

# IT'S YOUR

# VOICE

Internal Newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

ubuntu diplomat

PART THREE 1976 – 1976

Ukwazi  
Kwazi  
Tawuza



## BUILDING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

June 16, 1976: Thousands of schoolchildren from Soweto high schools sing and shout slogans as they march towards a rally in Jabavu. They are protesting against the government's decision to introduce Afrikaans as the new medium of instruction in black schools. Riot police arrive with their howling dogs, and live ammunition. Suddenly, they open fire!

Nearly a thousand students were killed in Soweto and other townships around the country in the months that followed. The 1976-77 protests against apartheid, South Africa was

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"They went on this carriage ... the news stunned and shocked us ... to massacre children on ... was something utterly incredible to say, the international comm



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# Editor's Letter

## Dear Diplomats,



# JB

Juanique Bowman

It is a great honour to be the guest editor of this edition of the *Ubuntu Diplomat*.

I was initially filled with trepidation when tasked with producing this edition. The process, however, has been a wonderful learning and fulfilling experience. It has reminded me of the important work we do and has inspired me to work harder.

October is an important month. Not only is it Breast Cancer Awareness Month but it is also a time when we reflect on and celebrate the life and inspiring work of a great diplomat, Oliver Reginald Tambo.

The theme of this month's edition is "Diplomacy in Action". There are a number of articles on the achievements and accomplishments of colleagues which can be found on pages 10 and 11.

This edition also carries important information on knowing your Heads of Mission on page 5 as well as giving insight into a day in the life of an official deployed abroad. The article on page 8 shows that it

is not always fun and games when posted abroad, but hard work, as you endeavour to represent your country while forging and establishing important diplomatic relationships.

I was inspired to never let fear hold me back from achieving my goals. The inspiring story of young school boys who ventured to DIRCO in their quest for knowledge on page 7 is testament to this. Hopefully, it will inspire you to always strive for excellence.

There are many lessons to be learnt from arguably the greatest diplomat, OR Tambo, whose life and activism embodied values of patriotism, integrity, humanity and passion. These are values that we as diplomats should reflect daily.

Finally, we encourage all staff to put pen to paper and contribute to creating a unique internal publication by making your voice heard. Let us know your thoughts on this month's publication, so we can work together to produce a publication we are all proud of moving forward.

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**JOIN THE  
FIGHT**  
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



# DID YOU KNOW?

**Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko was appointed as member of the advisory group of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).**

On 24 September, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, appointed Ambassador Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko, Deputy Director-General of Global Affairs and Continental Agenda in the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, as one of the seven new members of the Advisory Group of CERF, the UN's global emergency response fund.

The Advisory Group's 18 members provide policy guidance to the UN Secretary-General and advise on the use and impact of CERF, through the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, who manages the fund on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, the Advisory Group members serve in their individual capacity, and not as representatives of their countries or governments. They include government officials from contributing and recipient countries, representatives of humanitarian non-governmental organisations and academic experts.

According to Under-Secretary-General O'Brien, the CERF has since its inception in 2006, allocated more than US\$4 billion in support of humanitarian operations in 95 countries and territories facing natural or man-made disasters, ranging from the victims of earthquakes and tsunamis to survivors fleeing war and atrocities in their homelands.

The Deputy President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, embarked on a Working Visit to Japan from 22 to 25 August 2015. He was accompanied by the Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor; Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Nomaindiya Mfeketo; Deputy Minister of Science and Technology, Mzwandile Masina; and Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, General Bheki Cele; a South African business delegation; and researchers from South Africa's science, technology and innovation (STI) sectors.

In his meeting with the Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, Deputy President Ramaphosa expressed South Africa's desire to enhance its capacity-building, human capital and vocational training as key areas of cooperation that could contribute to South Africa's industrialisation agenda. Over a working lunch with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso, he took the opportunity to strengthen cooperation between South Africa and Japan, and expressed South Africa's goal of increasing the number of participants in Japan's Africa Business Education (ABE) Initiative. This initiative has already accepted 45 South Africans to complete Master's degrees in respective postgraduate studies at various universities in Japan.

Deputy President Ramaphosa addressed Keidenran, the most influential business organisation that consists of Japan's captains of industry, during which he provided an update on the implementation of and opportunities that exist through the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement, which culminated in the Continental Free Trade Agreement in July 2015. The potential market of approximately one billion people will offer various business opportunities on the African continent.

At the Japan-South Africa Business Forum, which was jointly organised by the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in Japan and the Japan External Trade Organisation, Deputy President Ramaphosa stressed the need to deepen engagement in innovation. Echoing the sentiments expressed at the dialogue between South Africa and Japan on the Hydrogen Economy, the Deputy President emphasised the strategic role that South Africa's platinum



## Deputy President Ramaphosa builds bridges in Japan

Deputy President Ramaphosa and members of the delegation at Miraikan

group metals, in collaboration with Japan's technological know-how, could play in creating new sources of energy.

A dialogue on agriculture increased the momentum for cooperation in this sector. The two countries discussed strategies to expand the current Food Value Chain Dialogue to include fisheries and forestry. This will provide more opportunities for South Africa to export agricultural products.

A working dinner enabled the Deputy President's engagement with members of the African Union Parliamentary Friendship Association. He promoted the idea of exchanges between the parliamentarians of the two countries to deepen friendship and cooperation.

At the Japan National Press Club, Deputy President Ramaphosa sent a clear message that South Africa was open for business and offered an environment for growth.

Highlighting STI as a key priority for South African and Japan, Deputy President Ramaphosa visited the Japan Museum for Innovation and Technology where he met ASIMO, the humanoid robot from Honda that showed off its oral skills by greeting the Deputy President as well as his soccer skills. The aim of robotics in Japan is to exhibit the capacity it has to assist the aging population as well as making some complex labour sectors safer for workers. Toyota launched an automobile called the MIRAI in 2015. It uses hydrogen-cell instead of petroleum.

The Deputy President had a test drive in this futuristic car, which if produced in South Africa, could use platinum as a catalyst for the fuel cell – a perfect collaboration between the two countries.

The Working Visit successfully consolidated the bilateral relations between South Africa and Japan. The key message from Deputy President Ramaphosa was that South Africa was open for business. The immediate response to his call was an announcement by Keidenran, that it intended to send a large business delegation to South Africa in February 2016.

– SAnews.gov.za



1 Deputy President Ramaphosa with ABE Initiative students

2 Deputy President Ramaphosa during the South Africa Business Forum in Japan

3 Deputy President Ramaphosa with Taro Aso, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister of Japan

4 Deputy President Ramaphosa with HE Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan

5 Deputy President Ramaphosa with hotel staff



# OCTOBER - THE MONTH OF CELEBRATING DIPLOMACY IN ACTION!

BY LINAH LEDWABA

DIRECTORATE: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA



“Oliver lived not because he did all the things that all of us as ordinary men and women do. Oliver lived because he had surrendered his very being to the people.”

October is the month when DIRCO, through various activities, celebrates the advancement of diplomacy. It is during this time that we commemorate OR Tambo through an exhibition entitled “Oliver Reginald Tambo: The Modest Revolutionary (1917 – 1993)”, which covers Tambo’s early life, his education and training as a teacher and becoming a lawyer, the tough times that led to his escape to exile, his continuing determination as a principled leader and his fight against the apartheid regime. During his burial, the late former President Nelson Mandela said “Oliver lived not because he could breathe. He lived not because blood flowed through his veins. Oliver lived not because he did all the things that all of us as ordinary men and women do. Oliver lived because he had surrendered his very being to the people.”

OR Tambo espoused the values of patriotism, integrity, humility and passion and these values are those that DIRCO stands for. Hailed as one of the most compassionate diplomats of note for his magnificent negotiation skills, it only makes sense that the DIRCO Open Day took place in the same month. The DIRCO Open Day was an opportunity for everyone in the department to get to know why we were here; to put names to faces and voices; and establish, mend and maintain conducive work relations that would take us to new heights in terms of achieving our objectives.

OR Tambo relentlessly lobbied other governments to come to the aid of South Africans who lived under the inhuman conditions of the apartheid regime and that is why DIRCO annually hosts the Diplomatic Fair, attended by the diplomatic community accredited to South Africa, to thank them for their support, build and improve relations with them as well as educate the general public about diplomacy and more importantly, how our foreign policy’s objectives align to our domestic priorities.

The DIRCO Service Excellence Awards have recently been launched in the department to recognise and award officials who have dedicated their lives and have helped craft and maintain the integrity of DIRCO and that of the Public Service as a whole.

Looking at these activities taking place in October, I realised that they are the perfect celebrations of OR Tambo Month because of their interconnectedness and the similar objectives of each, i.e. to understand what diplomacy is all about and how, as diplomats, we should carry ourselves.

The interconnectedness of the OR Tambo Month activities firstly begins with an understanding of where diplomacy comes from through studying the life of OR Tambo who is regarded as South Africa’s pioneer diplomat; secondly, by learning how DIRCO has advanced the values that OR Tambo stood for through the DIRCO Open Day, which was a platform for equipping officials with information on the different responsibilities of branches that holistically contribute to the achievement of DIRCO’s mandate; thirdly, by evaluating how diplomatic efforts have progressed by hosting the Annual Diplomatic Fair, which is meant to appreciate the relations South Africa has with the 126 embassies abroad and international organisations accredited to it and; lastly, by appreciating the efforts we put in as officials by giving us an opportunity, through the DIRCO Service Excellence Awards, to nominate those who determinedly go the extra mile in service delivery.

I can’t help but ask whether in our daily tasks, do we carry ourselves with the poise, respect and dignity that is required of diplomats? Can we fearlessly boast that we are truly patriotic ambassadors of DIRCO and South Africa as whole? 🇷🇵



# Know our Heads of Mission

## 1. Tell us about yourself?

I am Ambassador Vusumuzi Lawrence Sindane. I have been accredited to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire since March 2012.

## 2 What is your daily routine?

Naturally, I have an office in the Chancery, where I spend most of my time. I cannot say I am bound to a particular routine as the nature of my work is dynamic. However, generally, I perform the following daily activities:

Usually, I arrive in the office at 09.00 am. I start my activities by checking to see if there are any messages that need my urgent attention, after which I consult with my secretary about the messages that had come in and were processed by the Counsellor Political. On other occasions, depending on the situation, I consult with the Counsellor Political.

From time to time, I also receive briefings from the Defence Attaché, pending the situation.

We have scheduled meetings of different formats, e.g. management, which brings together all the different section heads (that includes the different departments represented in the host country). This particular meeting is the one that looks at the overall life and health of the mission. For most of the time I have been here, we have been holding such meetings twice a month. However, with the improvement of the general situation in the country, we have scaled down the frequency to once a month.

A few other meetings are scheduled or ad hoc and I have asked the different colleagues as section heads to coordinate them. These are the sort of meetings where, for example, the general security situation gets reviewed, the state of accommodation for transferred staff is evaluated or issues of recreation are addressed, etc.

We are regularly involved in other types of meetings such as meetings with multilateral bodies, e.g. the United Nations system, where on a frequent basis we receive briefings on various subjects. Each month, we have a scheduled meeting with the Group of African Ambassadors. These meetings are very helpful, because each ambassador or Charge d'Affaires (where countries are not represented by an ambassador), gets a chance to share information about developments in their respective countries, for example, preparations for elections or major meetings that are held in one's country. Other meetings that we hold are with government officials – scheduled and some ad hoc.

National Day celebrations are a regular occurrence and it is always a good thing to attend to represent one's country. We attend a host of other events organised by ourselves or other missions, including non-governmental organisations.

## 3. How have you you acclimatised to the environment?

The conditions in Côte d'Ivoire are bearable. Whereas in South Africa we are accustomed to four seasons in a year, here we do not have that. What you find here is either a rainy or a dry season. In other words, it never gets cold. You never need a jersey here. What is needed most is acclimatising to an air-conditioned environment. This can take time. On my side, everything has now become



“The enthusiasm with which they support our initiatives always demonstrates their interest to promote the relations between the two countries...”

normal – a headache here or there cannot always be ruled out, but this is possible even if one was in South Africa.

## 4. One thing that people in HO should know about your country of accreditation?

When I arrived here in March 2012, this country was still nursing the scars from the violence that erupted as a consequence of the Presidential elections just over a year prior. However, there was a history that accompanied that violence. For over 20 years, the country was not functioning normally. I was happy to find that they had established a mechanism similar to what we experienced in South Africa, called the Dialogue Peace and Reconciliation Commission. It was the intention behind this commission that impressed me. The work of the commission was concluded last year (2014), although there are mixed feelings about whether or not it realised its objective.

In the three years that I have been in this country, there has been much progress in the area of development, especially in terms of infrastructure and systems. It does appear that many lives have been affected positively as a result of the improvements that have been put in place. I also like the fact that this country is endowed with many natural resources, including gold, diamond, oil, gas, etc. It is my belief that this provides many prospects for business for the benefit of both South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire.

## 5. What are the core activities of the Mission, and how do you implement this?

I believe Head Office is fully aware of the possibilities that Côte d'Ivoire offers. The enthusiasm with which they support our initiatives always demonstrates their interest to promote the relations between the two countries. I can only encourage them to stay unflinching in their support of the work we do.

## 6.What is your favourite sport and restaurant?

My favourite sport is golf. Both here and in South Africa, I am part of golfers who meet almost every weekend to compete. For the three years we have been here, we have held a SA Golf Day, which coincided with the National Day on 27 April. This year, it was bigger, because we obtained two free economy return air tickets to South Africa, including accommodation with breakfast at any of the Tsogo Sun resorts. These prizes were won by two young Ivorians whom I hope will be spurred on, especially as nations are preparing for the golf at the Olympics in Rio next year.

To tell the truth, I do not have a favourite restaurant because every time we eat out, we go to a different place. The list is long as we would like to experience as many restaurants as we can. Ordinarily, we prefer to make full use of the privilege of a chef in our residence, who has been afforded us by the South African Government.

## 7. Are there any similarities between your country of accreditation and South Africa?

There are countless similarities between Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa. At the very top are the people in both countries who are very warm.

Côte d'Ivoire is supposed to overcome the legacy of the conflict, just like we also still have to overcome the legacy of apartheid.

The Ivorian people love sport, and they do different codes, just as it is the case with South Africa. Like in South Africa, football (soccer) is the most popular sport in the country.

Côte d'Ivoire is blessed with many natural resources, such as gold, diamonds and oil, which we obtain by converting coal.

However, there are also differences, some of which are a result of its geographic location in relation to the equator. As a result, as stated above, whereas South Africa has four seasons annually, Côte d'Ivoire experiences a warm climate throughout the year, with either a rainy or dry season.

## 8. Are there any myths that are commonly held regarding your country of accreditation that you would like to burst?

For many years, many people in South Africa were shy to engage with Ivorians owing to the belief that French speaking was a barrier. Similarly, many people in South Africa failed to see Côte d'Ivoire for its true value simply because of the French.

Lately, increasingly so, more people exchange is taking place. We witness many Ivorian artists, such as their football stars, around the globe, and many students are coming to further their tertiary education in South Africa. MTN, Standard Bank, Rand Gold Resources and SAA are prominent brands in Ivory Coast. Ivorian Cocoa is the source of much of the chocolate that we are enjoying.

Both countries must work hard to add value to their resources to grow their economies and create more jobs. This is a task that requires the undivided attention of all who are stakeholders, both private and government.

# Meet South Africa

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South Africa

Inspiring new ways

# Building awareness: DIRCO Internal Audit

BY KORTMAN MOKOANA  
CHIEF DIRECTORATE: INTERNAL AUDIT

## Vision

DIRCO's Internal Audit strives to render world-class, most valued, efficient, effective and continually improving internal audit services, thereby functioning as a strategic management partner to DIRCO.

## Value-adding statement

To act as an advisory unit to management that strives to improve the operations of the organisation by providing objective, reasonable, assurance and value-adding recommendations which endeavour to improve transparency and service delivery.

## Mandate

The Chief Directorate: Internal Audit obtains its mandate from the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) and Treasury Regulations.

DIRCO's Internal Audit mandate is set out in a written charter, which is aligned with the charter of the Audit Committee and is consistent with the standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Internal Audit Charter is reviewed and updated regularly and covers key aspects such as (charter can be found on the Intranet):

- the role and responsibilities of the Internal Audit function
- the functional reporting relationship with the Audit Committee
- access to corporate employees, facilities and records (including those of contractors)
- any restrictions of the scope or authority of Internal Audit
- the requirement that managers cooperate with Internal Audit and respond to reports

- the Code of Ethics
- Internal Audit standards
- the relationship with external auditors
- working closely with risk management
- the distribution of audit reports and summaries
- the following up of recommendations
- the right of the Chief Audit Executive to attend Audit Committee meetings.

## About Internal Audit

Dirco Internal Audit is affiliated with the following professional bodies:

- Institute of Internal Auditors
- Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
- Information System Audit and Control Association.

Internal Audit was established to help the organisation achieve its set goals by evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, internal controls and governance processes.



DIRCO's audits engagements are generally focused on the efficiency and effectiveness of current and future operations.



DIRCO Internal Audit conducts risk-based audits at the missions and Head Office to provide management with reasonable assurance that policies, approved/standard procedure manuals and prescribed directives in place are complied with and working as management intended.

The Chief Directorate: Internal Audit consists of:

- Operational, Compliance and Forensic Audit
- Performance and Information Technology Audit.

## Operational and Compliance Audit

The unit provides assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control system of the department.

It provides reasonable assurance by testing internal controls at Head Office and/or mission(s) to assess whether process owners adhere to departmental policies, approved/standard procedure manuals and the prescribed directives.

## Forensic Audit

The prevention, deterrence and detection of fraud are the responsibility of management

in the department. The Internal Audit activity assists to evaluate the internal controls that management has established to manage the risk of fraud.

## Performance Audit

The aim is to evaluate the measures instituted by management, and/or ensure that resources have been acquired economically and are utilised efficiently and effectively as well as assessing qualitative and quantitative performance of all units within the department and/or South African missions abroad.

## Information Technology Audit (IT Audit)

DIRCO's Internal Audit activity assesses whether IT supports the organisation's strategies and objectives.

IT Audit evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of IT controls and governance processes in responding to IT risk and activities within the department.

## Remarks

Collective cooperation by both Internal Audit and management in the department can yield positive results such as:

- the improvement of organisational ethics and cooperate governance
- proper safeguarding of assets
- enhanced productivity and service delivery
- enhanced working relationships within the department
- the achievement of departmental goals and objectives.

# VOICES FROM DIRCO



## A township duo's quest for information/knowledge

BY LEBALANE MALATJI  
DIRECTORATE: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

To become employable, young people must be knowledgeable and exposed to the workplace environment, and learn about different types of careers, and how to associate and interact with different people from different backgrounds.

Recently, I bumped into two young guys, Kopano Molokomme and Tebogo Mashita, on the third floor of the OR Tambo Building. They were from a township called Tembisa, just outside Kempton Park, in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. My initial thought was that they were probably accompanying their parents who were working here. I was, however, so wrong after taking a moment to have a conversation with them. These young lads, who are in Grade 12 at Winnie Mandela Secondary, were in the company of Mandla Masilela from Talent Management and

explained to me their reason for being here ... and yes, it was an important one indeed!

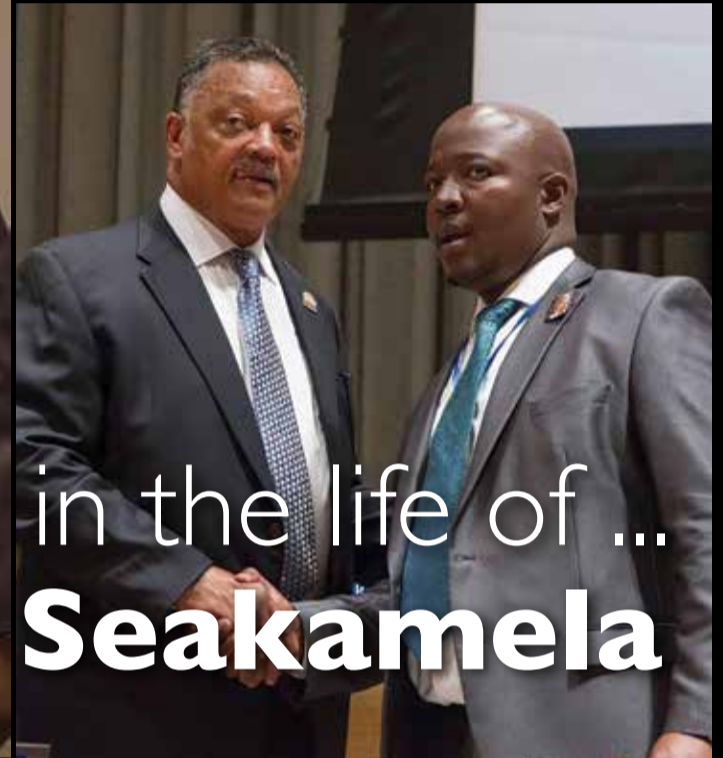
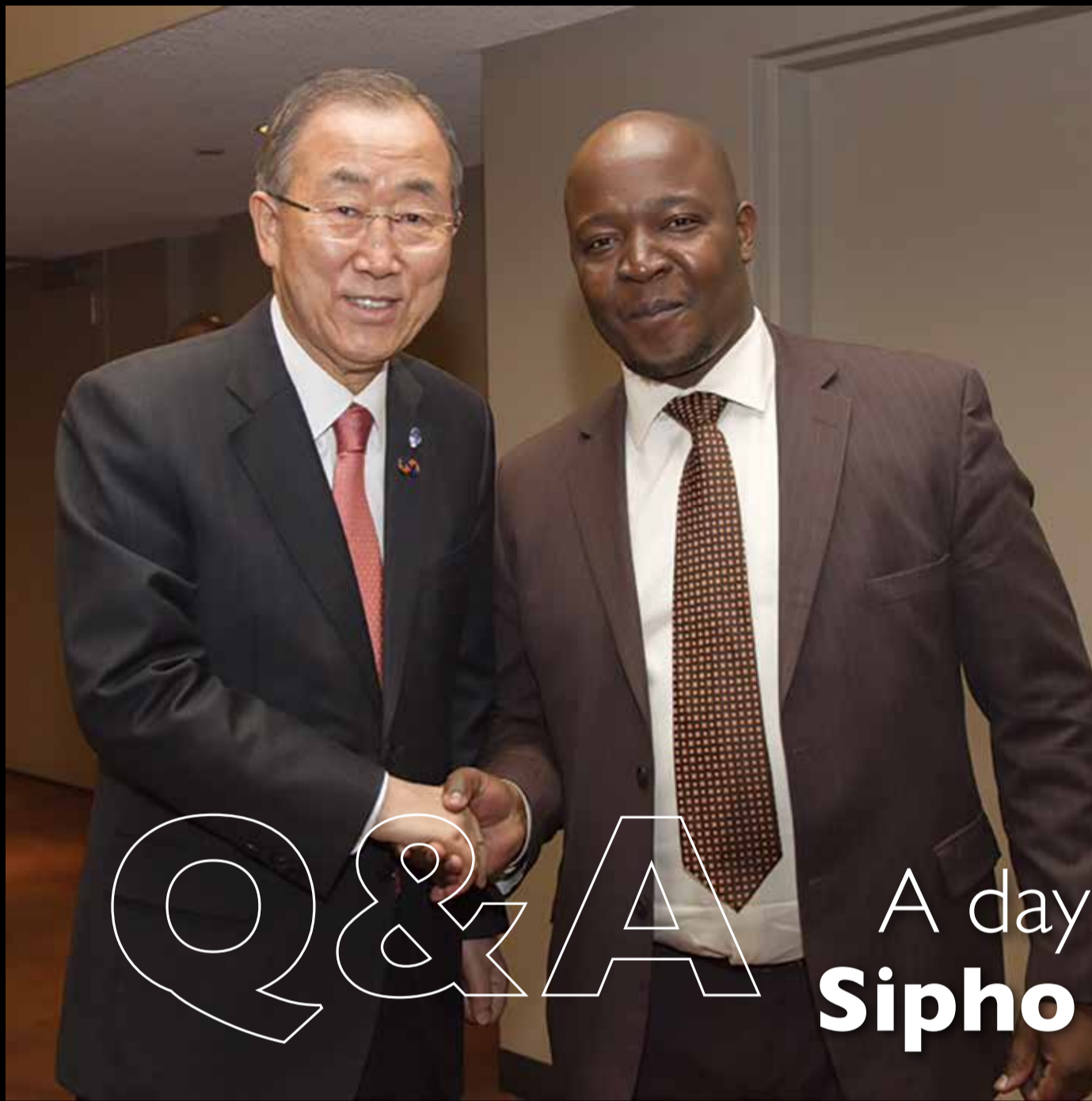
They woke up early on the cold winter morning, without adequate resources, and boarded a not so comfortable and reliable train to the capital, Pretoria. They disembarked at Pretoria Station and walked all the way to Blood Street (about 30 minutes' walk), where they caught a bus to OR Tambo Building. They arrived at the department, not knowing any one inside this building. They called Human Resources and were introduced to Mandla Masilela who gladly took them in and showed them around while being asked a variety of questions.

Hosting these two pupils/learners reiterated the need to have career exposure at an early age, specifically at secondary school, as this is the deciding period when one has to choose

which career to pursue. Most pupils/learners complete their secondary schooling without a firm career choice, with this decision being left to the late periods of education and only when one thinks of tertiary enrolment.

Having the opportunity to learn about careers at a young age and even better, to prepare for tertiary education knowing much about what career one wants to pursue, is indeed very important and to everyone's advantage.

Maybe the Department of International Relations and Cooperation can do more by taking career information/exhibitions to secondary schools as this will most probably assist in broadening the career choices of our young people in the most disadvantaged and educationally starved corners of our communities. 🌍



#### 1. Tell us about yourself ...

I am a husband, father of three boys and servant of the South African people. For almost a decade, I have had the distinct honour and privilege to serve my country at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York on different occasions. During this period, I served in two different, yet important, capacities as a diplomat at the Permanent Mission and as a Senior Adviser to the President of the UN General Assembly (GA).

It has been an illustrious tenure, working alongside many of our country's finest diplomats at the Mission, including supporting three Permanent Representatives (Ambassadors Dumisani Kumalo, Baso Sangqu and Kingsley Mamabolo). Simultaneously, I have witnessed the administrations of two UN secretaries-general (Messrs Kofi Anan and Ban Ki-moon).

My first four years in New York were undoubtedly priceless with the highlight being part of South Africa's historic tenures as the Chair of the Group of 77 and China in 2006 as well as non-permanent member on the UN Security Council from 2007 to 2008. Having said that, my secondment to the UN Secretariat since 2012, as Senior Adviser to the President of the GA, remains a privilege. I am indeed humbled by this unique opportunity to serve at international level.

#### 2. What are your responsibilities?

The GA is the chief deliberative, policy-making and the most representative organ of the UN. It provides a unique platform for multilateral discussions on a spectrum of international issues as provided by the UN Charter. The highlight of the work of the Assembly is the annual gathering of world leaders in September when over 100 leaders descend on the UN Headquarters for the

high-level general debate and to take stock of global state affairs. My primary role is to provide advisory support to the President of the GA in the discharge of his responsibilities, particularly on issues pertaining to Africa and cooperation between UN and regional organisations. I am also a focal person with the African Group and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in New York. So far, I have worked with three presidents of the GA from Serbia, Antigua and Barbuda and Uganda and will shortly join the President from Denmark.

I regularly brief the President of the GA (PGA) and advise him on all UNGA processes, including the interpretation of the rules of procedure. I provide substantive support to PGA-appointed facilitators under my portfolio. I also draft the president's speeches delivered before the Assembly and other meetings; organise select thematic debates and briefings; make political arrangements for the PGA's travels, in particular briefing notes for bilateral meetings; and liaises with relevant interlocutors and stakeholders, including the media, civil society and permanent missions to the UN.

As Senior Adviser, I am expected to submit written analytical reports every time I accompany the PGA to bilateral meetings and consultations with other interlocutors. Most of my daily interactions with interlocutors are aimed at utilising the "good offices" of the President to encourage member states to work together to achieve the priorities of the GA. Each President of the GA has a different leadership style and culture. Adapting to each of the last three presidents has been a learning curve.

#### 3. How long have you been with DIRCO?

I have been with DIRCO since February 2004.

#### 4. What does your normal day entail?

While each day is different, my typical workday starts with a coordination meeting at the Mission at 9 am and concludes any time after 7 pm. I attend to regular Cabinet meetings in the Office of the PGA, where briefings are provided to the President. Most of my morning is spent in consultations with member states, civil society and other interlocutors on the work of the GA. If not in meetings, I spend time at work preparing briefing documents, drafting speeches and other policy documents.

There is a seamless relationship between the Mission and my work in the Office of the PGA. Serving as a seconded diplomat, one is expected to retain regular interaction on strategic issues for the country at the UN. For this reason, I regularly consult with the Ambassador, attend meetings of the Mission and share information as appropriate on the processes of the UN Secretariat.

#### Lessons from your work:

I never stop learning from both my South African colleagues and fellow international civil servants at the UN Secretariat. Humility, commitment, dedication, hard work and passion are essential ingredients to succeeding at the UN.

My family has been the pillar of my strength. In the midst of the challenging long hours at work – spending time with my family, reading and some exercising keep me focused and inspired to strive to work harder to represent the country at international level. It is truly a privilege. Being away from Mzantsi teaches one to appreciate our country, and treasure family and friends in life. 🌍





### 1. Geographical location

Brazil is the fifth-largest country in the world (both in terms of area and population) and occupies almost half of the entire South American continent. The coastline stretches for 7 491 km and continues to be a major tourist attraction for the country. Brazil has claims to the following islands:

- Fernando de Noronha
- Rocas Atoll
- Saint Peter and Paul Rocks
- Trindade and Martim Vaz Islands.

Brazil shares borders with Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela. It is divided into five official regions, namely: Central-West, North-east, North, South-east and Southern Brazil. These are then split into 26 states and a Federal District. Brasilia is the capital city of the country.

### 2. Language

Portuguese is an official language in Brazil, making it the only Portuguese-speaking country in the Americas. Brazilian Portuguese differs somewhat in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation from the language of Portugal. The vast majority of Brazilians are monolingual in Portuguese, although many middle-class and elite Brazilians study English and to a lesser extent Spanish, French and German.

### 3. Culture

Brazil is a country that is known for its rich cultural background. The country's culture is one of the world's most varied and diverse. This is due to it being a melting pot of nationalities such as Amerindians,

European, African and Asian. All of these different influences have meant that the modern-day Brazilian culture is unique and very complex.

### 4. Religion

Due to the richness of its culture and its heritage, Brazil boasts an array of religious ideals and affiliations.

In fact, there are more Catholics in Brazil than in any other country in the world.

In terms of Christian religions, the main churches in Brazil are as follows: Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, Episcopal, Pentecostal, Lutheran and Baptist.

### 5. Sport

Football is the most popular sport in Brazil. The Brazilian national soccer team is governed by the *Confederação Brasileira de Futebol*.

It is appropriate that Brazil hosted the 2014 FIFA World Cup™ as this nation currently holds the record number of victories in this tournament, at an impressive five. Brazil is the only country in the world to qualify for every single World Cup tournament since its inception – a truly notable achievement for any nation.

Each time, Brazil was playing during the 2014 FIFA World Cup, almost all institutions were closed to allow locals to watch and support the country. It is a demonstration of the passion for football in Brazil.

### 6. Tourism

Tourism in Brazil is an important sector that is contributing to the economy. The country offers both domestic and international tourists a sufficient range of options, with natural areas being its most popular tourism product; a combination of ecotourism with leisure and recreation, mainly sun and beach, and adventure travel, as well as historic and tourism. Some of the most popular destinations are the rainforest, beaches at Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina, cultural and historic tourism in Minas Gerais and business trips to São Paulo city and Salvador in the State of Bahia.

Another place worth noting for tourism purposes is the town of Gramado. It is a municipality and small tourist town situated in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. Gramado is a shopping paradise. Most of the shops are situated along the most important streets in town. The town is principally known for its chocolate. Its inhabitants have imported the art of chocolate-making from Argentina. Leather products such as bags, jackets and shoes are of high quality at a reasonable price.

### 7. Entertainment

Brazil is one of the South American countries that is well known for its festive celebrations and annual events. Carnival is celebrated throughout Brazil, and each city observes it in its own unique way. Carnival is characterised by brightly-coloured costumes, lavish decorations and cheerful music. Dance and music parades fill the streets as the audience looks on and joins in the festivities.

Coastal cities such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Salvador tend to have more entertaining celebrations than those further inland.



*Carnival in Brazil*

### 8. Mission experience

Brazil was my first diplomatic mission and the four years that I spent there were fulfilling. I worked with different officials who were hard-working, disciplined and had a wealth of experience..

Relating to diplomats from the African continent and in particular the Southern African Development Community (SADC) also helped me to broaden the scope of diplomacy from the perspective of diplomats from other countries. I felt part of the SADC family as I used to accompany the Head of Mission in Brasilia to the SADC Ambassadors' meetings and I have acquired more knowledge on the SADC activities through that forum.

I also had the opportunity to be part of the team that hosted the South African delegation led by President Jacob Zuma to the Sixth BRICS Summit that was held in 2014 in the city of Fortaleza. It was not an easy task dealing with a huge number of principals and

ensuring that all was in order prior to the actual day of the summit. I believe that the experience that I gathered in Brazil will benefit me in the execution of the work at Head Office.

### 9. Politics system

Brazil is a federal presidential constitutional Republic, based on representative democracy. The Federal Government has three independent branches: Executive Legislative and Judicial. Executive power is exercised by the executive branch, headed by the President, advised by Cabinet. The President is both the head of state and the head of government. Legislative power is vested upon the National Congress, a two-chamber legislature comprising the Federal Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Judicial power is exercised by the judiciary, consisting of the Supreme Federal Court, the Superior Court of Justice and other superior courts, the National Justice Council and the regional federal courts.

### 10. Economy

Brazil is not just the biggest country in Latin America in terms of geography, but is also the largest economy in the region. The country is also a member state of the MERCOSUR economic trade bloc which consists of the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela.



*Copacabana Beach*

The automobile sector is the most critical manufacturing sector in Brazil. The country has manufacturing plants for General Motors, Volkswagen, Ford, Fiat, Honda and Toyota. Workers are highly unionised, receiving the highest salaries among the manufacturing industries.

Mining also plays an important part in the economy of Brazil. The country is the world's largest producer of bauxite, gemstones, columbium, gold, iron ore, kaolin, manganese, tantalum and tin. The country's major exports are iron ore, tin and aluminum.

The financial sector is also key to the Brazilian economy and the Government owns most of it, which is the largest component of the services industry. The three largest banks are the Bank of Brazil, Federal Economic Register and National Bank of Economic and Social Development (BNDES). As a sign of confidence towards South Africa, the bank inaugurated its representative office on the African continent. The BNDES' new office is located in Johannesburg and was opened in December 2013. The bank plans to widen its relations with regional and local institutions, as well as furthering its know-how concerning Africa's business environment. Its presence in Africa is expected to help boost business between Brazil and the




*The famous Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro*

African continent, contributing to mutual economic development. Brazil is also known for the manufacturing of commercial, executive aviation and military aircrafts under the company, Embraer.

There are several Brazilian companies in South Africa. Odebrecht is a Brazilian conglomerate consisting of diversified businesses in the fields of engineering, construction, chemicals and petrochemicals.

Marcopolo is another notable Brazilian company that manufactures buses and is headquartered in Germiston.

There are several South African companies operating in Brazil such as South African Airways, Standard Bank and Anglo Gold Ashanti.

South Africa-Brazil relations are also strengthened through forums such as IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) as well as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). 



# Globe at a glimpse

## Bangkok Nelson Mandela Day 2015



Bangkok Mission Counsellor, Deon Seals, painting the perimeter wall at Camillian Home in Bangkok



Second from left: Ambassador Robina Marks, with event coordinators



Embassy officials, Jabulani members and UNESCAP officials with Camillian Home children

In recognition of International Nelson Mandela Day, the South African Embassy in Bangkok, led by Ambassador Robina Marks and Embassy officials, in partnership with members of the South African-Thai Chamber of Commerce (SATCC), Jabulani Social Club (South Africans living in Thailand) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP), participated in a programme of support at Camillian Home for children living with disabilities on 16 July 2015. The visit to Camillian Home included activities such as painting the perimeter wall of the premises, playing games with the children as well as storytelling based on the Nelson Mandela children's book, *Long Walk to Freedom*. The participants also donated groceries to Camillian Home.

## South African Embassy hosts Tourism Roundtable in Almaty



On 18 September 2015, the South African Embassy in Kazakhstan hosted a Tourism Roundtable at the Rixos Hotel in Almaty. The roundtable was attended by about 65 tour agents based in Almaty.

Two South African tourism companies, Southern Africa 360 Luxury Holidays and OKNO African Tours, participated and made presentations through Skype.

Two airlines, Etihad and FlyDubai, also participated in the roundtable by making presentations on their flight options from Kazakhstan to South Africa. All presentations were extremely well received.

Talgat Kaliyev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of South Africa, also joined the roundtable through Skype and expressed his gratitude to participants.

The Kazakhstan Tourist Association worked with the Mission to select and invite tour operators to the Tourism Roundtable.

The purpose was to promote South Africa as a travel destination and enhance awareness of travel agents in Almaty of South African business and training opportunities.



## South Africa's involvement in Nuclear Sciences and Applications: 59th IAEA General Conference

During the 59th Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference, Ambassador Tebogo Seokolo, in his capacity as Chairperson of the IAEA Committee that mobilises support for the renovations of the IAEA Nuclear Application Laboratories, joined IAEA Director-General, Yukiya Amano, in unveiling the model laboratories.

Through these laboratories, the IAEA provides support to its member states to utilise the benefits of nuclear science and technology for socio-economic development in areas such as human health, animal health, environmental health and water management.

Through its nuclear application laboratories, the IAEA collaborated with the South African Institute

of Communicable Diseases in providing support to countries in West Africa to curb and manage the outbreak of Ebola. Similarly, the IAEA, through its laboratories, is collaborating with the African Union in its campaign to eradicate tsetse flies and mosquitoes, which are detrimental to both human and animal health and are also a threat to food security on the continent.

The modernisation of the laboratories will cost 31 million Euros. During the conference, South Africa pledged R3 million towards this project. Thus far, funds that have been raised amount to 15 million Euros. Ambassador Seokolo appealed to other member states to contribute financially towards this project.



Ambassador Seokolo addressing the audience as the Chairperson of the Friends of ReNuAL and Yukiya Amano, Director-General of the IAEA

## Minister Joemat-Petterssen attends IAEA 59th General Conference



Minister Joemat-Petterssen delivering the National Statement at the opening of the 59th Session of the IAEA General Conference

The 59th Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference was held in Vienna, Austria, from 14 to 18 September 2015. Minister Tina Joemat-Petterssen led the South African delegation.

Addressing the conference, Minister Joemat-Petterssen reaffirmed South Africa's commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its three equally important pillars: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Minister indicated that since the advent of democracy, South Africa had consistently called for the elimination of nuclear weapons on the basis that they were inhumane weapons of mass destruction and a threat to global peace and security.

Minister Joemat-Petterssen further said that the IAEA had an important role to play in accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

Minister Joemat-Petterssen further reiterated that the inalienable right to the peaceful utilisation of nuclear energy as set out in the NPT was an essential objective of the NPT and the basis for the work of the IAEA. In this regard, the Minister said that nuclear power and the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, if optimised to the fullest, could meaningfully enhance the achievement of the millennium development goals and contribute to the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda.

Minister Joemat-Petterssen also informed the conference that South Africa would be embarking on

a significant expansion of its nuclear power-generating capacity, which would see 9 600 MW of electricity generated through nuclear power, with the first new unit to be commissioned by 2023. According to the Minister, this programme will contribute to South Africa's energy security through the provision of a reliable and sustainable electricity supply, and will enable the country to, among others, create jobs, develop skills, create industries and catapult the country into a knowledge economy.



Unveiling of the new models for nuclear science and applications laboratories. From left: Deputy Director-General Aldo Malavasi (IAEA), Director-General Yukiya Amano (IAEA), Ambassador Tebogo Seokolo (South Africa) and Ambassador Friedrich Dauble (Germany)

## Second Kazakh Robot Olympiad in Astana



South African teacher, Pragasen Naidoo, with competitors



Ambassador Soni with winners of the Kazakh Robot Olympiad 2015

The South African Embassy in Kazakhstan engaged in the Kazakh Robot Olympiad in Astana, held at Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) from 18 to 19 September 2015. The event was attended by government officials, media, public, parents, teachers and students from across Kazakhstan. Some 158 students from 35 schools from 10 regions participated in the competition.

South African teachers are training students on robotics at NIS across Kazakhstan. Teachers

prepared a Kazakh team to participate in the 2014 World Robot Olympiad held in Russia.

This is the second year that the Embassy participated in the Robot Olympiad. Ambassador SM Soni presented a speech at the closing ceremony and handed out prizes to the winners. They will be sent to participate in the World Robot Olympiad to be held in Qatar from 6 to 8 November 2015. The South African teachers will also be part of the trainers attending the competition with the Kazakh team.

# IDC helps Hall Longmore save jobs

The manufacturing industry has the potential to make a major impact on South Africa's economy. The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) funded Hall Longmore for the purchase of raw materials and plant equipment. The funding enabled the company to save jobs and recover all the way to profitability. Hall Longmore is now ranked amongst the leading international suppliers of Electric

Resistance Welded and Spiral Welded steel piping for the transportation of water, gas and petro chemicals. The IDC, an entity of government, continues to play a critical role in coordinating key industrial sectors across the economy to advance industrial development. The IDC can fund your business. Call **0860 693 888** or visit [idc.co.za](http://idc.co.za) for information about the sectors that the IDC supports.



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