



Minister Sisulu hosts Diplomatic Corps and briefs the media

The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Lindiwe Sisulu, met members of the Diplomatic Corps on Tuesday, 19 February 2019, for a briefing on a number of issues, including preparations for the national elections taking place on 8 May 2019 and South Africa's tenure as non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the period January 2019 to December 2020.



The engagement is in line with the commitment of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) to keep the Diplomatic Corps abreast of all important policy directions and events in the country.

The Minister also briefed the media on matters in the foreign policy environment. The media briefing included details relating to the Southern African Development Community Solidarity Conference on Western Sahara, which President Cyril Ramaphosa announced in Parliament on 14 February 2019 in his reply to the debate on the State of the Nation Address (SoNA).

With the general elections fast approaching, Minister Sisulu has called on Heads of Mission to rally behind the Electoral Commission (IEC) to allow for smooth elections for South Africans living abroad. "I have directed all Heads of Mission and Consuls-General to ensure that the IEC is given all the necessary support for South Africans [living abroad] to exercise their right to vote," said the Minister.

Minister Sisulu said she met with IEC CEO, Sy Mamabolo, who briefed her on the logistics and the legal requirements expected of missions abroad in preparation for the elections. Mr Mamabolo, who delivered a presentation to the Diplomatic Corps, assured them of the country's state of readiness to hold elections.

On elections further afield in Nigeria, the Minister said there was "nothing untoward" in the postponement of the elections, which were set to take place on 16 February 2019. "It has happened before in Nigeria and there was nothing untoward about it and we will wait for the announcement on what the technical glitch there was that led to the postponement," Minister Sisulu said.



More African countries sign the AfCFTA

Taking the members of the Diplomatic Corps through developments in the region, Minister Sisulu highlighted that progress was being made on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement.

To date, 52 out of the 55 African countries have signed the agreement, which is set to create a single continental market for goods and services and pave the way for accelerating the establishment of the Continental Customs Union.

Zimbabwe protests and sanctions

On the recent protests in Harare, Zimbabwe, the Minister said South Africa stood ready to support the Zimbabwean Government and its people whenever needed. Minister Sisulu also wished Vice President Chiwenga a speedy recovery. "I am informed by our High Commissioner in Harare that he travelled to India for medical attention."

With a bi-national meeting with Zimbabwe scheduled for 12 March 2019, Minister Sisulu said South Africa would call on the international community to lift sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe.

"We call on the EU and particularly the United Kingdom to give the Government and the people of Zimbabwe a chance to change their situation by urgently lifting the sanctions," she said.

Minister Sisulu said without lifting sanctions, Zimbabwe would never be able to address its economic challenges, which were compromising the political gains achieved since the coming in of the new President.

Western Sahara

Last year, the Heads of State and Government of the South African Development Community (SADC) resolved to hold a Solidarity Conference for Western Sahara, which remains the last colony on the African continent.

In light of this, Minister Sisulu confirmed that South Africa and Namibia would jointly host a SADC conference from 25 to 26 March 2019 in Tshwane.

Update on MTN staff in Uganda

Following the deportation of cellular network MTN staff in Uganda, Minister Sisulu said the matter was being addressed through diplomatic channels.

"We are aware of the deportation of MTN executives by the Uganda government, and we are engaging our Ugandan counterparts through diplomatic channels.

"We will continue to monitor this situation and to engage with the Ugandan Government," said the Minister.



Travel warning

Minister Sisulu called on travellers to sensitise themselves with the relevant countries' laws when visiting the countries. "It is of concern that some South African citizens continue to find themselves in conflict with the law in the People's Republic of China, despite DIRCO's repeated appeals that all persons travelling to China or any other country must ensure that they obtain legitimate and correct documentation."

Minister Sisulu said her department remained in contact with Chinese authorities in an effort to find a solution to the current challenge.

“It is encouraging that the Travel Smart Campaign, launched by DIRCO in 2018, is yielding positive results. More and more South Africans are heeding the message that we want to spread through the campaign, which is that South Africans must travel on valid documents, not engage in any illegal activities, respect the laws of the countries they are visiting and make contact with South African diplomatic missions in the countries they are travelling to. We have the contact details of all our diplomatic missions on the DIRCO website.” – Source: SAnews.gov.za



SA to host EU-SADC Joint Council

South Africa on Tuesday, 19 February 2019, hosted the first European Union (EU)-Southern African Development Community (SADC) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Joint Council Meeting.

The meeting, which was held in Cape Town, provided an opportunity for the ministers of the SADC EPA states and the EU to discuss the state of play in the trade between the parties and how the EPA could contribute to inclusive and sustainable development.

The ministers also considered a number of procedural issues such as the approval of the rules of procedure of the various committees created to oversee the implementation of the EPA, said Trade and Industry Minister, Rob Davies.



“The core objective of the SADC EPA Group and EU’s joint efforts in implementing the agreement must be to ensure that the EPA enables sustainable development in the SADC EPA states through changing the structure of trade, including the fundamental structural imbalance in the trade between the parties and promote enhanced value-added trade,” said Minister Davies.

South Africa, Botswana, eSwatini, Lesotho, Mozambique and Namibia signed the EPA that was negotiated with the EU in June 2016.

The EPA provisionally entered into force on 10 October 2016 and replaced the trade chapter in the Trade Development and Cooperation Agreement between South Africa and the EU that entered into force in 2000.

Through the EPA, South Africa gained improved market access into the EU for agricultural products such as wine, sugar, ethanol and fruit, as well as for fisheries. South African exports to the EU have increased from R214 billion in 2015 to R262 billion in 2017.

Minister Davies said South African exports to the EU were led by vehicles, which contributed 26% of the country’s total exports to the EU in 2017.

This is followed by precious stones and metals, nuclear reactors, edible fruit and nuts and ores, slag and ash which contributed 17%, 8%, 8% and 7% respectively, in the same year.

“Although South Africa has managed to increase exports of value-added products to the EU, thus contributing to South Africa’s industrial development objectives, there is still a need for further improvement in changing the structure of trade,” said Minister Davies. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

South Africa expected to reach roll-over agreement with the UK

The Department of Trade and Industry (dti) is expected to reach a roll-over agreement with the United Kingdom post-Brexit.

The department briefed Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry on Wednesday, 13 February 2019, on developments made by its negotiating team regarding preferential trade arrangements after the British exit (Brexit) from the European Union (EU). Brexit is expected to occur on 29 March 2019.

Committee Chairperson, Joan Fubbs, commended the department and other government departments for the work they were doing in ensuring a “form of continuity in arrangements after Brexit”.

The Chief Director for Trade Negotiation, International Trade and Economic Development Division at the dti, Niki Kruger, explained the intricacies of the agreement.

“It is only once the UK leaves the EU without an agreement that the UK can draw up its own agreements with other countries. The impact of them not reaching an agreement with the EU before Brexit is difficult to quantify now,” said Ms Kruger.

Ms Fubbs said all should be done to ensure more positive agreements for South Africa and all African countries in the future.

The committee heard that a final agreement would be signed by the end of the first week of March 2019. In addition, the committee heard that no agreement had been reached between the UK and the EU about the UK’s continued use of existing EU trade agreements.

The UK is currently South Africa’s second-biggest trading partner in the EU, despite South Africa having a negative trade balance with the EU.

South Africa has a positive trade balance with the UK and this has increased significantly over the last few years. The South African and UK trade balance is currently at about US\$1,5 billion in South Africa’s favour. The UK currently receives about 40% of all fresh food products or agricultural products exported from South Africa to the EU. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

SA making strides against rhino poaching

South Africa’s efforts to curb rhino poaching continue to produce results, with 2018 figures revealing that incidents had dropped to 769, down from 1 028 in 2017.

This, said the Department of Environmental Affairs, was the third consecutive year that South Africa had seen a decline in rhino poaching and the first time in five years that the annual figure was under 1 000.



Environmental Affairs Minister, Nomvula Mokonyane, has reported significant progress on the implementation of the Integrated Strategic Management of Rhinoceros, covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2018.

The rhino strategy was adopted by Cabinet in 2014 and draws together the work of the Department of Environmental Affairs together with the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster departments and agencies.

“The decline is not only indicative of the successful implementation of the Integrated Strategic Management of Rhinoceros approach countrywide, but also a confirmation of the commitment and dedication of the men and women working at the coalface to save the species,” said Minister Mokonyane.

A total of 421 rhino were poached in the Kruger National Park (KNP), 16,5% less than the 504 poached in 2017, and one was poached at Marakhele National Park.

“Combating rhino poaching remains a national priority and as such, all the relevant government departments will continue their close collaboration to ensure that this iconic species is conserved for generations to come.

“Although we are encouraged by the national poaching figures for 2018, it is critical that we continue to implement collaborative initiatives to address the scourge of rhino poaching,” said Minister Mokonyane.

During this period, 365 alleged rhino poachers and 36 alleged rhino horn traffickers were arrested across the country, while 229 alleged poachers were arrested inside and adjacent to the Kruger National Park, 40 more than the 189 arrested in 2017.

“There are currently 318 rhino poaching-related cases on the court roll involving 645 accused and 897 charges. Two hundred and seventy-five of these cases are trial-ready,” the department said.

Between January and December 2018, the National Prosecuting Authority obtained convictions in 78 of the 82 cases that went to trial. The 78 cases involved 135 accused, all of whom were convicted of rhino poaching and related matters, and this translated into sentences of over 500 years imprisonment in respect of these guilty verdicts.

Elephant poaching increases

Meanwhile, the department said elephant poaching had increased in the past year, with 71 of these animal elephants poached in the KNP.

“Specific risk areas have been identified and strategies to address the threat are being adapted and implemented. One elephant was killed in KwaZulu-Natal, which brings the total for South Africa to 72 elephants for 2018.”

Government recognises that international cooperation remains a critical component of the overall response strategy, both at a regional and international level, to halt rhino and elephant poaching, and all related wildlife crime. “Apart from the good cooperation between all Security Cluster members, cooperation with private rhino owners is commendable and most beneficial to our efforts against poaching. This is complemented by the excellent support from the local industry, NGOs and South Africans at large.

“As South Africa, we continue to engage countries where rhino horn seizures take place in order to request that samples of the rhino horn DNA be sent to South Africa for analysis, in line with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species resolutions.

“This enables us to link these seized horns to poaching cases and live rhino or rhino horn stockpiles, thus providing key information to further support investigations and understand transit routes. We are also proud as a country of our world-class DNA laboratory and bank against which we may compare rhino horn DNA and trace it to the exact cases of poaching or rhino in our country,” Minister Mokonyane said.



The department urges the public to report any suspicious activities around wildlife to its environmental crime hotline on 0800 205 005 or the SAPS number 10111. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

SA to tantalise UAE taste buds

South African companies are tantalising the taste buds of the world at the Gulfood Exhibition that got underway on Monday, 18 February 2019, in Dubai.



Gulfood has been hailed as the leading food and beverage exhibition in the Gulf region bringing together exporters, importers, distributors, retailers, wholesalers, food producers and restaurateurs from more than a 100 countries.

The exhibition in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) draws about 5 000 exhibitors and more than 100 000 visitors from 120 countries annually.

Local companies are partaking in the exhibition through the Department of Trade and Industry's (dti) Export Marketing and Investment Assistance Scheme.

"This is part of the department's commitment towards increasing market access for value-added goods and services in key markets. The objective of the scheme is to develop export markets for South African products and services and to recruit new foreign direct investment into the country," said the department ahead of the start of the exhibition.

Owner of Cape Town-based Art of Taste the House of Amir, Leonard Arangies, said his range of grape and rooibos tea infusion was previously available in the UAE market and sold in most hotels before the contract with their distributor expired. "We are here again to remarket the brand, but this time around we are looking for a big distributor with more reach," said Arangies.

Meanwhile, Commercial Manager of Africa Rhodes Food Group, Quentin Stanfliet, said their aim for Gulfood was to exhibit their range of products to the globe. "Some of the companies that we will meet are coming from Mozambique, Ghana and Kenya and these meetings are to continue building and looking for opportunities within Africa and to establish South Africa as a world-class manufacturing hub for agro-processing," said Mr Stanfliet.

Africa Rhodes Food Group currently offers convenience meal solutions in South Africa and Swaziland. The company manufactures canned fruit and meat, juice, baby food, as well as fresh and frozen meals.

The programme for Gulfood, which will conclude on Thursday, 21 February 2019, includes workshops and business-to-business meetings. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

Media urged to enter SADC Media Awards Competition



South African media have been invited to submit entries for the 2019 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Media Awards Competition.

The awards are aimed at recognising excellence in journalism in print, photo, television and radio, as well as to encourage media practitioners in member states to cover issues pertaining to the region.

They were established following a decision by the Council of Ministers in 1996 to establish a sector that deals with matters relating to, among others,

information, culture and sport. The awards serve as part of ensuring a link, coordination and synchronisation between formal structures of SADC governments, civil society, academia, labour and the media.

All entries must be submitted to the National Adjudication Committee not later than 28 February 2019. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

Brand South Africa hosts South Africa-Hong Kong Business Breakfast

Brand South Africa and the South African Consulate in Hong Kong recently hosted a business breakfast to enhance the country's Nation Brand reputation through positioning South Africa as an attractive investment destination.



The theme was “Growing Bilateral Trade and Investment Relations between South Africa and Hong Kong”, and aimed to contribute towards delivering impactful investment country messaging to the high-level business audience.

Brand South Africa’s Marketing Manager, Tshepiso Malele, said: “Brand South Africa has been in discussions with stakeholders to pursue an opportunity for a strategic intervention through direct engagement with Hong Kong business. With the enthusiastic support of the China General Chamber of Commerce (CGCC) in Hong Kong, the collaborative engagement enabled Brand South Africa to interact with a sizable number of Hong Kong’s prominent businesspeople who are members of the chamber.”

Speaking at the event, CGCC Chairperson, Dr Jonathan Choi, emphasised the important role South Africa played in facilitating Sino-African relations.

The platform was an opportunity for South Africa to enhance its stakeholder network in China, provide feedback on the SA Investment Conference and to profile South Africa as an attractive investment and trade partner of choice. Founder and CEO of Hong Kong-based Acorus Capital, Maxine Barnett, who was a delegate at the South African Investment Conference, remarked, “There is a strong breeze in South Africa. There is a new wind in the sails.”

Referring to the significant investment commitments that have been made thus far in response to President Ramaphosa’s drive, she added, “The private sector in South Africa is backing the country ... there has never been a better time to consider South Africa.”

The confidence in South Africa’s investment potential was echoed by Mike Blades, CEO of Standard Advisory Asia (which is part of the Standard Bank Group), who highlighted some of the country’s most compelling economic attributes. He commended South Africa’s competitive strengths such as the independent judiciary – an important contributor towards investor protection – as well as the Government’s firm stance in rooting out corruption. “Hong Kong will be pivotal in leading investment into South Africa,” he said.

South Africa’s Consul-General to Hong Kong, Madoda Ntshinga, said: “The growing people-to-people connections that are taking place between China and Africa continue to help build the bridge of human understanding, within the framework of solidarity. We have in the recent past seen an increase in collaboration, cultural exchanges, science and technology cooperation and innovation, as central pillars of development, within the China-Africa relationship. Consequently, there is growing consensus that development of these areas is needed in promoting

greater industrialisation, beneficiation and economic development, on a large scale.”

“The South African Consulate in Hong continues to work to increase the export of South African agricultural products by improving market access for South African agricultural products in Hong Kong. South African exports including products from the agro-processing sector, such as seafood, meat, wine, fresh fruit and vegetables have strong possibilities for growth.

“Bilateral trade between Hong Kong and South Africa continues to grow. We are certain that in the coming months we will continue to see more and more Hong Kong companies investing and doing business in South Africa,” concluded Mr Ntshinga. – Source: www.brandsouthafrica.com

Over R1 billion ploughed into Saldanha Bay IDZ

The Western Cape Government has unlocked R1,8 billion in provincial and private sector infrastructure funding for the Saldanha Bay Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) since 2014/15.

Presenting her final State of the Province Address in Cape Town on Friday, 15 February 2019, Western Cape Premier, Helen Zille, said there were currently eight confirmed major investors in the IDZ, with a total investment value of R3 billion.

“We were also instrumental in establishing the Atlantis Special Economic Zone for Greentech. It is projected to attract R3,7 billion in investment and create nearly 3 000 direct jobs by 2030. At local level, we’ve helped municipalities create 15-year infrastructure investment plans through our local government department.

“Wesgro, our world-class trade, tourism and investment promotion agency, has secured 299 investments since 2009, attracting R100 billion worth of foreign direct investment and creating over 19 000 jobs in our region,” Premier Zille said.



Tourism

In just three years, Premier Zille said, the provincial government had added over 750 000 international inbound seats to Cape Town and 13 new routes, generating jobs, tourism and investment.

“These expansions have injected an estimated R6 billion in tourist spend into our local economy. Tourism means jobs. Estimates based on the new Hong Kong route have shown that 1 000 jobs can be created for each new route added.

“We continue to add new tourism offerings such as cycle routes, a Mandela Legacy Route and a new Archaeology and Paleontology Route to show the world that humanity did indeed begin in southern Africa,” said Premier Zille. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

OR Tambo International Airport unveils first phase of R4,5-billion development

OR Tambo International Airport, South Africa’s biggest and busiest port of entry, just unveiled the first phase of a R4,5-billion mixed-use development that will see its Western Precinct acquire new offices, retail space, hotel and conference facilities and additional transit-related services.

At a sod-turning ceremony for its Western Precinct development, an 8,5-hectare site, General Manager of the Airport, Bongiwé Pityi-Vokwana, detailed the airport’s plans to unlock the development potential of 180 000 m² of bulk for a mixed-use development to be located on the northern precinct of the airport.

Construction begins this month with an anticipated completion date for the first phase of the end of 2020. Ms Pityi-

Vokwana was joined at the ceremony by members of the Western Precinct Consortium, which won the bid for the first phase. This phase will see construction of three six-storey office buildings, above podium with a floor area of 33 000 m².



Ms Pityi-Vokwana said: “As the busiest airport in Africa and the international gateway to South Africa, it is imperative that OR Tambo International Airport remains an international landmark with world-class infrastructure and a large variety of services for all users and markets. The Western Precinct development forms part of a strategy to expand our offering and to drive new sources of growth for the entire region.”

In addition to this development, OR Tambo International’s Airports Company long-term

Infrastructure Master Plan features midfield cargo and midfield passenger terminals, each requiring several billion rands in further investment. These developments will accommodate growing passenger demand and expand the midfield cargo facilities at the airport to accommodate up to two million tonnes of air cargo annually.

“At the same time, airport users will start to see upgrades to the existing terminal buildings. So, we are entering a very exciting period in the life of our airport which supports about 38 000 jobs in and around the precinct,” said Ms Pityi-Vokwana.

The mixed-use development will consist of a variety of buildings, which are framed in such a way as to form a boulevard at the international departures level, where a variety of retail commercial and ancillary buildings each open onto a vibrant energetic “street” environment serviced by lively restaurants, corner cafes and bars. The iconic structure will house all the vertical and horizontal circulation functionality in a clear and legible way anchored by the Gautrain Station at its core and will provide a unique architectural language to Africa’s largest airport. – Source: www.news24.com

Scientists win top awards

Two South African scientists won the prestigious African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence 2018 edition in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 11 February 2019.

Prof. Aletta Schutte won the regional prize for Women Scientist US\$20 000 for the Life and Earth Sciences Category. She is a Professor of Physiology at North-West University. Prof Schutte holds a SARChI in the Early Detection and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease in Africa.

The research chair is funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST). Her research focus is on hypertension and its development in African populations.

Prof. David Mark Richardson won the continental award of US\$100 000 for the Earth and Life Science category. He is a Distinguished Professor of Ecology at Stellenbosch University and Director of the DST-National Research Foundation Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology. His research deals with understanding issues pertaining to invasive alien tree species.



DBSA wins global award for renewable energy project financing

The Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) has won the African Renewable Energy Programme Award.



**Development Bank
of Southern Africa**

The award was presented to the DBSA in London, in the United Kingdom, by Project Finance International (PFI), an institution that organises the global awards.

The achievement signified the DBSA's growing involvement in energy project financing and raised the institution's profile among its peers in the industry, PFI said in a statement published recently.

The PFI panel of judges said the DBSA beat other strong contenders primarily because of the successful financial closure and implementation of several projects it financed in Round Four of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPPP).

The DBSA provided project financing for over 14 renewable energy projects in Round Four of the REIPPPP, including the Sirius Solar and the Dyasons Klip 1 and Dyasons Klip 2 photovoltaic projects developed by Scatec Solar. The Scatec Solar projects were funded through a combination of equity and debt raised from the DBSA – about R1,1 billion – commercial banks and local asset managers.

Other notable projects include the 140 MW Roggeveld wind project for which the DBSA provided R951 million in debt funding and the 102 MW Copperton wind project, for which the DBSA provided R1,2 billion in debt funding.

“This award is significant because the deals survived contractual delays in the signing of the power purchase agreements,” DBSA project finance head, Mpho Mokwele, said.

DBSA is currently involved in 33 renewable energy projects for which the development investment is about R17 billion.

The bank has also created a project development facility to assist with bankable feasibility studies and has enabled Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment parties and local community trusts to participate at an ownership level in the projects.

“The DBSA remains committed to the growth of renewable energy and the promotion of local ownership and community involvement, which are all crucial to long-term success and sustainability,” said DBSA Energy, Environment and Information and Communications Technology Head, Lucy Chege. – Source: www.engineeringweekly.co.za

SA photographer wins top international award for capturing sharks underwater

A South African photographer has won a top award for his work on sharks at the World Shootout 2018 awards.



The competition is focussed on underwater photography and Allen Walker beat David Salvatori and Filippo Borghi (both from Italy) to claim the first prize in the Sharks Category.

"It's always nice to get recognition for years of work and dedication to try and master the art of underwater photography and photography in general, especially if it is only done as a hobby. Right now though, the fact that I have won a dive aboard trip to 'The Gardens of Eden', Cuba, something I could never afford, is just amazing. One big bucket list tick!" an ecstatic Mr Walker told News24.

His love for shark photography started when he saw a variety of shark species on the Aliwal Shoal in Umkomaas, KwaZulu-Natal. He said: "It was, however, the likes of the BBC and NatGeos of the world that essentially got the pioneers of shark diving to find ways of attracting tiger sharks in for the filmmakers. This then progressed into a product that was offered to advanced divers and photographers.

"Being involved in the industry and an instructor first, then taking up UWP (underwater photography) as a hobby, it was natural to photograph these animals."

Mr Walker's images capture the beauty of marine creatures and he believes it helps conservation efforts.

"Most definitely, my images have made people curious; they have evoked a sense of serenity around the 'feared' shark; they have made visible what people cannot see and they have shown that you can work in very close quarters with these animals," he said.

"More importantly, I have been able to take people on shark dives and show them firsthand how amazing these animals are. Most of my images are surreal and show the beauty of the animal and the ocean," he added.



The competition started in 2005 and has so far awarded US\$1 000 000 in prizes, of which US\$260 000 has been in cash. The 2018 ceremony was held in Düsseldorf, Germany. – Source: www.news24.co.za

Tiny SA beach restaurant crowned best in world

Chef Kobus van der Merwe said his win was a victory for the African “continent and my beautiful, diverse country”.

A tiny beach restaurant in an isolated South African fishing village was named the best in the world on Monday, 18 February 2019. Chef Kobus van der Merwe, who did not begin to cook seriously until he was 30, forages every day for ingredients on the wild Atlantic shore of the Western Cape near his Wolfgat restaurant, where he also makes his own bread and butter.

The Wolfgat, whose six mostly female staff have no formal training, opened just two years ago in a 130-year-old cottage and cave on the beach at Paternoster. Its seven-course tasting menu costs the equivalent of €53 (US\$60 or R848), a fraction of what you would pay at a top Paris table.'

But its humble setting, and Van der Merwe's belief in sustainable, back-to-basics cooking won over the judges of the inaugural World Restaurant Awards in the French capital. “

I'm really proud to bring something like this back to our continent and beautiful country. I'm very proud to be working in a team of mostly women.”



The 38-year-old, who can feed only 20 people at a sitting, told AFP, "I don't feel worthy. It's a big title. My staff who go out every day gathering herbs, succulents and dune spinach, should be here ... It's their baby."

With dishes such as twice-cooked laver (seaweed), angelfish with bokkom sambal and wild garlic masala, limpets, mussels and sea vegetables harvested within sight of its "stoep" (porch), Wolfgat also won the prize for best "Off-Map Destination".

Van der Merwe, a former journalist, said that apart from the influence of the subtle spices of local Cape Malay cooking, his philosophy was to "interfere as little as possible with the products, and to keep them pure, raw and untreated".

"It's hyper local cuisine but we try to come up with new flavours, like dune celery spice." – Source: www.ewn.co.za



News from the United Nations Security Council



Continuing the Legacy: Working for a Just and Peaceful World

South Africa's Permanent Representative addresses UNSC on the situation in Burundi

South Africa's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Jerry Matjila, recently told the Security Council that South Africa fully supported the facilitation process led by the East African Community (EAC) in the spirit of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, with the support of the African Union and the United Nations.

"We thank former President Michel Kafando, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Burundi and Ambassador Jurg Lauber, Chair of the Burundi Configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission for their important and insightful briefings on the evolving situation in Burundi and for their unwavering commitment to the Country.

"In this regard, the efforts of the mediator, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and the facilitator, former President Benjamin Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania, is acknowledged and commended. We also commend the essential and valuable work of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, former President Kafando as well as the Burundi Configuration of the PBC, under the able leadership of Ambassador Lauber.

"South Africa welcomes Burundi's participation in the East African Summit of the Heads of State and the African Union (AU) Summit last week. This participation is in line with our longstanding position of the important role played by regional and continental bodies in the resolution of the impasse. With the submission of the final report of former President Mkapa to the EAC, South Africa and the international community need to await direction from the



leadership of the EAC and the AU in strengthening our commitment to helping Burundi, especially in view of the elections scheduled for 2020.

“South Africa supports a Barundi-led process which respect its sovereignty and that is within the parameters of the Constitution.

“Any political impasse in Burundi can only be addressed through a fully inclusive dialogue. We therefore call on the international community to continue to support initiatives of the EAC. We deplore any efforts that seek to undermine or exclude the Arusha Accords by any party. As South Africa, we are concerned

with the current trajectory that has overturned the 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement as such we implore on the mediation process to revert back to the principles of that agreement. South Africa calls upon the Barundi to implement the principles of the 2000 Arusha Accords. It is our view that the Global Ceasefire Agreement flowed from the Arusha Accords and as such the two should be read together. South Africa stands ready to support the Government and people of Burundi.

“We encourage Burundi to work closely with the EAC and the AU to create an environment conducive to the holding of elections. In this regard, all Burundian parties need to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation in order to ensure peace and stability beyond 2020. South Africa welcomes the decision by the Government of Burundi to finance the elections with their national budget.

“With regard to the political developments in Burundi, we are encouraged by the continued stable security situation in the country. We would like to congratulate the Government of Burundi on initiating the preparatory process for the elections, especially the establishment, on 31 August 2018 of an Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), according to the Burundian Electoral Code.

“We commend Burundi’s contribution to peace and security through its deployment of troop contingents. Burundi participates alongside other countries in UN and AU peacekeeping missions with much success, with more than 6 000 Burundian men and women deployed in various peacekeeping operations, mostly in the Central African Republic and Somalia. We therefore call on the international community to support Burundi in strengthening their peacekeeping capacity, as it is of critical institutional value to the county. We would like to congratulate Burundi on their appointment to the African Union Peace and Security Council.

“We note Burundi’s adoption of a 10-year National Development Plan (NDP), which provides direction on the way towards sustainable development in the year 2030. We urge the international community to do more to alleviate the socio-economic challenges and humanitarian situation facing the people of Burundi and call on its partners to support the implementation of the NDP for the benefit of the Burundian people. In this vein, we reiterate the call by the AU during it 32nd Summit for the European Union to lift the unilateral sanctions imposed against the Republic of Burundi.

“We encourage Burundi to continue to work towards the voluntary repatriation and dignified return of refugees. The gradual return of refugees is evidence of the improvement in the country’s situation. To date approximately 210 000 refugees have returned voluntarily to Burundi. In 2018 alone, 58 262 Burundians have returned mainly from Tanzania, Congo, Kenya and Uganda. We call on the international community to support these efforts and in particular to provide assistance for the refugees’ return and reintegration.

“Finally, we appeal to the international community to support the Government and the EAC mediation process to lay the foundation for an environment that is conducive to the holding of democratic elections, to support a peaceful transfer of power, in order to ensure peace and stability beyond 2020.”

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South Africa’s position on Yemen

On 19 February 2019, Ambassador Jerry Matjila, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, addressed the Security Council Meeting on Yemen.

“We thank the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy, Mr Martin Griffiths, as well as the Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr Mark Lowcock, for their informative briefings. We also welcome the appointment of Major General Michael Anker Lollesgaard and wish him all the best as the Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee (RCC) and Head of the Special Political Mission to support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA).

“We also join in congratulating the members of the RCC for making progress in planning for the redeployment of forces in line with the Hodeidah Agreement, during their fourth joint meeting held from 16 to 17 February in Hodeidah city. This meeting was a commendable confidence-building measure by the parties, and we congratulate them for agreeing on Phase 1 of the mutual redeployment of forces. We look forward to the RCC convening again within a week to finalise Phase 2.



“South Africa remains concerned at the serious humanitarian and security situation in Yemen. We reiterate that in order to ensure a long-term solution to the crises in Yemen, it is necessary for all parties to commit to a political process. We also welcome the proposal made by the Chair of the RCC to move forward on the implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement. We hope that this commitment will result in tangible progress that brings peace and stability in the region. It is imperative that all parties make every effort to adhere to the ceasefire agreement and the full implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement. We reiterate that the conflict cannot be resolved through military might, the parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict.

“The humanitarian situation remains dire in Yemen. We call on all parties to ensure that the necessary humanitarian assistance is able to safely reach their intended destinations. Most of Yemen’s imports, including food and humanitarian assistance, enter through Hodeidah’s port, which has often been out of action because of ongoing fighting. Any hindrance to the delivery of this vital humanitarian aid only exacerbates the already severe crises. We wish to reiterate that the only sustainable resolution will be a negotiated, Yemeni-led political settlement that is inclusive and fair and puts the interests and wellbeing of all the citizens of Yemen first.”

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Security Council considers situation in Middle East, including Palestinian question

Job Obiang Esono Mbengono, Deputy Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations (UN) and President of the Security Council for the month of February, chaired the Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, on 20 February.



Delivering South Africa’s statement, Amb Jerry Matjila, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the UN, said: “The briefing we heard today clearly indicates one thing. Peace in Palestine remains elusive.

“As time goes on, we have seen the positions of the Israelis and Palestinians growing further and further apart. Key final status issues that ought to be dealt with through negotiations are rapidly being eroded as the issue of Jerusalem is being pre-determined and illegal settlements continue to be built on Palestinian land in flagrant violation of International Humanitarian Law and numerous Security Council resolutions.

“The briefing today takes place a few weeks after the Government of Israel decided not to renew the Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) after 22 years of dedicated service to both Palestinians and Israelis. It is appropriate that I use this opportunity to express South Africa’s deep regret at the decision by Israel, which clearly undermines one of the few confidence-building mechanisms between the Palestinians and the Israelis. We have no doubt that this decision by the Israeli Government will be yet another step that will have negative implications on the Middle East Peace Process. It is also unfortunate that we were not even able to adopt a press statement to support the mechanism that promoted peace and stability in Hebron. Despite this setback, we appreciate the effort by the President of the council of consulting with both Palestine and Israel on this matter and we welcome the valuable feedback that he has provided to the council in that regard.

“This Council began dealing with the issue of Israel and Palestine almost from the beginning of its work, over 70 years ago. Yet as this Council, we have regrettable done very little or more often, nothing at all. On almost any other issue that this Council deals with, if there was a similar magnitude of violations or deterioration of the situation, we would waste no time in taking decisive action.

“On 21 December 2018, Belgium, Bolivia, China, Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, France, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden and my own country, South Africa, wrote to the UN Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council raising concern over the lack of implementation of Security Council Resolution 2334, which included the need for the Secretary-General to provide written reports every three months on its implementation.

“We wish to reiterate our call for the submission of timely written reports by the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council on its implementation of Resolution 2234, every three months in order for progress to be adequately monitored. This council receives written reports on other matters that it is seized with, and the situation in Palestine should be no different. We must not allow the decisions made by the Security Council to be undermined and blatantly violated in some cases.

“We express deep concern about the dire humanitarian situation of more than two million Palestinians living in Gaza of whom 50% of them are children. The people of Gaza desperately need humanitarian assistance. In that connection, we wish to call upon the international community to continue to support UNRWA, which continues play a pivotal role in providing the basic services to the people of Palestine.

“I wish to reiterate South Africa’s position in support of a two-state solution based on pre-1967 borders. We, as part of the international community, support and encourage both parties towards this endeavour. Dialogue and negotiation remain the only way forward to finding a lasting solution. The guidelines for these negotiations have to be based on the already established international legal framework, which include United Nations General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions, the Madrid Principles, the Arab Peace Plan and the Quartet Roadmap, to name but a few.

“South Africa was elected onto this council with the aspiration to work, with other member states represented here, for a long-lasting peace in the Middle East. We must, as a council show consistency and act to promote peace between Israelis and Palestinians. During our time in the council, we will continue to call on the council to show consistency and act on this matter.”



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