

IT'S YOUR

Internal Newsletter of the Department of
International Relations and Cooperation



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Copy Editor	Delien Burger
Designer	Muzi Msimanga
Photographers	Jacoline Schoonees, Yolande Snyman
Editorial Committee	Daisy Motsisi, Linah Ledwaba, Tseliso Matlakeng, Sammy Morwe
Publisher	The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) ©2016 Tel: +27 12 351 1000, www.dirco.gov.za Private Bag X152, PRETORIA, 0001 Republic of South Africa 460 Soutpansberg Road, Rietondale, Pretoria, 0084, Republic of South Africa

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Editor's Letter

Dear Diplomats,



Greetings to you! We have reached this year's last edition of "It's Your Voice" and what a year it's been. I'm sure you'll agree when I say that 365 days go by quite quickly. Throughout the days,

our editorial team has ensured consistent delivery of quality content in previous editions and this one is no different. Quite frankly, it's safe to say that the holiday fever is gradually creeping in and this December edition aims to usher you beautifully into that festive season mode. We wrap it up in style and touch on things you need to know, from 16 Days of Activism, the world of international relations, road safety tips to your favourite holiday destinations.

Our very own Minister, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, shares with us her message for the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign. Mr Madivha Aaron Mudimeli, an employee based in our mission in Niger, lets us in on the 10 things he cherishes about the country's capital city, Niamey. Get to know Ms Caron Kgomo as she takes us through a typical day in her life. We bid farewell to

one of our shuttle bus drivers, known to many as "Baba Zungu".

A special word of thanks goes to the staff members who have contributed to this edition (after all it is a platform for the staff); your efforts have not gone in vain.

In conclusion, I would like to wish you a wonderful and safe holiday season filled with many blessings. Enjoy the break and we certainly hope to hear from you again in the New Year.

TSELISO MATLAKENG

16 DAYS OF Activism
for no violence against Women and Children

MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO ALL STAFF

Dear Team DIRCO, as you are aware, at this time every year, we unite as a nation to observe the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children Campaign. This is in support of the national cause to unite in the fight against violence and abuse of our women and children. We use this occasion to renew our commitment to end brutal and dehumanising behaviour by some in our society. We use this period to recommit our country to the inalienable human rights of women and children.

The 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children Campaign is annually launched on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and ends on 10 December (International Human Rights Day). This period coincides with World AIDS Day on 1 December and the International Day for People with Disabilities on 3 December.

We are calling on everyone to be active citizens who care about the well-being of women and children. The theme,

"Count me in: Together moving a non-violent South Africa forward", charges all of us not to turn a blind eye to violence, child marriages, sexual violence and ill-treatment of elderly women. We need to care about one another in such a way that it pains us to see children, women and the elderly suffer as a result of our failure to take action. Creating a non-violent society should and must be our collective responsibility.

I urge all of you to join President Jacob Zuma on 25 November 2016 as he launches the national dialogues, which will incorporate skills development and empowerment for communities, especially for women, as well as service delivery improvement in terms of access to justice, counselling and health services. As South Africans, we all have a duty to be active participants in the fight against violence and the abuse of women and children.

I thank you.

Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane



Together we move South Africa forward



The Oslo Mission attends the Nordic-African Business Summit 2016

NABA 2016: Ambassador Zondo and First Secretary Mepha during the speed-meeting session

The Nordic-African Business Summit 2016, the Norwegian-African Business Association's (NABA) annual flagship event, was held on Thursday, 13 October, in the Norwegian capital of Oslo.

This is the NABA's annual flagship event. Thirty-eight speakers and around 400 African and Nordic business delegates and participants, including more than 20 ambassadors from African and Nordic countries, discussed how best to invest in the rapidly growing cities in Africa.

Welcoming remarks were given by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Børge Brende: "The potential is endless when it comes to Africa and urbanisation. Norway will partner with African countries that are also interested in private-sector partnerships."

The encouraging words were followed by plenary sessions and panel debates which included key speakers such as former President Thabo Mbeki, who focussed his speech on the African State of Affairs and what it meant for the future development of the continent.

The popular speed-meeting session in the afternoon offered a great networking arena. Ambassador Queen Anne Zondo and First Secretary Makhosazana Mepha from the Oslo Mission, alongside more than 20 ambassadors/embassy representatives, were present to discuss opportunities in their respective African countries with potential business partners.

NABA was established six years ago to promote business opportunities on the African continent and serve as a bridge between Norwegian and African business communities.

NABA has an extensive network across the continent and is working with private-sector companies in Norway and in African countries.

NABA is a member of the European Business Council for Africa and the Mediterranean. Its 12 associations across Europe represent more than 4 000 companies present in African markets. 🌐

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By Hlangasina Mbatha

The December month brings joy to people; it's the festive season and it gets everyone into that celebratory mood. To some, it is a time for a holiday after a long, stressful and maybe successful year, or to go home to your loved ones, your brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts that you haven't seen in a long time. To me, it is going back to the land of my forefathers – home. For me, travelling home is not just some everyday drive; the journey itself is amazing.

I am from Newcastle in KwaZulu-Natal. So, like many people across the country I bus down home passing through some of the most beautiful places in this country. From the green farms of Standerton to the Amajuba Mountains, (which are so scary but enjoyable).

My home town, Newcastle, is to most people just another town in the Durban Northlands but it is in fact known as the cleanest town in the country. It's always bustling with a rush of travellers on their various journeys but the unmistakable underlying buzz of summer and the festive season afoot permeate the air with excitement, and such an anticipation that the taxi ride home after getting off the bus can seem like a lifetime.

One thing that always dazzles me when I get home is the fresh air that blows on my face; its way different from that of the city. It calms and relaxes me like I've been born again, and this is the reassurance that I have arrived at Kwa Velintaba, a rural area where my family has a large piece of land, with only a few neighbours around. I can almost see it now.

The whole area is an open green field and fortunately we were not affected by the recent drought so our livestock is nice and fit. As you approach the gate, you can see it grazing on the vast expanse of greenery, grass and grain we have. Our area is just next to the Drakensberg Mountains. We grew up climbing them (even though we were not allowed to do so), so you can imagine the view – it's just breathtaking. It's hard to think that others have to experience the Drakensberg at a price, but to me, it's the playground in my backyard.

Every time I get home, the first thing I do is go out to the cattle kraal and shout: "Ntombi emnyama singikhona" (Black Girl, I'm here). That's the name of one of my cows, and amazingly she always responds. Seeing my cows always brings joy to me because our livestock is important to us. We get to slaughter a cow every December, not just any but either an old one or a female that has given birth five times already as it's no longer fertile and you may sell it or slaughter it.

One thing that's a norm at home is that when you are back home, you go to the neighbours and greet and announce that you are back; it's a matter of respect to the families around the area. During the holidays, families have all sorts of festivities, from weddings to Umembheso (where the groom's family gives gifts to the family of the bride-to-be). Attending such events is always a humbling and joyous time as we show support to the host family and enjoy ourselves by singing, Ukugida (Zulu dancing) and obviously eating meat and drinking umqombothi (Zulu beer).

These are the cultural activities that being home for the holiday give me a chance to enjoy. Also, at such gatherings you get a chance to sit with the elders and you learn about the different histories of surnames in the area and the Zulu nation at large.

What I like about home, other than spending time with family, is milking the cows in the morning before taking them with the horses out to the field. When it comes to the sheep and the goats, we need to monitor them while they go to the fields because there are jackals in the area. So, we need to be on the look-out. Together with my brothers, we would go through the woods to hunt them down, and it's pretty scary and interesting at the same time. We'd also ride horses through the grasslands. It's the best feeling ever to see the beauty of Mother Nature, while riding on a horse.

Being home is incredible, because it makes me appreciate the little things in life. Life there is simple and enjoyable; you actually feel the spirit of community. The beauty of nature, the openness of the green fields and fresh air are incredible and it's hard to come back to the city. Ekhaya is a priceless vacation destination! 🌍





Tribute to El Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz

BY CHARLOTTE LOBE

CHIEF DIRECTOR: TRANSFORMATION AND TRANSVERSAL PROGRAMMES, THE OFFICE OF THE COO

On Sunday, 4 December 2016, the world bid farewell to Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro Ruz. To my recollection, El Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz is the only individual ever to be acknowledged by the United Nations as a "World Hero of Solidarity". It is very hard to think of international solidarity without thinking of Fidel Castro. His contribution to the course of humanity is monumental – particularly if you take into account the reality that he was the leader of a country with roughly the same population as New York City.

In Botshabelo, Free State, where I grew up, the name Fidel Castro was certainly a household name for those who grew up in the Congress Movement. The understanding of the Cuban revolution of 1959 was at the heart of understanding the theory of the revolution. El Comandante and his people fought not only for liberation of Cuba from the Batista regime but joined the struggling people of the world and fought tirelessly for liberation of others.

As young activists, nothing inspired us more than the Revolutionary song: "Cuban people, loving nation, here we are far from home... we shall love you... we shall need you... when our freedom comes around". This song vibrated through the thick walls of prison, enthused young guerrillas in trenches and inspired activists through the length and breadth of our country.

From 1987 to 1988, during the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in Angola, the Cuban soldiers fought alongside our own African combatants against the South African Defence Force (SADF). Cuba lost 42 soldiers and seven pilots, three additional pilots were captured as prisoners of war and 70 soldiers were wounded. The Cuban people were not compelled by anything to fight in a battle that had nothing to do with them but were bound by their love for humanity and conviction that a more humane world order was possible.

It is not a mistake that in 1991, after his release from prison, President Nelson Mandela found it befitting to travel to Cuba to thank Fidel Castro and the Cuban people for supporting the fight against apartheid and colonialism in southern Africa. In his moving tribute, President Mandela said: "The decisive defeat of the aggressive apartheid forces [in Angola] destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the white oppressor".

"The defeat of the apartheid army served as an inspiration to the struggling people of South Africa."

The battle of Cuito Cuanavale and the Cuban intervention in Angola are some of the turning points in southern African history. It led to the

movement of powerful Cuban armed force, into the west, towards the Namibian border. The fighting in the south-western part of Angola led to the withdrawal of the South African army from Angola and contributed to the independence of Namibia.

The battle of Cuito Cuanavale was among the important historic milestones that contributed immensely towards the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 264 of 1969 that the apartheid regime ignored for years. Following the defeat of the apartheid army, the UN in accordance with UNSCR 264 assumed direct responsibility for the territory and declared the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia as illegal, calling upon the Government of South Africa to withdraw immediately.

The Security Council condemned the refusal of South Africa to comply with previous resolutions, which declared that South Africa had no right to enact the South West Africa Affairs Bill and that South African actions were designed to destroy the national unity and territorial integrity of Namibia through the establishment of Bantustans.

Whether it was a tactical retreat on the part of SADF or an Angolan forces victory, one cannot contest that the battle of Cuito Cuanavale was a turning point that brought the border war to an end and led to the peace negotiations that saw the withdrawal of the SADF, Umkhonto we Sizwe and Cuban forces from Angola and Namibia and led to the independence of Namibia. The Cuban people fought with us for us, died with us for us and won our battles with us for us. We are Cuba, Cuba is us!

In addition, the Latin American Medical School in Cuba continues to train doctors from all around the world, particularly from poor countries. Today, 70 countries from around the world, including South Africa, benefit from Cuba's medical internationalism, which is based on the ideal of a better world order. Cuba has hundreds of its doctors working in poor countries all over the world, including in countries such as slums in Venezuela, in remote parts of Honduras and a few African countries.

Patients from 26 Latin American and Caribbean countries have travelled to Cuba to have their eyesight restored by Cuban doctors. Among this list is Mario Teran, the Bolivian soldier who shot and killed Che Guevara. The Cubans not only forgave Mario, but also returned his eyesight to him. Cuba even offered to send 1 500 doctors to minister to the victims of the Hurricane Katrina, though this kind offer was rejected by the United States of America (USA).



In 2005, Piero Gleijeses, a professor at John Hopkins University, wrote a book *Conflicting Missions*. This book gives a clearer account of the international solidarity of Cuba. In this narrative, Gleijeses writes:

"It was an unusual gesture: an underdeveloped country tendering free aid to another in even more dire straits. It was offered at a time when the exodus of doctors from Cuba following the revolution had forced the government to stretch its resources while launching its domestic programs to increase mass access to health care. *'It was like a beggar offering his help, but we knew the Algerian people needed it even more than we did and that they deserved it.'* [Cuban Minister of Public Health] Machado Ventura remarked. It was an act of solidarity that brought no tangible benefit and came at real material cost."

The Cuban people have been consistent throughout history in standing with the struggling people of the world; the act of international solidarity is repeated by Cuba over and over again. And, it has been done even as Cuba has struggled to survive in the face of a 55-year embargo by the USA, which has cost it billions of dollars in potential revenue.

Notwithstanding the fact that Cuba remains an impoverished island that is largely cut off from the world, in the recent period, Cuba has dispatched its healthcare workers to assist the West African nations such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea to fight Ebola. Cuba's contribution was part of its consistent international solidarity work. It is humbling to note that a nation with a population of just over

11 million people, with a gross domestic product of \$6,051 per capita was at the forefront of the international efforts to fight Ebola and save lives. With technical support from the World Health Organisation, the Cuban Government trained 460 doctors and nurses on the stringent precautions that must be taken to treat people with the highly contagious virus.

At the very least, Cuba's consistent international solidarity work has a message for the international community: that a more humane world order is possible and it starts with ordinary people whose extraordinary efforts contribute in changing the course of history and building a better world. The contribution of El Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz is engraved in the hearts of the people of the world.

I join the world in paying tribute to El Comandante Fidel Castro Ruz. Indeed, great people like El Comandante never die but they cease to breathe and their legacy lives on and continue to give life to many. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the Cuban people and the people of the world. Your Pain is our Pain. I am reminded of the words of El Comandante when paying his tribute to Comandante Che Guevara:

"In these moments of remembrance, let us lift our spirits and, with optimism in the future, with absolute optimism in the final victory of the people, say to Che and to the heroes who fought and died with him: *Hasta la Victoria Siempre; Patria o Muerte! Venceremos!*". Fare thee well El Comandante!

Ms Lobe writes in her personal capacity.

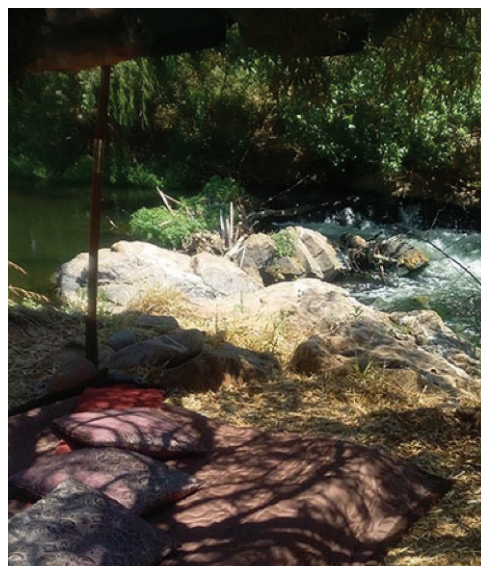


Picnic spots to visit With ready-made baskets

Lethabo Estate

Situated in Muldersdrift, Lethabo Estate (meaning "joy") offers a "romantic picnic" on the banks of the Crocodile River (R450 a person); a "luxury picnic" in an enclosed thatched gazebo with a double-bed flop spot (R750 a person, including sparkling wine and water); and a "boudoir picnic" in a private lovers' retreat tucked on the river bank, where a petal-strewn carpet leads to a bed and a table set with crystal, antique silver and Spode china (R1 475 a person, including gourmet food, chilled Cap Classique and a cooler box of drinks).

Contact: E-mail lethabo@iafrica.com, tel 087-151-1817 or visit www.lethaboestate.com



Hartenberg, Stellenbosch

Long known for its unpretentious hospitality, Hartenberg offers a country picnic hamper packed to the brim with Eleanor's snok pâté, beetroot and cumin pâté, homemade lamb and pork terrine, tomato and basil salad, potato salad, chicken and thyme tart, farm bread, rosemary foccacia, cheeses and a chocolate brownie. (R145 pp, including juice or a half bottle of wine).

Focussing on sustainability, the ingredients are sourced locally and the picnic containers are made of biodegradable material. Enjoy it on the lawns, or take it with you along the estate's popular wetland walk.

Contact: Tel 021 865-2541 or visit www.hartenbergestate.co



Budmarsh Country Lodge (Magaliesburg)

At this elegant countryside venue – where guests can even drop in by helicopter – everything is arranged for you. You need only choose your picnic spot: on the lush lawns beneath shady trees with a view of the Magaliesberg, or near the dam, where you can sit and watch birds swooping low over the water. Expect luxurious rugs and oversized pillows along with your wicker picnic basket, which you'll find stuffed with homemade breads, quiches and tartlets, cold cuts, salads, sandwiches, wraps, scones with cream and jam, and a chocolate tart, as well as various cheeses and biscuits. An assistant will look after you, replenishing your drinks as necessary. (R450 per couple)

Contact: Tel 011 728 1800 or visit www.budmarsh.co.za



Makaranga (Kloof)

Guests are invited to hire picnic blankets, baskets and umbrellas and recline in the lush subtropical gardens for which this lodge is renowned. The breakfast picnic for two (R290) includes wraps filled with bacon and scrambled eggs, the muffin of the day and more. The veggie basket (R340) comes packed with mini ciabattas, local cheeses, mushroom pâté, hummus, quiche and chocolate crunchies, and the deli staff can also help you assemble your own picnic basket for R480. For kiddies, there's the Mon Petit Chouchou basket (R70), which includes a cheese croissant, popcorn, fudge, biscuits and fresh juice.

Contact: Tel 031 764 6616 or visit www.makaranga.com



VOICES

FROM DIRCO

A running career by default wow!

BY MOYAHABO RONNY MOTAU
EMPLOYEE, HEALTH AND WELLNESS

after a comment made by Mtshweni "Bro Mesh", requesting officials to graduate from 10 km to 21 km or even marathons. I was so excited to be part of the club in my first race, the Om die Dam Ultra Marathon at Hartebeespoort Dam. Of course, I ran earlier in my life, just to be fit while playing soccer but never with race goals in mind.

At first, I thought running was just a new hobby and never thought it would turn my life around completely. Running has allowed me to become the best version of myself; it implies a form of internal competition, which admittedly sounds a little strange to compete with oneself.

In November 2014, I joined the then Employee Wellness Centre as Administrator, focusing on health and coordinating fitness and wellness activities such as exercise classes, health seminars and special events. My duties still involve research though one should expect to spend around half of each day outside of the office, coordinating events, and the other half of the day planning and completing paperwork in the office.

Today, I have no doubt that joining the Employee Health and Wellness (EHW) has brought new career opportunities and improved my love for running. Now, I am no longer just a runner, but an umbrella of all sporting codes. As a coordinator, coach and motivator, I should know

what is happening in all DIRCO sporting codes and give full support while leading by example.

Wellness awareness is well promoted and coordinated within the unit through different sporting codes such as aerobics, badminton, chess, pool, tennis, netball, volleyball and soccer (male and female). Today, volleyball, athletics, netball and soccer are also competing in league games. We have also launched the GEMS fitness programme that takes place twice a month. The programme is designed to create an environment for employees and members to get active, to realise the benefits of their efforts, while engaging with, competing and motivating each other in the workplace. The programme aims to decrease obesity and non-activity, enhance weight management and reduce clinical health risks, thereby achieving improved overall wellness and beneficial lifestyle choices for employees.

In 2014, with athletics under my leadership, the DIRCO Athletics Club won the second annual Kaya FM Relay for Mandela Race and the Athletics Gauteng North Third Division League race. We continued with this tremendous job the following year, defending the Kaya FM Relay in 2015. Today, the athletics team has increased the number of participants in the ultra-marathon from four in 2014 to 11 in 2016.



Finally, I would like to salute those officials who continue with the running programme at postings. We at EHW are saying: "Keep moving New Delhi, Vienna, Kinshasa, Taipei and Harare. At Head Office, I would like to congratulate Ms Mirriam Poee, Mr Paul Letageng and Mr Gideon Labane who are always with the team.

I would like to wish my teammates well in their preparations for the 2017 Comrades and Two Oceans ultra marathons. #DIRCOAC. 🌍

I am Moyahabo Ronny Motau. I joined the DIRCO in December 2011 as a Foreign Affairs Administration Officer under the leadership of Adv. Johanna De Wet at the Office of State Law Adviser. I spent most of my time in the library in the client service environment which I loved. Research was so exciting and it brought me daily challenges, ideas and recognition of what was happening around the world.

In 2012, I joined DIRCO Athletics under the leadership of Tebogo Chipu. I remember it was

FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO SIMON ZUNGU

A wise man once said: "All good things come to an end" and that is the case with Mr Simon Zungu, commonly known among his colleagues as "Baba Zungu". He retired on 30 November 2016 and we thought it would be a good gesture to feature him in this edition of "It's Your Voice".

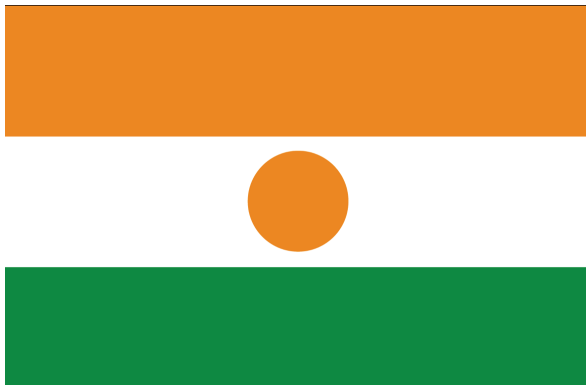
Born and bred in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Zungu joined the then Department of Foreign Affairs on 14 January 1991. He was initially appointed as a furniture mover in the division Supply Provision and worked there for five years with a colleague he remembers quite vividly, Mr Koos van Zyl.

In 1996, he moved to the Transport division and began driving the department's kombis which were changed to shuttle buses in 2012 and since then has been known as a reliable, punctual and safe driver.

His retirement will definitely be a huge loss to the department as he'll be missed by his colleagues for the principled and passionate man that he is. On behalf of DIRCO, we would like to thank Mr Zungu for his commitment and loyalty throughout his 26 year-long service.

We wish you all the best for the future. 🌍





1. INTRODUCTION



You have probably rarely heard about life in Niamey, Niger. Niamey is a secured city to live in. There are pluses and minuses to every place and Niamey is no exception. You will experience many electricity cuts and become accustomed to the noise of the generator in your house and office, especially during the driest season from March to June. On the brighter side, you will find the

people to be very friendly and willing to help you to adjust to life in Niamey.

2. THE POPULATION

The population is estimated at 20 million and is composed of seven tribes, the most prominent of which are the Hausas and Zarma whose languages are widely spoken all over the country. French, however, is the official language. English is not widely spoken, even in the capital, Niamey.

3. CLIMATE

I like warm weather, not winter. Niger's subtropical climate is mainly very hot and dry, with much desert area. There are two major seasons: The rainy and the dry. The rainy season is from June to September, with "heavy rains" between July and August that cause floods every year. The rain storms are very impressive in Niger as they always begin with a dusty wind, similar to eclipses that plunge the city into total darkness for a few minutes. Temperatures are lower in the rainy season, averaging about 20°C and rising up to 50°C during March and April. The Harmattan dusty weather that covers the sky during the dry season can be harsh but with time, we got used to it.

4. GEOGRAPHICAL



Niger is landlocked and 99% of produce is imported. The most commonly used port is in Cotonou (Benin) and as a result, Niger imports are taxed twice (in Benin and Burkina Faso), making commodities very expensive. Niger faces serious challenges to development due to its landlocked position, desert terrain, lack of infrastructure, poor healthcare and environmental degradation. The economy of Niger centres on subsistence crops and livestock, and is the world's fourth-largest uranium producer.

Niger borders Nigeria and Benin to the south, Burkina Faso and Mali to the west, Algeria and Libya to the north and Chad to the east.

5. THE MISSION

The South African Embassy in Niamey was opened in 2008 and is headed by the Chargé d'Affaires. There are only three transferred staff and five locally recruited personnel. The working environment is excellent with friendly and supporting staff willing to help at all times. Local staff are always granted time to pray (as a Muslim practice) and facilities are available at the Mission.

6. ADJUSTMENT TO THE LOCAL CONDITIONS

Niamey is my third Mission to serve full-time as a diplomat after Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire. I arrived in Niamey in July 2015 but that was not my first visit to the country. When I was serving at the Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, we were also accredited to Niger and I used to visit the country from time to time. My first visit was in 2007 with the then President Thabo Mbeki. Since then, I have fallen in love with the country. The crime rate is very low and religious belief plays a critical role in the discipline of the population.

The road to the Mission and our homes is not tarred as we are accustomed to, but with time, we adjusted to local practice. Although they drive on the right-hand side, I brought in my own SA-made right-hand drive 4x4 D/Cab and prefer to drive myself to the office and around the city on weekends.

Littering is the most problematic environmental degradation issue that needs to be addressed in Niamey. Plastics are easily available and cause pollution in the city.

7. TRANSPORT



Mini buses and buses are always overloaded with goats and almost everything else on top of the roof. Motorbikes are the most used mode of transport and normally carry two to four people at once – something I saw for the first time in Niger. The Traffic Police are not bothered much about bad driving, seat belt wearing, overloading and people wearing motorbike helmets, but are only there to assist with the traffic flow.

8. LOCAL CUISINE

The local food is very nice and is served at many restaurants, even at official functions. Informal trade is very common and mostly done alongside the roads where you can buy anything from vegetables, fruit, fried fish and braai chicken. I like the local hard-bone chicken, which is scarce in South Africa. We also buy our meat in the informal roadside butcheries – no fridge, no stress.

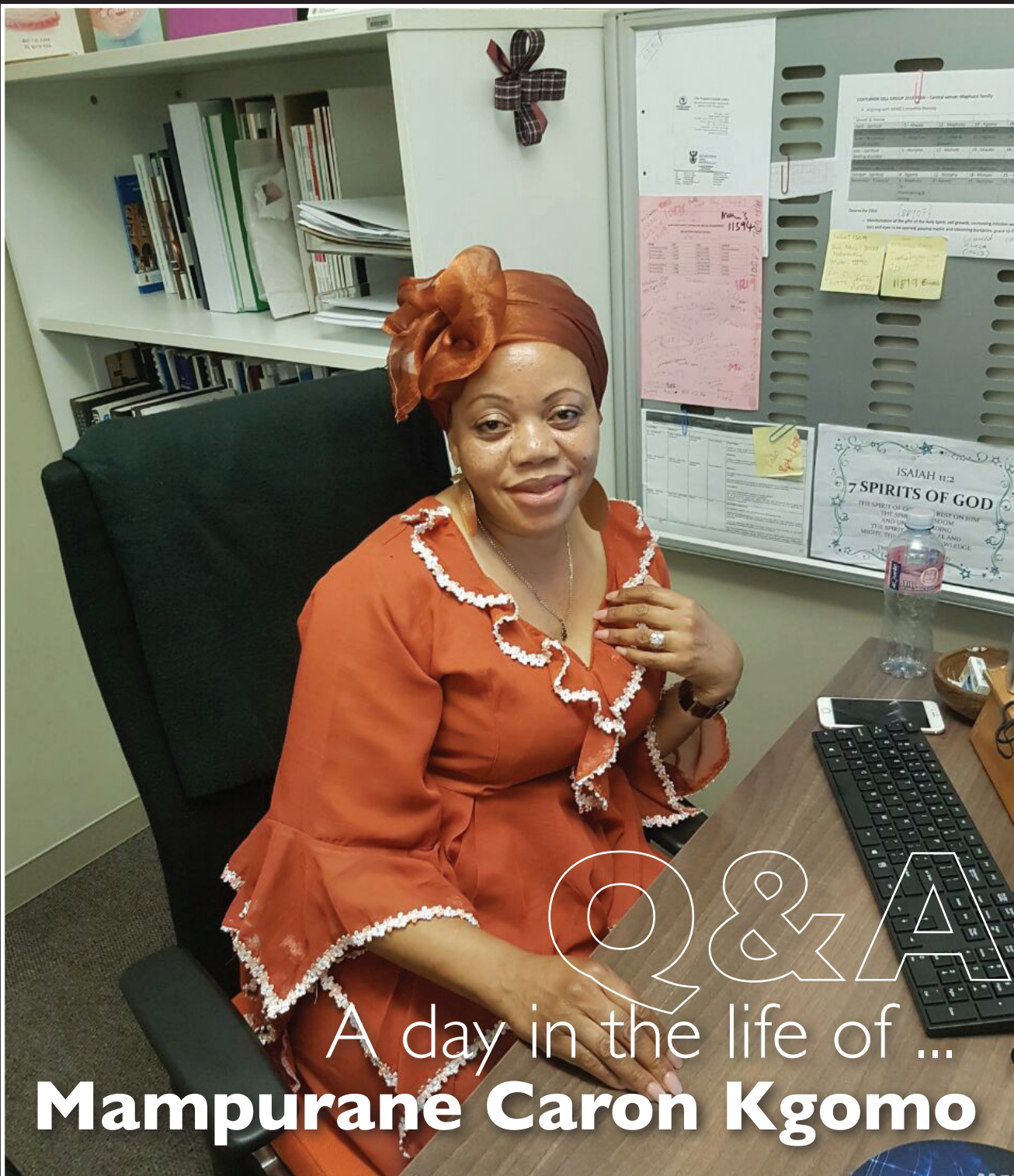
9. ENTERTAINMENT

With no English cinemas or shopping centres where you can take a break and relax, one just has to be creative to kill time. Satellite TV with South African channels is a must-have. Horse and camel riding/races can keep you busy if you adjust to the style. The Niger River also provides boat rides across the river if you are adventurous. The American School Recreation Centre provides some sports/gym activities at a fee.

10. RELIGION

Ninety-four per cent of the population practise the Islam religion. Christians and traditional practice complete the scale. During the Muslim prayer time, the country comes to a standstill.





Q & A

A day in the life of ...

Mampurane Caron Kgomo

1. Tell us about yourself ...

My Name is Ms Mampurane Caron Kgomo. I am the Deputy Director responsible for Gender in the Directorate: Gender and Diversity Management.

2. What is your daily routine?

I do, as a matter of principle and routine, plan my day. I start by attending to e-mails to check whether there are urgent tasks that need attention and respond to those. I then look at administrative issues such as follow-ups on responses to queries and submissions that may have been returned from the higher offices, ensuring that meetings that I need to attend are streamlined and not too close to one another, and what the Annual Performance Plan (APP) requires so that I do not fall behind. Most of the time, the e-mails I receive actually determine my day and to avoid being swamped, I allocate an hour (or two if there are very urgent emails) to respond to e-mails.

The nature of my work is very flexible and dynamic. The next step would be laying the foundation for the planned projects and programmes as outlined in the APP. I check if I need to consult with my colleagues or outsiders and streamline the necessary consultations. These may be telephonic or physical. I then attend to key documents that need to be drafted, as well as the accompanying research. Before I leave the office, I ensure that my desk is cleared of any documents, especially key and confidential ones. The diary for the following day will also be prepared.

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

I started at DIRCO in 2007 when I was seconded from the then Provincial Department of Housing in Gauteng. I was posted to The Gambia, working for the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. After I completed my secondment, I was fortunate to be appointed as the Deputy Director: Gender on 19 December 2011.

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

DIRCO is a very professional environment and full of people with hopes and aspirations. The fact that we are the face of South Africa and we have missions across the globe are worth the toil because I know for sure that I will serve in one of these missions one day. I also love the look on people's faces when they talk about our beautiful OR Tambo Building. It is as classy like the icon himself!

5. What do you like about your job?

Investing in the responsibility of creating a conducive environment for women empowerment and gender equality in my unit is a responsibility I carry with honour and dedication. I do hope that through our work, the department will one day reflect the demographics of 50% gender parity and the 2% for persons with disabilities. In the senior management levels, I hope we will achieve the 50% gender parity as well. The department must reflect a workplace where women are free from sexual harassment.

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

Gender inequality is a reality; it is my humble desire that our Senior Management can share and embrace the enthusiasm we have in ensuring that in DIRCO gender perspectives are incorporated in the programmes and projects of the department and effectively implemented. Training is readily available at DIRCO. However, we need the warm bodies to receive that knowledge and skills. My dream is to see every branch, every chief directorate, every directorate and further down being conscious about uprooting discrimination in whatever form it appears. Men and women, inclusive of persons with disabilities, deserve equal access and exposure to opportunities availed in the department and beyond.

As we enter the 16 Days of No Violence against Women and Children, we need to re-claim our Ubuntu and close the breakdown in communication between mothers and their sons, and fathers and their daughters and together work for a non-violent society! We need to stand up and be counted as caring and responsible people. We must shout and say: "Not in my name shall there be gender-based violence!"

DIRCO has established mechanisms through which all may participate in the 16 Days of No Violence against Women and Children. It is our collective responsibility to participate, earn and encourage ourselves to do the right thing. At the end of the day, the safety of the community, especially women and children, is our collective responsibility. Let us take up the Spear! 🌍



Globe at a glimpse



Ambassador Sizani receives official accreditation



Ambassador Phumelele Stone Sizani has officially arrived in Berlin and is ready for the job. Ambassador Sizani received his official accreditation with President Joachim Gauck on 11 October 2016 but had to return to South Africa for the Heads of Mission Conference. On 4 November 2016, he hosted at the Embassy, a small and intimate get-together to meet members of the Diplomatic Corps and partners and friends of the Embassy and the Republic of South Africa.

In his speech, Ambassador Sizani said that: "Peace and reconciliation are very important aspects to South African politics and that this could only be done by talking and not fighting".

Ambassador Sizani also highlighted that the Bi-national Commission from 15 to 16 November in Berlin was very important to both countries. Ambassador Sizani highlighted that education remained a priority for the South African Government.

He further expressed that he was looking forward to working with the German Government, South African and German businesses and South African and German citizens alike to consolidate bilateral political and economic relations, for the mutual benefit of the peoples of both countries and to fulfil the mandate entrusted to him by the President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma.

Assumption College primary section's academic event 2016



Deon Seals, Chargé d'affaires, and George Mello, First Secretary from South African Embassy in Bangkok, attended the Academic Event 2016 hosted by the Assumption College Primary Section on 6 September 2016 on invitation by the Director of the college, Brother Seksan Sakonthawat. The South African booth at the event was decorated

with South African promotional material supplied by the Embassy and South African Airways.

There are seven South African teachers at the college teaching English language. The college intends entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with a South African school and the Embassy will be providing assistance.

Launch of an international album entitled, "We Love Russia"



On 11 November 2016, the South African Embassy in Moscow, in partnership with the Institute for Asian and African Studies of the Moscow State University,

launched an international album, entitled: *We Love Russia* by Zolani Mikva, the South African poet.

Ambassador Sisulu pays courtesy call on Nippon Houshou Kyoukai (NHK) President



Ambassador Beryl R Sisulu paid a courtesy call on Nippon Houshou Kyoukai (NHK) President, Katsuto Momii on 4 November 2016. NHK is the public broadcaster in Japan and has an office in

Johannesburg, responsible for television news gathering on the African continent for broadcast on news and social affairs programming.

Arrive Alive this holiday season

Planning the journey and rules of the road

- Obey the rules of the road and carry your driver's licence with you.
- Plan the route to your holiday destination and give yourself enough time to reach the destination.
- Use a GPS navigation tool or a road atlas to plan your trip in advance.
- For peace of mind, try to stick to major routes or toll roads – If you are going to travel on the "back roads", identify the towns along the route and what the distance is between them.
- Do not get stranded without fuel – Always plan ahead where you will refuel.
- Plan rest stops along the way and if you are travelling with kids, it is a great way to let them know when and where you will be stopping.
- Always ensure that a friend or family member, who is not travelling with you, is aware of the route that you are planning to travel. Ideally, you should also update them on your progress of the journey and let them know when you have reached your destination safely.
- Try to avoid driving after dark if possible.
- Expect others not to be as obedient to the law as yourself.

Vehicle fitness and roadworthiness

- Make sure that your vehicle is in a roadworthy condition before departure.
- All lights and indicators, windscreen wipers, brakes, steering, exhaust system and tyres should be carefully examined for faults.
- Take your vehicle for a full check before embarking on your holiday travels.
- Do not overload your vehicle.

Driver fitness and fatigue

- Have a good rest before you embark on your journey.
- Take safety breaks every two hours or 200 km.
- Do not drink and drive – If you intend to consume alcohol, make alternative arrangements so you will not be behind the wheel.
- Remain alert at all times and avoid driver distractions such as cellular conversations, texting, etc!
- Be responsible with seatbelt wearing – Always wear your seatbelt and see that everyone in the car is wearing theirs.
- South African law requires each passenger being transported in a motorvehicle to make use of the seatbelts and strap themselves in.



It is the driver's responsibility to make sure all passengers are strapped in and remain strapped in while travelling. It is a criminal offence for an adult to allow a child younger than 14 years to travel unrestrained in a vehicle equipped with seatbelts or a car safety seat.

- Infants and children under the age of 12 should travel in the back seat of a vehicle and should be buckled up, either a car's seat, booster seat or using the seatbelt, depending on the age and weight of the child.
- Infants between 0 months and one year of age, or up to 10 kg in weight, should travel in a rear-facing car seat in the back of a car. In the event of an accident, the impact will be on the seat and not on the infant.

Emergency stops and accidents

- Try to avoid stopping on the highway; rather take the next off-ramp to stop in a more public area where you can stretch, refresh yourself and/or take a break from driving; and have numbers for roadside assistance and other emergencies close at hand or saved on your cellphone, so that you are well-prepared for any eventuality.
- Keep essential roadside equipment with you as many breakdowns are caused by relatively minor problems. Items include a first-aid kit, tow rope, warning triangles, torch and fire extinguisher.
- In the event of an accident, determine the extent of the damage or injuries and assess whether or not medical attention is required.

- Take a picture with a camera or mobile phone and file an accident report with the police as you will need a case number for your insurance company to file a claim. Remember to get names, addresses, telephone numbers and ID numbers of everyone involved in the accident.

Share these suggestions with your family and friends – And follow them 24/7 every day of the year!

[Advice from www.arrivealive.co.za]

Where do I report bad driving?

National Traffic Call Centre Number: 0861 400 800

Assist emergency response units by:

- ensuring they have information on hand when calling – accurate address details and nature of the incident
- landmarks are useful and if no street names exist, agree on a meeting area at a specific landmark
- allowing emergency vehicles right of way to respond to the emergencies and giving way timeously
- allowing access to the scene of the incident and patient/s
- sending someone to meet the vehicles and ensure that security at entrance points are made aware of emergencies in complexes
- switching on some outside lights if the incident is at night
- clearing access routes and lock away any dangerous or vicious domestic animals.

Know the emergency numbers

Police: 10111

Ambulance: 10177

Emergency: 112

ER24: 084 124

Netcare: 082 911

Help is at hand!

Road safety information on your mobile phone – www.arrivealive.mobi

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54
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INTERCONTINENTAL
JOHANNESBURG SANDTON AIRPORT

Southern Sun
HOTELS

Southern Sun
RESORTS

SUN
SQUARE

Garden
Court

stayeasy

SUN 1

INTERCONTINENTAL
JOHANNESBURG SANDTON TOWERS

Experience



Bugatti Type 35B



Chevrolet Camaro RS 327



Mercedes-Benz Roadster



McLaren F1

Franschhoek Motor Museum, Franschhoek, Western Cape

For lovers of vintage and modern cars, the Franschhoek Motor Museum is definitely the place to be! It houses a fantastic collection of vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles and fascinating memorabilia, ranging from an 1898 Beeston motor tricycle to a high-performance 2003 Enzo Ferrari supercar. The museum is home to a range of antique, veteran, vintage, post-vintage, post-45 and post-60 automobiles housed in four dehumidified halls and presented in chronological order, portraying the evolution of the motor car. Entry prices: adults, R60; motor club members, R50; and children aged 3 to 12 years, R30. 🌐

Ostrich farms, Oudsthoorn, Western Cape

Oudsthoorn is the capital of the ostrich industry; and a visit to the farm will clarify all about how the birds are bred and the various ways in which ostrich products are marketed and fashioned. For example, ostrich skin is used for handbags and shoes, and eggshells for decorative purposes. Ostrich meat is also popular, as it lean and full of protein. Kids can sit on one of the wide-eyed birds and also hold an ostrich egg, which would make an awfully big omelette! 🌐



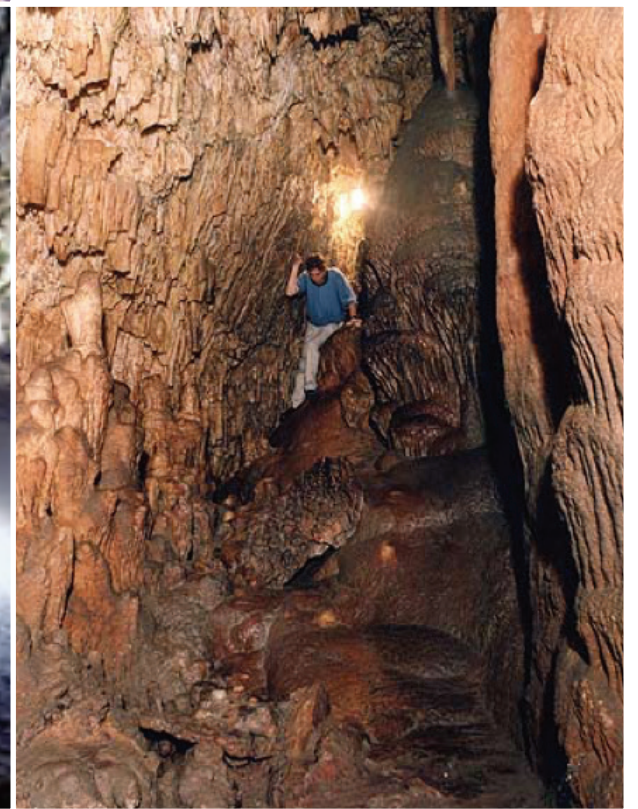
South Africa this **holiday season**

Tourist Attractions - Western Cape, Garden Route and Eastern Cape



Cango Caves, Oudtshoorn, Western Cape

If you enjoy going underground, a visit to the Cango Caves in the Swartberg Mountains, 30 kilometres north of Oudtshoorn, is the way to go. The 20-million-year-old caves consist of a progression of hidden chambers, cut deeply into the solid limestone rock layer. Have fun exploring some of the stalagmite formations on either the standard or adventure (for the fitter members of your party) subterranean tours! The Interpretive Centre will explain more about the caves' history, and there is also a curio shop selling African collectables. Prices subject to change. 🌐



Newlands Brewery, Cape Town, Western Cape



How about a day out learning all about the history of beer? Sounds like thirsty work! A tour of Newlands Brewery illustrates the brewing process from start to refreshing finish. The beer, first brewed here by Pieter Visagie in 1658, grew from strength to strength. The tour takes in the whole production line, including the speedy bottling method and how the brewery makes sure its beers are produced following stringent quality practices. Best of all, you get the chance to enjoy two beers to try for yourself! Tour price is R80 per adult and R50 per pensioner and student, and includes two drinks, a tasting and the tour. 🌐





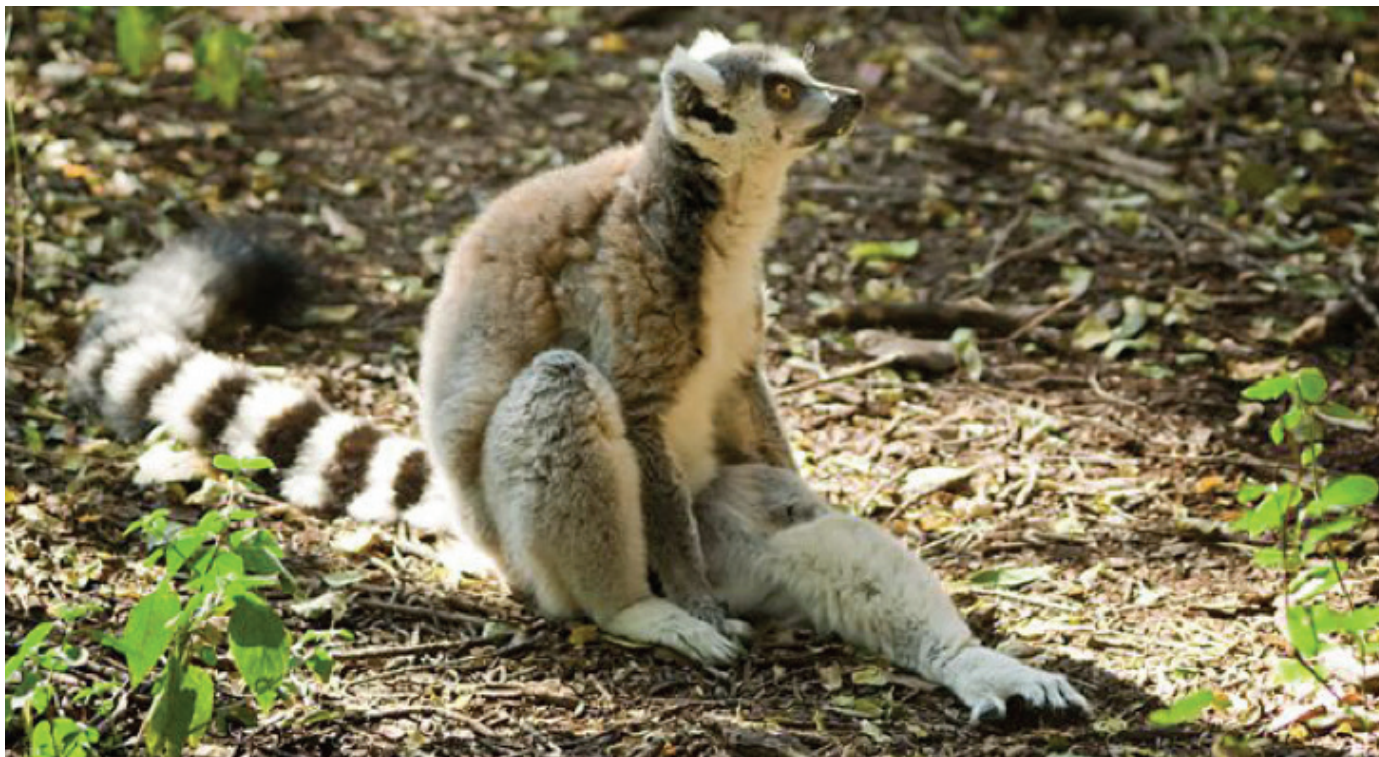
Addo Elephant National Park, Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape

The Addo Elephant National Park is home to more than 550 elephants, various lions, black rhinos, buffaloes, hyenas, leopards, zebras and a variety of antelopes. It is the third-largest park in South Africa and also concentrates on preserving a wide variety of flora. Entrance fee is R62 per adult, R31 per child for South Africans plus a Standard Conservation Fee for foreign visitors at R248 per adult and R124 per child. There is also a main camp for tourists featuring a swimming pool, restaurant, floodlit water hole and different types of accommodation. 📍



Bathurst, Eastern Cape

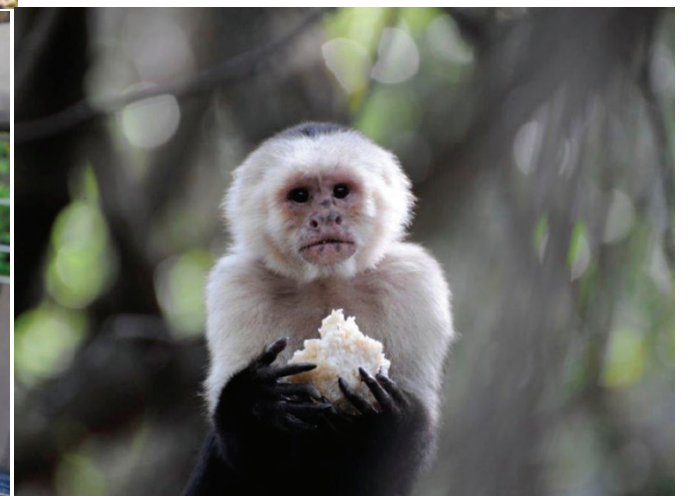
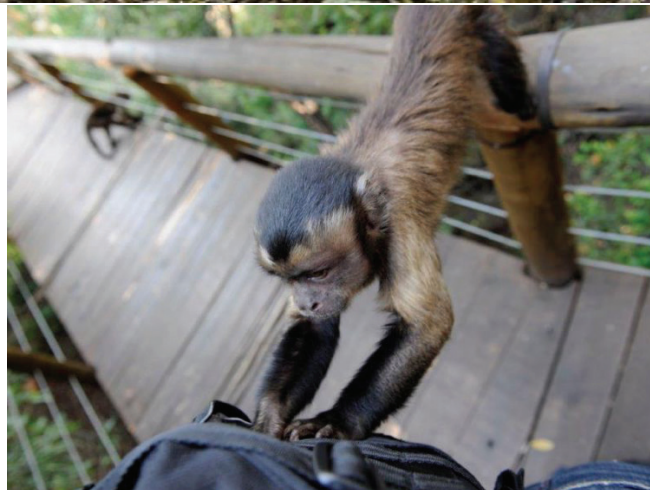
Bathurst is one of South Africa's largest pineapple-growing areas and has a 16,7-metre giant pineapple with a fibre-glass skin and a metal structure just to prove it! Inside the 60-seater auditorium, watch documentaries about the pineapple industry and then climb further up to the top to take in the amazing views of the landscape. Back on the ground, the kids can enjoy a farmer's tractor ride through the pineapple fields. A fun attraction for the whole family. No entrance fee. 📍



Bush Babies Monkey Sanctuary, North West

Situated west of Hartbeespoort Dam in the Magaliesberg mountain range, the Bush Babies Monkey Sanctuary offers a guided walking tour on elevated wooden walkways through natural forest which will captivate you through encounters with a range of exotic monkeys. It provides the perfect environment for monkeys and is one of several sanctuaries that specialise in providing rehabilitation for abused and orphaned animals, enabling them to remain in their natural environment. Learn all about the sanctuary and its work while enjoying the incredible Bushveld views. Rates: R295 per adult, R235 per pensioner and R175 per child (from the ages four to 14 years). 📍

“... specialise in providing rehabilitation for abused and orphaned animals ...”



Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Northern Cape

A merger of South Africa's Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Botswana's Gemsbok National Park, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is one of the largest wilderness areas in the world. Established in 2000, it is Africa's first officially declared transfrontier park and lies in a remote region of South Africa's Northern Cape. Gnarled camel thorn trees, red sand, golden grasslands and deep blue skies provide a bold backdrop for photographs and game viewing. Among the huge diversity of wildlife, this vast conservation area is home to the famous black-maned Kalahari lion, stately gemsbok with their V-shaped horns, the sprawling nests of sociable weavers, meerkats and many birds of prey. Other predators such as leopard, cheetah and hyenas are also found here. Four-wheel drive vehicles are recommended for some of the minor rugged roads or for those venturing into Botswana. Entrance fees R76 per adult, per day and R38 per child, per day. 🌍



Satyagraha House, Johannesburg, Gauteng

Between 1908 and 1909, Satyagraha House was the South African base of Mahatma Gandhi. Built and designed by Gandhi's friend, Hermann Kallenbach, it was fashioned and named The Kraal, with its two rondavel-style rooms. Satyagraha is the tenet of passive resistance, the stance upon which Gandhi developed his successful struggle for India's independence from the British Empire. The house, situated in Orchards, Johannesburg, has been restored and provides the option to appreciate its tranquillity either through a day visit (free) or an overnight stay in one of its seven rooms. Prices vary from R1 735 for a Superior Room to R4 850 for the Family Cottage.



Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga

The Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve in Mpumalanga forms part of the Greater Drakensberg escarpment and is part of the scenic Panorama Route. The route includes natural wonders such as the Bourke's Luck Potholes, Three Rondavels, Pinnacle Rock and God's Window. Many visitors to this region enjoy the visual splendour of combining the Panorama Route with exceptional game viewing in the Kruger National Park to create a spectacular itinerary in Mpumalanga. 🌍



El Dorian Horse Riding Trail, Mpumalanga

Found between Carolina and Badplaas, this trail is set over 20 000 ha of beautiful mountains and is great for riders of all levels. Riders are surrounded by picturesque scenery ranging from fresh green fields to fountains and rock pools. A variety of game and birdlife can be seen along the beautiful trail. 🌍

Witbank Skydiving Club, Mpumalanga

The Witbank Skydiving Club started in 1980 and is located about one hour from Johannesburg. A variety of skydiving courses as well as standard jumps are offered. There are three options for your first skydive. These include static line, accelerated free fall and tandem. A camera man can be arranged to film this magical experience.

Divers should be 18 years old or at least 16 years old with parental consent and need to be medically fit. 🌍



Bon-Af Berry Farm, Free State

About 95 km from Johannesburg next to the N1, just before the Kroonvaal Toll Plaza, lies the beautiful berry farm. With its rich history dating back to 1839, Bon-Af Berry Farm is a must-visit destination in the Vaal Region. Take a tour through the orchard with a variety of succulent berries to choose from. 🌍



Zanchieta Wild Cat Farm, Free State

Zanchieta Guest Farm and Lodge is situated in the heart of the Free State province in South Africa, just 22 km from the city of Bloemfontein.

Zanchieta is essentially a wild cat rehabilitation facility and is home to an extensive "pride", consisting of many of South Africa's great (and lesser) cats.

It offers exclusive, luxurious accommodation and great conferencing facilities.

Daily guided walking tours are a special event, where guests are able to meet and see all the residents, including the magnificent male white lion, William Wallace, offering amazing photo opportunities! 🌍

Adventures with Elephants, Limpopo

Adventures with Elephants is a place of inspiration and joy. The beautiful reserve close to Bela Bela is home to many types of wildlife from zebra, giraffe and warthogs to meerkats.

The reserve offers close-up and personal encounters with the elephants, carried out with cheerfulness and respect for the welfare of both the majestic residents and guests. Here you will learn all about our continent's gentle giants, their intelligence, their bodies, their behaviour. You will leave humbled and moved, and a lifetime ambassador's of holistic wildlife conservation. 🌍



Amarula Lapa, Limpopo

The Amarula Lapa is the hospitality centre for the now world-famous Spirit of Africa. Made from thatch, stone and wood, it is a simply constructed but luxurious and welcoming spot created from traditional materials.

Just 12 km south-west of Phalaborwa, guests can sample Amarula in a variety of ways, learn about the origins of the world-famous drink and buy Amarula memorabilia.

Close by is the processing plant where the fresh marula fruit is brought during the harvesting season (December-February). But the lapa itself is open all year round to give visitors the chance to experience Amarula at its source. Visit the Amarula Lapa for a delightful lunch or taste the delicious Amarula liquor! 🍷



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