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Freedom Day celebrations around the world



Freedom Day on 27 April is an annual celebration of South Africa's first non-racial democratic elections of 1994. It is significant because it marks the end of over 300 years of colonialism, segregation and white minority rule and the establishment of a new democratic government led by Nelson Mandela and a new state subject to a new Constitution.

South African missions across the world also celebrated Freedom Day in April. The editorial committee decided to produce a special edition telling stories of how missions celebrated the day.



Union Buildings, Pretoria

Like an ancient temple adorning over the city it governs, the Union Buildings are a modern-day acropolis. Built at the highest point of South Africa's capital city, Pretoria, it forms the official seat of South Africa's government and houses The Presidency.



Parliament, Cape Town

Parliament plays a direct and active role in national affairs. It is the place where the members of Parliament look after your interests.



Freedom Park, Pretoria

The site of Freedom Park was carefully chosen, a 52-hectare undeveloped hill overlooking the city of Pretoria. It was here that the nation's heroes would be honoured and the complex story of South Africa and its people would be told. Freedom Park is a memorial to honour those who sacrificed their lives to win freedom. It also celebrates and explores the country's diverse peoples and our common humanity.



Constitution Hill, Johannesburg

These areas host gripping exhibitions with themes that reveal South Africa's rich heritage and advocate human rights. Furthermore, Constitution Hill is an imperative platform for heritage-, education- and tourism-related programmes.



Brick Tower, Kliptown

The brick tower symbolises freedom and democracy. It's built where the Freedom Charter was adopted by the Congress of the People in 1955, Kliptown.



Flame of Freedom, Kliptown

The Flame of Freedom in the Freedom Charter Monument in Kliptown, in the Johannesburg metropolitan area. The flame was lit in June 2005 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Freedom Charter.

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Mumbai, India

The Consulate-General in Mumbai hosted the 22nd Freedom Day celebrations under the theme "Together Building Better Communities – Local Government is Everybody's Business", with the aim of highlighting South Africa's democratic processes and the forthcoming local elections to be held on 3 August 2016, and to introduce the newly appointed Consul-General, Maropene Ramokgopa, to the Consulate-General's stakeholders in Mumbai.

The occasion was utilised to, among other things, heighten the profile of South Africa; promote closer cooperation between the South African Consulate-General, the Maharashtra Government and the diplomatic community; recognise the role of India in the liberation of South Africa; inform invitees of the Government's priorities; and highlight some of the achievements made with regard to South Africa-India relations.

Approximately 400 guests from the Mumbai Consular Corps, the Maharashtra Government, the Consulate-General's key business and tourism stakeholders and friends attended the celebrations.

The guests were entertained by maskandi extraordinaire, Maqhinga Radebe, and David Jenkins, popularly known as Qadasi.

Many of the guests were seen dancing to the rhythm of maskandi.



Consul-General Ramokgopa (fourth from right) with staff members of the Consulate



New Delhi, India

The South African High Commission in New Delhi, India, celebrated Freedom Day on 27 April 2016 under the Indian skies in the garden of the Grand Hotel, aptly situated on Nelson Mandela Marg (street).

High Commissioner France K Morule hosted the celebration commemorating South Africa's freedom.

The High Commissioner noted in his speech that huge strides had been made in South Africa to attain the stability that the country currently enjoys. The High Commissioner further highlighted the "special place India occupies in the struggle against apartheid". He added that South Africa would always remember the contribution India had made to the anti-apartheid movement and recognised the shared icon, Mahatma Gandhi's, political activism and consciousness that developed in South Africa.

The High Commissioner emphasised the strengthening of South Africa-India economic relations. India ranks among the top five major countries investing in South Africa. The investments cover a wide spectrum such as pharmaceutical products, the automotive sector and information and communications technology.

The High Commission was privileged to have as the honoured guest the Minister of State for Finance, Jayant Sinha. The Minister spoke passionately about the similarities of the two nations and the shared goals the countries had.

The Consul-General based in Mumbai, Maropene Ramokgopa, was in attendance. Additionally, the Mission was honoured to

have approximately 35 Tshwane University of Technology students studying in India on a two-week course; our Director-General, Ambassador Jerry Matjila; and the Deputy Director-General for the Branch: Asia and the Middle East, Dr Anil Sooklal, attending the evening festivities. Several prominent Indian businesspeople, diplomats and friends of South Africa indicated their excitement to be part of the country's National Day celebrations and to be able to share in the festive atmosphere. The Mission showcased South African food and wine, which was prepared by South African High Commission staff and their spouses. The fires for the braai were lit early afternoon with 200 kg of chops flown in from South Africa being prepared and braaied by the staff – a true labour of love taking into account the temperatures in New Delhi.

A band that performed popular songs rounded off the night that was truly a celebration of the coming together of South African and Indian culture.



From Left to right: Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr Malusi Mogale, Honorary Consul, Mr V Sahney, Minister Jayant Sinha, High Commissioner France Morule, Consul-General Maropene Ramokgopa



Guests enjoying the evening



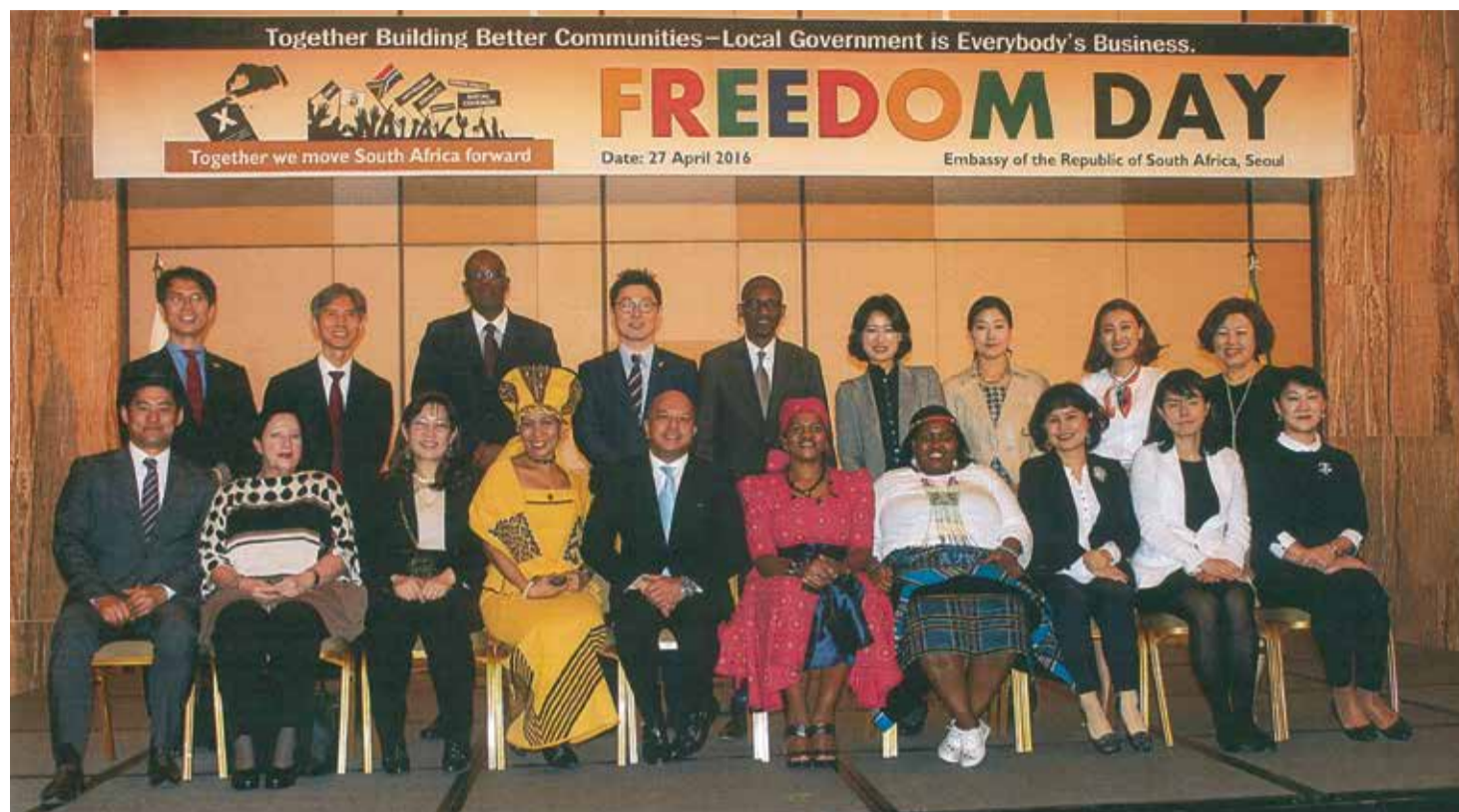
Seoul, Korea

The Seoul Mission commemorated the National Day/Freedom Day of South Africa on 27 April 2016 at the Millennium Hilton Hotel. About 200 guests comprising representatives from the Korean Government and business, members of the Diplomatic Corps, South African business and teaching community and members of the media attended this auspicious occasion not only to celebrate South Africa's unique heritage and diversity, but also to promote the country's offerings.

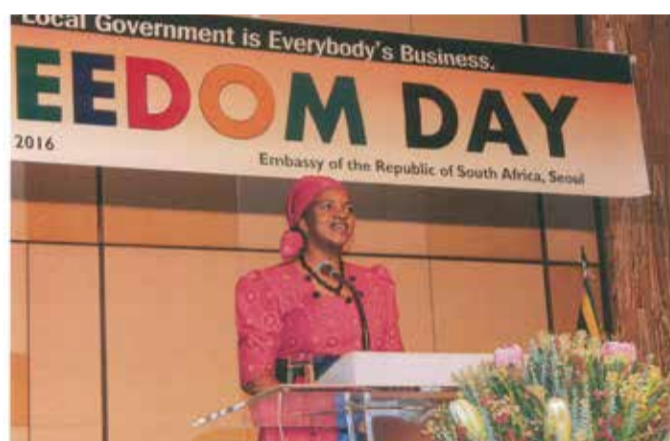
In Ambassador NG Bam's address, she warmly welcomed guests and highlighted how South Africa's freedom and democracy was achieved; the economic progress made over the past 22 years; challenges that the country faced in realising its development agenda; and the state of South Africa-Korea bilateral relations. "Our two countries enjoy long-standing and friendly relations with historical bonds dating back to the Korean War. South Africa's act of solidarity and concrete expression of support at that time remains immensely treasured by the Koreans."

Following the Ambassador's speech, congratulatory remarks were delivered on behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Korea by Deputy Minister LEE Young, Vice Minister of Education.

Following the formal speeches, guests were treated to the uniquely warm South African hospitality of a buffet that comprised both a Western and Korean menu accompanied by South African wines and beverages complemented by an attractively decorated venue enhanced with South African flora and an ice sculpture that incorporated a map and flag of South Africa. A banner with the words encapsulating the theme for this year's Freedom Month: "Together Building Better Communities – Local Government is Everybody's Business!" was suspended across the podium.



Staff of the South African Embassy
 Back row: Mr KS Jin, Mr H Manamela, Mr HC Kim, Mr B Mandla, Ms SY Lee, Ms KW Park, Ms R Yoon
 Front row: Mr JY Park, Ms A Kruger, Ms SY Chung, Ms J Ybanez, Mr I Esau, Ms NG Bam, Ms ZF Nkosi, Ms SO Joo, Ms SY Park, Ms BY Lee



Montevideo, Uruguay

Montevideo Mission celebrated Freedom Day on 28 April 2016 at the Radisson Montevideo Hotel. The cocktail event was hosted by HRH Princess Zenani Dlamini, accredited Ambassador to Uruguay.

The Uruguayan Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, José Luis Cancela, attended the function, as well as various other government officials, members of the Diplomatic Corps, entrepreneurs and selected guests.

The venue was decorated with banners and roll-ups depicting life, industry and landscapes of South Africa.

After the national anthems were played, Ambassador Dlamini addressed the audience. In her heartfelt speech she referred to the struggle towards a free South Africa and her family's experiences and involvement in this process. While doing so, images portraying different moments in Nelson Mandela's life were shown on a screen.



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini, Embassy staff and family members



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini delivering a speech



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini, Ms N Bertullo Ministry of Industry, Energy and Mining) and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, JL Cancela



Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Ambassador of South Africa to Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, HRH Zenani Dlamini, hosted the country's Freedom Day Celebrations at the Alvear Hotel on 27 April 2016

The theme of this year's celebrations was the South Africa Constitution, the highest law of the country, which was promulgated by President Nelson Mandela in 1996. The event attracted, among others, members of government, media, businesspeople and the Diplomatic Corps.



Embassy staff and family members



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini and Ambassador of Honduras and spouse



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini delivering a speech



Ambassador Zenani Dlamini delivering a speech



Asmara, Eritrea

South Africa's National Freedom Day was celebrated in Asmara on Saturday, 7 May 2016. It was hailed by guests as "the best-ever National Day so far in Asmara".

Preparations for the event excited the South African Embassy staff, as Asmara Palace's Salon Keren was pleasantly decorated with South African cloth designs for this auspicious occasion.

Officials of the ruling liberation movement's PFDJ, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice, as well as eight Eritrean government ministers graced South Africa's Freedom Day event.

Selected pictures uploaded on the South African Embassy Asmara Facebook page elicited a range of positive comments, such as: "Marvelous evening. Professional organisation to the point like I love it" (EU Diplomat).

The festivities opened with an inspirational and touching rendition of the South African and Eritrean national anthems by the Embassy's Eritrean and South African staff. It moved many hearts, leaving Ambassador Prof. Iqbal Jhazbhay wondering if anything further needed to be said!!

Numerous directors-general from various ministries attended, as well as the Head of ERI-TV. Heads of missions, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator, heads of UN agencies, UN officials and business leaders were also present.

A notable feature of the evening was the warm applause received when Ambassador



Ambassador Prof. Iqbal Jhazbhay and staff of the South African Embassy to the State of Eritrea



Embassy staff



Eritrean government officials singing the South African National anthem



Performance by Eritrea's musician, Ms Dehub Fatinga

Prof. Jhazbhay read a message of support from President Jacob Zuma to President Isaias Afwerki. This year is the Silver Jubilee 25th Anniversary of the Independence of the State of Eritrea (24 May 2016).

The Presidential message congratulated Eritrea's leaders and people: "We salute the

courageous citizens, men, women and youth, who gave their lives for an independent Eritrea. Their example continues to inspire the people of Eritrea to achieve sustainable development and prosperity in their country, and mirrors our joint continental efforts to achieve a better life for all".

This day was made special as the South

African Embassy honoured and handed over gifts and certificates to the Embassy's key institutional partners and musicians.

The evening concluded with memorable liberation songs performed by Eritrea's world-renowned iconic musician, Dehub Fatinga, and recipient of South Africa's Africa Mama Award.



Dakar, Senegal

The South African Embassy in Senegal held its National Day celebration on 27 April 2016 at King Fahd Palace in Dakar. The function took the form of a cocktail.

The celebration of South Africa's achievement of freedom and democracy also provided the Embassy with an opportunity to profile South Africa, thereby activating our public diplomacy; to strengthen the bilateral ties between the two countries in the area of arts and culture, promote relations in the field of economy and encourage the spirit of cohesion and Ubuntu among Africans in particular, and the world in general.

The function was attended by about 230 invitees, including diplomats, government officials, business community, NGOs, South Africans in Senegal and members from the Senegalese community.

South African businesses operating in Senegal were offered a space for their pull-up banners and tables to display their products/services. The business participants were SAA, DStv, West Africa Farms, Protea South African Food Store and Fathala Wildlife Reserve. Prizes sponsored by each of these organisations were won by the participating invitees. e.g. SAA sponsored one Business Class return air ticket to South Africa; DStv sponsored one DStv Explorer with free installation plus one month free subscription; Fathala Wildlife Reserve sponsored a free walk with lions plus a game ride; and Protea South African Food Store gave away a hamper of food stuff.

This year's celebration was graced by the presence of Deputy Minister Luwellyn Landers who also delivered the keynote address. The Deputy Minister represented the South African Government at the 103rd Session of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) Council of Ministers and the 41st Session of the ACP-European Union Council of Ministers held from 25 to 29 April 2016. Also present was the Deputy Minister of Energy, Thembisile Majola. In his speech, Deputy Minister Landers referred to the visit of the South African Minister of Arts and Culture who was in Senegal from 20 to 23 April 2016, and reiterated the strong relations that existed between the two countries.

The visit of the Minister of Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa, and the participation of the South African cultural dance group, Gauteng Dance Manyano, during the National Day served as a built-up to the signing of the Twinning Agreement between Robben Island and Goreé Island, and the celebration of the 30 years anniversary of the Dakar Declaration. The Gauteng Dance Manyano also participated during the International Dance Day held at Grand National Theatre on 29 April 2016. Preparations are underway to commemorate the Dakar Declaration in July next year at Goreé Island. A meeting organised by Institute for a Democratic South Africa in Goreé Island in 1987 played a pivotal role in starting negotiation leading to the achievement of our democracy.



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The Abu Dhabi Mission celebrated the South African Freedom Day in the company of 350 people drawn from South Africans living in the UAE, the Diplomatic Corps, UAE government officials, business and academia. The guest of honour was Mohammed Meer Abdullah Al Raeesi, the Under Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

The friendly relations between the two countries continue to be cemented by year-on-year growth in trade with a current volume of \$3 billion. About 100 000 South Africans live and work in the UAE. There are more than 100 South African businesses ranging from construction, financial sector, retail, restaurant, leisure and entertainment. The UAE investments in South Africa are real estate, hotels in Cape Town and Johannesburg, finance sector and transport logistics. South African exports to the UAE are mainly fresh produce, processed food products, meat, coal, automotive vehicles and component, chemical and mineral products. South Africa imports from UAE crude oil in the main and chemical and mineral products.

Historical ties between the UAE and South Africa date back prior 1994 when the UAE leadership gave material support to the African National Congress in support of the struggle against apartheid. The two countries established formal diplomatic relations in 1995. The current serving South African Ambassador in UAE is Mpetjane Leggoro.





Ankara, Turkey

The South African Embassy in Ankara celebrated the South African Freedom Month with a series of events.

Ambassador Pule Malefane prioritised Izmir, İstanbul and Mersin for official interactions with organs of state and dialogue with business during South Africa-Turkey investment seminars.

27 April is an annual commemoration of South Africa's freedom and democracy since the first non-racial democratic elections of 1994.

The occasion of Freedom Day also provides an opportunity to thank all those people in the world who supported and assisted South Africa in its fight for freedom from the discriminatory apartheid regime.

South Africa and Turkey has strengthened its relations at the highest levels with the visit of President Jacob Zuma in November 2015 to attend the G20 Summit hosted by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. South Africa and Turkey are in agreement on many international issues, one of which includes the peaceful settlement of disputes and the eradication of the global phenomenon of terrorism. South Africa has demonstrated its support to the Turkish people in the attacks levied against them through the public statements of condolence by President

Zuma, and will continue to work with Turkey in strengthening relations between the two countries.

As part of the Freedom Day celebrations, the South African Embassy in Ankara hosted a successful media breakfast interactive session with senior members of the media on 26 April 2016. Representatives and editors from Turkish media houses participated. The Embassy also hosted a successful CEO Breakfast in partnership with MUSIAD in Ankara, attended by prominent business leaders on the morning of 27 April 2016. Ambassador Malefane highlighted the importance of strengthening economic relations between the two countries.

The South African Freedom Day Reception was hosted by Ambassador Malefane and Mrs Olivia Malefane at Hilton Ankara SA, with the participation of the Honorary Consul of Mersin, Numan Olcar; Honorary Consul of İstanbul, Remzi Gür; representatives from the Turkish Government; members of the Diplomatic Corps; representatives of the business sector; media; fellow Africans in the Diaspora; and South Africans living in Turkey. The Minister of Energy, Berat Albayrak, attended the Freedom Day celebration as VIP guest of the South African Embassy.



Hanoi, Vietnam

On 25 April 2016, the South African Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam, celebrated the 22nd Anniversary of Freedom Day at the Sheraton Hotel in Hanoi. About 500 guests attended the event who represented members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Vietnamese Government ministries, academic, business contacts and South Africans.

Addressing the event, Ambassador Kgomo Ruth Magau, said South Africa had chosen the theme: "Together building Better Communities – Local Government is Everybody's Business" for this year's Freedom Day celebration. She added that the 2016 commemoration coincided with the 20th Anniversary of the signing of the final draft of the Constitution into law, the 60th Anniversary of the 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings and the 40th Anniversary of the 16 June Student Uprising.

The Vietnamese Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Duong Chi Dung, was the guest of honour at the event. He said that as a close and faithful friend of South Africa, Vietnam was proud to stand side by side with South Africa throughout the struggle for freedom and equality.

In order to give further impetus to the celebration, the Embassy invited a choir of Vietnamese children who commenced the event with the two national anthems. The evening was furthermore enlightened by the performance of the Qadasi group from KwaZulu-Natal. The group entertained the guests with a variety of South African and African music and was well received by the audience. South African ambience on the day was complemented by the serving of traditional dishes such as curried fish, samoosas, bobotie, beef stew, milk tart, malva pudding, South African wines, KWV Brandy and Amarula.



Vietnamese Hope Choir singing South African and Vietnamese national anthems



Ambassador Kgomo Ruth Magau and the Guest of Honour cutting the cake



Ambassador Magau with ambassadors and heads of diplomatic missions and international organisations at the celebration



São Tomé and Príncipe

The South African Embassy in the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) held its 22 Years of Freedom and Democracy celebration on 27 April 2016.

As Acting Chargé d'Affaires, Margaret Langa (Counsellor Political and Trade) delivered her speech in Portuguese while First Secretary Political Heinie Lotze read the English version. This gesture earned the Mission a lot of respect from all guests as non-Portuguese missions usually utilise a local interpreter.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of STP was represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities, Manuel Salvador dos Ramos, who delivered a speech on behalf of the STP Government and its people. Together with Ms Langa, the Minister toasted to the occasion and cut the celebration cake (a tradition at national day events in STP).

The colourful event promoted South Africa through the display of various posters, pull-up banners and the screening of Brand South Africa videos and material, which captured the attention of guests and prompted enquiries by many.

The occasion was also graced by the presence of the President of the National Assembly, the President of the Court of Auditors, various heads of missions and/or representatives, presidents of political parties, local businesspeople as well as a presidential candidate in the upcoming July 2016 presidential elections, Maria das Neves.

To promote the values that OR Tambo possessed in his career of diplomacy, lapel pins were distributed to guests as they arrived at the venue.



The Ambassador of Portugal, Maria Paula da Silva, congratulating SA Embassy officials on Freedom Day



First Secretary Admin, Sibongile Qangule, handing out promotional material



From left to right: PA to President of the Courts of Auditors, Presidential candidate Maria das Neves, President of the Courts of Auditors, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities and President of the National Assembly, José da Graça Diogo



Acting Chargé d'Affaires, Margaret Langa, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communities of the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, Manuel Salvador dos Ramos, toasting to the occasion



Nouakchott, Mauritania

The South African Ambassador to Mauritania, Louis Pienaar, hosted a reception to celebrate the 22nd National Day on 27 April 2016 under the theme "Celebrating the Third Decade of our Freedom through Accelerating Radical Economic Transformation".

The Ambassador welcomed the guests and in his address reflected on the strides that South Africa had made in addressing its socio-political challenges since the inception of democracy in 1994. He also used the opportunity to embrace the excellent bilateral relations that existed between the Republic of South Africa and Mauritania.

The event was graced by the presence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Isselkou Ould Ahmed Izidbih; the Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs responsible for Magreb, African Affairs and Mauritians Abroad; Khadijetou Mbareck Fall; and other senior officials from the Foreign Ministry, including members of the Diplomatic Corps, international organisations accredited to Nouakchott, and various Mauritanian personalities.



The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Isselkou Ould Ahmed Izidbih, cuts the cake



Ambassador Louis Pienaar from right and the transferred officials



Ambassador Pienaar with the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ambassador Tiguegig



The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Isselkou Ould Ahmed Izidbih; the Minister Delegate of Foreign Affairs Responsible for Magreb, African Affairs and Mauritians Abroad, Khadijetou Mbareck Fall; and other senior officials from the Foreign Ministry

Bangkok, Thailand

On 27 April 2016, the Mission in Bangkok hosted the Freedom Day celebration reception at Conrad Hotel in Bangkok.

The event was attended by more than 400 guests, including the diplomatic community, Thai government officials, international business representatives as well as South Africans residing in Thailand. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was represented by the Deputy Director-General of Middle East and Africa Affairs.

The Mission made arrangements with companies that import South African products to set up booths to promote goods imported from South Africa. The companies included Villa Market, Rooibos tea, Packo Atchaar, Heart of Africa and various wine companies which gave guests an opportunity to taste different South African wine brands and other South African-made products.

The Mission invited the South African music duo Qadasi and Maqhinga from KwaZulu-Natal to entertain the audience. The Embassy also invited the Assumption University Choir to sing the Royal Thai Anthem as well as young Thai violinists.

The event was broadcast on the Thai Travel channel, a popular tourism promoting television channel in Thailand.



First Secretary Admin, Sibongile Qangule, handing out promotional material



Qadasi and Maqhinga from KwaZulu-Natal performing during the reception



Assumption University Choir



Embassy officials



Tunis, Tunisia

The South African Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia, hosted a Freedom Day cocktail reception on 27 April 2016. The event was well attended with 150 guests from the local diplomatic community, business leaders and Tunisian politicians in attendance. The Tunisian Minister of Youth and Sport represented the Tunisian Government. South African wines and Amarula provided a South African touch to the evening.

Ambassador Mandla Harold Hoyana reflected on the numerous achievements of a democratic South Africa in his speech. The extension of healthcare to rural communities has been a key achievement and the work of 77 Tunisian doctors in South Africa's rural hospitals since 2008 has contributed to this achievement and has been a highlight of the bilateral cooperation between South Africa and Tunisia. There are currently 10 joint scientific research projects underway – a major step to deeper science and technology cooperation between the two countries.

As South Africa commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the Women's March to the Union Buildings, the inspirational role played by the women of Tunisia who achieved equality before the law in 1956 must be remembered. Also acknowledged was the important role played by then Tunisian President, Habib Bourguiba, in providing financial support to Nelson Mandela as well as Tunisian diplomatic passports,

enabling the freedom fighters to travel the world, highlighting the plight of the anti-apartheid struggle.

Ambassador Hoyana highlighted the important role that South African experts played as consultants during the development of the Tunisian Constitution of 2014 and the Tunisian Truth and Dignity Commission. It is hoped that further cooperation in the fields of tourism and information and communications technology will bear fruit during this year when agreements are signed.

Addressing business leaders present, the Ambassador reminded them of the many opportunities that South Africa could present to Tunisian companies through investments, partnerships and joint ventures. Ambassador Hoyana reiterated that Africa was the central pillar of South Africa's foreign policy, extending to the field of trade and investment. South Africa is a reliable partner seeking win-win partnerships in all domains.

He said the South African business community should not allow the opportunities available in North Africa to continuously be taken by the European Union and the United States of America, while North African countries also expanded into West Africa.

Ambassador Hoyana concluded by extending an invitation to his guests and the Tunisian people to discover South Africa and its many offerings, a visit they are sure not to regret.





Muscat, Oman

The South African Mission in Muscat celebrated Freedom Day in spectacular style on 28 April 2016. The Afrah Ball Room of the Grand Hyatt looked impressive in South African tourism décor intended to promote the country as a destination of choice.

Major-General Lungile Pepani, South African Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman, flanked by his spouse and staff of the Embassy, presided over the reception line to welcome more than 200 guests to the occasion. Invitees to the event came from all walks of life – government, business, and the international and local community. The local Omani media was there to cover the event.

South Africans based in Oman came in their colourful numbers to proudly sing the national anthem and showcase our unique rainbow culture and dance.

The all-male representatives of the Omani Government, decked out in *dishdasha* (long white robe) and *masser* (headgear), as well as the ceremonial *bisht* (black woollen robe) and *khanjar* (dagger on a belt), were there to lend dignity to the occasion. They also supported the Head of Mission in the cake-cutting formality.

The Freedom Day remarks by Ambassador Pepani emphasised the history and meaning of freedom to South Africans, and he paid homage to the men, women and youth through whose sacrifices our democracy was born. He referred to the 60th, 40th and 20th anniversaries of the Women's March in 1956 to the Union Buildings to protest pass laws, the Soweto Youth uprising and the adoption of the Constitution of South Africa, respectively, to highlight the country's journey to democracy.



The Ambassador also highlighted the advances made by the country in the last 22 years in improving the lives of the previously disadvantaged.

The Head of Mission used the opportunity to express satisfaction with the state of relations

between Oman and South Africa. He also drew the attention of Omanis and the international community present to the attractive South African features that made our country a permanent fixture in the highest global leagues in terms of tourism.

The occasion, which was also used to celebrate uniquely South African cuisine, wines, music and dance, was thoroughly enjoyed by all and the Embassy received highly positive feedback on its arrangement of the function.



Tokyo, Japan

On 27 April 2016, the Mission in Tokyo hosted its National Day reception under the theme of South Africa's "National Identity". The reception was convened at the Official Residence and was attended by 300 guests, who were welcomed by Ambassador Beryl Sisulu upon their arrival. Notable guests included the guest of honour, Ichiro Aisawa, Chairperson of the Japan-African Union (AU) Parliamentary Friendship League; Hitomi Takahashi, who is a well-known actress in Japan and is the Goodwill Ambassador for the South African Tourism Office in Japan; and Karin Hiramatsu, winner of the Mission's high school essay-writing competition. Thomas Kantha, a South African former anti-apartheid activist currently residing in Japan, delivered the *kanpai* (toast) for the evening.

Ms Takahashi and Ms Hiramatsu informed guests about their respective experiences of visiting South Africa. Ms Hiramatsu's visit was part of her prize for winning the Mission's high school essay-writing competition. Guests were immensely delighted by Ms Takahashi's and Ms Hiramatsu's noteworthy impressions of South Africa.

In her remarks to guests, Ambassador Sisulu enunciated the significance of celebrating South Africa's heterogeneous national identity as well



Ambassador Sisulu with special guests



Ambassador Sisulu with some South African ABE Initiative students



Ambassador Sisulu with Ichiro Aisawa, Chairperson of the Japan-AU Parliamentary Friendship League

as the role of the Constitution in facilitating a united country. Ambassador Sisulu also highlighted significant developments in South Africa's ever-increasing bilateral relationship with Japan, and encouraged more investment in South Africa, particularly investment that could contribute to the creation of jobs, including the country's beneficiation strategy. She further acknowledged Japan's role in contributing to South Africa's human capital development through the hosting of 49 South African Master's degree students under the Africa Business Education for the Youth Initiative (ABE Initiative), of whom a few attended the reception.

As part of its National Day celebration, the Mission collaborated with the South African Tourism Office in Japan and Emirates Airlines to select two travel journalists to visit South Africa later this year to experience and write a series of articles about South Africa and its tourist attractions. To this end, Emirates Airlines sponsored two air tickets for the visit.

The reception was a wonderful success as friends of South Africa from various sectors in Japan were treated to live music, courtesy of two South Africans now residing in Japan, Prisca Molotsi and Joseph Nkosi of Nkosi African Marimba and Drums.



Ambassador Sisulu with Ms Hitomi Takahashi, Goodwill Ambassador for South African Tourism Office in Japan



Kuwait City, Kuwait

In celebration of 22 years of freedom and democracy in South Africa, the Mission in Kuwait hosted a South Africa Week from 25 to 28 April. The SA Week commenced with the South African National Day celebration on 25 April. The National Day was well attended with over 300 guests from the Kuwait Government and institutions, the diplomatic community, private sector and various sections of Kuwait civil society. The event was followed by a food festival on the 26th, and food tasting and food products promotions on the 27th and 28th in partnership with the Western Cape Fine Foods Initiative (WCFFI), Marina Hotel, Lulu Hypermarket in Salmiya and the Cooperative in Mishref.

The Mission also received generous support and partnership from Ethiopian Airlines, IFA Hotels & Resorts, United Meat Company, Universal Al Abra Foodstuff & Meat Company and a Kuwait-owned South African franchise, The Meat Company.

The Mission and WCFFI set up beautiful exhibition stands and displayed a variety of South African products such as spices, sauces, Rooibos tea, coffee, juices, biltong, pastries, olive oil, etc. Brochures and audiovisual material on trade, investment opportunities and attractive South African tourism destinations were also displayed during SA Week, and helped to promote Brand South Africa in Kuwait.

South Africa's National Flower, the Protea, and South African artefacts were used to decorate the venue together with banners to showcase

South Africa's culture, diversity, traditions and handicrafts. Traditional South African cuisine was served and gift bags, containing Ceres juice, Rooibos tea and tourism brochures, were handed to guests to promote some of the country's premium products.

The stands generated good interest from Kuwait businesspeople and other members of the National Day audience.

The Freedom Day celebrations and the rest of the SA Week events were a big success and:

- Provided the Mission with the opportunity to promote Brand South Africa in Kuwait as a desirable tourist, trade and investment destination.
- Gave South Africa extensive coverage in local print and audiovisual English and Arabic media.
- Provided an opportunity for the guests to have a unique taste and experience of South African cuisine and hospitality.
- Promoted premium brands of South African food products, especially WCFFI products. WCFFI and the Mission generated a number of trade leads with Kuwait food importers, retailers, distributors, etc.
- Strengthened relations between the Mission and the visitors/guests who participated in the events and also laid the basis for good partnerships between South Africa and targeted Kuwait stakeholders.



Doha, Qatar

The Mission's 22nd Freedom Day celebration took place on 14 April 2016 at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Doha. Feedback indicates that this flagship networking event, attended by more than 320 guests, can be considered a success.

The event was graced by the South African Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture, Rejoyce Mabudafhasi, who was accompanied by a nine-member dance ensemble from Okiep in the Northern Cape. The South African artists added considerably to the success of the evening.

While in Doha, the Deputy Minister met with several cultural institutions.

The Mission was fortunate enough to secure assistance from Qatar Airways, which agreed to fly the Executive Chef of the Grand Hyatt in Johannesburg to Doha. Chef Tazman Dlomo devised an authentic South African menu and managed the preparation of the food, which included several live cooking stations. He also prepared the menu for the South African Brunch at the Grand Hyatt on Friday, 15 April 2016.

The Government of Qatar was represented by the Minister of Justice, Mohammed Lahdan al Mohannadi, as well as the Chief of Protocol, Ambassador Ibrahim Fakhroo. The Qatari Royal family was represented by Sheikh Ali al Thani.





Port Louis, Mauritius

South Africa's Freedom Day was celebrated on 29 April 2016 at the Domaine IZI, Bambous, in the presence of the chief guest, Prof. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius; Aneerod Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius; Vishnu Lutchmeenaraidoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade; and various other ministers.

The event was well attended with over 200 guests, ranging from heads of missions, CEOs of banks and other institutions, South Africa and Mauritius business communities as well as invited Mauritians.

The official ceremony started with a toast by President Gurib-Fakim and High Commissioner Dr Nomvuyo Nokwe to the national anthems of both countries, played by the Mauritian Police Band. During her speech, the High Commissioner took the opportunity to read a message from Prime Minister Jugnauth to President Jacob Zuma, which said: "... every year, the celebration of Freedom Day stirs strong emotions across Africa as the continent celebrates with the people of South Africa, the memory of the long struggle for liberation led by the late President Nelson Mandela and culminated in the emergence of the Republic of South Africa with a new Constitution. We take pride in this achievement as we do in the legacy of freedom, equality and justice bequeathed to Africa by Madiba".

The event was widely covered by local press and the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and was featured on TV during the news reading on one of the local channels.



Madrid, Spain

The Embassy in Madrid hosted its Freedom Day celebration on 27 April 2016 – an event that also served to celebrate South Africa's Armed Forces Day. The highly successful Freedom Day ceremony was attended by approximately 300 guests, inclusive of role players from the Spanish State, business sector, civil society, education, tourism sectors, South Africans living in Spain, friends of the Embassy, etc. During the event, speeches were delivered by Ambassador Lulama Smuts Ngonyama and by the Spanish Secretary of State for Investigation, Development and Innovation, Carmen Vela Olmo.

In his speech, Ambassador Ngonyama underscored the growing strategic bilateral relationship between South Africa and Spain, which was aimed at a direct contribution towards South Africa's national priorities. One notable area relates to the extensive involvement of Spanish companies in the ongoing major South African infrastructure development programme, mainly focusing on renewable energy and the ocean economy. The event also served as an important platform for the Ambassador to announce the envisaged launch in June 2016 of the South African Business Chamber in Spain, and he invited interested South African and Spanish companies/investors to join this important initiative, which will provide an opportunity "to unlock the full potential of our

relations, securing win-win cooperation between our companies and countries".

In her address, Secretary Vela extensively covered areas that provided opportunity for further collaboration between both countries, especially science and technology. She further expressed her optimism in the rise of bilateral tourism between the two countries; especially that Iberia would launch three direct flights per week between Madrid and Johannesburg from 1 August 2016.

During the event, South African Airways (SAA) and Iberia handed over return airtickets to three lucky winners who will have an opportunity to visit South Africa and explore the country's tourism opportunities. The Mission also used the event to mount stalls around the venue in order to popularise South African commercial products currently being distributed in Spain such as, a variety of South African wines, Appletiser, Amarula and South African cultural artefacts. South African artists currently involved in the *Lion King* musical in Spain entertained the invited guests with traditional South African songs and dance.

The Embassy is highly grateful to Echalar Fishing Company, SAA, Compañía Cervecera, Comercial Masoliver and Iberia for their collaboration that ensured that the event was a resounding success.



Embassy staff and participants of the Freedom Day ceremony



Ambassador Lulama Smuts Ngonyama delivering his keynote address



Ambassadors Lulama Smuts Ngonyama, Secretary of State, Vela and ambassadors of Gambia, Kenya and Pakistan and embassy staff



South African members from the *Lion King* musical in Spain, entertained the guest with traditional South African dance and song



South African commercial products

Conakry, Guinea

The South African Embassy in Conakry hosted the Freedom Day celebration on 29 April 2016. The event was attended by contacts of the Mission, members of the Diplomatic Corps, as well as people with whom the Mission conducts business across the population spectrum. It was also graced by the presence of the Third Vice President of the National Assembly, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad, Makale Camara; former Minister for Public Administration; Inspector-General of the Ministry of Industry, SME and Promotion of Private Sector; Dean of Ambassadors; senior public servants; members of international organisations; as well as members of the civil society at large.

Ambassador MM Mdingi delivered a speech after the rendition of both the South African and Guinean national anthems.

A performance group, *Le Petit Musee Children Group*, entertained the participants before and after the ceremony. Their performance went a long way in showcasing South Africa's history of yester years as it was tailor-made to reflect South Africa's apartheid era atrocities and suffering of the black working class and population in general.

Ambassador Mdingi thanked all companies who attended and supported the event. The Ambassador highlighted political and economic diplomacy during a press briefing.



São Paulo, Brazil

The South African Consulate-General in São Paulo held its Freedom Day celebration on 28 April 2016 at the Tivoli Mofarrej Hotel. The event was attended by government representatives under the Mission's area of jurisdiction, the diplomatic community, Brazilian business community, South African business representatives based in São Paulo, the Afro-Brazilian community as well as the South African-based community.

During her speech, Consul-General Mmaikeletsi Dube highlighted the accomplishments that the South African Government had made since attaining freedom and democracy in 1994. She also mentioned that the country was now focused on tackling the challenges lying ahead through the implementing of mechanisms that were in place such as the National Development Plan. Consul-General Dube also emphasised the importance of strengthening political and economic ties with Brazil and all the countries of the South in order to ensure economic development and prosperity among the developing countries. She also invited the guests who were representing the different countries during the event to come and invest in South Africa as well as to choose our beautiful country as the preferred destination of choice. She also encouraged the guests to take advantage of the national carrier, South African Airways (SAA), which has 10 direct flights daily between São Paulo and Johannesburg.

The event was a great success based on the turnout of the invited guests as well as the congratulatory messages received during and after the event. The guests were served with mouth-watering South African traditional dishes



Ambassador to Brazil, Joseph Mashimbye, Consul-General Dube and the South African Tourism Representative in Brazil, Tati Isler

such as umngqushu, beef stew as well as distinctively South African wines and Amarula.

During the event, the Mission accorded an opportunity to:

- the event's sponsors, SAA, South African Tourism, Standard Bank and Distel to display and promote their proudly South African products by showcasing/exhibiting and interacting with the guests who attended the event
- a group of entertainers, to showcase the uniquely South African culture through gumboot dance.

Consul-General Dube used this platform to wish the Brazilian Government and its people every success during its hosting of the 2016 Rio Olympic and Paralympic Games later this year.



Consul-General Dube and the members of the South African Consulate-General



Ambassador Mashimbye and spouse, Consul-General Dube and spouse and the former SAA General Manager in Brazil, Mr Nelson de Oliveira

Shanghai, China

The South African Consulate-General in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, commemorated the 22nd Anniversary of South Africa's Freedom Day at a reception held at the Westin Hotel on Tuesday, 26 April 2016. The Consulate also utilised the occasion to commemorate the 18-year anniversary of diplomatic relations between South Africa and China, highlighting the milestones that had been achieved by both countries.

The reception, hosted by Consul-General Thabo Thage and Mrs Thage, was attended by more than 120 guests representing the Chinese Government, the South African and Chinese business communities, the media, academia, the diplomatic community and South African expats in the Mission's area of jurisdiction. The Shanghai Government was represented by Zhao Wen, Vice Mayor of Shanghai Municipal People's Government; Li Kexin, member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress; Miao Xiaobao, Chair of the Committee for Social and Legal Affairs of the CPPCC Shanghai Committee; and Fan Yufei, Deputy Director-General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government.

In his speech, Consul-General Thage, highlighted the significance of 27 April as the day on which South Africa's first democratic elections were held in 1994 and heralded the turning point in building a country that truly belonged to all who live in it. He further noted that this year's commemoration coincided with key milestones that South Africa was proud of, such as the:

- 20th Anniversary of the adoption of our new Constitution as the supreme law of our country
- 40th anniversary of the 16 June Student Uprising

- 60th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March to the seat of Government, the Union Buildings
- holding of the fifth municipal or local government elections.

Consul-General Thage further reflected on excellent bilateral relations between South Africa and China, which had deepened and expanded into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSPA), and its Five- to 10-Year Strategic Framework Agreement signed respectively in 2010 and 2015. The CSPA aims to, among others, address the structure of trade between the two countries, which is characterised by the dominance of South Africa's exports of raw materials to China and imports of value-added products. The composition of the trading basket, therefore, remains a concern for both countries, given the developmental approach to our bilateral relations.

Important to note during his address was also the ongoing work undertaken by the Mission in Shanghai and its various stakeholders and interlocutors in advancing South Africa's relations in Shanghai and the provinces in the Mission's area of jurisdiction.

The Shanghai Mission participates in and facilitates high-level exchange visits between South Africa and Shanghai; coordinates trade, investment and tourism expos; and holds high-level one-on-one and roundtable sessions to encourage targeted enterprises to invest in South Africa. Additionally, it has also increased its activities in fostering people-to-people cooperation and thus increasing better understanding and appreciation of South Africa's respective cultures.

Through the spouse of the Consul-General of South Africa, who is the President of Consular Spouses Shanghai, the Mission participated in charity events that raised and distributed funds to



The South Consulate-General in Shanghai and fellow South Africans



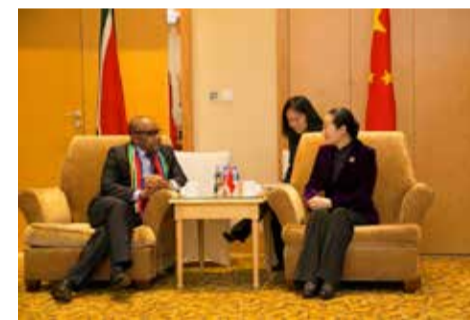
Consul-General Thage and his wife welcoming the guests



Other VIPs in attendance included Leslie Maasdorp, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the New Development Bank (NDB); Paulo Nogueira Batista Jr, Vice President and Chief Risk Officer of the NDB; and Vladimir Kazbekov, Vice President and Chief Administration Officer of the NDB

worthy and charitable courses in Shanghai and other areas under its jurisdiction, thereby touching lives of women and children

Guests had an opportunity to taste and sample numerous South African wines and traditional food, including boerewors, lamb bobotie, chakalaka and milk tart. The beauty, ambience and welcoming hospitality of South Africa were captured by bouquets of King Proteas, table cloths in the colors of the national flag, banners and posters reflecting the diversity of South Africa's landscape and people, and of course the sounds of both old and contemporary South African music.



Bilateral meeting between Consul-General Thage and Vice Mayor of Shanghai Municipal People's Government, Madame Zhao Wen

Hong Kong, China

The South African Consulate in Hong Kong hosted its Freedom Day reception on the 75th Floor Apex Room in Central Plaza Hong Kong. The celebratory evening had guests from business, government and the diplomatic and South African community coming together to commemorate South Africa's Freedom Day. The guest of honour for the evening was Carrey Lam, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China.

Consul-General Phumelele Gwala in her address to commemorate the 22nd Freedom Day celebration acknowledged that South Africans had come a long way since the long lines of the first democratic elections in 1994, when South Africa cast aside centuries of discrimination and oppression to form a new society, built on the foundations of freedom and democracy. Her remarks focused on South Africa's continued emphasis on boosting economic growth and working towards improving the livelihood of all its citizens. She acknowledged that despite the significant progress made since the first democratic elections in 1994, the South African Government through the National Development Plan sought a much faster, more active and better implementation of national goals. South Africa is



focused on building an inclusive and sustainable future and a better life for all, including attracting foreign direct investment into the growing number of opportunities that the country offers to international investors in diverse sectors.

Chief Secretary Carrey Lam reflected in her address on Hong Kong being a major international financial centre.

Guests enjoyed an evening of South African cuisine and wines and were entertained by South African performing artist Tshagofatso Mhlongo who is one of the lead vocalists at Disney Hong Kong's *Lion King*.





Beijing, People's Republic of China



On Friday, 29 April 2016, the Embassy hosted a Freedom Day function at the Kempinski Hotel in Beijing to commemorate 22 years of freedom and democracy and 18 years of South Africa-China diplomatic relations.

The event was attended by more than 400 guests representing the Diplomatic Corps, government, academia, civil society, business, media and the expat community.

The Embassy collaborated with Brand SA on media exposure, which included a pre-event press release, one-on-one interviews with various media outlets as well as wide coverage by media contacts and key opinion leaders on local social media platforms.

The guest of honour was the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, QIAN Hongshan, and his delegation from the MOFA African Department and Protocol. Ambassador Dolana Msimang's fruitful bilateral meeting with Assistant Minister Qian was followed by the other official proceedings, the highlight being the Ambassador's speech, which celebrated the death of apartheid, the 60th Anniversary of the 1956 Women's March to the Union Buildings, the 40th Anniversary of the 16 June Soweto Uprising and the 20th Anniversary of the signing into force of South Africa's Constitution. The event suitably honoured South Africa's journey to a free, democratic, united, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous society.

The Freedom Day celebration presented a perfect occasion to showcase South Africa and guests received a gift bag with tourism information, Amarula liqueur and Rooibos tea as part of promoting South Africa and South African products available in the Chinese market.

Guests were served South African wines, Amarula and traditional South African cuisine with South African music in the background and



tourism-related videos and photographs on big screens. The sponsors that contributed to the success of the event were:

- Beijing Axis
- Standard Bank Advisory Ltd.
- Investec
- AngloAmerican
- Hollard
- Brand SA
- South Africa Diamond Wines

- Eagle Canyon International Training
- Sun & Diamonds
- Wine River Trading
- Naspers MIH
- SAB Miller
- Distell China
- Dole China
- Jenny Lou
- South African Airways
- LandPac

- SA Tourism
- Pinotage Restaurant
- LifeSolutions China
- Xi'an Juice Company.

The Mission also arranged performances by South African students studying in Beijing who displayed their talents in poetry, song and dance in honour of the 16 June anniversary.

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