

South African Embassy participated in the World Experience Festival, 3 – 9 September 2018, Bucharest

As it does every year, the South African Embassy has participated in the World Experience Festival, a festival of embassies, cultures and traditions organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania.

Within the World Experience Festival, the SA Ambassador was invited to speak about the role of music in cultural diplomacy, on 6 September 2018, at ARCUB Hall, Bucharest. H.E. Jabu Mbalula emphasised that musicians and music played a special role in South Africa during the apartheid period, because this art conveyed the social struggle of those times. The diplomat described South Africa as "a confluence of various cultures" and talked about the musical richness of his country.



Ambassador Jabu Mbalula spoke about South Africa's musical richness within 'Sounds of the World' conference, Bucharest City-Hall, 2018

The 4th edition of this year was organised in Titan Park, Bucharest. Our Embassy participated in the 3-day world bazaar with a vividly decorated stand showcasing traditions and art of South Africa. Three mannequins dressed in traditional SA costumes attracted hundreds of visitors, being admired by both children and grandparents. Brochures and printed information were put at the disposal of visitors, such as Mandela centenary, Mandela's life and values, tourism maps and a cuisine recipe.



South African Embassy's colourful stand at World Experience Festival, Bucharest 2018



South Africa presented its diversity of traditions and languages at Café of Cultures.

On 27 September 2018, the SA Embassy was invited to take part in the Café of Cultures event organised by the British School of Bucharest. The participating embassies talked to the students about their cultures and taught them some phrases in their native languages.

The South African stand was by far the great attraction of the event. Decorated with wild animal pictures, posters, books, dolls and flags, the stand showcased the variety and richness of South Africa. Mrs. Eunice Mbalula, SA Ambassador's spouse, and Mrs. Dayanidhie Ramnaidoo, Secretary I, attracted the children to the stand and offered them hot rooibos tea cups that were highly appreciated, cakes, snacks, pastry and traditional food. The children learnt how to say 'Please' and 'Thank you' in some of the 11 official languages of SA.



Mrs. Eunice Mbalula, South African Ambassador's spouse (left side), and Mrs. Dayanidhie Ramnaidoo, Secretary I (right side) attended the Embassy's stand and presented South Africa's cultural diversity to the students.



South African Woman's Day was marked in Bucharest on 9 August.

'Wild Olive', South Africa based company managed by a Romanian lady, hosted the SA Woman's Day celebration in its elegant cosmetics shop of Bucharest. The event was attended by the female staff of SA Embassy, having H.E. Jane Ada Ndem, lady Ambassador of Nigeria as guest of honour. Mrs. Eunice Mbalula, SA Ambassador's spouse, opened the discussions about role of woman in the past South Africa and in the present, encouraging the participating ladies to share opinions on the topic.



H.E. Jane Ada Ndem, lady Ambassador of Nigeria (third from left) and Mrs. Eunice Mbalula, South African Ambassador's spouse (fourth from left), chaired the discussions about role of woman in the past and present.



South Africa's National Freedom Day and Nelson Mandela Centenary celebrated in Bucharest on 18 June 2018

This year, 2018, South Africa has celebrated 24 years of freedom. More precisely, 27 April 2018 marked twenty-four years of freedom for the people of South Africa.

The South African Embassy in Romania celebrated this day on 18 June 2018, the significance of this date and month being the fact the 18 (July 1918) is the date on which Nelson Mandela was born while June is the month on which the youth is celebrated (16 June).

On 18 June 2018 the Embassy also celebrated the Centenary of Nelson Mandela through an overarching theme: *"The year of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela: towards full realisation of our freedom through radical socio-economic transformation"*. The intention of the theme was to foreground characteristics and values which former President Mandela was renowned for across the world. He valued: Integrity, Passion, Service, Transparency, Respect and Transformation. The late Nelson Mandela played an integral role in the liberation of South Africa. He dedicated his life to the pursuit of equality and justice for all South Africans and was one of the founding fathers of our constitutional democracy.



Mrs. Ana Birchall, Deputy Prime Minister of Romania, addressed the audience and praised the good diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries

The event was hosted by the National Museum of Art in Bucharest and was marked by addresses of H.E. Jabu Mbalula, Ambassador of SA to Bucharest and Mrs. Ana Birchall, Vice Prime Minister for Romania's Strategic Partnerships' Implementation. A brief video presented the life and struggle of the first democratically elected President, Nelson Mandela. The songs of the British School children choir conveyed a message of joy and hope to the audience. An exhibition of paintings by a Romanian artist inspired from her travels to South Africa and showcasing SA people and traditions was organised in the hall of the museum.



South African Ambassador, H.E. Jabu Mbalula, emphasised the lessons of the past and Nelson Mandela's values in the opening of the ceremony.

Around 250 guests attended the reception including ambassadors, high ranking officials, members of ROSABA association, journalists, South Africans residing in Romania. The guests were offered delicious typical South African cuisine made with specific condiments.



Nelson Mandela Centenary was celebrated with video memories, children choir songs, painting exhibition and reception at Bucharest Art Museum.



Official visit of Romanian delegation of Romania-South Africa Parliamentary Friendship Group to Cape Town, June 2018

The Romanian delegation of Ro-SA parliamentary friendship group paid an official visit to Cape Town in the period 4-8 June 2018, thus resuming the parliamentary relations between Romania and South Africa after a 10 year break.

The Romanian delegation included: Senator Laszlo-Odon Fejer, Chairman of Ro-SA parliamentary friendship group, Senator Marian Pavel, Vice-Chairman of the group and Deputy Vlad Emanuel Durus, Secretary of the group.

The Romanian Members of Parliament had meetings with Mrs. Masefako Dikgale, Member of Parliament, Head of International Relations Department within the National Council of Provinces, Mr. Jonas Phello Parkies, Member of Parliament and member of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP Programming Whip), Mr. Eddie Makue, Member of Parliament and Head of Trade and International Relations Committee.



Head of the Romanian delegation, Senator Laszlo-Odon Fejer, shaking hands with Mrs. Masefako Dikgale, House Chairperson for International Relations in the National Council of Provinces

The discussions revealed interest in academic cooperation, research and development field, in sectors such as IT&C, bio-economy, social sciences. In the economic sector the officials identified opportunities of cooperation in agriculture and phyto-sanitary training, considering the needs of SA side and its food safety policies.



The Romanian delegation led by Senator Laszlo-Odon Fejer, Chairman of Romania-South Africa Parliamentary Friendship Group (photo: fourth from left), was warmly welcomed by members of SA Parliament in Cape Town



Africa Day was celebrated in Bucharest on 21 – 24 May 2018

The group of African Embassies in Bucharest, in partnership with the University of Bucharest, organised, between 21 – 24 May 2018, a set of events dedicated to Africa and Romanian-African relationship.

In the opening, the audience was addressed by Vice Prime Minister for Romania's Strategic Partnerships' Implementation, Rector of the University, Ambassadors.

The event was hosted by the University and was celebrated with African countries stands exhibition, traditional food, traditional costumes, live African music performed by Ikhaya Band.



South African Ambassador Mbalula and his wife, Mrs. Eunice Mbalula (second and third from the right) joined the African Ambassadors during the celebration



Ikhaya Band drummers of Bucharest enchanted the audience with African rhythms and songs.



The South African Embassy's stand displayed the colours and traditions of South Africa



'Spotlight on Africa and Ocean Islands' tourism workshop, 12 April 2018

The travel workshop „*Spotlight on Africa and Indian Ocean Islands*” was organised by the South African Embassy in partnership with South African Houston Travel Marketing Services company at Hilton Athenee Palace.

During the workshop, Romanian tourism agencies had the chance to meet face to face, know and discuss travel offers provided by tourism agencies from South Africa, several African countries and some Indian Ocean islands. 32 Romanian travel agencies were present at the event. Among the participating African countries there were: Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius islands, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe.



32 Romanian travel agencies and more than 8 African tour operators attended the workshop in Bucharest.



South



African

Ambassador to Romania, H.E. Jabu Mbalula, addressed the audience in the opening of the event. Secretary 1 Political, Mr. Bethwell Tiba, participated in the workshop representing the SA Embassy in Bucharest.



South African Ambassador on a visit to Craiova, Cluj, Targu Mures municipalities, on 5-12 February 2018

In the period 6-12.02.2018, South African Ambassador, H.E. Jabu Mbalula, and Mr. Bethwell Tiba, Secretary 1 Political of the Embassy visited the municipalities of Craiova (South-West Romania), Cluj and Targu Mures (West and Central Romania), being welcomed by Mayors, Prefects, University Rectors and Chairmen of Chambers of Commerce. The main purpose of the visits was for the SA delegation to get to know the cities, their economic, social and cultural development, so that they can guide the South African investors who are interested in cooperation with Romanian cities, and exchange ideas and good practices.

Also, the SA delegation met academic representatives, seeking to establish educational partnerships in the sectors of agriculture, engineering and medicine.



In Craiova, Ambassador Mbalula signed in the Book of Honour. His Excellency and the Secretary I Political had talks with Deputy Mayor and professors of the University of Craiova.



South African Embassy delegation met with the Prefect of Cluj county and was warmly welcomed by Cluj Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



South African Ambassador discussed cooperation opportunities with the Prefect of Mures county.



South African Embassy participated in Romania’s Tourism Fair in February 2018

In the period 22-25 February 2018, the SA Embassy participated in the spring edition of Romania’s Tourism Fair hosted by Romexpo exhibition Hall of Bucharest. The event attracts annually 291 exhibitors, with 30% international participation and over 23000 visitors.

The Embassy stand attendants offered the visitors brochures, tourism maps of South Africa and info materials about the reasons to visit this country, 10 best destinations of SA, adventure tourism and specific details about Cape Town. Colourful photos of wild animals, vuvuzelas and traditional dolls decorated the stand to the delight of children, who came to enquire about South Africa.

Radio journalists interviewed Ambassador Mbalula on SA tourism theme, asking details about the increasing number of tourist visas issued by the Embassy and the importance of this event for the Mission.



South African Embassy's stand at 2018 Tourism Fair attracted lots of visitors who came to enquire about South African destinations.



Painting exhibition dedicated to South Africa and Argentina opened in Bucharest, October 2017

On 5 October 2017, SA Ambassador Jabu Mbalula was invited to speak in the opening of a painting exhibition illustrating landscapes and portraits of people from South Africa and Argentina. The exhibition comprised 35 paintings inspired from history, attires, culture, traditions that the artist, Romanian painter Mihaela Coheci, met during her trips to South Africa and Argentina. The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, UNESCO, Presidential Administration, admirers of world art and culture, friends. In his address, H.E. Jabu Mbalula emphasised the need to develop strong cultural links between the peoples of Romania and South Africa.



From right to left: South African Ambassador Jabu Mbalula, painter Mihaela Coheci and representative of the Embassy of Argentina, shaking hands at the exhibition opening, October 2017 .

