embark on a constitution-making process that will serve as the basis for a new political dispensation that will replace the current Transitional Federal Institutions by August 2012 when the latter's mandate expires. This is a crucial step that signals a bold move to advance the objectives of the peace process.

South Africa stands ready to share its own experiences on the constitution-making process with our Somali friends. We have, in fact received a request from the office of the Deputy Speaker of the Somali Transitional Federal Parliament, for South Africa to host a 30-member delegation of Somali lawmakers who are part of the constitution-making process to undertake a study tour and to engage

with our constitutional law experts and persons that played a critical role in the drawing of our own Constitution. This visit will be scheduled in the coming weeks in consultation with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia.

South Africa believes that it is imperative that Somalia has adequate institutions of governance that will be sustained beyond the mandate of the Transitional Federal Government. It is in this light that South Africa will work closely with local and international partners to ensure that Somalis are equipped to govern themselves. South Africa will therefore be allocating 100 million Rands to providing capacity and institution building, socio-economic support, as well as specified training in key government sectors.

The continuing instability in other parts of Somalia sadly provides fertile ground for the scourge of piracy. South Africa is concerned about the threat posed by piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, especially by the extended range of the piracy threat into the Mozambique Channel. We believe that the solution to piracy is on land, and that the issue of piracy will only be solved once there is political stability in Somalia. It is necessary that Somali institutions be strengthened to enable them to play their role in the prosecution of piracy. South Africa would consider rendering assistance in capacity building for Somalis in the fields of justice and correctional services to support this.

The matter of bringing home our citizens held hostage by Somali pirates was discussed. South Africa maintains regular contact with the family. □

Deputy Minister Marius Fransman participates in the High-Level Segment of the 19th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

Deputy Minister Fransman delivered his statement on 29 February 2012, during the plenary meeting of the High-Level Segment. His statement focused on contemporary issues facing the international human rights system and the agenda of the Human Rights Council. Deputy Minister emphasised that South Africa, through its engagements with the United Nations (UN) system, continues to focus on priorities such as the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, including making the right to development a reality for all.

Deputy Minister Fransman urged the major financial institutions and major economies to meet their obligation and pledge towards assisting developing countries to meet their Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets.

The Deputy Minister announced that South Africa will present its 2nd Country Report to the 13th Session of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism (UPR) of the UNHRC in June this year. "The UPR Report is primarily intended to confirm South Africa's commitment to the core values and principles enunciated in the

South African Constitution in the areas of promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms", the Deputy Minister said.

In conclusion, Deputy Minister Fransman raised concern that the partiality, in which some international bodies are perceived to respond to situations of human rights abuse in different parts of the world, is problematic. "It is the responsibility of this Council to ensure that this type of selective application of the definition of human rights is being stopped and that all people everywhere in the world are protected from abuse",

During his visit to Geneva, Deputy Minister Fransman held bilateral talks with his counterparts, as well as with Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Human Rights from Europe, Asia and Africa. Issues discussed included the strengthening of bilateral cooperation with strategic countries to further the objectives of multilateral cooperation in those areas where South Africa shares common vision and objectives. Other issues raised were human rights matters and enhancing regional, continental and global governance institutions and



Deputy Minister Marius Fransman, at the the High-Level Segment of the 19th session of the Human Rights Council.

international platforms.

Deputy Minister Fransman also paid a courtesy call to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Navanathem Pillay. Technical assistance and cooperation by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in human rights capacity-building at country and regional level were discussed. □

Deputy Minister Ebrahim visits the Egyptian government to consolidate bilateral relations

Deputy Minister Ebrahim visited the Egyptian government to consolidate bilateral relations between the two countries. During his interaction with the media, he said that the Joint Bilateral Commission with Egypt that regulates the relationship between the two countries has been one of the successful ones. South Africa and Egypt have entered into more than 25 bilateral agreements so far and have agreed during this visit that there should be continued interaction between the two parties at a higher level.

In addition, he said an agreement was made, that more needs to be done in terms of economic cooperation. In this regard, the parties identified trade, tourism and investments to be pursued for mutual benefit, within the already established structures such as the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Economic Cooperation signed in August 2009 and the Joint Trade and Investment Committee (JTIC).

A fundamental principle of South

Africa's foreign policy is the consolidation of the African agenda. Accordingly, we believe Egypt should play an important role together with South Africa in the development of the Continent as well as in the strengthening of the African Union (AU) and its structures as Africa has been identified as the next growth point.

President Jacob Zuma is currently championing the "North-South" corridor roads and railways initiative in support of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. This will enhance trade within the African Continent.

In conclusion, Deputy Minister reiterated that his visit is also on behalf of the South African government in order to express solidarity to the people of Egypt for the revolution that has taken place and their process towards democratic rule. He expressed that he met with representatives of Parliament who have been elected by the people of Egypt who were about to embark on the constitutional making process in the Joint's sitting which



Deputy Minister Ebrahim with Ambassador Mayende-Sibiya and Dr Navil Al-Araby Secretary General of Arab States

is scheduled for 10 March 2012.

The constitutional process is as important as the Constitution product itself and it is important that it be transparent and inclusive, wherein civil society and non-government organisations equally make a contribution.

Deputy Minister Ebrahim concluded by saying that to this end, we have expressed South Africa's willingness to share experiences on the Constitutional making process and national reconciliation. □



Ray Sithole
Desk:
Human Rights
Branch:
Multilateral



Percy Makholwa
Desk:
Human Rights
Branch:
Multilateral

Human Rights: A powerful instrument in South Africa's foreign policy toolkit

“The aim of human rights... is to move beyond the design and drawing-board phase, to move beyond thinking and talking about the foundations stones - to laying those foundation stones, inch by inch, together.” (Mary Robinson, first female President of Ireland, 1990 to 1997, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1997 to 2002)

South Africa's foreign policy derives from the values and principles that are subscribed to and are celebrated domestically. The 21st of March is a significant day in South African history as we celebrate a National Human Rights Day under the theme "Working Together to Promote Unity in Diversity and Human Dignity for All". This day also has international significance as it is recognized by the United Nations Human Rights System as "the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination". This important day in our domestic calendar and in the globe is celebrated in memory of the "Sharpeville Massacre". The police at this time opened fire on demonstrators, who were protesting against the pass laws, in Sharpeville and Langa. Sharpeville signaled the need to intensify the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, and prompted international sanctions against apartheid.

SA's commitment under the first post apartheid administration: Mandela's diplomacy dissuades the US, UK and Libya from stalemate

On 29 October, 1997, former President Mandela was welcomed to Libya by exuberant fanfare. Mandela arrived in Libya to both award the slain Colonel Qaddafi the Order of Good Hope, and also to advise Qaddafi on the peaceful

resolution to the stalemate triggered by the Lockerbie bombing. This bombing took place on 21 December 1988, and was targeted at the Pan Am Flight 103, which killed 270 people. Two Libyan intelligence agents were suspected of carrying out this crime.

During this visit Mandela called on the world and its leaders to assist the UN in its mission and to commit to resolving their challenges through peaceful means. Mandela offered the following options to resolve the tensions between the United States (US), United Kingdom (UK) and Libya: (1.) that if no extradition treaty exist between the countries concerned the trial must be conducted in the country where the accused were arrested (2) that the trial should be conducted in a neutral country by independent judges, (3) that the trial should be conducted at the Hague by an International jurisprudence. After Mandela's massive shuttle diplomacy, the US and UK finally approved for the trial of the Lockerbie Libyan accused to take place at a neutral country.

The Second administration extends SAs commitment to Human Rights to strengthening UN institutions on human rights: opposition to double standards

During the second democratic administration, former President Mbeki's administration worked to ensure South Africa's non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council in 2007-2008, a premier global platform which deliberate and decides on actions to be taken to preserve peace and security in the world. Secondly, the Mbeki administration, ensured South Africa's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2006-2007, the UNHRC is a centerpiece for the global human rights agenda. South Africa's foreign policy in these UN fora was

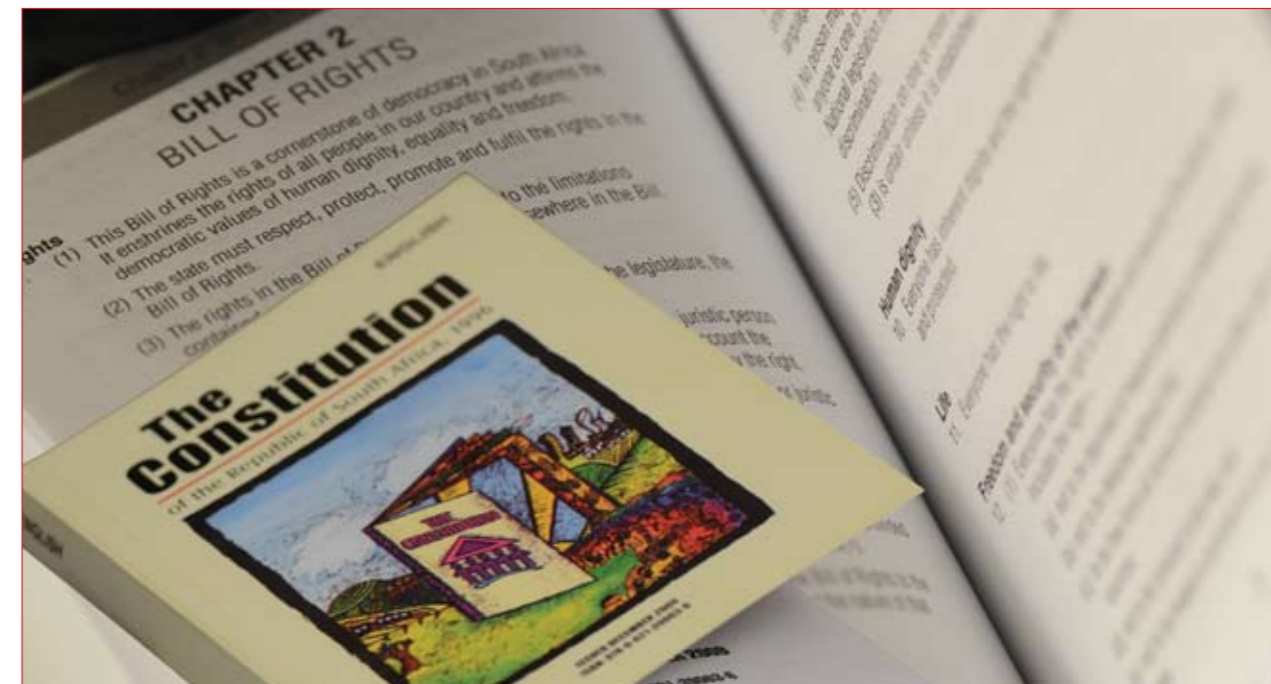
based on principles of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. South Africa's involvement in these premier institutions assisted in SA's continued advocacy for security, development and human rights for all.

The third administration opposes misuse of regime change in the name of human rights protection: the case of Libya

In the third post-apartheid administration, South Africa under President Zuma continues to play a central role to advocate for peace, development and human rights. The Libyan crisis, wherein South Africa's moral janus faced stance on the protection of citizens against state tyranny, and opposition to the human rights agenda being used as an excuse for regime change, is a case in point. The opposition to the misuse of human rights as "shields and weapons" on the part of the Zuma administration preceded the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)'s misuse of the need to protect Libyan civilians, while actually advancing narrow selfish interests unrelated to the preservation of human rights. South Africa then displayed its unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights in an unbiased way.

South Africa's domestic and international commitment: accountability, and transparency and rule of law

Complementing its human rights centric foreign policy posture, in advocating for the Responsibility to Protect, and opposing the misuse of human rights, is SA's commitment to the International Bill of Rights, The International Bill of Rights espoused in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the UN Charter and key covenants on political and economic rights. The latter is seen in SA's accountability to the realisation of both political and economic rights, as contained in its Second Report to the United Nations Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, to be presented in May 2012 at Geneva. As a result of all these and other noble endeavours, South Africa's foreign policy on human rights continues to be a major reference point in the international community. Additionally South Africa in the UN is revered as a



beacon of moral leadership in Africa and the globe. It is therefore prudent that human rights commitment remains a powerful instrument in our foreign policy toolkit. Moral leadership is a most discernable feature in the absence of globally competitive military resources, to profile SA while contributing to a 'rules based' multilateral system.

SA's commitment to the human rights of women: instituted reformist gains praiseworthy achievements

On 8 March the entire world celebrated International Women's day and a bold message was sent to the world, a world which is still by and large patriarchal, to eliminate human rights abuses and violence against women. South African history and sociology highlights the pain of triple oppression based on race, class and gender suffered by our mothers and sisters. Authors like Zine Magubani teach us that colonialism and the racist order created a hierarchy of races that subverted women's rights. Women and black men for example were seen as politically infantile and thus not worthy of the citizenship rights. Magubane establishes that the black man's fecundity (fertility and sensuality) was deemed as their core quality and nature, as opposed to rational colonists, which rendered the black man to be the "female of the human race", in the context of a misogynous and a patriarchal society. Therefore, blackness and femininity were

used "as a short hand for social marginality" The colonial project established a language that metaphorically deemed the poor white in the metro as "African savages- black" and the white women was equated to the black man. The black woman was in the lowest position in this hierarchy, and suffered the injustices of a white male supremacist patriarchy; the disregard and lack of solidarity from the white women; and the further suppression and denial of human rights from black patriarchy. (See Zine Magubane, Bringing the Empire home, 2004 p1-3).

Thus, the celebrations of these historic days, 8 and 21 March, here at home and across the globe seek to remind us not to repeat the repugnant epochs in our history where rampant marginalization and socio-economic exclusion were legitimized on the basis of race, religion and gender.

Human Rights in South Africa: a futuristic trajectory

The National Planning Commission's Diagnostic Report (2010:7) states that despite the success of the first decade in SA's democracy, South Africa runs the risk of falling short of meeting objectives of prosperous, united, non-racial and democratic South Africa with opportunity for everyone, irrespective of race and gender, if the work currently done on human rights is not intensified. Thus, as we mark Human Rights Day on 21 March, 2012, 18 years after our country's first truly democratic

elections, we should work against a business-as-usual attitude. Thus, South Africans should work for the achievement of a viable and stable democratic polity with socio-economic content.

This work is already in progress and is constitutionally documented, in this regard; the Bill of Rights in our Constitutions remains a guarantor of both civil and economic rights. In addition South Africa has set up institutions that promote and protect our constitutional democracy, wherein Human rights remain central to South Africa's domestic and international relations.

Conclusion

As we celebrate human rights day on 21st March, each one of us has an obligation to "move beyond thinking and talking about the foundations stones - to laying those foundation stones, inch by inch, together" in order to construct a true stable, united democratic society with opportunities without regard to race or gender. The human rights agenda in the foreign policy of South Africa continues to play a big role in South Africa's initiative to encourage democratization in Africa, and to democratize global governance. The statement by former President Mandela in the journal: Foreign Affairs, in 1993, that "human rights will be the light that guides South Africa's foreign policy", still rings true. The latter is seen in the role played by South Africa, domestically, sub-regionally, regionally and internationally. ☐



THE GHOSTS OF SHARPEVILLE



Jerry Tumelo Sibanyoni
Branch: DTRD
Directorate: Language Training

Did the 69 unarmed marchers know that on that fateful afternoon of March 21, 1960, they would give up their lives in the name of setting South Africa free? Did they know that they would be brutally killed by the police who were using live ammunition? Did it cross their minds that on that afternoon they would pay with their lives and be turned into martyrs? But did those freedom fighters know that 52 years later, after their tragic sacrifice, South Africa would sadly still be in an absurd maze of confusion about the true meaning of human rights?

Perhaps in answering the above questions we need to also examine the soul of our country. As we remember the fallen heroes and heroines of the Sharpeville massacre, we need to examine our progress and the following scenarios paint a clear picture of how far we've come as a nation:

"In 1959 the United Nations found that South Africa went against the principles of the UN Charter on the Declaration of Human Rights."

"In 2012 South Africa leads the United Nations on gay rights."

The two quoted scenarios tell a remarkable story of a country that has traveled a transformational journey to liberation. Today we look back and acknowledge the injustices of the past as depicted in the first quotation, but we, together with the international world, celebrate the South Africa that is defined in the second quotation. In 1966, six years after the Sharpeville massacre, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 March to be International Day for the Elimination of Discrimination in remembrance of that tragedy.

On the 9th of March 2012 the "Mail & Guardian" ran a piece entitled, "South Africa leads United Nations on gay rights."

The opening line read, "In a victory both moral and diplomatic, South Africa took the lead this [that] week during the first debate of the UN on the rights of sexual minorities." The debate was opened by UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, with a statement that referred to the discrimination and violence against sexual minorities as, "a monumental tragedy for those affected and a stain on our collective conscience." South Africa was one of the countries that called for an end to discriminatory homosexuality laws.

South Africa is to be congratulated for unapologetically championing the values of human rights both locally and abroad. This brave stance couldn't have come at a better time when we celebrate human rights month. In order to advance the culture of human rights and progressive civilization, modern South Africa needs to spearhead the cause of uprooting any form of discrimination. Much as the 21st of March reminds us all of our rights and of the many who laid their lives in order for us to enjoy our rights, Chapter two of our Constitution, the Bill of Rights, provides a concrete platform for each individual to claim their rightful place in society because, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it" (The Freedom Charter).

As South Africans, we need to understand that human rights are universal and inclusive, for a narrow and bigoted attitude leads to hypocrisy and hatred, and the latter is manifested in acts of xenophobia, racism, homophobia, and sexism, thus reawakening the ghosts of Sharpeville. Although we are a gradually transforming society, we still witness hate crimes and this becomes an indictment on our society for failing the unarmed men and women who were brutally massacred while fighting for our rights.



www.threatofrace.org

Reason suggests that until we stop denying our fellow citizens their rightful freedom to exist, through our bigoted and intolerant attitudes towards them, we can never truly be free to exercise our own rights. So the hypocrisy that we need to rid ourselves of is that whilst we are quick to cry foul when our rights are trampled upon, such as being called derogatory names because of our race, we, the victim, become the perpetrator when we, at some stage, feel free to trample on our fellow citizen's rights.

At the end of it all, human rights is a celebration of people for simply being human, so that what matters the most is that we are first human, then we fall in various categories such as race, ethnicity, country, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, religion etc. It should not matter who or what we are, but what should matter is that we are human.

The ghosts of the Sharpeville massacre are still haunting us today because of the intolerance of those who are different from us, thus perpetuating discrimination. Our attitude of intolerance dishonours those who suffered for justice and freedom. The simple logic is that when we unfairly discriminate our fellow beings, at some stage, we will also be victims of the same discrimination, thus feeding the vicious cycle.

Battles have been fought, blood has been spilled, tears shed, and laws written, and now it is up to us to grasp the baton of freedom firmly and run our race responsibly. And when doing so, let us honour the ghosts of Sharpeville by not turning a blind eye to the suffering of others, but by embracing virtues of tolerance, acceptance and ubuntu. By guarding against our own prejudices, we would finally lay the ghosts of the Sharpeville massacre to rest. ☐

DIRCO STAFF BEING CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE



Ambassador Jerry Matthews Matjila with Ms Grace Mason wearing their name tags

The Batho Pele principals are informed by 8 principles, they are aimed at changing the attitudes of public servants, and at creating a new service delivery culture for Public servants. These are in line with the White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service Act, which has set out eight (8) transformational priorities among which transforming service delivery is key.

These principles are aligned with the Constitutional values of promoting and maintaining high standards of professional ethics; providing service impartiality, fairness, and equitability, the proper utilisation of resources and efficiency. South African citizens are encouraged to participate in policy-making; in return assisting in rendering an accountable,

transparent, and development-oriented public administration. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that these values are realised.

The public service will be judged by one criterion which is effective delivery of services which is a basic priority to the public. In practical terms, the department is implementing the eight transformational priorities through service delivery programmes embedded in the Batho Pele (People First) initiatives. The Branch: Human Resources in partnership with the Branch: Public Diplomacy is distributing name-tags to all officials as part of implementing one of the Batho Pele Principles: "Ensuring Courtesy" and as guided by the Government Corporate Identity manual requirements which

By: Serialong Chauke

stipulate that every public servant should be clearly identifiable when providing a service to the public.

The concept of courtesy goes much wider than asking officials in the department to treat members of the public, stakeholders and visitors of the department as customers who are entitled to receive the highest standard of service they deserve from the public service. DIRCO adheres to the approved Cabinet memo that ensures that all officials should wear name tags at all times when on duty.

The standards will, among others cover the identification of officials of the department by name when dealing with customers, whether in person, telephonically, electronically and in writing. The code of good conduct for the public service issued by the Public Service Commission also makes reference to the concept of courtesy and regard for the public as one of the fundamental duties of the public servants, and thus due consideration should be given to putting the interests of the public first. DIRCO's officials remains part of the core team that ensures that we meet the service delivery needs of all our service beneficiaries. ☐

By: Mooketsi, GE
Presidential & Diplomatic Guesthouses

Creative Corner

There was a time in this country when colour determined your humanity
there was a time in this country when colour determined your career options
there was a time in this country when colour determined your place of work
there was a time in this country when colour determined your choice of school
there was a time in this country when colour determined your education system
there was a time in this country when colour determined your social circle

that time is the time when our heroes were found guilty for raising their voices
that time is the time when our heroes had to fled the country and be exiled
that time is the time when our heroes had to leave their families behind and stranded just to fight for all of usto fight for the freedom of this country
to fight for our human rights

that time is long gone and we are greatfull to our fighters
now is the time to celebrate
now is the time to rejoice
now is the time to build a nation
now is the time to celebrate our human rights

halala madiba
halala sobukwe
halala sisulu
halala tambo
halala human rights halala

E-GOVERNMENT: BEYOND SOUTH AFRICA'S 2011 POPULATION CENSUS



President Jacob Zuma shakes hands with Statistician General Pali Lehohla at his official residence in Pretoria.

South Africa's (SA) young democracy is challenged with the dual task of uplifting its population affected by centuries of oppression and discrimination, and developing within the global knowledge-based economy. The basis of this article is that population census is central to the determination of the service delivery needs and capacity in any modern democracy. The intention of the article is to generate constructive dialogue on how best South Africa could leverage global developments to improve its efficiencies – within the context of the country's socio-economic circumstances, including government's financial and human resource capacity. National population census was scheduled to be held in over 50 countries around the world in 2011, including the Republic of South Africa. On 20 September 2011, the Minister of National Planning, Mr. Trevor Manuel addressed Members of Parliament (MPs) about South Africa's census 2011 preparations. Although the preparatory work by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) was on course, the Minister had the following to say to the MPs: "what risks remain? - Perhaps the greatest risk is that people do not voluntarily participate in being counted - they shut the doors, let out the dogs and turn out the lights when the enumerators approach. Actually, the

only reason why people might respond in this manner is that we haven't taken the time to allay their fears and to explain to them that participation in the census, apart from it being a statutory obligation, is directly and unashamedly in their own best interest." (Stats SA Website) South Africa follows the traditional census method that involves mainly the enumeration of individuals using hand-delivered questionnaires and door-to-door visits for interviews. It is argued that although this traditional method is simple, it carries the risks of lower public cooperation and participation due to trust issues, and has huge financial costs. There are reports of isolated bogus census takers in countries like the United States of America (USA) from the 2000 census and in Australia in the 2006 census. In Canada and Ireland people have been fined for refusal to cooperate with census officials. So, this census method requires winning public

support for its success. Accordingly, Stats SA supported by Cabinet, when faced with similar cooperation and security challenges, continued to send messages of reassurance to the public through various media channels. According to the Population and Societies Journal (PSJ), another challenge of the traditional census method is that people are adopting mobile lifestyles and are managing their lives through various Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), therefore they are reluctant to complete manual forms and to give information already available in public registers. Many European countries have started adopting alternative census methods in order to respond to the above growing challenges associated with the traditional census method. Out of the 40 European countries, about half were still conducting traditional census by 2010, 5 dominated by the Scandinavian countries conduct



Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe campaigning for Census

census using the register method, and 13 have adopted a mixed approach representing the Baltic countries, several Central and some Southern European countries. France stands out with a rolling census over 5 years since 2004. (PSJ volume 467, Paolo Valenle:2010) The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation reported in 2008 that *the USA government launched an Internet-based data collection method for the population census in 2000. However, this Internet method was suspended for the 2010 census due to feared security risks and low response rates, and GPS-enabled handheld computers were introduced to assist enumerators during field interviews. On Internet security risks, the Foundation argues that most census related information is not as sensitive as information disclosed during revenue e-filing or e-banking, instead it is data that is easily accessible from public registers and therefore, the option for Internet-based data collection should have been*

left open. (Daniel Castro: February 2008) In 2010, Brazil launched its first digital census in partnership with the country's telecommunications industry. The enumerators used electronic handheld devices to collect and transmit data, and the public could also opt to complete the questionnaire on-line. The advantages of this initiative were improved outreach and

speed of data collection and transmission, including environmental friendliness.

(Thalif Deen, IPS, August 2010)

Thirteen countries in Europe introduced on-line census in 2011. Some of these countries are young democracies, namely Hungary, Estonia, Bulgaria, and Lithuania. Estonia's 65% Internet response level in 2011/12 surpassed the performance of Canada and South Korea in 2011 and 2010, respectively. In November 2011, Poland exhibited its on-line census project in close cooperation with the European Commission, "as the most interesting polish initiative in e-Administration currently implemented". (Central Statistics Office Poland).

What lessons can we take from our 2011 challenges and from international practice? Would the pure traditional census method still be best for South Africa in 2021? The traditional census method requires that individuals are enumerated through the completion of questionnaires. However, with the evolution of modern technologies, this method has a variety of data collection channels in addition to field interviews that are working reasonably well in other countries. Accordingly, the telecommunications industry and the postal services are central to the implementation of these diverse channels. Below are some of these channels of data collection:

1. The mail delivery of questionnaires: This channel allows respondents to complete the forms with minimal assistance. However, the channel would be most effective in communities with high levels of literacy and access to a reliable postal service.

2. The use of ICTs: With the widespread use of mobile telephony in South Africa, telephone interviews could provide speedy household responses and help to minimize field interviews. If adopted, the GPS-enabled handheld computers would not only facilitate field interviews, but would automate some of the traditional manual tasks of enumerators. Lastly, the questionnaire could also be posted on-line for e-filing. However, the challenge would be that only about 20% of South Africans have access to Internet. In 2003, the South African Government launched a successful world-class on-line revenue service, which could be likened to the Financial Services e-banking system in terms of the confidentiality, integrity, availability, authenticity and non-repudiation characteristics. This service is used by South Africans who have access to Internet, as a filing method of choice. It is one of the best e-government initiatives that the South African government has launched since the advent of Internet! No system is foolproof – the e-census questionnaire can be bungled like in Australia in 2011 where some users omitted to press the "submit" button after completing the questionnaire (Chris Jager: Connecting the Australian Channel, August, 2010). Nevertheless, well managed, and with sufficient security awareness, e-filing does not only provide speed and efficiencies, it dilutes the rancor that is associated with face-to-face contact.

Despite the anxiety that was experienced at the commencement of our 2011 census, the project was successfully executed, overwhelming household participation was reported, and the overall results are expected in 2013. However, a lot more still needs to be done, and therefore, the results should present the country with an opportunity to debate the need for a gradual shift to a much wider data collection mix, in order to improve on the implementation of this crucial national project. □

*Sources: Stats SA and other on-line publications. Due to space constraints, full sources will be made available on request.

THE STATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR THE ROMA PEOPLE IN BULGARIA

"In Bulgaria the rights of the Roma people and discriminatory practices which disadvantage them is a huge issue"



The St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral a Bulgarian Orthodox cathedral in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. Built in Neo-Byzantine style, is one of the largest Eastern Orthodox cathedrals in the world, as well as one of Sofia's symbols and primary tourist attractions.

In South Africa, the Roma are not an issue. We have enough of our own problems around discrimination based on race and ethnicity. I first encountered a powerful lobby for Roma rights at the UN World Conference against racism in Durban in 2001, which I attended as a member of South Africa's Parliamentary delegation. The Roma group at the conference was very articulate and certainly dominated some proceedings and I recall watching former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan using all his diplomatic skills to restore order at one of the meetings where Roma issues were on the agenda.

By contrast in Bulgaria the rights of the Roma people and discriminatory practices which disadvantage them is a huge issue which, from time to time explodes with very negative consequences which I will refer to below. However, as I indicate below, it seems

that in accordance with EU requirements from January 2012, the Bulgarian government will have a final strategy for social integration of the Roma in place. *1 It is appropriate that on the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and programme of action recently commemorated in New York, to draw attention to the plight of the Roma people.

I refer to Bulgaria as I am currently South Africa's ambassador in this small but beautiful country on the South Eastern border of the EU, of which it is the poorest member.

Bulgaria is officially home to an estimated 325 343 Roma or 4.9% of the population who self identifies as such – although some unofficial data estimates double that number

out of a population of ± 7.5 million. *2 typically the Roma tend to live in abandoned ghettos with garbage strewn streets and in ramshackle houses. According to reports in the media, extortion, human trafficking, baby selling and other menaces are rife in Roma ghettos. *3

I was first aware of Roma people when I noticed the young sex workers who were always standing on the corner of the ring road where we turn off to the official residence. "Oh, they're Roma" I was told. Then on my first Mandela Day as Ambassador on 18th July 2009 we adopted and visited two orphanages on a town called Kyustendil at the suggestion of a South African missionary here. We were told most of the children there were from Roma parents.

This possibility is supported by figures recently released by the Bulgarian Child Protection Agency, according to which there were 3,440 children aged 7 to 18 in social care homes for children deprived of parental care in 2010, and just over half of them were of Roma origin – a totally disproportionate number. In the homes for children aged 0-3 years, 1,190 out of a total of 2,334 children were Roma, and in the homes for children with mental disabilities approximately a third of a total of 956 children are of Roma origin. *3 According to the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee which is very active on this and other socio-economic issues, particularly affecting women and children, among the prime reasons for the institutionalization of Roma children is poverty, low education status, inadequate housing and inadequate social services for Roma children and families. *4

Having become more sensitized to the Roma issue in Bulgaria after a few months in the country it became very easy to identify Roma settlements. They stand out from other residential areas in a way similar to South Africa's squatter settlements and semi-developed township areas. It seems the authorities in Bulgaria have little power or inclination to exercise control over these large Roma ghettos in towns, villages and clan. The Chiefs or so-called local "tsars" are left to rule, often with very negative consequences as I will indicate below. Any integration strategy which might have existed on paper seems to have been more honoured in the breach. *5

Not surprisingly then the Roma issue and particularly how it affects women and children has exercised the minds of a number of ambassadors here were research and visits to Roma settlements have been carried out and reports on this made available to the general community of ambassadors. In May 2010 a number of EU Embassies in Sofia (Spain, France, Italy, Finland and Hungary) embarked on a so-called Roma Initiative with the objective of taking stock of the present situation. I was party to some of the events, such as the ground breaking Roma Fashion Show hosted at the Italian Ambassador's Residence in June 2010 with the particular purpose of putting the spotlight on Roma women in a positive way. In this he succeeded magnificently in that the outstanding Roma designed and made garments and the extensive media coverage of the show helped to boost the image of Roma women in Sofia particularly.

I was also present when a briefing

on the field trips undertaken to Roma neighbourhoods by the French and Italian Ambassadors was given to the so-called Non-Group of ambassadors. (This is a regular monthly event at which some EU ambassadors and some from the IBSA / BRICS and other leading countries meet to exchange information and views over lunch). There were also round table discussions on Roma issues. The briefings and the revelations at the round table discussions paint a picture on neglect and non-inclusion and the conclusion was that the humanitarian situation found in the neighbourhoods visited should not exist anymore inside the EU.

The Ambassadors were careful to note that they were aware of the complexities of the issue and that the purpose of the initiative which was well publicised in the media was not to criticize the Bulgarian government particularly given the fact that the issue was of concern to other EU countries. The exercise was a fact finding one and one of its aims was to share the observations with the authorities in Sofia and representatives of international organisations in Sofia spurred on by the knowledge that the European Commission was developing an EU framework for National Roma Integration strategies up to 2020.

The facts uncovered and reconfirmed were that the Roma neighbourhoods visited were in effect ghettos. One, near the town of Sliven with more than 20000 inhabitants occupying less than 2sq.km is one of the biggest Roma neighbourhoods in Europe. They are clearly separated from the rest of the cities of which they are part with limited roads to enter them; many roads were not properly asphalted; a majority of households lacked access to quality water; there was a lack of functioning waste water collection systems and little public lighting. The Roma neighbourhood in Sliven is accessed through only one road using cars and one pedestrian tunnel under the railroad. A high wall along the railroad is a symbol of the reduced mobility of the inhabitants and such walls exist in many other Roma neighbourhoods in Bulgaria. In addition there was a lack of public transport to enter the districts visited. Even teachers in the school had to walk 20 minutes to the nearest bus terminus. There is a notable absence of public authorities and public investment in these neighbourhoods, with the exception of church and mosques which have played a positive role fighting alcoholism and are also used by some NGO's as informal health centres. As a South African this obvious marginalisation

of Roma communities gave me a sensation of "deja vu" mixed with outrage that this can be tolerated in a post-apartheid era in that most developed community, the EU.

The reports of the field trips paid particular attention to the problems around education and the plight of girls and women in these ghettos who suffer badly from the exclusion and the poor living conditions in the Roma communities.

The first major problem affecting girls emphasised in the reports was early marriage. Majority of the girls in the 2 communities investigated got married between the ages of 12 and 16 with a high school dropout rate as a consequence. This is in violation of Bulgarian law but little or nothing is done about it. Even girls who don't get married so early live in fear of "kidnapping" which seems to be a traditional practice where the girl have no option but to marry the boy who "kidnapped" her – again contributing to a high school dropout rate. The women also suffer much more than Roma men from human trafficking and prostitution. As I indicated on the roads around Sofia and other large cities Roma prostitutes openly plying their trade with their pimps hiding in the background are a common sight. Mixed marriages between Bulgarians and Roma are rare.

According to research of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee which has been most active in conducting research into prostitution and trafficking in Roma communities, approximately 80% of those charged with offences related to prostitution are Roma; 70-80% of victims of trafficking of women and children are Roma and 80% of all those trafficked abroad for sexual exploitation are Roma. This is based on empirical evidence obtained from the police at local level as very little data is available through official channels such as the State Agency for Child Protection and the Ministry of the Interior. Trafficking in human beings was recognised as human rights issue late in Bulgaria – when legislation was adopted and an institutional setup prepared from 2003 onwards. *6

As an EU member Bulgaria is a signatory to Council of Europe conventions against trafficking in human beings (2005) and on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (2007). It has a Commission for Combating Trafficking and a National Action plan against sexual exploitation of children but in its research the Helsinki Committee did not find any evidence

(Continues on page 22)

(from page 21)



Sozopol is one of the oldest seaside resort and town in Bulgaria

of state funding for any implementation of this or for publicly available reports – not even in the reports of the State Agency for Child Protection. It seems Bulgarian and international NGO's are more active in this field than the Bulgarian government.

The EU ambassadors' field trips also paid attention to education. The main focus of activists in Roma communities is to promote desegregation by bringing Roma children from one of their ghettos to downtown schools with other Bulgarian children as the only way to break the exclusion of the Roma community and integrate them into the general community. The EU ambassadors were involved in these efforts on the basis of EU solidarity. Bulgaria has the lowest GDP in the EU which it joined in the beginning of 2007. There is therefore recognition that Bulgaria needs financial assistance to meet the challenge of Roma inclusion.

My experience as an ambassador here, which is shared by other ambassadors, is that at local level Bulgarian authorities and actors here (especially in the schools) often work hard to find ways for better inclusion of Roma communities. However field workers from the Helsinki Committee have encountered up to now an unwillingness to grapple with the problem at higher levels of government.

From time to time there are incidents which demonstrate that inclusion is a long way from being achieved: At the end of September Bulgaria was shocked by an incident on September 23 in which, after a dispute, a 19-year old Bulgarian man was run over and killed by the Roma driver of a minibus in a Roma village near Plovdiv (called Katunitsa) - Bulgaria's second largest city and home to 40000 Roma. 7 Word soon spread that the driver worked for the local Roma clan boss or so-called "Tsar" and very soon there followed angry protests against Roma and attacks on the "Tsar's" property in

the village and other parts of Plovdiv. Within hours there were large demonstrations in 20 Bulgarian cities including Sofia. Police guarded entrances to Roma neighbourhoods across the country. In the midst Bulgarians were protesting against Roma and Roma communities arming themselves. Hundreds were arrested and charged. The Chief Prosecutor sent orders to local prosecutors to immediately investigate charges of "inciting ethnic hatreds" a criminal offence in Bulgaria punishable in by up to 6 years in prison.

The Prime Minister, Boyko Borissov and the President Georgi Parvanov made a show of unity by visiting the Roma village where the killing occurred. In a speech Mr Borissov demanded ethnic peace to guarantee Bulgaria's prosperity.

Since the incident newspapers regularly carry reports on charges being processed against offenders. A young Bulgarian man, 23, was given a suspended sentence of 10 months and 3 year's probation for stirring ethnic violence and racial hatred by organising a Facebook event called "Roma slaughter".*7

The Roma "Tsar" of Katunitsa himself was arrested on charges of large scale tax evasion. He is still being held in prison on those and other charges. The other day he paid 9 years' worth of unpaid taxes to the authorities. Local officials of the National Revenue Agency are being investigated for corruption.

An uneasy peace has since returned. Bulgaria generally prides itself on being a nation tolerant of all minorities – for example 15% of its population is made up of ethnic Turks who have their own political party in Parliament. A source of pride is that during World War Two (WWII) Bulgaria saved its 50000 Strong Jewish population from the death camps.

Ironically the Roma "Tsar" in Katunitsa whose driver initially caused the trouble had tried to start a political party for Roma in 1998 but it came to nothing. Currently there is no specific political representation of the Roma community in Bulgaria. Until the Katunitsa event Roma issues were not on the agenda of any of the 18 political parties which registered to fight the local government and presidential elections which took place on 23rd and 30th October 2011. Politically it is still a non issue.

It is perhaps significant that within 6 weeks of the Katunitsa incident on 14 November 2011 Bulgaria announced its own Draft National Strategy for Roma Integration

(2012-2020) with much fanfare at an event launched by the Minister of Interior and Deputy Prime Minister Tsvetan Tsvetanov, and drawn up, by the working group of Bulgaria's National Council on Ethnic and Integration Issues.*8

Claiming to be a political framework and strategic document setting out directions for implementation of Bulgaria's Roma social integration policy in line with the EU framework for National Roma Strategies it focuses on 5 priorities: employment, education, healthcare, living conditions and non discrimination. This strategy was adopted by the cabinet on 5 January 2012.

Speakers at the event included the World Bank Country Manager for Bulgaria who made the point that only 13% of working age Roma had completed secondary education and that there was a clear economic reason why Roma inclusion was crucial to Bulgaria (Bulgaria loses an estimated EURO 340M in fiscal contributions as a result of this).*9

Bulgaria's Minister in charge of EU funds and the Education Minister also spoke, making three points: there is no alternative to Roma integration which must comply with EU rules; they appealed for EU funding to assist Bulgarian local government structures to comply with the strategy and they appealed to Roma leaders to cooperate, the Education Minister saying that education will dilute ethnic differences.

It seems that at least in terms of political commitment to Roma inclusion the tide has turned, though the jury is still out on the pace of implementation of the strategy.

This is an opportune time for South African authorities to explore ways to contribute to what is now an active EU strategy even in its poorest nations. ☐

Footnotes and References

- *1.Bulgarian telegraph Agency (BTA) Daily News 11 January 2012
 *2>Data from the National Statistical Institute from the 2011 Population Census. According to English news services in Bulgaria (e.g. Novinite.com., BTA Daily News and Sofia Echo weekly) it is well known that many Roma avoid being counted in census). *3.Thematic study on child trafficking in Bulgaria by Slavka Kukova August 2008 (study for Helsinki Committee) and Reports in Bulgaria's Novinite.com. and BTA Daily News – English on-line news services and Sofia Echo weekly. *4. Report of the Bulgarian Child Protection Agency released in 2011 and reported in Bulgarian Novinite.com. and BTA Daily News on-line English services and quoted by Bulgaria's Helsinki Committee. *5.Report on the Roma Initiative held by European Embassies in Bulgaria May 4th – 12th (non-paper). Article "Roma children at risk and an unhitched government system" by researcher Slavka Kukova 25th August 2011. Articles by Galina Kostadinova, Bulgarian legal advisor of Minority Rights Group International based in London "Recent crisis shows that not only Bulgaria but also the EU still fail the Roma" and "Recent anti-Roma tensions show that not only Bulgaria but also the EU fail the Roma". *6.Trafficking of Roma in Eastern and Central Europe: Analysing the Effectiveness of National Laws and Policies in Prevention, Prosecution and Victim Support by Slavka Kukova 2010 (A Helsinki Committee commissioned study). *7.Extensive reports in the media and TV including the English on-line services Novinite.com. and BTA Daily News and the Sofia Echo weekly September 24th – October 6th 2011. *8.Draft National Strategy for Roma Integration in the Republic of Bulgaria (2012 – 2020) published on 14 November 2011 and adopted by a decision of the Bulgarian government on 5 January 2012. *9 Speech by Marcus Repnik, World Bank Country Manager in Bulgaria at the event on 14 November 2011.

CAUGHT UP IN A COUP IN MALI

"It appeared that the increasing number of soldiers returning in body bags from northern Mali not only infuriated the troops, but also their families and the rest of the Malian population."



Laoura Lazouras at the AU peace and security council meeting in Bamako Mali

My visit to Mali took an unexpected turn, when, on Wednesday night, 21 March 2012, mutinous, mid-ranking troops stormed Mali's capital, Bamako, taking control of the Presidential palace, the state broadcasting corporation and other institutions.

The disgruntled troops of the Malian army dissolved the country's Constitution, closed all borders of this landlocked country, as well as the airspace, thus forcibly seizing power from President Amadou Toumani Toure and his Cabinet. The President subsequently went into hiding and his Cabinet Ministers were arrested.

Although this coup d'état came as a shock to me, it was quite revealing to discover that there were rumours of an imminent rebellion despite the fact that national elections in Mali were only a month away and that President Toure, after having already served two terms, was not eligible to run for re-election.

The Malian army has for some time been unhappy with the way President

Toure was handling the Tuareg rebellion in the northern part of Mali. This ultimately led to a few soldiers, the coup-plotters, deciding that they had enough of the President's failure to support and properly equip the soldiers.

Having read the reports leading up to the takeover, it appeared that the increasing number of soldiers returning in body bags from northern Mali not only infuriated the troops, but also their families and the rest of the Malian population.

A few days before the coup, the Malian Government hosted a Ministerial Meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC). The Council considered the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region, as well as the situation in the northern part of Mali.

As the Media Liaison official, I was in Bamako with other DIRCO officials to cover South Africa's participation at the meeting. Our delegation was led by Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane.

I was fortunate to witness President Toure chair the meeting of the PSC and even had the opportunity to be at



the Presidential palace where Minister Nkoana-Mashabane paid a courtesy call to the President. The Minister informed President Toure that South Africa has taken heed of the call by Mali for humanitarian relief in the areas where immediate assistance was required.

After concluding a successful visit to Mali, I, together with two other DIRCO officials, i.e. my colleague, Mr Siba Mdena, as well as Ambassador Mdu Lembede, Chief Director: West Africa, departed for Bamako International Airport on that fateful Wednesday night.

After checking in, we waited in the VIP lounge to board our flight back home.

Oblivious to what was happening in Bamako, I started to feel restless and repeatedly asked an airport official for the boarding time for Kenya Airways. Since I could not speak French, nor he English, I tried to make sense of what he was struggling to tell me. I thought he was trying to say that the flight has been delayed. He kept shaking his head vigorously, waving his hands in the air. Since he realised that I did not understand him, he sent a protocol official to announce to us that our flight had been cancelled. The official stated that Kenya Airways' plane was turned away by the airport tower and could

(Continues on page 24)



(from page 23)



South African Embassy in Bamako - Mali



A view from Radisson Blu hotel window in Mali

therefore not land in Bamako and was consequently diverted to Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso.

After a few minutes of confusion and disbelief, the news of the mutiny spread and the airport was shut down with effect.

Stunned by the news, we contacted the South African Embassy which speedily arranged to transport us back to our hotel.

The Radisson Blu hotel, where we were staying, was full of stranded guests, some of whom also returned due to the airport closure. On arrival, we were told that the hotel was fully booked. Luckily for us, the Presidential suite was made available and for the next week, the suite became our place of safety. During this unsettling time, we three DIRCO officials connected by trying to remain positive and lifting each other's spirits.

In the next couple of days, news of foreigners and expatriates stranded in Mali, including a few African Foreign Ministers and government officials who were in Bamako for the PSC, came to the fore.

For almost a week, we remained cooped up in the hotel, not daring to venture out into the streets. The military imposed a curfew from six o'clock in the evening to the early hours of the morning.

Most businesses, schools and government institutions in Bamako remained closed. During the first two nights since the coup, we could hear gunshots go off in the night and occasionally during the day. News of lootings and hijacking of

vehicles by soldiers, as well as looming food and fuel shortages in Bamako, circulated. Some of the guests at the hotel, who I befriended, told me of seeing soldiers coming to the hotel, requesting that the management release the hotel's guest list. I presumed they were looking for certain senior government officials that have gone into hiding.

Although we felt safe in the hotel with the military repeatedly calling for calm in the Capital, one could not help but feel helpless and uneasy about the whole situation, considering the fact that the coup has been widely condemned.

The military was becoming increasingly isolated and pressured to restore the elected Government. The African Union spared no time in suspending Mali's membership. In the meantime, the Tuareg rebels were advancing to key towns in the north of the country.

Six days after the coup, the military allowed for the partial reopening of the airport on Tuesday, 27 March 2012. Anxious to getting back home, we requested the Embassy to check for commercial airlines possibly leaving on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Fortunately, the Embassy managed to get us seats on a chartered plane owned by a mining company, Ashanti Gold, which was in the process of evacuating some of its employees and their family members to Dakar, Senegal, that Tuesday.

After a bumpy and turbulent flight to

Dakar, we boarded the SAA flight to Johannesburg the very next day.

Looking back on my experience in Mali, I am very thankful to our Embassy staff in Bamako, who took such good care of us during this volatile time. I now have a much better understanding and appreciation for officials serving in hardship missions.

Ambassador Mokou and his officials checked up on us every day and even sent over a warm, home-cooked South African meal, which cheered us up immensely. As South Africans, we take the spirit of Ubuntu with us wherever we go, no matter what situation we find ourselves in.

Malians are known for being a peaceful and dignified nation. I was amazed with the way in which the Mali civilians in Bamako handled the coup with such calmness. Looking out of my hotel window, I could see Malians going about their day in spite of the coup: a mother and her child walking with a basket of goods to sell at a nearby market; an elderly man setting up his kiosk to sell cigarettes, sweets and vegetables; and courageous youth on scooters travelling to their various destinations.

As for the hotel staff at the Radisson Blu, they remained composed, friendly and very helpful throughout our stay, making us feel relaxed and comfortable.

I wish the people of Mali all the best and pray for a speedy solution to the crisis currently facing their country. ☐

Uruguay provides post support to soccer youth development in the Northern Cape



The Uruguayan national soccer team and their national soccer authority established relationship ties with the people and authorities of Kimberley and the Northern Cape when they had their base-camp in Kimberly during the 2010 FIFA World Cup. The Northern Cape Government, the Municipality of Kimberley and the people of the city gave the Uruguayan team a very warm welcome on their arrival and supported them throughout the World Cup. The Uruguayans are still talking with huge appreciation about the hospitality extended to the Uruguayan team. This resulted in the Uruguayan National Football Association (AUF) offering to assist with soccer youth development in the Northern Cape and signing a Declaration of intent in that regard with the Government of the Northern Cape before returning to Uruguay after the World Cup.



Ambassador Dawie Jacobs with From left to right (at the back): Mr Theodoric Khupa, SAFA Executive Member; Mr Daniel Banales, Technical Director of AUF; Mr Miguel Sejas, Vice President of AUF; Mr Faisal Aysen, Director General of Department of Sport and Culture of the Northern Cape; Mr Ahmed Jinnah, Senior Manager Stakeholder Liaison; and Dr Sebastian Bauza, President of AUF. In the foreground from left to right: Dr Eduardo Belza, Team Manager of the Uruguayan National Team

The visit of Heads of Mission to the Northern Cape during July 2011 as part of the provincial outreach at the conclusion of the Head of Mission Conference in South Africa provided an opportunity for Ambassador Dawie Jacobs, Charge D'Affaires of the SA Embassy in Montevideo, to follow up on the issue of Uruguayan assistance to soccer youth development. Subsequently, the Uruguayan Football Association (AUF), in close consultation with the Embassy, sent their Director for Technical Development, Mr Daniel Banales, on a fact finding mission in September 2011 to evaluate the level of soccer, facilities and opportunities for cooperation in Kimberley and the Northern Cape in general.

In the latest development a four member delegation consisting of Mr Faisal Aysen, Director General, and two senior officials of the Department of Sport and Culture of the Northern Cape and Mr Theodoric Khupe, Executive Member of SAFA, visited Uruguay from 4 to 11 March 2012 as guests of AUF. The MEC for Sport unfortunately had to cancel her participation at the last minute due to poor health.

Besides fine-tuning the agreement

on cooperation, the delegation had an extensive exposure to all aspects of the very impressive all-encompassing soccer structures and facilities of Uruguay, with special emphasis on youth development that will be one of the focus areas in the planned assistance to Uruguay.

The President of AUF mentioned that the current success of the Uruguayan National team, can be traced back to the implementation of their youth programme about six years before the FIFA World Cup in SA. Proportional to the population Uruguay ranks among the top countries in the world as far as number of players are concerned. They also had a meeting with the Uruguayan Department of Sport and Tourism.

AUF also received a delegation from another African country and when they learned about the assistance to the Northern Cape, they requested AUF for the same assistance.

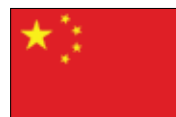
The President of AUF, Dr Sebastian Bauza and the Manager of the National team Dr Eduardo Belza have been invited by the Government of the Northern Cape to attend an awards ceremony related to the FIFA World Cup 2010 in Kimberley during the last week of March, where the Agreement on Cooperation between AUF

and Northern Cape will also be signed.

The "matching" of Uruguay and the Northern Cape for soccer youth development is a very positive development. Uruguay is one of the leading countries in world soccer today and since it has its own challenges within Uruguay with the development of sport in rural areas, they are well placed to guide and assist the Northern Cape. They also have a very successful youth development programme from which the Northern Cape will surely benefit.

This concrete outcome flowing from the positive impact of the World Cup confirms the strength of our "soft power", namely our people who built this strong relationship with the Uruguayans during the World Cup.

The fact that the Uruguayan Football Association (AUF) is honouring their commitment to support soccer development in the Northern Cape is not only a reflection of the strong ties established during the World Cup, but is also in line with the longstanding and cordial ties between our two countries, also and especially in the area of sport cooperation, especially in respect of rugby and soccer. ☐



World's Largest Telescope bringing technological revolution to Africa



South African Ambassador to China Dr. Bheki Langa addressing delegates

the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio-telescope project, what would be the world's largest telescope worth billions of US dollars.

Amidst all the negative publicity and the myths around Africa being a dark continent, South Africa took a leading role on an African bid to host the SKA project. It was proven to the world that South Africa can host such an enormous undertaking, as was illustrated by our hosting of the FIFA World Cup in 2010.

Although the World Cup was only concentrated in South Africa, the hosting of the world's largest telescope will be different. Besides the main satellite dishes being located in South Africa, the SKA project will involve reconfiguring and linking satellites in 8 African countries.

The presentation was attended by a large cross-section of the African Diplomatic Corps in Beijing, key Chinese academics, businesspeople, as well as journalists and practitioners in the field of astrophysics.

Deputy Minister Hanekom was joined at the presentation by Dr. Bernard Fanaroff, the Director of the South African SKA project, who gave an in-depth description of the technical and scientific aspects of the bid proposal. In addition, he also highlighted the potential business and

investment opportunities, for Chinese companies, that the SKA project would generate in South Africa and the 8 other African countries. In his message, the Deputy Minister underscored the advantage of the South African bid when he stated that "Representing an unparalleled opportunity to leap forward in mankind's understating of science and astronomy, South Africa's Karoo Radio Astronomy Reserve offers a perfect location for such an undertaking."

The audience became excited, when the Deputy Minister highlighted that the successful South African designed and built MeerKAT was one of the precursors for the global SKA, and that South Africa was working with other African governments to host the largest radio telescope in Africa. The successful SKA presentation was preceded by various meetings that the Deputy Minister held with the Chinese vice Minister of Science and Technology, representatives from Chinese enterprises, and the Chinese astronomy community. Deputy Minister Hanekom also found some time to visit the optical telescope site in Hebei Province to learn more about the Large-Area-Multi-Object-Spectroscopic-Telescope (LAMOST), in the context of strengthening scientific and technological ties between South Africa and China. □

South African Food Festival at the Sofia Hilton Hotel



Ambassador Camerer with from Left to right Memoria Choma, Adriana Tzvetkova, Nomsa Motloung, Galia Hristova, Dilyana Ileva, Annie Vitkova, Vanya Kombakova

As part of the celebrations on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between South Africa and Bulgaria the South African Embassy in Sofia organised a weeklong Festival of South African Food

and wine at the Sofia Hilton Hotel. The Hilton Group brought curry specialist Chef Jonathan Naidoo from the Durban Hilton to Sofia and Qatar Airlines sponsored the South African Chef's ticket – this was his first overseas trip.

The week kicked off with a cocktail function with 150 guests. This was followed by a curry evening at the Hilton's main restaurant. Ambassador Camerer's Indian colleague and his wife, who were invited, pronounced Jonathan Naidoo's curry as "excellent".

A Gala Dinner fundraising event for a local children's charity took place the following evening with former Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev and the Deputy Minister for Social Policy and Labour attending as guests of honour. □



Thailand's 8th Defence & Security 2012 show



The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Dr Lindiwe Sisulu was one of the high profile guests invited to attend the 8th Defence & Security 2012 Show held at Impact Exhibition Centre Bangkok, Thailand. H.E. Ambassador Ruby Marks accompanied Minister Sisulu during her visit to the show. The show which was organised by the Ministry of Defence was held from 5 – 8 March 2012 and was based on unique concepts which were exhibition, technical, special seminars, presentations, live demonstrations and networking.

Apart from Minister Sisulu, other key figures who attended the event included, but were not limited to, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for National Defence of Cambodia as well as other defence ministers from Malaysia, the Philippines along with military top brasses and Ambassadors.

There were 212 arms producing companies from 35 different countries across the world exhibiting a wide variety of both large and small defence and security equipments including bullet-proof vests, medical tents to armoured vehicles, humvees, flight simulators and drones.

There were three South African companies with pavilions namely; Denel Dynamics, OTT Armoured Vehicles, CSIR Defence, peace, safety and

Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Dr Lindiwe Sisulu with From left to Right: Ms. Salinee Punyarachun from Variety City Life, Ambassador Ruby Marks, Ms. M. Chowgley: PA to the Minister and Ms. M. S Dube: Head of Protocol – Office of the Minister



security, whereas ARMSCOR just sent representatives. Countries such as Germany, the United States, Czech Republic, France, South Korea, Israel, Singapore, Belarus, Russia, Poland and Thailand also set up their national pavilions.

The show which is normally held every two years, envisaged over 8,272 defence and security related visitors.

Minister Sisulu also paid a courtesy call to the Thai Defence Minister Air Chief Marshal Sukumpol Suwanatat during which they discussed areas of cooperation

between South Africa & Thailand.

The Minister's visit attracted a lot of media interest.

Among the interviews which the Minister had were those with special focus on lifestyle, the minister was featured on a weekly programme called "City Life", whereby an interest was sparked by the fact that South Africa had a female defence minister thus they were keen to know how she balanced her work with that of being a married woman. The interview was broadcast on True Vision Channel 71 on the same day. □

South Africa elected to bureau of intergovernmental Environmental Review (IGR-3) conference in Manila



Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms. Rejoice Mabudafhasi led the South African delegation to the IGR-3 under the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) held in Manila, Philippines from 25 – 27 January 2012. A total of 85 other government representatives and the European commission attended the Conference, which was entitled "Towards a Greener Coastal Economy". It included a Ministerial Segment preceded by a two day Technical Global Conference on Land – Ocean Connections. The latter reviewed key and emerging marine and coastal management issues and policy frameworks, to build consensus on improved coastal resources management. The major unanimous outcome of IGR-3

was the agreement by governments to increase efforts to tackle key land-based sources affecting coastal water quality. The Deputy Minister's statement to the media stated that: "South Africa supports the notion that the three priority pollutants be treated as 'resources' with a potential to support 'green economic growth'. We need to find ways of putting excess nutrients, wastewater and litter to good use."

The Conference also adopted the Manila Declaration aimed at furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action (GPA) for the period 2012 – 2016 and calling for the establishment of global partnerships on the priority pollutants. South Africa was elected to the 5-member GPA Bureau, whose primary role is to monitor and guide implementation of the



Ambassador Nyamande-Pitso and Embassy staff in Manila with Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi and a delegation from the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs

GPA, and also to oversee preparations for the next IGR. □

