

IT'S YOUR

VOICE

Internal Newsletter of the Department of
International Relations and Cooperation

ubuntu diplomat



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Editor's Letter

Dear Diplomats,



It was a great pleasure when I was approached by our editorial committee team to be a guest editor of the 11th edition of *It's your Voice*. I am employed in the ICT section and have been with DIRCO for eight years. I was grateful for this opportunity as it meant that I would for once also explore my writing skills and narrate how working for the department has enlightened me about South Africa's diplomatic goals. I have been offered the opportunity to write this editorial to inform you all about what to expect in the edition.

You will read about the events that took place in October or "OR Tambo Month", namely: the Heads of Mission Conference (HoMC) and the Diplomatic Fun Fair.

The HoMC offered the department an opportunity to have all our mission heads to come and reflect on their efforts in their assigned missions and how they are moving South Africa forward through

diplomacy. The Diplomatic Fun Fair gave South Africans and opportunity to celebrate other countries' cultures – entertainment and cuisine galore! The events of the month meant we could unite as one and showed the world the spirit of Ubuntu that was exerted by OR Tambo.

You will also get to read about "A Day in the Life of Mr Nkone Sekalo" and 10 things Mr Mthembisi Mjikeliso liked about Botswana when he was posted there.

I would like to extend my well wishes to officials who are writing exams and encourage them to do their best.

MP

Tshitso Tladi

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Moving South Africa Forward through diplomacy

By Dave Malcomson

South Africa's heads of mission (HoM) gathered at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation's OR Tambo Building in Pretoria for their Biennial Conference from 17 to 21 October 2016 under the theme "Moving South Africa Forward through Diplomacy".

The conference was addressed by President Jacob Zuma, Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane as well as ministers from various Cabinet clusters.

The HoM were apprised of the latest Medium Term Strategic Framework imperatives, with a specific focus on the National Development Plan, the Nine-Point Plan, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, and other government programmes dealing with such key issues as small business development, the digital economy, and science and technology.

They acquainted themselves with the latest administrative directives, legislative prescripts

and regulations for effective and efficient management, as well as for the utilisation of resources for the achievement of the strategic objectives of the department and its missions abroad.

They examined the state of the economy, the global political and economic environment, and the current unfolding geo-political situation in the context of South Africa's national interests and values.

In this regard, they noted global developments such as the BREXIT vote; the rise of mega-regional trade deals; events in Syria and Yemen; terrorism; migration; the re-emergence of geo-politics, unilateralism, populism and nationalism; the rise of new parties and shifts from left to right; the importance of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) and India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA) in the crafting of a new world order; the future of multilateralism and a rules-based global architecture; and the impact

of climate change in terms of food, water, and human and energy security.

Having assessed the global situation, trends and dynamics to determine a strategy for the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy in an ever-changing geo-political and economic landscape, and mindful of the fact that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy, they made a number of recommendations to address the identified challenges.

Fundamentally, the conference reaffirmed the validity and legitimacy of our foreign policy and its basic tenets, principles and objectives. It also reaffirmed the importance of the global system of governance, with the United Nations at its centre, as well as the inextricable linkage between peace, security and stability on the one hand; and socio-economic development on the other, as well as the centrality of the Southern African Development Community region and the African continent in our foreign policy.

It was decided to intensify the implementation of South Africa's economic diplomacy programme to contribute to the growth of the economy, create jobs and address the triple challenge of poverty, inequality and unemployment. This will be done by focussing on improving trade and investment, science and technology transfers, and tourism into the country. Critical elements include infrastructure development, industrialisation, beneficiation, agro-processing and the commercialisation of opportunities relating to products and technologies, as well as health and education.

In closing, the conference was reminded of the achievements of OR Tambo in the field of international diplomacy and there was a commitment to carry forward his legacy into 2017 and the celebration of the centenary of his birth.

Lastly, tribute was paid to the late Rev. Dr Makhenkesi Stofile who served South Africa with honour and distinction in various public roles, including as Ambassador to Germany.



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My experience at the Diplomatic Fun Fair

By Fhulufhelo Maeba

On 29 October 2016, DIRCO held its annual Diplomatic Fair at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. It was a scorching sunny day. However, people, both young and old, were ready to experience the world in one day and came out in large numbers. You could see the excitement of being part of this gigantic event.

The Diplomatic Fair is a cultural event during which countries from around the world and United Nations (UN) agencies showcase their culture, including food, clothes, music and dance.

Each participating country had a stand where one could tantalise their taste buds and experience different fine cuisine. Each country also had an opportunity to showcase their culture on stage, either through music or dancing. One could almost taste, smell and touch the world.

The Southern lawns of the Union Buildings were bright and colourful with all the amazing garments that people wore from all over the globe.

The beautiful Thembisa Mdođa and our very own Talifhani Munzhedzi, from Ubuntu Radio, kept the audience entertained. National treasure Babes WoDumo did what she does best and DJ Tira kept the people moving. Bucie closed the show on a high note.

The Diplomatic Fair was a day filled with international cultural experiences. Imagine travelling to, among others, the UN, China, Nigeria and Sri Lanka all in one day! The fair offered a world of possibilities.



Know our Heads of Mission



1. Tell us about yourself?
My name is Ambassador Pule Malefane. I am a happily married man with five children based in Ankara, Turkey. I was a Member of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature from 1994, became the Chief Operations Officer of Gauteng Tourism Authority in 2007 and was appointed Consul-General of South Africa in Mumbai in 2010.

I served in different roles in the tripartite alliance structures of the African National Congress (ANC), including being the Regional Deputy Chairperson of the ANC and a District Secretary of the South African Communist Party in the then East Rand (Ekurhuleni). My latest deployment is that of being the Ambassador of South Africa in Turkey and non-resident to Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

2. What is your daily routine?
My day starts with early morning meditation, followed by eye yoga and a few minutes of

workout in the gym, I generally start at the Mission around 08h30. After settling in and checking the latest news, I update our website content and attend to e-mail messages. I receive daily briefings from my colleagues on the primary issues being addressed and then I set about my daily interactions which vary from managing the Mission to meetings with different stakeholders in Turkey, from government to the private sector and other ambassadors in Ankara. After a busy day in the office, I often have an evening engagement as Ankara has a very big and vibrant diplomatic community.

3. How have you acclimatised to the environment?
Well, we arrived during one of the coldest winters from a tropical India, so acclimatising was a shock to the system. But, we adapted very quickly to the new environment and the lifestyle here in Turkey, and once we settled into the daily routine and all the little things

were sorted out (schools and home comforts), things became very normal quickly.

4. What do you like about the country of accreditation?
The history and the sights around Turkey – as the crossroads of Europe and Asia, it has been at the centre of many different civilisations from these two continents. The country and culture show examples of this extensive merging with the cuisine being a fusion of Asian seasoning mixed with European ingredients and Central Asian styles of cooking.

Alternatively, you can walk from an ancient Greek/Roman hippodrome and find yourself in one of the biggest mosques in the world built by the Ottoman Empire or drive a short distance and visit a settlement of the Hittites from before the Greeks or Romans. Every town has its own story to tell but it is often a fusion of the different cultures of these two continents.

5. One thing that people in HO should know about your country of accreditation?
Turkey is a vast country with incredible opportunities for South Africa and its capital is Ankara not Istanbul.

6. Favourite spot/restaurant?
Ankara has so many great restaurants and park areas. I would have to narrow it down to home with the family, the football pitch (at Galatasary Academy) where I play every week and Ankara's only golf course, which has become my fishing pond for business executives and senior bureaucrats to interact with socially.

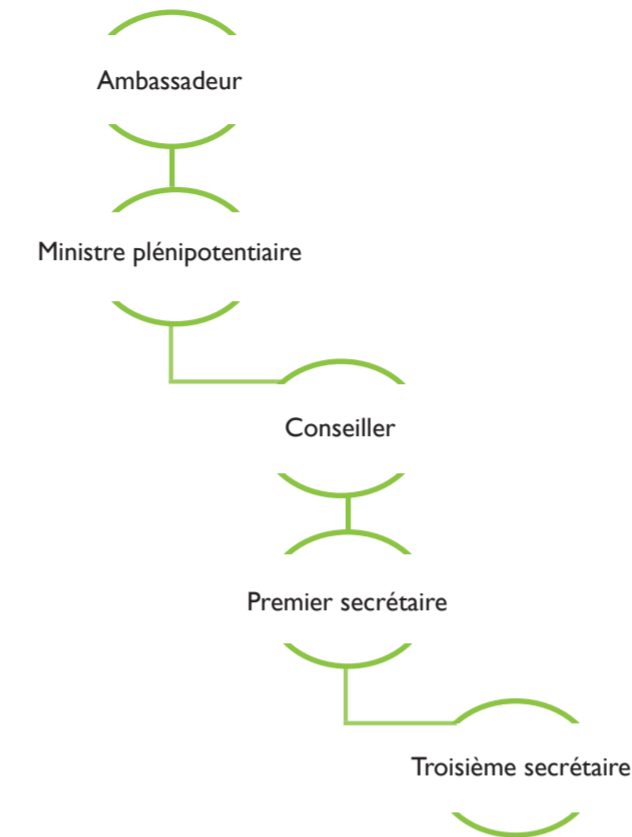
7. Are there any similarities between your country of accreditation and South Africa?
Turkey also has a type of mass transport system for commuters called a "dolmuş" and they operate just like the taxis back home – except they don't give any warning when they are going to stop and they don't even pull over. But, seriously, the people are similar in their friendly, warm and helpful nature. We are also both fans of the braai or *Izgara* as they call it here.

8. Are there any myths that are commonly held regarding your country of accreditation that you would like to bust?
It is not so much a myth to bust but rather so many interesting facts – like Turkey being the place where St Nicholas or Father Christmas is from or that King Midas and his Golden Touch lived in and is buried in Turkey. You can also find the site of the ancient city of Troy in Turkey. There are so many parts of Ancient Mediterranean History centred around Turkey while it is never mentioned in the stories. With all that said and done, Turkey still remains a fascinating place to explore.

LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

FRENCH

L'organigramme d'une ambassade



L'AMBASSADE

un ambassadeur / une ambassadrice
un ministre plénipotentiaire / une ministre plénipotentiaire
un conseiller / une conseillère
(administratif/ve ou politique)

un premier / une première secrétaire
un / une troisième secrétaire
(administratif/ve ou politique)

un / une attaché(e)
un chef de mission

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L'Ambassadeur **représente les intérêts de** l'Afrique du Sud.

Le Conseiller politique **est en charge des** dossiers politiques.

Le Troisième secrétaire administratif **s'occupe** des demandes de visa.

L'Attaché de Défense **est un spécialiste de** la défense.

THE EMBASSY

an ambassador
a minister plenipotentiary
a counsellor
(political / administration)

a first secretary
a third secretary
(political / administration)

an attaché
a head of mission

RESPONSABILITIES

The Ambassador **represents** the interests of South Africa.

The Political Counsellor **is in charge of** political matters.

The Third Secretary (Administration) **deals with** visa applications.

The Defence Attaché **is a specialist on** defence matters.

La carte de visite

les armoiries

le nom

le prénom

le titre / la fonction

l'adresse

le numéro de téléphone

le numéro de fax

l'arobase

le courriel

Les fonctions

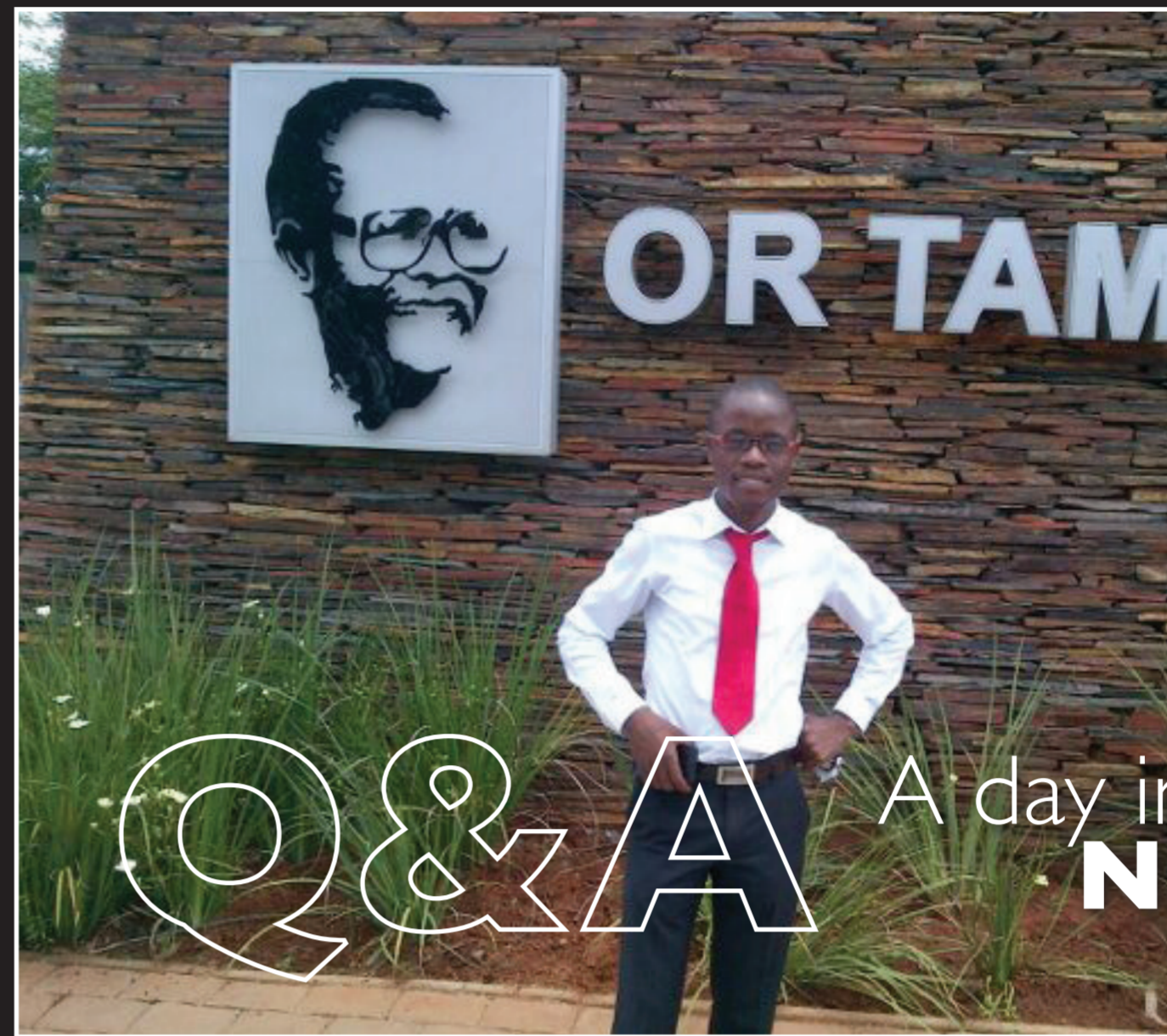
Retrouvez 6 fonctions dans la grille suivante. Find 6 titles in the grid below.

Q W G Q D M T W V M S A U Q S
 A A E N L P C F E F V T G D B
 G I Ç Ç P R D I P L O M A T E
 L L Z I L D E D B B Y I M L F
 X K M V J V J C R U Q I B P B
 Y U Y S E A T T A C H E A K R
 Q J B E L U I X M L Ç M S I V
 M B M C R Z G Y I Y T R S C F
 D G C R V E M J N H M C A T Q
 I R D E V J T L I C P H D V N
 Ç W O T J Y Q X S X J Ç R N G
 D B A A M N J T T X V Ç I Q Q
 Q A D I L J V S R G R Q C C N
 F B T R C O N S E I L L E R C
 W G T E Y C V X B F G L K T J



Creative Corner

Pictures taken by Sammy Morwe from the Branch: Public Diplomacy during his hiking trips



A day in the life of ... Nkone Sekalo



The Diplomatic Fair also marked the third birthday celebration of Ubuntu Radio. It offered a platform to create awareness about the radio station and its core purpose of providing a means to exchange views and opinions by various stakeholders, including opinion-makers, think-tanks, academics, scholars, students, diplomats and other key players in the field of diplomacy and international relations.

Ubuntu Radio is immediate, reaches many parts of the world and runs live broadcasts of major DIRCO events like the Dip Fair, hence its attendance. Outside broadcasting took place during the event, conducted in the OB van. Representatives from different countries were interviewed. Furthermore, Tali Munzhedzi, current affairs show presenter was co-presenting with Themisa Mdoda. It was a mammoth experience and history was made. This station has become a major source of reliable, recent and trusted news on South Africa's foreign policy.



Tali Munzhedzi, current affairs presenter



Thelma Ngobeni and the Netherlands Ambassador, Gerads Marisa, to South Africa



Khayakazi Kyoto and Ghana High Commissioner Kwesi Ahwoi

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1. Tell us about yourself ...

My name is Nkone Sekalo. I was born in Temba and raised in a tiny village called Sodoma in the Limpopo province. I am also called "Mokone", which is my clan name.

I attended several primary schools in both Limpopo and Gauteng and completed Grade 12 at Pirwana High in Limpopo.

In 2005, I went to Tshwane University of Technology to pursue my undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in Human Resource Management.

I joined DIRCO in 2010 as an intern and I was appointed permanently as Human Resource Officer in 2011 in the Sub-Directorate: Recruitment and Selection. I was subsequently promoted in 2014 to the post of Senior Human Resource Practitioner in the same sub-directorate.

I enjoy travelling, more especially to Limpopo and spend time with my three lovely children.

2. What is your daily routine?

I wake up at 5:00 and by 7:30 I am in the office to check my e-mails and respond to queries.

I then brief my supervisor on the programmes of the day.

3. What do you enjoy most about working for DIRCO?

DIRCO is no ordinary government department, but a dynamic one. You get to meet and interact with wonderful people.

It exposes you to different cultures and you get to understand them better not only in your professional environment but in your social space as well.

The Department has afforded me the opportunity to learn the French language. I also like the fact that DIRCO has been diversified by virtue of its international nature.

4. What do you like about your job?

What fascinates me about my job is that as recruiters we are the first point of contact in the Department because we specialise in acquiring human capital for the Department.

Attention to detail is imperative in what we do and my job has taught me that. I like the fact that we strive to ensure that each and every step is executed with precision.

And obviously the team Recruitment and Selection is wonderful; we are like a family in a sense that we support each other to attain set objectives.

5. Anything else you would like to tell us about yourself?

I believe that I am a humble person.



TEN THINGS I LIKE ABOUT BOTSWANA

BY MTHEMBISI MIJELISO
MISSION COUNSELLOR
BOTSWANA, 2012 - 2015



Villages in Botswana were traditionally built around the meeting place (lekgotla) and cattle kraal. Kgotla, a traditional art form, was used to decorate the walls of houses and courtyards.

6. SAFETY
Botswana has a low percentage of crime compared to other countries. During street patrols, security and police officers walk instead of driving around in vans. They also patrol with nothing else but hand-cuffs, batons and communication material. However, in most streets there are visible police vans sometimes patrolling, slowly keeping a watchful eye on the public and their assets. They are visible at every street corner, throughout the day.

7. SOCIAL SYSTEM
The disabled, orphaned and elderly members of society are well taken care of by the Government as its primary responsibility. However, improvements are needed in this respect.

8. INFRASTRUCTURE
The railway operation system is of good quality and the roads are not bad at all. Water and sanitation systems are well managed and maintained. There is electricity even though the country's poor communities depend on neighbouring countries to provide them with energy.

9. ARTS AND CULTURE



The country invests heavily in its arts and culture. Batswana are popular for their traditional dance and the dancers travel around the globe, performing and sharing their culture with the world. Youth cultural groups and activities are fully supported by the President as this ensures that the seTswana culture is well-documented, preserved and passed on to future generations.

10. WOMEN
Along with their traditional dances, Botswana is also best known to be a country with beautiful, intelligent and independent women who possess leadership qualities in literature, politics as well as business, to mention a few. They are generally well-mannered but not to be taken for granted. "Caution": do not take them for-granted!

1. CAPITAL CITY: GABORONE (MEANING "OUR HOME")



Gaborone is a modern city with a population of about 200 000 people with modern office buildings, hotels, blocks of flats and shopping malls. However, there are some colonial buildings in this capital. Generally the country uses "Pula" as the local currency, which means "rain" and "blessing" in Setswana and this expression is used as a greeting for good fortune.

During the week especially, the town is business-like, with young entrepreneur engaging in small business ventures. Botswana has a notable number of qualified engineers who are on their own, operating under the mentorship of big companies. Educational institutions are thus enjoying some level of independence.

2. WEATHER

Good weather is one of the best features that I enjoyed about Botswana; it is definitely blessed in this respect. However, the heat tends to be to the extreme most of the time with very little rain. I guess climate change is hitting the country significantly. The Kalahari Desert usually gets very dry, especially in November.

3. WILD ANIMALS

Botswana is a hub of wild animals and has diverse areas of wildlife habitat. This can be witnessed particularly at the Chobe National Park and Moremi Game Reserve, which are popular destinations and attract tourists from around the world.

The Botswana Government usually sponsors a tour for diplomats accredited to the Republic and this gesture is fascinating, especially to the new arrivals.

4. GASTRONOMY

Their cuisine shares some characteristics with that of countries other in Southern Africa. Common food that South Africans would relate to are, among others, boerewors, samp (stampa), vetkoek, mopani worms (scary though) and food that is unique to Botswana, including seswaa, heavily salted mashed-up meat, which forms part of the traditional cuisine.

Millet and sorghum are staple foods in Botswana. Both are made into porridge with various additional ingredients. Maize and beans, although less drought-resistant than millet and sorghum, are also grown.

5. A SELF-RESPECTING NATION

There's an element of monarchy within the country as they have chiefs in some of their villages. I can say that the royalty can be associated with the Batswana's well-mannered personalities.



Globe at a glimpse



Dakar celebrates SA Heritage Day

As part of a campaign to conduct a series of events building up towards the 30-year commemoration of the Dakar Talks and the official twinning of Gorée and Robben islands in July 2017, the mission hosted a Heritage Day event at the Gorée Institute, located on the Gorée island, Dakar, on 29 September 2016, under the theme: "Reflections on Poetry as a Medium to Preserve our Common Heritage".

The event was hosted in partnership with the Gorée Institute. Other partners included the Ministry of Culture and Communication; the Regional Office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO); the West African Research Centre; Brand South Africa; and the Movement of Young Madibaristes (MJM – a student movement championing the values of Nelson Mandela).

The event was attended by about 50 people – government officials; embassies; academics, students and practitioners of the arts; among others, who jointly reflected on how memory could be preserved as part of Africa's common heritage – a critical factor in the transmission of our values, history and identity to future generations.

The event fell within the framework of strengthening bilateral relations between South Africa and Senegal, which are deeply rooted in history. It also served to highlight Aspiration 5 of the African Union's Agenda 2063: "An Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity, Common Heritage, Values and Ethics".

The event further served as part of the build-up to the official twinning of Gorée and Robben islands – both inscribed by UNESCO as world heritage sites – and the commemoration of the 30-Year Anniversary of the Dakar meeting for democracy in South Africa that took place in 1987 between the exiled leadership of the African National Congress and a group of liberal white South Africans. These events will be organised on Gorée Island in July 2017, in partnership with the Gorée Institute.

To highlight the kindred nature of Gorée and Robben islands as UNESCO world heritage sites, the mission, with the support of the Public



Diplomacy Photographic Unit, partnered with the Regional Adviser for Culture at the UNESCO Regional Office, who agreed to print a reflective exhibition of photographs of the two islands. The exhibition consists of five panels of each island and

an explanatory text in French and English on the significance of the two islands. Each panel carried the official UNESCO logos and it is believed that this was the first exhibition featuring only these two islands.

The Mission decided to use poetry as a medium of reflection at the event, and invited the locally popular group of singer/poets, the Dakar Slammers, to perform during and after the seminar.

Answer

Q W G Q D M T W V M S A U Q S
 A A E N L P C F E F V T G D B
 G I Ç Ç P R **D I P L O M A T E**
 L L Z I L D E D B B Y I M L F
 X K M V J V J C R U Q I B P B
 Y U Y **S E A T T A C H E A K R**
 Q J B E L U I X M L Ç M S I V
 M B M C R Z G Y I Y T R S C F
 D G C R V E M J N H M C A T Q
 I R D E V J T L I C P H D V N
 Ç W O T J Y Q X S X J Ç R N G
 D B A A M N J T T X V Ç I Q Q
 Q A D I L J V S R G R Q C N
 F B T R **C O N S E I L L E R C**
 W G T **E Y C V X B F G L K T J**

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