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South Africa's Public Diplomacy in action

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UBUNTU

a Nguni word meaning humanity

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation's quarterly magazine



ON THE COVER

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN), deliver its Order on the Request for the indication of provisional measures submitted by South Africa in the case concerning Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel), on 26 January 2024, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the seat of the Court.

The Court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by States and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorised UN organs and agencies.

President Cyril Ramaphosa labelled the ICJ ruling as a "victory for international law, for human rights, and above all, for justice.

"We, as South Africans, will not be passive bystanders and watch the crimes that were visited upon us being perpetrated elsewhere. We stand on the side of freedom for all. We stand on the side of justice".

Cover photo: UN Photo/ICJ-CIJ/Frank van Beek

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PARTNERSHIP AND GROWTH
#Freedom30



international relations & cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

30 YEARS OF FREEDOM
South Africa 1994 - 2024

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As a nation that fought and defeated apartheid, we have a particular obligation to stand up for justice and fundamental human rights for all people, everywhere. It is this obligation that informed our application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to halt the violence unleashed by Israel on the Gaza Strip.

The Genocide Convention was unanimously adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, one of the worst crimes in modern history. Having witnessed the mass extermination of six million Jews and millions of other victims of the Nazis, the world came together to prevent such atrocities from occurring again.

As a signatory to that convention, South Africa carries a responsibility, like other states that are signatories to the convention, to prevent acts of genocide wherever they occur. It was in fulfilment of this responsibility and to prevent further civilian deaths and destruction that South Africa took this case to the court.

The ICJ listened to the South African case and in turn also listened to the Israeli case. In its order handed down on 26 January 2024, the ICJ found that it was plausible that Israel had committed acts that were in violation of the Genocide Convention to which South Africa, Israel and many other countries are signatories.

The ICJ ruled that the State of Israel should, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, in relation to Palestinians in Gaza, take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II of this Convention, in particular: killing members of the Palestinian group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to Palestinians; deliberately inflicting on Palestinians' conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction in whole or in part; and imposing measures intended to prevent births of Palestinian children.

The court further ruled that the State of Israel should ensure with immediate effect that its military does not commit any acts set out above. The State of Israel shall take all measures within its power to prevent and punish the direct and public incitement to commit genocide in relation to members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip. In effect, the court said that the steps Israel claimed to be taking in respect of international law were insufficient.

On the issue of humanitarian assistance, the court ruled that the State of Israel should take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance to address the adverse conditions of life faced by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.



I call on all South Africans to rally behind our call for justice for the Palestinian people, and for a negotiated settlement that will bring about a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

The court further directed the State of Israel to take effective measures to prevent the destruction and ensure the preservation of evidence related to allegations of acts within the scope of the Convention on the Crime of Genocide against members of the Palestinian group in the Gaza Strip.

Criticism of the atrocities committed by the Israeli military is not directed at any religious or ethnic group and cannot simply be dismissed as anti-Semitism. Nor can our case before the ICJ be said to diminish the enormity of the Holocaust. On the contrary, it is the experience by humanity of the Holocaust and other acts of genocide that motivates our efforts to prevent anything of this nature from happening again.

As government, we have been consistent about the application of international law. We have been equally consistent in condemning the atrocities committed by Hamas against Israeli civilians on 7 October 2023 and in calling for the release of hostages still being held in Gaza. Yet, as we argued in our case before the ICJ, this attack on civilians in Israel cannot justify the subsequent acts committed by the Israeli military against the residents of Gaza.

This court application is about the Palestinian people: their suffering, the deprivation of their rights, and the denial of their right to self-determination. Yet, in bringing this application, we are seeking to reinforce, protect and advance the rights of all people at all times. The unprecedented onslaught against the people of the Gaza Strip by the Israeli military is an assault on all those who believe in justice, human rights and respect for international law. As South Africa, we have called these genocidal acts that the international community has a duty to halt and hold Israel accountable for. As South Africans who are committed to peace, justice and human rights, we are proud to stand on the right side of history.

The eminent novelist Primo Levi, himself a Holocaust survivor, wrote: "As long as there is suffering in the world, our duty to remember is not fulfilled."

If the slogan "Never Again" is to offer hope for humankind, the lessons of not just the Nazi Holocaust, but all forms of genocide, must be practically and consistently applied.

At the time they were committed, and despite glaring evidence, there were those who claimed they were unaware of the extent of the horrors committed by the Nazis or others like the Bosnian Serb armed forces or the Interahamwe in Rwanda. In our own country, there were also those who feigned ignorance about apartheid and its true impact on our people.

A genocide is unfolding in the Gaza Strip and we have a moral duty to act.

Let it be recorded in the history books that the democratic South Africa was not among those who shut their eyes or claimed they didn't know.

I call on all South Africans to rally behind our call for justice for the Palestinian people, and for a negotiated settlement that will bring about a just peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

This cause is a reminder to us all that justice for only some is justice for none.

Dr GNM Pandor, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA: MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

2023 – 2025

"Together, building back better through human rights"



Publisher's Note: It is South Africa's right to pursue an independent foreign policy

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) recently took the long-awaited decision to call for an immediate ceasefire in the raging war in Gaza, albeit for the month of Ramadan only.

It is significant that the government of the United States (US), which occupies one of the five permanent seats on the UNSC, has taken the decision – for the first time since the current war began – not to veto a resolution pertaining to Israel's responsibilities in Gaza.

It is significant that the international community acts in unison in fulfilment of its responsibilities to ensure respect for international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law.

The UN, the premier international body entrusted with preventing wars and ensuring world peace, can only serve its mandate if its member states fulfil the responsibilities they have assumed as stipulated in the UN Charter.

The UNSC is mandated, in terms of the UN Charter, "to maintain international peace and security", "to develop friendly relations among nations", "to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights" and to be "a centre for harmonising the actions of nations".

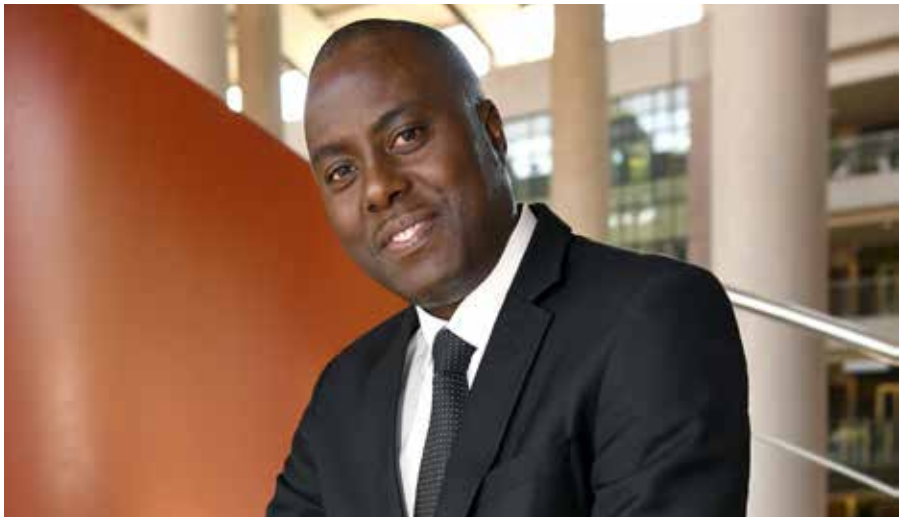
With respect to the question of Palestine, it is clear that the UNSC has failed to fulfil its mandate, and this failure did not begin in October 2023. For over seven decades, the rights of Palestinian people have been violated, often brutally so, with the global community – including proponents of freedom and human rights – watching on.

The slow pace at which the global community has reacted to the Palestine question has eroded trust in institutions of global governance. It is no surprise, therefore, that since October 2023, we have seen a growing exasperation among civil society organisations around the world, with protests taking place in cities around the world, from Cape Town, to London, Washington DC, Paris, Jakarta, Tunis, Istanbul etc.

Although governments have the powers to determine and execute foreign policy, the non-governmental sector has always had an influential role in putting pressure on decision-makers seen as neglecting their responsibilities to uphold and promote human rights.

The apartheid regime was isolated on the global stage, with civil society protests routinely taking place outside South African embassies until Pretoria acceded to calls to unban political parties, release Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and begin a process of transitioning to democracy.

We believe that civil society could again be instrumental in ending a system in Palestine which is reminiscent of apartheid.



From Gaza to Ukraine, from Western Sahara to Cuba, South Africa will continue to work through established bilateral diplomatic channels, as well as international institutions, to achieve the goals of the 1955 Freedom Charter.

Civil society activism will not be a substitute for government-to-government engagement or diplomacy. This is why, recently, Minister Naledi Pandor spent time in the US engaging a wide range of stakeholders on South Africa's foreign policy approach, emphasising our commitment to peaceful co-existence and cooperation for mutual benefit.

South Africa's bilateral cooperation with the US continues to strengthen despite differences of opinion on matters such as the wars in Gaza and Ukraine.

High-level engagements with the US administration have allowed for frank and honest discussions on areas of divergence and a strategic review of bilateral relations, with a joint commitment to strengthen relations in trade and investment, energy, health and infrastructure.

The US is a strategic partner for South Africa and a major export market for value-added products. It is also a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI), technology transfer, tourism and development assistance. South Africa is home to more than 600 US companies across a range of sectors.

Like South Africa, the US also has institutions of the state that are independent of each other. The US Congress, like our Parliament, is independent of the executive and is at liberty to initiate laws.

Some of the recent laws pertaining to South Africa, which have been proposed by members of the US Congress, are of serious concern to South Africa. For example, the so-called "Countering Malign Russian Activities in Africa Bill", which thankfully was not passed, sought to unfairly marginalise and punish African countries for exercising their sovereignty in their pursuit of development and economic growth.

Currently before the US Congress is another piece of proposed legislation, the "Bilateral Relations Review Act", at the core of which is an attempt to censure South Africa and curtail its sovereign right to determine and implement an independent foreign policy. This attempted censorship is at odds with the stated foreign policy of the US. US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said, while launching the US Strategy towards Sub-saharan Africa at the University of Pretoria in August 2022, that the US will "foster openness, by which we mean the capacity of individuals, communities, and nations to choose their own paths and shape the world we live in".

It was important to hear the US refer to the charter of the African Union's predecessor organisation, the Organisation of African Unity, which underscored "the inalienable right of all people to control their own destiny."

Secretary of State Blinken went further to say, "The US will not dictate Africa's choices. Neither should anyone else. The right to make these choices belongs to Africans, and Africans alone. At the same time, the US and the world will look to African nations to defend the rules of the international system that they've done so much to shape." We could not agree more.

South Africa's independent foreign policy is geared towards promoting the goals of the UN, top of which is the maintenance of international peace and security – which is why we remain actively involved in efforts to resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict. As part of the African Peace Initiative, President Cyril Ramaphosa and other African leaders visited Ukraine and Russia last year, having direct talks with President Volodymyr Zelensky and President Valdimir Putin.

Clayson Monyela, Deputy Director-General: Public Diplomacy

UBUNTU RADIO

SOUTH AFRICA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

Since its launch in 2013, South Africa's first, 24-hour online radio station has been setting in motion dialogue on South Africa's foreign policy.

Ubuntu Radio is available on DSTV's audio bouquet Channel 888, increasing its reach to over 45 African countries and over 10 million potential listeners. In addition to the mobile application accessible globally, the Ubuntu Radio Mixit Application is also available to a potential 80 million users.

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2030 NDP





Zebra in the golden hour near Satara Camp, Kruger National Park



Leading digital solutions for Africa's progress

MTN Group is a pan-African mobile operator driven to enable the benefits of a modern connected life for everyone in our 19 markets. Guided by our strategic intent – which is 'Leading digital solutions for Africa's progress' – we provide our 290 million subscribers with a diverse range of voice, data, fintech, digital, enterprise, wholesale, and API services.

Established in South Africa at the dawn of democracy in 1994, MTN has grown by investing in sophisticated communication infrastructure, developing new technologies, and by harnessing the talent of our diverse people to offer services to communities across Africa and in the Middle East.

We aim to be the trusted partner for progress with our nation state hosts in the socioeconomic development of their countries as well as to contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. We continue to expand our network coverage; lower the cost to communicate; reduce our GHG emissions; and advance the representation of women across our business.

In 2022, we contributed approximately R149 billion to society, as measured by economic value added. Of this, our total tax contribution was R51.5 billion. As a company rooted in Africa, we are connected with all things that give Africans dignity, hope and opportunity. Expanding digital and financial inclusion are a particular focus. In 2022, of our 289 million subscribers, 137 million were active data users and 69 million were active users of MTN Mobile Money. Some 88% of the population



We are committed to contributing to the 'Africa We Want'...

in our markets fell within our broadband coverage and we are targeting 95% by 2025. In 2022, we contributed approximately R149 billion to society, as measured by economic value added. Of this, our total tax contribution was R51.5 billion. As a company rooted in Africa, we are connected with all things that give Africans dignity, hope and opportunity.

Expanding digital and financial inclusion are a particular focus. In 2022, of our 289 million subscribers, 137 million were active data users and 69 million were active users of MTN Mobile Money. Some 88% of the population in our markets fell within our broadband coverage and we are targeting 95% by 2025.

Women make up 40% of our workforce, and we aim for 50% by 2030. To contribute to the fight against climate change, we are committed to a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030 and Net Zero by 2040.

MTN's journey is rooted in the soul of Africa. It is a journey of tenacity, resilience, dedication, and the pursuit of excellence. We are committed to contributing to the 'Africa We Want' and are inspired by the transformative power of connections and the potential they hold for mutual and sustainable growth, development, and understanding. We actively seek opportunities to leverage our connections to address the challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Through increased collaborations in trade, investment, tourism, skills for the future, and technology transfers, we envision a future of sustainable growth and development for Africa and beyond.

We are excited about the opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Digital Transformation Strategy and remain committed to strengthening the post-pandemic recovery. We are at the forefront of sustainable solutions, investing in renewable energy and innovative technologies that reduce our environmental footprint

.

Since over 60% of Africa's population is under 35 years of age, we are determined to empower young people by equipping them with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the digital age, and beyond. MTN is a partner in progress, a catalyst for change, and a believer in the power of connection. We are excited about the opportunities ahead. Together, we can create a better Africa and world, with a more connected future for all.

Doing for tomorrow, *today.*



South Africa: A champion of human rights and international law

> As South Africans struggled against apartheid, many stood with us in solidarity and it is correct that today we stand with the oppressed.

By Dr GNM Pandor
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation

This year, we are celebrating 30 years of democracy and we already have much to celebrate as we have scored some major successes that position our country as a champion of human rights and international law. Madiba would have wanted us to continue making human rights central to our foreign policy and we have acted on this. We have affirmed our commitment to fight for the rights of the oppressed and to do so in the highest bodies of our multilateral system. As South Africans struggled against apartheid, many stood with us in solidarity and it is correct that today we stand with the oppressed.

South Africa derives many benefits from our international work:

> We have affirmed our commitment to fight for the rights of the oppressed and to do so in the highest bodies of our multilateral system.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the G77 and China summits

The summits of heads of state and government of the NAM and the G77 and China were convened in Kampala, Uganda, from 19 to 22 January 2023.

The NAM Summit identified five priority areas:

- regional and international peace and security
- the fight against terrorism
- migration and humanitarian crises
- human trafficking
- the Sustainable Development Goals.



In his statement to the NAM, President Cyril Ramaphosa confirmed that South Africa would remain steadfast in advancing its non-aligned approach to the maintenance of international peace and security by advocating for the peaceful political settlement of disputes and inclusive dialogue.

The NAM welcomed its first new member in 13 years, the Republic of South Sudan, which brings the total membership to 121 states.

Following the NAM meeting, I led the South African delegation to the G77 and China Summit under the theme, *Leaving No One Behind*.

The G77 and China, also known as The South Summit, is the largest negotiating bloc in the United Nations (UN), representing most developing countries and over 80% of the world's population. The focus of the summit was on South-South cooperation in the areas of trade, investment, sustainable development, climate change, poverty eradication and the digital economy.

The case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding Israel's genocide in the war on Gaza

At a special Cabinet meeting on 8 December 2023, it was decided that South Africa should institute legal proceedings at the ICJ against Israel for violating its obligations under the Geneva Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948).

Oxfam's figures indicate that the average daily killing of Palestinians by the Israeli military since 7 October 2023, exceeds the daily death toll of any major conflict in recent years. The deaths of children are almost incomparable, both in terms of actual numbers killed and the rate at which children have been killed. By the end of January 2024, more journalists had been killed in Gaza in the last 100 days than were killed during World War II and the Vietnam War. Cabinet was persuaded by the sheer immorality and illegality of the actions of the Israeli Government. There was consensus that South Africa needed to approach the highest judicial organ of the UN to seek an end to the mass killing of Palestinians and to stop the wholesale destruction of civilian infrastructure, including residential buildings, hospitals, schools, bakeries, water and electricity sources. From the outset, our concerns have been centred on the values and principles of the South African Constitution, which places a premium on the right to life, the right to dignity and the human rights of all people.

On 29 December 2023, South Africa filed its application to institute proceedings against Israel, as well as its request for provisional measures. The matter was heard in The Hague on 11 and 12 January 2024 in relation to the request for provisional measures. On 26 January 2024, the ICJ delivered its order on South Africa's request for provisional measures. While not all provisional measures that were requested by South Africa were granted, crucial ones that will contribute to the protection of Palestinians were granted. The Court was near unanimous (a 15-2 division) in its order for provisional measures, which included that:

- Israel shall take all measures within its power to prevent all acts of genocide as contained in Article II of the Genocide Convention (including "killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group")
- Israel must prevent and punish direct and public incitement to commit genocide
- Israel is required to take effective measures to provide urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance
- it must ensure effective measures are taken to prevent the destruction of evidence and ensure its preservation
- Israel is required to provide a report to the court on the measures it has taken to give effect to these provisional measures within one month.

> As Nelson Mandela momentously declared, "Our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians".



While South Africa had called for the suspension of Israeli military operations in Gaza, the ICJ did not grant this provisional measure. The decision by the court marks a decisive victory for international law and a significant milestone in the search for justice for the Palestinian people. It also affirms the importance of global governance institutions, including organs of the UN. It remains vital for all member states to respect and implement the decisions of the ICJ.

The finding also makes it clear that it is plausible that genocide is taking place against the Palestinian people in Gaza. Third states must, therefore, also act independently and

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immediately to prevent genocide by Israel and ensure that they are not themselves in violation of the Genocide Convention by aiding or assisting in the commission of genocide. This necessarily imposes an obligation on all states to cease funding and facilitating Israel's military actions, which are plausibly genocidal.

South Africa will continue to do everything within its power to preserve the existence of the Palestinian people as a group, to end all acts of apartheid and genocide against the Palestinian people and to walk with them towards the realisation of their collective right to self-determination, for, as Nelson Mandela momentously declared, "Our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians ".

The UN peace and security architecture is clearly not able to give effect to the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people or to protect them from grave war crimes and the threat of genocide, necessitating concerned states to turn to the judicial institutions of the UN.

South Africa welcomes the support expressed by several countries and we encourage states that are so inclined to approach the ICJ to intervene in the proceedings so as to send a strong message to the international community that the situation in the Gaza Strip is indefensible.

African Union

The African Union (AU) Summit

At the core of South Africa's foreign policy is the advancement of the African Agenda. The AU Summit took place on 17 and 18 February 2024 in Addis Ababa. The summit was held under the theme, *Educate an African Fit for the 21st Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa*.





In 2023, the AU finalised a 10-year review of Agenda 2063. A key recommendation in the Agenda 2063 evaluation report is that the AU member states must accelerate implementation of the Agenda 2063 flagship projects that are aimed specifically at fast-tracking continental integration, in particular trade and market integration, free movement of people and infrastructure development.

One of the flagship projects in which South Africa is playing a leading role is the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), which serves as a milestone development in the evolution of the AU.

We were especially pleased that President Cyril Ramaphosa officially witnessed the launch of South Africa's first shipment and preferential trading under the AfCFTA on 31 January 2024, at the Port of Durban. The event was an historic occasion.

President Ramaphosa participated in several high-level committee meetings of the assembly. These included the meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, which was held to reaffirm Africa's position on climate change as advocated during the Conference of the Parties (COP28), held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

In his capacity as the Chairperson of the Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative, President Ramaphosa annually hosts a meeting of participating countries on the margins of the AU Summit, to provide a Progress Report on infrastructure projects. The initiative aims to enhance infrastructure development in sectors such as transport, ICT, water and sanitation, and energy in our country and throughout our region and continent and is critical to the implementation of the AfCFTA.

On the margins of the summit, the President chaired a high-level meeting of the Committee of Five (C5) on South Sudan to review and provide political guidance on the progress made in the implementation of the Revitalised Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

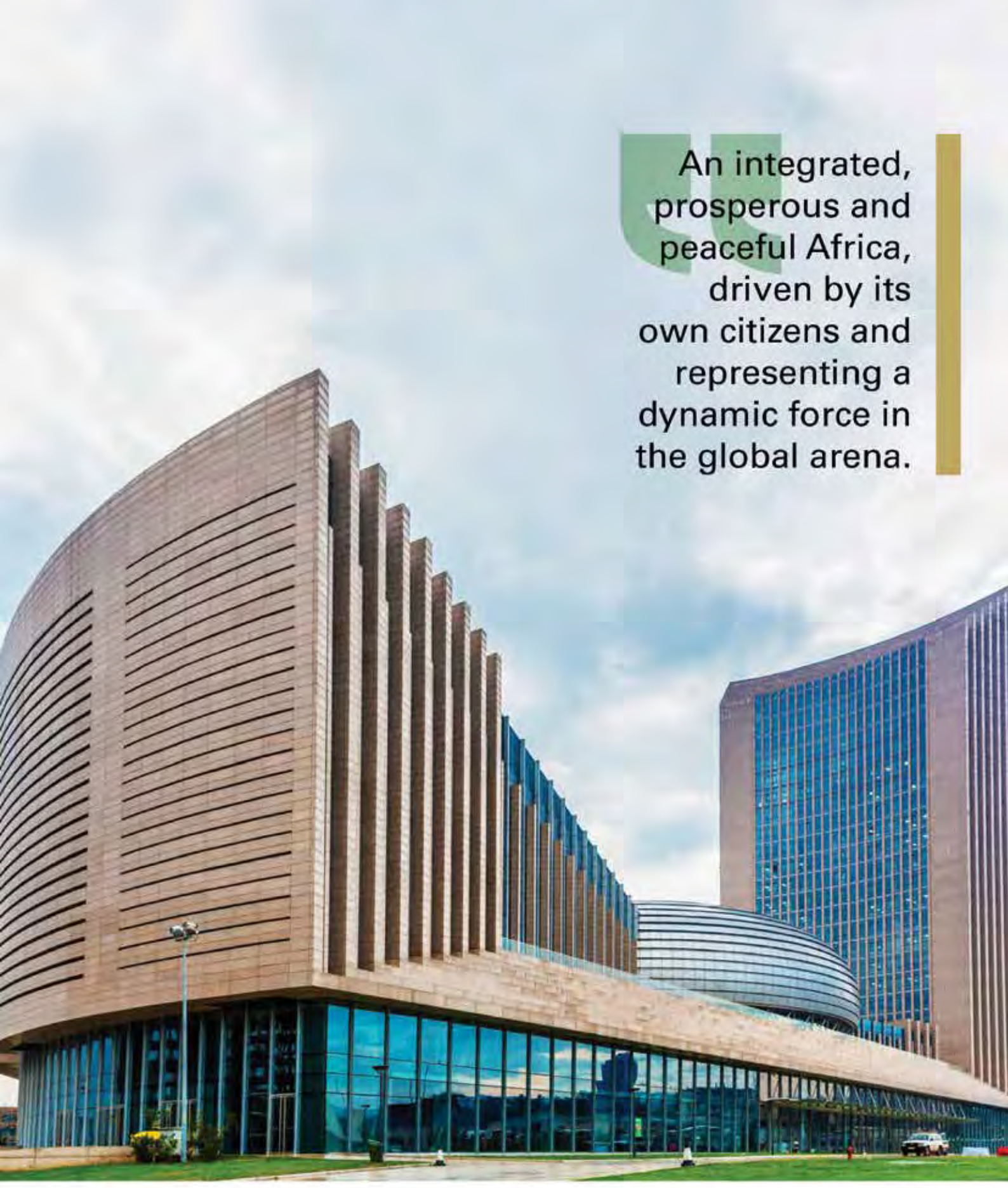
BRICS 2023 SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's handover of the BRICS chair to the Russian Federation

South Africa hosted XV BRICS Summit in South Africa from 22 to 24 August 2023 at the Sandton Convention Centre. The most prominent outcomes of the BRICS Summit were:

- The first phase of the BRICS full membership expansion was announced. Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were invited to join BRICS as full members.
- The BRICS foreign ministers were tasked to develop a BRICS partner country model.
- The finance ministers/reserve bank governors were tasked to consider the use of local currencies and payment instruments and platforms.
- The advancement of BRICS support for UN Security Council reform.
- The establishment of a BRICS youth council.

We anticipate that these outcomes will continue to receive support from Russia as the 2024 Chair.



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Ubuntu Awards honour and celebrate excellence

"We are proud as a government to know that many South Africans hold positions of influence on global platforms, and we are proud of the success stories of South Africans around the world who reflect what South Africa believes, which is firmly rooted in the notion of Ubuntu.

South Africa recently honoured the contribution made by those who have excelled in promoting the interests of the country on the international stage. To recognise South African industry leaders, eminent persons and ordinary South African citizens for their distinguished service and contribution in promoting South Africa's national interests and values across the world, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation annually hosts the Ubuntu Awards.

The Eighth Annual Ubuntu Awards took place on Saturday, 11 February 2024, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, after the opening of Parliament. It brought together captains of industry, leaders from civil society, members of Cabinet and eminent persons, in addition to all ambassadors and high commissioners accredited to South Africa.

The keynote address was delivered by Deputy President Paul Mashatile who said that he considered it a privilege to be present at such a prestigious event, which acknowledged outstanding individuals in South African industries. "We used to have a by-line as part of promoting our country that says that South Africa is alive with possibilities, without suggesting that we must go back to it, I believe that this event serves as a reflection that our future is indeed bright."

Deputy President Mashatile highlighted that the awards took place a few days after President Cyril Ramaphosa, delivered the sixth administration's final State of the Nation Address.

"The President delivered a deeply moving address that recounted the critical path of our young democracy.

"The analogy of Tintswalo resonated with many South Africans, some of whom will be honoured today.

"The President's reference to Tintswalo solely serves as an indication of the bare minimum achievements that South Africa has achieved over the last three decades.

We are cognisant that to some, Tintswalo may appear to be an unattainable ambition for a variety of reasons; but, as the Government, we want the life of Tintswalo to mirror the life of every person and the possibilities that exist for all South Africans; possibilities that exceed Tintswalo's wildest dreams."

Deputy President Mashatile said that to achieve the above, we must all come together as government, NGOs, private sector and communities to build a society that would see everyone with equal opportunities.

"The express reference to Ubuntu in the interim Constitution created hope of an equal and just society, which does not discriminate between people on the grounds of their culture, race, gender or religious beliefs. As the ANC-led government, we are committed to ensuring that South Africa maintains its position as a prominent nation in diverse sectors in the coming years, thereby effecting positive change both domestically and internationally."

"We are humbled to be here today with many of you who have tirelessly worked to ensure that the spirit of Ubuntu is a reality for a great number of South Africans."

South Africa's unique perspective on global issues has found expression in the concept of Ubuntu, which informs our approach to diplomacy and shapes our vision of a better world for all.

The Deputy President continued by stating that as the Ubuntu Awards entered its eighth year of existence, these awards continued to demonstrate that our country was an important participant in the international community.

“For many years, South Africa did not feature positively in global discourse, however, the past three decades have seen increased recognition of South Africa’s contributions across various sectors.

“While we can only recognise a few people today, we are aware that around the country, numerous people have represented South Africa in various projects in research, education and training, sports, arts and culture, and business and corporate affairs over the last year.



“It is South African tradition, to honour and celebrate those among us who have distinguished themselves in their fields while championing the concept and values of Ubuntu,” the Deputy President said.

“We are proud as a government to know that many South Africans hold positions of influence on global platforms, and we are proud of the success stories of South Africans around the world who reflect what South Africa believes, which is firmly rooted in the notion of Ubuntu.

“Ubuntu is an ancient African philosophy that is rooted in having compassion for others. It is an affirmation of our humanity, which also affirms the humanity of others. As South Africans, we firmly believe in the idea of ‘I am because you are’.

“In reflecting on the true meaning underpinning tonight’s event, I recall the words of our great former statesman, President Nelson Mandela, when he said – “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

“When our country emerged from the dark past of apartheid, where people were oppressed and excluded because of their race, we were as a nation determined to celebrate the truly African philosophy of Ubuntu. As a compass for our journey over the past 30 years, the philosophy of Ubuntu has played a major role in the forging of a South African national consciousness and guided us throughout the process of our democratic transformation, social cohesion and nation-building.”

The Deputy President went on to say that since 1994, the international community had looked to South Africa to play a leading role in championing the values of human rights, democracy, reconciliation and the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment. “We believe that South Africa has risen to the challenge and continues to make a meaningful contribution in the pursuit of these goals in our region, on the continent and globally.

“South Africa’s unique perspective on global issues has found expression in the concept of Ubuntu, which informs our approach to diplomacy and shapes our vision of a better world for all.

“It was the commonly shared values of Ubuntu that motivated us as a government to mobilise our sharpest legal minds to prepare a solid case to be presented to the International Court of Justice in the hopes of arresting the genocide in Gaza, which the United Nations Secretary-General has called an ‘unprecedented catastrophe’.

“If Madiba were alive today, he would never have remained silent in the face of genocide, ethnic cleansing or gross human rights abuses."

"He would have moved mountains to try to end the Israeli military onslaught on the people of Gaza and to have Hamas release the civilian hostages. Taking this case to the World Court to bring about an end to

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this human tragedy would have been his priority, no matter the cost."

"At the end of the day, what do we have, if not our principles?"

"We have demonstrated to the world that South Africa's human rights-informed foreign policy did not end with Madiba. We are as committed today to the universality of human rights as we always were to the struggle for justice, freedom, and self-determination. The struggle of the Palestinians is our struggle, as it should be for all freedom-loving people in the world," the Deputy President said.

"We will stand hand in hand with the Palestinians until they achieve their freedom. As Martin Luther King Jr said: 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice'.

"Whether in conflict resolution or diplomacy, international relations work is not the exclusive domain of the Government but requires input and participation by citizens. South Africa is a diverse quilt of incredibly talented people who are deeply committed to the work they do, and many have succeeded in making the nation incredibly proud.

"It is thus wonderful that we have such an evening where we highlight these achievements, honour those who have made significant strides globally and inspire others to emulate their example.

"I trust that the stories we have heard here tonight have left us feeling inspired and will give us all the courage to choose the path less travelled. I would like to sincerely congratulate all our nominees and award winners tonight, not only for being global ambassadors and flying our flag high but also for contributing to your fields for the benefit of others and making our world a better place."

Deputy President Mashatile said that envoys for economic diplomacy played an increasingly important and prominent role, as we needed to urgently stimulate economic growth if we were to lift our people out of poverty and make South Africa a better place to live in. The Deputy President stated that we must recognise businesses that have contributed to South Africa's reputation as an ideal destination to conduct business.

"The Mining Indaba 2024, held over the past few days under the theme *Making South Africa a Favourable Destination for Mining Investments*, is also one of the strategic platforms for South African business to advance their interests, but also those of the nation.

"Such efforts will help us achieve our socio-economic goals to create jobs, facilitate trade and attract investment.

"We are also cognisant of the fact that South Africa's exports go beyond goods and services, as we are a country that is also rich in the arts, culture, sport, science and ideas.

"The various categories of these prestigious awards are indicative of the fact that successful diplomacy is indeed an integrated effort."

In closing, Deputy President Mashatile thanked Minister Pandor, Deputy Minister Alvin Botes and Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamani for their continued leadership in this sector and congratulated them on hosting this successful ceremony.

"I would also like to thank all our diplomats here tonight for the sterling role they play in implementing our foreign policy and lastly thank our nominees for the part they play in making our country a success and shaping the narrative on the global stage about what it means to be South African."

2024 Ubuntu Award winners





Ubuntu Economic Diplomacy Award (Africa): MultiChoice Group

As Africa's leading entertainment platform, the MultiChoice Group delivers entertainment products and services to over 23.5 million households across 50 countries across the continent.

With a track record of over 38 years in operation, MultiChoice creates and licenses exceptional local and international content, including award-winning programming in 40 languages and the best sports content. Whether through world-class direct-to-home, satellite broadcast–DStv, digital terrestrial television broadcast - GOtv or over-the-top video entertainment streaming services, MultiChoice ensures that their viewers enjoy a seamless entertainment experience anytime, anywhere, and on any device.

By creating employment opportunities, nurturing emerging talents in film and sports and supporting local entrepreneurs and small businesses, MultiChoice strives to make a meaningful contribution to society.



Ubuntu Economic Diplomacy Award (Global): Maxhosa Africa

Maxhosa Africa is a South African luxury institution, established in 2010.

Specialising in premium knitwear, Maxhosa Africa celebrates traditional African beadwork aesthetics using South African mohair and wool. Laduma Ngxokolo, the founder, draws inspiration from ethnic art and heritage, with the brand's core pillars being Ubuntu and Culture.

Evolved and created in a modernised fashion, the label translates into a form that resonates worldwide with multiple global fashion markets. The brand takes pride in owning its production facility, shaping a new narrative for the business of design.

Maxhosa Africa has won a string of awards for its patterned knitwear range. The brand's exceptional craftsmanship and quality have garnered international attention, leading to displays in prestigious museums such as the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art in the United States (US).

The label has a flagship store at Mall of Africa in Johannesburg, while the ready-to-wear collection is also available at selected boutiques in South Africa, New York, France, Australia and online.



Ubuntu Social Responsibility Award: Rescue South Africa

Rescue South Africa was formed in 2001 after the realisation of a "search and rescue" skill shortage in the southern Africa region. Rescue South Africa has three primary objectives:

- To respond to sudden onset disasters by providing technical rescue skills – regionally, nationally and internationally.
- To build a cache of equipment for training and response.
- To build capacity by offering high-quality rescue training regionally, nationally and internationally. Their vision is to offer humanitarian services worldwide.

Rescue South Africa has run training programmes in several countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Namibia, Madagascar and Zambia, with these trainees being the first to be exposed to this type of training in Sub-Saharan Africa. Rescue South Africa has also proudly responded to sudden onset disasters in Mozambique, India, Iran, Algeria, Haiti, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Malawi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and various calls in South Africa. Rescue South Africa believes that search and rescue response is a powerful diplomatic tool that displays solidarity when a country is in need.

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Ubuntu Youth Diplomacy Award: Ncumisa Mkabile

Ncumisa Mkabile is a 30-year-old female farmer from Khayelitsha, Cape Town. She is the founder of Dawana Fresh Produce, which specialises in crop production and poultry farming. Mkabile started farming in March 2020 when she had to close down her catering business due to the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

She has worked with local and international brands such as the United Nations Children's Fund, Blue Ribbon, Sunlight, Standard Bank, Discovery Insurance, BarOne and Trace Urban. She supplies fresh produce to local retailers as well as street vendors. Mkabile dreams of one day opening a farming academy in the township of Khayelitsha, where she will educate children from a young age on the importance of food security.



Ubuntu Sports Diplomacy Award (Male): Siyamthanda Kolisi

Siyamthanda Kolisi, was born in 1991 in Port Elizabeth. He is a South African professional rugby union player who currently captains the South African national team and generally plays as an extraordinary flanker and loose forward. Having formerly played for the Stormers and Sharks in South Africa, he currently plays for a French professional rugby union club, Racing 92.

In 2018, Kolisi was appointed captain of the Springboks, becoming the first black man to hold the position and eventually leading the South African rugby team to victory in the 2019 Rugby World Cup Final against England. This was South Africa's third World Cup win.

In 2023, the Government of South Africa bestowed on him the National Order of Ikhamanga (in Gold) for his contribution to rugby.

In 2023, Siya Kolisi captained South Africa to a historic fourth Rugby World Cup in Paris, France and became the second captain to win the World Cup back-to-back.

Kolisi is one of 44 players (in the world) who have won the Rugby World Cup on multiple occasions and one of 25 South Africans to do so.



Ubuntu Sports Diplomacy Award (Female): Janine van Wyk

Janine Van Wyk is the former captain of South Africa's women's national football team, Banyana Banyana. She has participated in two Olympic Games, namely, the 2012 Summer Olympics in London and the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

She became the first captain to lead her team to a Women's World Cup appearance at the 2019 Women's World Cup. Van Wyk captained the Banyana Banyana at their first Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON) victory in 2022, where they defeated hosts Morocco in the final. Van Wyk played her final match for South Africa on 4 December 2023, helping them secure the WAFCON qualification in a 2-0 home victory over Burkina Faso.

She has also represented South Africa internationally, playing professionally in the US, Scotland and Greece, and participated in the Union of European Football Associations Women's Champions League quarter-finals.

Van Wyk currently holds the record for being the highest-capped footballer in Africa (male or female) with 185 appearances.

She is currently a co-founder of the JVW Girls Football Development programme, which aims to develop female football players while providing a platform for them to reach higher levels in the sport.



Ubuntu Arts and Cultural Diplomacy Award (Youth): Thuso Mbedu

Thuso Mbedu is a South African actress from Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. Moulded at the University of the Witwatersrand, she was also awarded a scholarship by the New York University Summer Programme for Physical Theatre at the Stella Adler Studio for acting.

Mbedu made her onscreen acting debut in August 2014 in the major and recurring role of "Boni Khumalo" in South Africa's Mzansi Magic drama series *Saints and Sinners*. In 2018, she was nominated for her second International Emmy Award for Best Performance by an Actress for her breakout performance in the series *Is'Thunzi*. She has also won a South African Film

and TV Award for Best Actress in a TV Drama and was nominated for Best Young Actress at the International Achievement Recognition Awards for her work on the series. That year, she was also featured on the cover of the *Forbes Africa Under 30* issue – highlighting African leaders and was nominated as one of the 100 most influential Africans.

In May 2021, Mbedu starred in the lead role of Cora in Barry Jenkins' *The Underground Railroad*, making her the first South African leading woman in a US television series.

In 2022, she made her film debut as "Nawi", starring opposite the iconic Viola Davis in *The Woman King*, a historical epic film inspired by the true events that took place in the Kingdom of Dahomey, one of the most powerful states of West Africa in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Ubuntu Arts and Cultural Diplomacy Award (Veteran): Dr John Bonisile Kani

John Kani is an actor, author, director and playwright. He was born in New Brighton, Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha), in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa. He started his career in 1965 when he joined The Serpent Players Drama Group in Gqeberha and helped to create many plays that went unpublished but were performed to a resounding reception.

In 1989, he co-founded the Market Theatre Laboratory, a drama school for young black people who would not be able to study at universities due to a lack of high school education and financial resources. The school has now become a vessel of new talents and new works with an extensive outreach programme. The school celebrated 30 years in 2019 and has produced more than 300 actors working in the theatre, film and television industries in South Africa.

Kani has received a number of awards at different stages of his career – these include, to name a few, a merit award in 1987 from the Southern Transvaal Chamber of Commerce for his contribution to the struggle for liberation through culture; a Tony Award in 1975 for Best Actor for his performances in *Sizwe Banzi is Dead* and *The Island;* The Order of IKamanga (in Silver) from the Government of the Republic of South Africa in 2005; and an Honorary Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, bestowed upon him by King Charles III. He has also been honoured by several academic institutions in recognition of his services to the arts.



Dr Kani is known for portraying legendary roles, such as:

- Othello in the William Shakespeare play *Othello* (in 1987)
- T'Chaka in the Marvel Cinematic Universe Films Captain America: *Civil War* (released in 2016) and *Black Panther* (released in 2018)
- Colonel Ulenga in *Murder Mystery* (released in 2019)
- Rafiki in the 2019 remake of *The Lion King*.

His latest play was titled *Kunene and The King*, which he co-wrote and starred in alongside Sir Antony Sher in 2019.

OR Tambo Lifetime Achievement Award: Ambassador Mohammed Dangor (Diplomat, legislator and advocate for peace and justice)

Ambassador Mohammed Dangor is the eldest sibling of a family deeply entrenched in activism and a legacy intricately woven into South Africa's relentless struggle for liberation against apartheid.

His siblings include the late author Achmat Dangor; the late luminary African National Congress (ANC) Deputy Secretary-General and anti-apartheid activist Jessie Duarte; and the late Umkhonto weSizwe soldier Igshaan Dangor. The Dangor family's narrative is one of endurance, marked by imprisonment, banning orders and house arrests during the tumultuous era of the anti-apartheid struggle.

Raised among nine siblings in the Newclare ghetto, adjacent to the Western township and Sophiatown, his activism was shaped by the forced removal of neighbours under the Group Areas Act. He was actively involved in the civic movement and played a pivotal role in founding the ACTSTOP movement, proactively resisting the apartheid regime's Group Areas Act. His unwavering commitment to peace and justice is evident in his contributions

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to national peace. Active in the Civic Association of Southern Transvaal, a cornerstone in the formation of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), which in turn, played a vital role in the United Democratic Front.

Following the 2019 South African general election, he was elected as a permanent delegate from the Gauteng province to the National Council of Provinces, representing the ANC. Renowned as a distinguished diplomat, legislator, and advocate for peace and justice, Dangor's extensive track record in international relations includes serving as a Special Adviser on International Relations to the Middle East Region from 2015 to 2018.

His diplomatic service included a challenging tenure as the South African Ambassador to the State of Libya during a period marked by civil strife. He also served as the South African representative to Syria and Lebanon.

Before his distinguished diplomatic and parliamentary roles, Dangor made significant contributions in the private sector, notably as the Manager of Development at the South African Permanent Bank from 1991 to 1994. His pre-1994 professional experience also includes serving as the Executive Secretary of the (Exiles) Returnees Committee from 1989 to 1991.

He served the ANC as Treasurer in Gauteng (1994 to 2004), Vice President of the World Conference on Religion and Peace from 1990 to 2001, and Head of Housing for SANCO from 1989 to 1994.

His life is intricately woven into the fabric of South Africa's relentless struggle for liberation against apartheid. He is a distinguished South African politician and diplomat, embodying a career that spans in legislature, diplomacy and advocacy. His profound dedication to international relations, community development and anti-apartheid activism reflects a lifelong commitment to fostering a just and peaceful society.









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South Africa strengthens its response to climate change

African leaders have been advocating for urgent, practical and stepped-up climate action given the continent's extreme vulnerability to the effects of global warming.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

In February, I attended the African Union (AU) Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the worsening effects of climate change on the continent were raised prominently.

African leaders have been advocating for urgent, practical and stepped-up climate action given the continent's extreme vulnerability to the effects of global warming.

We have seen a rapid increase in climate-related disasters worldwide as extreme weather events become more frequent. In our own country, we have had wildfires in the Western Cape, heatwaves in the Northern Cape, continuing drought conditions in the Eastern Cape and intense storms in Gauteng.

Even before we could properly recover and rebuild after the 2022 floods in KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and North West, we were hit again this year with more flooding, further loss of life and damage to livelihoods, property and the local economy.

The insurance industry is warning about the increasing costs of disaster risk finance and even talking about the prospect of highly vulnerable regions eventually becoming uninsurable.

As noted during the AU Summit, African climate action is constrained by inadequate and unpredictable climate finance. It has long been the continental position that those most responsible for climate change and its impacts, namely developed countries, bear a responsibility to assist developing countries to build climate resilience.

We therefore welcomed the historic agreement at the United Nations (UN) Climate Conference in the United Arab Emirates in December 2023 to operationalise a Loss and Damage Fund to provide financial support for developing countries that are vulnerable to the impact of climate change. South Africa and the African Group were key to securing this agreement.

At the same time, African countries are forging ahead with plans to mobilise resources in support of climate action across the continent and the AU Commission has

African countries are forging ahead with plans to mobilise resources in support of climate action across the continent, and the AU Commission has recently established the Climate Finance Unit to ensure this is done in a coordinated manner.

recently established the Climate Finance Unit to ensure this is done in a coordinated manner.

For our part, South Africa has established the Climate Change Response Fund that will bring together all spheres of government and the private sector. By coordinating financial mobilisation from both government and the private sector, our country will have collaborative effort to build resilience and respond to climate change.

This includes climate-proofing existing essential infrastructure and facilities such as water and food systems, roads, rail and ports, human settlements and healthcare.

The fund will also collaborate with a variety of partners to respond to immediate needs in communities following climate change-related disasters.

The fund forms an important part of South Africa's comprehensive response to climate change, which includes both adaptation and measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

As I said in the State of the Nation Address in February 2024, we will undertake our Just Transition to reach our ambitious emission-reduction targets at a pace, scale and cost that our country can afford. At the same time, our Just Transition will be undertaken in a manner that ensures energy security and supports our developmental objectives.

As a country, we cannot be complacent about climate change because its impacts are already with us. We will continue to contribute our fair share to the global climate change effort.

Our country will remain vocal in calling for developed countries to meet their obligations for financing and technology transfer support. We will continue to campaign for transformation of the international financial architecture and reform of multilateral development banks and international financial institutions so that developing countries can access the resources needed for climate action and the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

As a country, we cannot be complacent about climate change because its impacts are already with us. We will continue to contribute our fair share to the global climate change effort.

We will also continue to campaign against the implementation of climate- and environment-based unilateral actions, policies and taxes and their potential impacts on African exports and trade.

Climate change is a global problem and as such, requires collective global action that is sustainable, that takes the differing circumstances and capabilities of countries into account, and that above all, leaves no one behind.

President Cyril Ramaphosa participated in the 37th African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government Summit, held in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia from 17 to 18 February 2024.

The AU Assembly met under the theme: *Educate an Africa Fit for the 21st Century*: *Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa.*

The AU Assembly was preceded by the 44th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, which took place on 14 and 15 February 2024. The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, led the South African delegation to the meeting, which was also held in in Addis Ababa.

The AU Executive Council is composed of foreign ministers, or such other ministers or authorities as designated by the governments of member states.

The Executive Council's core functions include considering reports and making recommendations to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

President Ramaphosa was accompanied by a delegation of ministers comprising International Relations and Cooperation; Trade, Industry and Competition; Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation; Public Service and Administration; Basic Education; and Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

The Assembly discussed the status of peace and security on the continent and the *Report of the AU Peace and Security Council*. The discussion took place against the backdrop of great concern regarding the state of peace and security in Africa, including the ongoing and concerning trend of unconstitutional changes of government that have occurred in West Africa as well as the enduring conflicts in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan and Mozambique.

Furthermore, the summit accepted a report on the progress of the institutional reforms of the AU.

The highlight of the summit was the launch of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of the AU's Agenda 2063: *The Africa We Want*.

Agenda 2063 serves as a 50-year blueprint for Africa's socio-economic development and integration, adopted by the AU member states after extensive consultations across the continent.

A key flagship project of Agenda 2063, in which South Africa plays a leading role, is the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, that serves as a milestone development in the evolution of the AU.

President Ramaphosa presented a report on the continent's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the state of readiness against future health threats in his capacity as the Champion of the AU's COVID-19 response. As the pandemic is waning on the continent, South Africa intends to work with the AU Commission and the Africa Centre for Disease Control (CDC) towards expanding the role of the President to include all other health pandemics that are affecting the continent.

South Africa sends first shipment under AfCFTA Agreement

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063: *The Africa We Want*, the AU's long-term development strategy for transforming the continent into a global powerhouse. Its mandate is to eliminate trade barriers and boost intra-Africa trade. In particular, it aims to advance trade in value-added production across all service sectors of the African economy.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

On Wednesday, 31 January 2024, I launched the first export shipment of goods produced by South African companies destined for other African countries under the preferential trade provisions of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) from the Port of Durban.

We can expect many more products and many more shipments to follow as South African companies sell South African-made goods into the massive African free trade area. Exports to AfCFTA countries already account for nearly a quarter of South Africa's global exports. This figure will now increase quite dramatically.

South African companies have a great opportunity to take advantage of the AfCFTA by exporting their goods into the rest of the African continent. In order to take advantage of this great opportunity as a country, we need to ensure that our products make it from the factory gate onto the ship and head towards their destinations with the least possible delay and at the lowest possible cost.

For some years now the efficiency and competitiveness of our ports and rail network have been in decline. To give our companies the ability to take up these export opportunities, we need to fix our logistics architecture.

Transnet, which operates our ports and freight rail lines, has had to contend with severe challenges, including the effects of state capture, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters and rising levels of theft and vandalism of its infrastructure. As a result, the volume of goods transported on our rail network has decreased significantly, forcing more companies to use trucks and causing congestion on our roads.

Working together with the private sector, we are turning the situation around, guided by the Freight Logistics Roadmap that was crafted by Transnet, government and social partners. The roadmap outlines a clear set of actions to stabilise and improve Transnet's performance in the short term and to fundamentally reform the logistics system in the long term.

To ensure this work receives dedicated attention, we established the National Logistics Crisis Committee, which is chaired by The Presidency and brings together all of the relevant government departments to drive a coordinated response to the logistics challenges.

We have also established corridor recovery teams, which bring together Transnet, the private sector and independent experts to improve the performance of strategic rail and port corridors.



This single-minded approach to improving performance is already showing results. For example, the number of ships waiting to berth at the Port of Durban – which has experienced severe congestion in recent months – reduced from more than 60 ships in mid-November 2023 to just 12 ships at the end of January 2024.

At the Port of Cape Town, which is preparing for the important fruit season, Transnet has deployed new leadership and is putting in place several measures to improve its capacity in the short term. Seven new cranes, which are used for moving and stacking containers, were delivered to the port last month and the number of work shifts is being increased to improve vessel turnaround times.

In addition to these short-term measures, the Freight Logistics Roadmap includes far-reaching reforms to modernise our logistics system and enable much greater investment in infrastructure. These reforms will introduce private-sector investment and competition in port and rail operations, improving efficiency and bringing down prices, while ensuring that infrastructure remains owned by the State.

A key milestone in this reform journey will be the implementation of "open access" to the freight rail network, which will allow private rail operators to invest alongside Transnet Freight Rail for the first time.

Another key step is the introduction of strategic partnerships in container terminals, which will enable new investment to expand port capacity and upgrade equipment. Progress has already been made with the appointment by Transnet of an international container terminal operator for the Durban Pier 2 terminal. Transnet will retain 51% ownership of the terminal and no workers will lose their jobs once the partnership is established. The private partner will have full management responsibility for the terminal and will contribute both capital and expertise to improve its performance.

The process of reform takes time and there are no quick solutions to the challenges facing Transnet.

> The AfCFTA is the world's largest free trade area, bringing together the 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The overall mandate of the AfCFTA is to create a single continental market with a population of about 1.3 billion people and a combined gross domestic product of approximately US$ 3.4 trillion.

However, the steps we are taking now will not only improve performance in the immediate term but will also create a truly competitive and efficient system into the future.

The Mining Indaba, held in February 2024 in Cape Town, showcased the enormous potential of the mining industry to drive economic growth and job creation. The actions underway to improve the logistics system will help us to unlock this potential, given that mining companies depend on the rail network and ports to compete in global markets.

From the work already underway, we have shown that it is possible to overcome the barriers to growth by working together in partnership. We are building momentum and have begun to see the results.

As more and more of our products leave our shores, whether to the African continent or other parts of the world, more companies will thrive, more investment will be made and more and more jobs will be created.







The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the world's largest free trade area, bringing together the 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The overall mandate of the AfCFTA is to create a single continental market with a population of about 1.3 billion people and a combined gross domestic product of approximately US$ 3.4 trillion.

The AfCFTA is one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063: *The Africa We Want*, the AU's long-term development strategy for transforming the continent into a global powerhouse.

Its mandate is to eliminate trade barriers and boost intra-Africa trade. In particular, it aims to advance trade in value-added production across all service sectors of the African economy.

The AfCFTA will contribute to establishing regional value chains in Africa, enabling investment and job creation. The practical implementation of the AfCFTA has the potential to foster industrialisation, job creation and investment, thus enhancing the competitiveness of Africa in the medium to long-term.

The AfCFTA entered into force on 30 May 2019, after 24 member states deposited their instruments of ratification following a series of continuous continental engagements spanning since 2012. It was launched at the 12th Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Niamey, Niger, in July 2019. Trading under the AfCFTA commenced on 1 January 2021.

The AfCFTA Secretariat is hosted in Accra, Ghana. Wamkele Mene is the first elected Secretary-General coordinating the implementation of the agreement. Born and raised in Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape, Mene previously served as the Head of Mission to the World Trade Organisation for South Africa. He later chaired the Committee on International Trade in Financial Services at the World Trade Organisation. Mene was the Chief Director for Africa Economic Relations in South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry and South Africa's lead negotiator in the AfCFTA.



Agenda 2063



THE AFRICA WE WANT

Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want

- A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
- An integrated continent, politically united, and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism
- An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
- A peaceful and secure Africa
- An Africa with a strong cultural identity, Common Heritage, values and ethics
- An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential offered by African People, particularly its women and youth, and with well cared for children
- Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner

Agenda 2063 is gaining momentum. It is time for action.
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Africa at Davos 2024: Promise, potential and mutually beneficial partnerships

Kashim Shettima, Vice-President of Nigeria, said that Africa was the next global frontier because entrepreneurship is embedded into the psyche of the average African.

By Julie Masiga
Digital Editor, World Economic Forum

Davos 2024, the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF), took place from 15 to 19 January in Davos, Switzerland.

The programme embodied a "back to basics" spirit of open and constructive dialogue between leaders of government, business and civil society.

African delegations discussed how the continent could leverage the potential of frictionless trade and engagement to become a major player in global supply chains.

"This giant is on snooze".

So, said Fifi Andrews, who moderated a session in Davos on scaling the African economy, raising the question: *Is Africa really rising, or is the "sleeping giant" yet to awaken?* Davos 2024 presented a timely opportunity to ring the alarm and delve into the policy and public-private partnerships that could rapidly scale the African economy.

The meeting saw a keen focus on economic growth from African delegates and the launch of the Private Sector Action Plan, a first-of-its-kind initiative between WEF and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat. The initiative comprised 40 global companies.

The announcement came after President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana, together with the United Nations Development Fund, launched Timbuktoo, a start-up fund with an initial US$1 billion target to leverage Africa's youth and dynamism. The fund is expected to provide financial support to innovative and dynamic start-ups, spurring economic growth, job creation and technological advancements across the continent. By encouraging entrepreneurship, the Timbuktoo Initiative aims to contribute to the development and empowerment of Africa's youth in the rapidly evolving global economic landscape.

Speaking at the *On the Frontlines for Nature* session in Davos, Emmanuel de Merod, Director of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) Virunga National Park, spoke on the violence, extreme poverty and environmental degradation in Eastern Congo – by-products of the scramble for Congo's resources.





Virunga National Park, perhaps best known for its endangered mountain gorillas, is a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation World Heritage Site located in the Eastern DRC. Virunga is the continent's most biologically diverse protected area. Yet, it exists within an ecosystem marked by protracted armed conflict and the violent extraction of minerals.

In some senses, that's the story of Africa. Thriving in the face of adversity. Surviving against all odds. But this romanticised view of the continent often acts as a barrier to real-world solutions to many of the continent's most pressing problems.



> The meeting saw a keen focus on economic growth from African delegates and the launch of the Private Sector Action Plan, a first-of-its-kind initiative between WEF and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat. The initiative is comprised of 40 global companies.

On real-world solutions

Speaking at a session where panellists discussed the schism between the global North and South, Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, alluded to capacity-building as one way to ensure that Africa remains up-to-speed with global developments, especially in times of crisis. "We cannot address global inequality by mitigating crises as they happen. We need to involve developing countries from the beginning. There are tools available for Africa to deal with crises as well."

During the same session, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), said that we lived in a multipolar world characterised by multiple power points. She pointed to a bigger role for multilateral organisations, such as the WTO, in shaping equitable outcomes for people and the planet. At the same time, she said that the balance of trading power was shifting towards the South. Whereas North-South trade has remained stable over the past few years, South-to-South trade is on the rise, with the South now becoming a power trading bloc. According to Okonjo-Iweala, this illustrates that the global centre of power is diffusing and we need to work together to remain on course. "We're interdependent, and we need to work together. We need to solve the problems of the global commons."

Taking a contrarian view, Enoch Godongwana, South Africa's Minister of Finance, made a case for BRICS, the recently-expanded intergovernmental organisation that comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Iran and Ethiopia.

"The key issue is how do we mobilise savings in the South in order to ensure a better development agenda? That's the most critical part. To do this, there needs to be reform of the international, multilateral institutions," he said.

While considering all these views, Africa remains a continent with incredible potential, perhaps only lacking the policies and regulations to steward its abundance of talent and resources.

Which is where the AfCFTA enters centre stage

According to a WEF Insight Report – *AfCFTA: A New Era for Global Business and Investment in Africa* – the free trade area, one of the world's largest by number of people and economic size, is projected to host 1.7 billion people and oversee US$6.7 trillion in consumer and business spending by 2030.

▶▶







Speaking at the African Economy of Scale session, Wamkele Mene, Secretary-General of AfCFTA, argued that the agreement had laid the ground for Africa's potential to be unleashed.

"Since the operationalisation of the AfCFTA, 47 countries have ratified the agreement. We have seen the start of trading in earnest and goods moving across borders. And we have developed a legal construct to make our single market more effective."

At the same session, Kashim Shettima, Vice-President of Nigeria, said that Africa was the next global frontier because entrepreneurship was embedded into the psyche of the average African.

From where he sits, as the Vice President of one of Africa's largest economies, agriculture holds the key. One hundred years ago, he said, people used horses and cutlasses to eke out a meagre existence. Now, farmers have to embrace modern agricultural practices and increase yields by leveraging our youthful population. The continent was poised, he said, to be a driver of growth and change in the world.

"Africa holds the promise, but we need partnership. I don't subscribe to the idea of begging. We can carry our poverty with dignity."

On investment

To become a driver of growth, both locally and internationally, African countries need access to capital, something that Mary Vilakazi, the CEO of FirstRand Ltd, is well aware of.

FirstRand Ltd is Africa's biggest lender by market value. Speaking at Davos, Vilakazi said that banks must prioritise businesses that create jobs and build the infrastructure required to generate economic capital.

She acknowledged that there were structural and regulatory barriers to trade and cited stronger public-private collaboration as an avenue to create environments that support frictionless trade.

"The frictional cost of trade in Africa is about US$5 billion a year. This is money that could go back into economies."

On wielding power

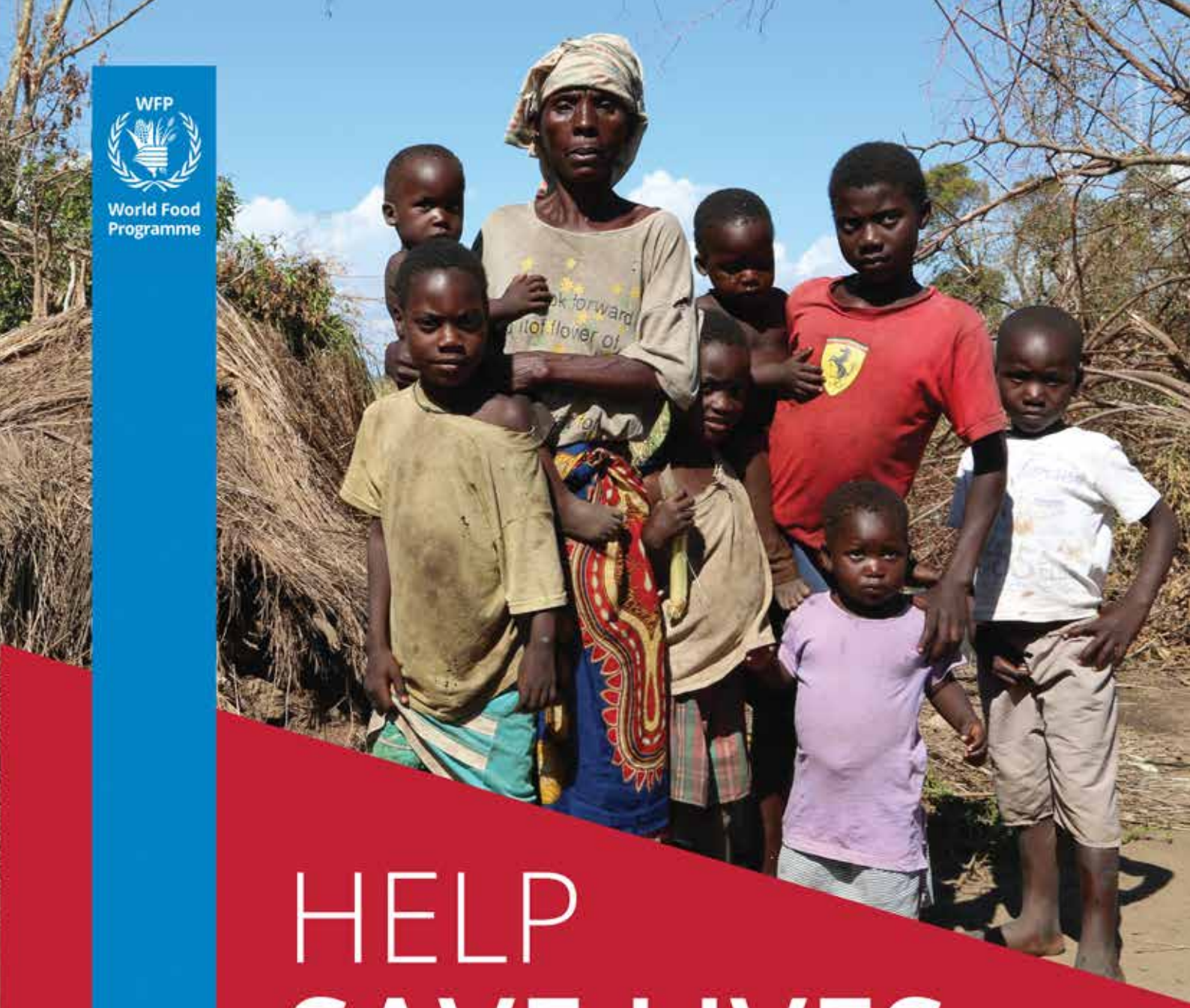
Speaking at the Middle Powers in a Multipolar World session, Demeke Mekonnen Hassen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, said that Africa needed to prepare itself to compete in a multipolar landscape. He spoke about a continental shoring up in the areas of peace and security, the African economy and digitalisation. The Deputy Prime Minister acknowledged Africa's challenges, including climate change and the energy transition, under-development, the technological divide, the reskilling imperative and the debt burden. All that notwithstanding, he said that Africa was rising and African countries were quickly evolving to compete on the global level.

"The establishment of BRICS is a good opportunity to strengthen multilateralism and create access for partnerships between developed, developing and underdeveloped countries."

On 1 January 2024, Ethiopia joined the BRICS pact. Deputy Prime Minister Hassen added in his remarks that Africa was poised to "play a pivotal role internationally when it comes to trade, investment and other economic activities".

This article first appeared on www.weforum.org





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After COP28, questions remain for communities struggling with climate change

The COP28 final outcome includes a call for all countries to have their adaptation plans in place by 2030. Experts say these ambitious targets will help direct support and finance to where it is most needed, accelerating action.

By the United Nations Environment Programme

A week after the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) came to an end, a cyclone slammed into Australia, torrential rains pelted the United States of America (US) and a punishing drought continued to decimate crops in Zimbabwe.

These disasters are a reminder, say experts, that while progress was made at COP28, not nearly enough financing has been devoted to helping communities adapt to extreme weather, which is expected to become more common as the Earth's climate changes.

"Frameworks and tentative commitments are not sufficient," said Mirey Atallah, Head of the Nature for Climate Branch at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

"We are no longer operating in an 'if-and-when scenario'. Countless communities around the world are already suffering the fallout from climate change. Finance and action are needed everywhere, from mitigation, to loss and damage, to adaptation."

On the climate adaptation front, COP28 started with groundbreaking news. The world agreed to operationalise the Loss and Damage Fund, which will provide financial assistance to the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Unveiled in 2022, the fund attracted nearly US$300 million in pledges at COP28.

"The new Loss and Damage Fund, though a significant step forward, does not diminish the urgent need for adaptation finance," said Alvin Chandra, Head of UNEP's Global Adaptation Network. "As we saw in the latest *Adaptation Gap Report*, every dollar invested in adapting to coastal flooding could save US$14 from loss and damage to the economy."

Published by UNEP in the run-up to COP28, this report set the scene for the conference's discussions, highlighting a widening adaptation finance gap in developing countries – estimated at US$194 to US$366 billion per year. The publication was cited in the COP28 final text on the Global Stocktake, a key process to assess the progress of climate action.

Beyond the Loss and Damage Fund, COP28 was not short on commitments. The United Arab Emirates President announced a US$30 billion fund for climate solutions, aiming to draw a total of US$250 billion of investments by 2030 for adaptation and mitigation.

The US pledged US$3 billion to the Green Climate Fund, taking its second replenishment to almost US$13 billion, of which half is devoted to adaptation.

A total of US$1 billion was announced for climate and health initiatives, along with almost US$200 million for the Global Environment Facility and around US$170 million for the Adaptation Fund.

Key targets to be achieved by 2030 include strengthening resilience to water-related climate hazards, attaining climate-resilient food production and reducing the adverse effects of climate change on poverty eradication and livelihoods.





At COP28, there was a clear recognition that countries are making progress in their efforts to develop and implement national adaptation plans, which chart how nations will build their resilience to climate change.

Experts were quick to point out, though, that funding announcements alone were not enough.

"It's not just the amount of adaptation finance that counts. It's also about the effectiveness and quality of the finance," said Atallah "We really need to dig deeper into how fast it is reaching the countries and communities that need it the most."

The COP28 final decision reiterated a call from 2021 for developed countries "to at least double" adaptation finance for developing nations and an agreement was reached to prepare a report to assess progress on that effort.

Global Goal on Adaptation

On 13 December 2023, a comprehensive framework of targets was agreed upon for the Global Goal on Adaptation, which is designed to build the resilience of countries to climate change. The goal was initially announced in Paris in 2015, but since then, disagreements have hobbled the creation of targets, metrics and indicators for the goal.

"This is a big deal for everyone wanting to scale-up adaptation ambition", said Chandra. "In future, countries can work towards a common playbook in their efforts to adapt, which will not only spur transformational action but also help close persistent finance gaps."

Key targets to be achieved by 2030 include strengthening resilience to water-related climate hazards, attaining climate-resilient food production and reducing the adverse effects of climate change on poverty eradication and livelihoods. A two-year work programme has been kickstarted to establish indicators for measuring progress towards the goal's targets.

"To be truly impactful, adaptation needs to be tracked. This framework sets ambitious targets that will help to plan, track and evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation," said Chandra.

National Adaptation Plans

At COP28, there was a clear recognition that countries are making progress in their efforts to develop and implement national adaptation plans, which chart how nations will build their resilience to climate change.

The Global Stocktake noted that 51 countries have now submitted plans, of which 11 were finalised in 2023 – a record number for any year. An increasing number of these plans now include costed frameworks and investment needs.

The COP28 final outcome includes a call for all countries to have their adaptation plans in place by 2030. Experts say these ambitious targets will help direct support and finance to where it is most needed, accelerating action.

►►



Nature-Based Solutions

Launched at COP28, the *State of Finance for Nature Report* found that global financial flows were still having a detrimental effect on the very ecosystems human well-being depends on.

Throughout 2023, via a series of regional workshops and technical submissions, UNEP collaborated with the UN Climate Change Secretariat to promote the importance of nature and ecosystems in building climate resilience. The Global Goal on Adaptation now includes a specific target to accelerate the use of ecosystem-based adaptation by 2030. COP28 also shed light on the challenges faced by mountain ecosystems and proposed concrete steps for intervention in 2024 under the Nairobi Work Programme.

The Global Stocktake emphasises the importance of reversing deforestation by 2030 and it underlines the need to address the "interlinked global crises of climate change and biodiversity loss in the broader context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals". The stocktake also specifies that national adaptation plans should cover, "as appropriate", the dimension of ecosystems.

"At UNEP, we welcome the decision on ecosystems and biodiversity as a concrete overarching target for enhancing resilience and adaptation," said Atallah. "All ecosystems and all species, irrespective of their conservation status, are the mesh of life on which we depend."

The 28th Session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) was held from 30 November to 13 December 2023 in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. It aimed to drive action on climate change by reducing emissions and halting global warming. COP28 explored the results from the first-ever Global Stocktake, which assessed progress toward the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise to below 1.5°C.

South Africa has welcomed the landmark decision to adopt a Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) at COP28 in Dubai.

According to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, this was something the country together with the African continent and other vulnerable nations has struggled to achieve for many years.

"The decision recognises different theme areas for adaptation action and it has measurable and time-bound targets. It also recognises the importance of securing adequate public finance for adaptation from developed countries. This is a big step forward," said the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy.

The two-week COP28 conference adopted a new fund to help poor nations cope with costly climate disasters.

"Throughout our facilitation of the Global Stocktake, South Africa emphasised that climate ambition must be balanced across mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation. We also emphasised that equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities should underpin all asks on developing countries," the Minister added.

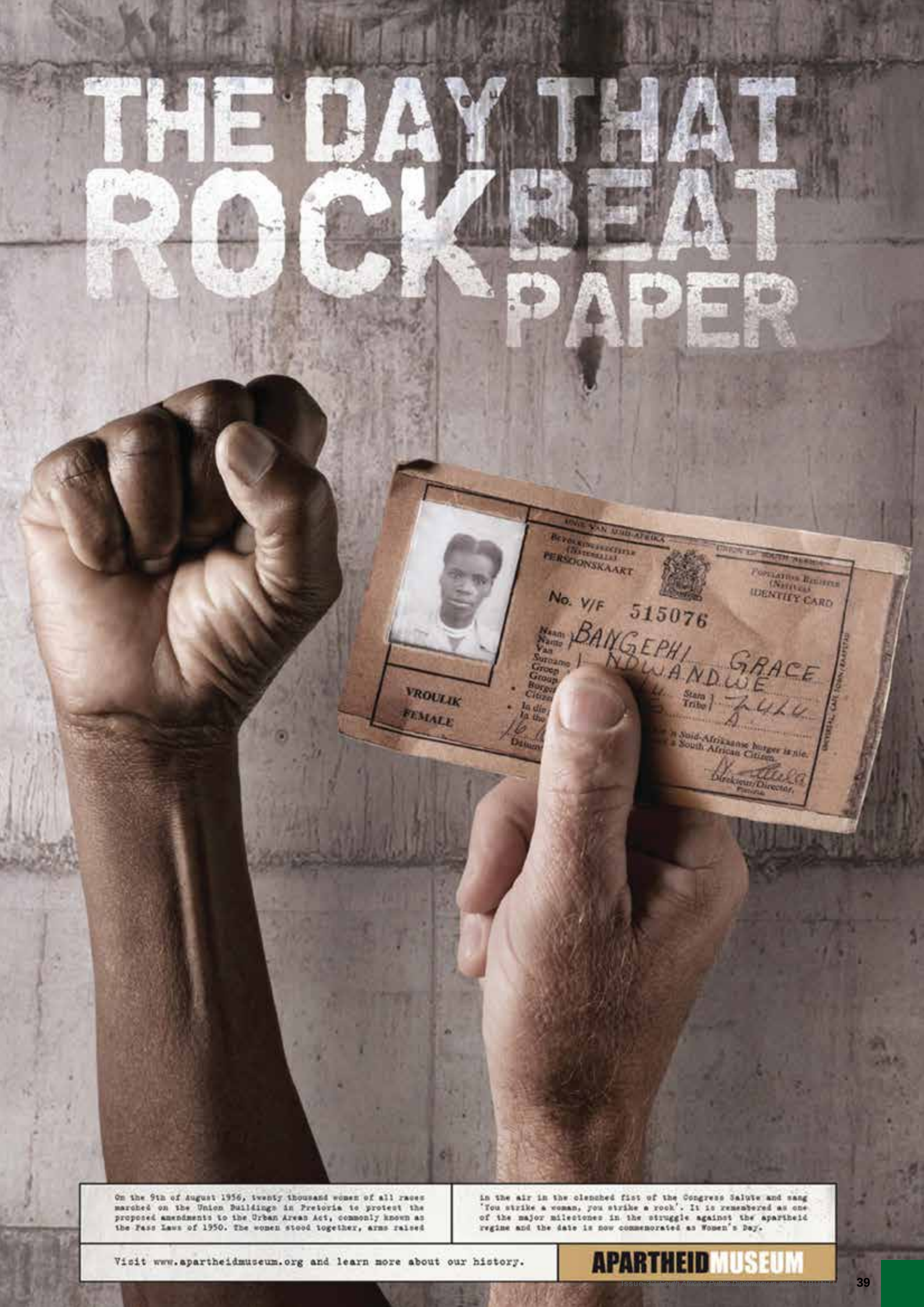
Accordingly, South Africa said it was pleased by the decision on the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund, Just Transition Pathways work programme, the Mitigation Work Programme and the GGA.

"These decisions are in line with our national framework on Just Transition, in particular the recognition of a country's right to pursue its climate resilience path in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

"For the first time, we have language which calls for transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems in a just, orderly and equitable manner to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science," the Minister added.

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Visit www.apartheidmuseum.org and learn more about our history.
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New Border Management Authority is a boost for our country's security and development

The BMA is tasked with ensuring that our country's immigration laws are enforced, and that our borders are well-protected and ports of entry well-managed.

By President Cyril Ramaphosa

Maintaining the integrity of our country's borders is key if we are to realise the aspiration of every South African to live in peace and harmony with ourselves and our neighbours.

It is a daunting undertaking. Our land border is over 4 800 km long and is shared with six countries. We have 53 land ports of entry, 11 international airports and eight sea ports.

The launch in October 2023 of the country's first integrated, unified Border Management Authority (BMA) was therefore a milestone in the necessary effort to secure our borders.

The challenges we face on our borders are both historical and contemporary.

The apartheid regime flagrantly disregarded the sovereignty of neighbouring countries to conduct illegal cross-border raids. It abused immigration measures to harass its opponents and enforced hated policies like influx control and the exploitation of labour from the region.

It was the priority of the democratic Government elected in 1994 to progressively reform the border management and migration regime, not just in the interests of economic growth and development, but also so that these reforms should reflect the broader values of the new State.

The democratic Government has worked to uphold the right of citizens to freedom of movement and residence, as well as the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers under international conventions. It also sought to deepen trade and investment between South Africa and other southern African countries and contribute to the political and economic integration of the African continent.

Over time, however, the complexities of border management have resulted in an uncoordinated approach by the various authorities. One of the challenges has been the sheer number of government departments and entities involved in this work. The absence of a central authority led to fragmentation of efforts and made it difficult to enforce accountability. This in turn rendered our borders vulnerable.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has noted that South Africa has become an important transit route for organised criminal networks involved in human trafficking, drugs and small arms smuggling and various other forms of cross-border crime.

It has also noted that as the economic powerhouse of the region, South Africa continues to attract economic migrants who are undocumented, especially from the Southern African Development Community region.

The proliferation of cross-border crime, illicit trade and illegal migration as a result of porous borders presents a serious threat to our national security and economy.

Maintaining the integrity of our country's borders is key if we are to realise the aspiration of every South African to live in peace and harmony with ourselves and our neighbours.

It also places strain on already stretched resources and public services and fuels social instability. We have in recent times seen anti-foreigner sentiment resulting in acts of violence and harassment.

As a country, we must condemn without reservation all acts of violence against foreign nationals, regardless of their immigration status, and work together to prevent such acts.

At the same time, we must recognise that South Africans are justifiably concerned about illegal migration. Like any sovereign nation, we have the right to guarantee the integrity of our borders and provide that all who reside in our borders have a legal right to be here. Those who have sought refuge in South Africa or wish to live and work here are subject to immigration regulations and must adhere to the country's laws.



> The establishment of the BMA is a significant step towards safer communities, better law enforcement and the growth of our economy through greater trade with our neighbours.



The BMA is tasked with ensuring that our country's immigration laws are enforced, and that our borders are well-protected and ports of entry well-managed.

The new authority is now the third armed service in South Africa after the South African Defence Force (SANDF) and the South African Police Service (SAPS).

The first officers of the new BMA border guard were deployed in July 2023 at vulnerable segments of the border, including at informal crossings. Although they will be conducting border law enforcement functions, including access control, the SANDF remains responsible for border protection and safeguarding.

With this new structure in place, we will also be able to better prevent the illegal importation and exit of goods, curb illegal migration and human smuggling, and combat cross-border crime.

The BMA will take on the work of several other departments and agencies and is already working with the South African Revenue Service, SAPS and SANDF to integrate border management functions.

The establishment of the BMA is a significant step towards safer communities, better law enforcement and the growth of our economy through greater trade with our neighbours.

Ensuring our borders are well-managed and well-protected are key to the security and development of our country.

The Border Management Authority (BMA) announced on Sunday, 28 January 2024, that it processed over five million travellers through South African borders over the festive period.

"The 2023/24 festive season was a remarkable time where a noticeable increase in the movement of persons and goods entering and exiting the Republic of South Africa was experienced," said the Commissioner of the BMA, Dr Mike Masiapato.

He said between 6 December 2023 and 18 January 2024, the agency lawfully processed 5 096 288 travellers across 71 ports of entry.

The latest data showed a one-million increase in travellers compared to 2022/2023.

"However, this number of travellers is still one million less than the pre-COVID-19 average numbers of about six million travellers."

Of the 5 096 288 travellers, 216 594 used private vehicles, 21 502 used mini-bus taxis, 6 443 used buses and 55 765 used trucks through the movement control system.

In total, more than 13 050 aircrafts were processed at international airports and approximately 709 vessels at seaports.

About 407 vessels underwent crew changes using the off-port limit mechanism in the maritime environment.

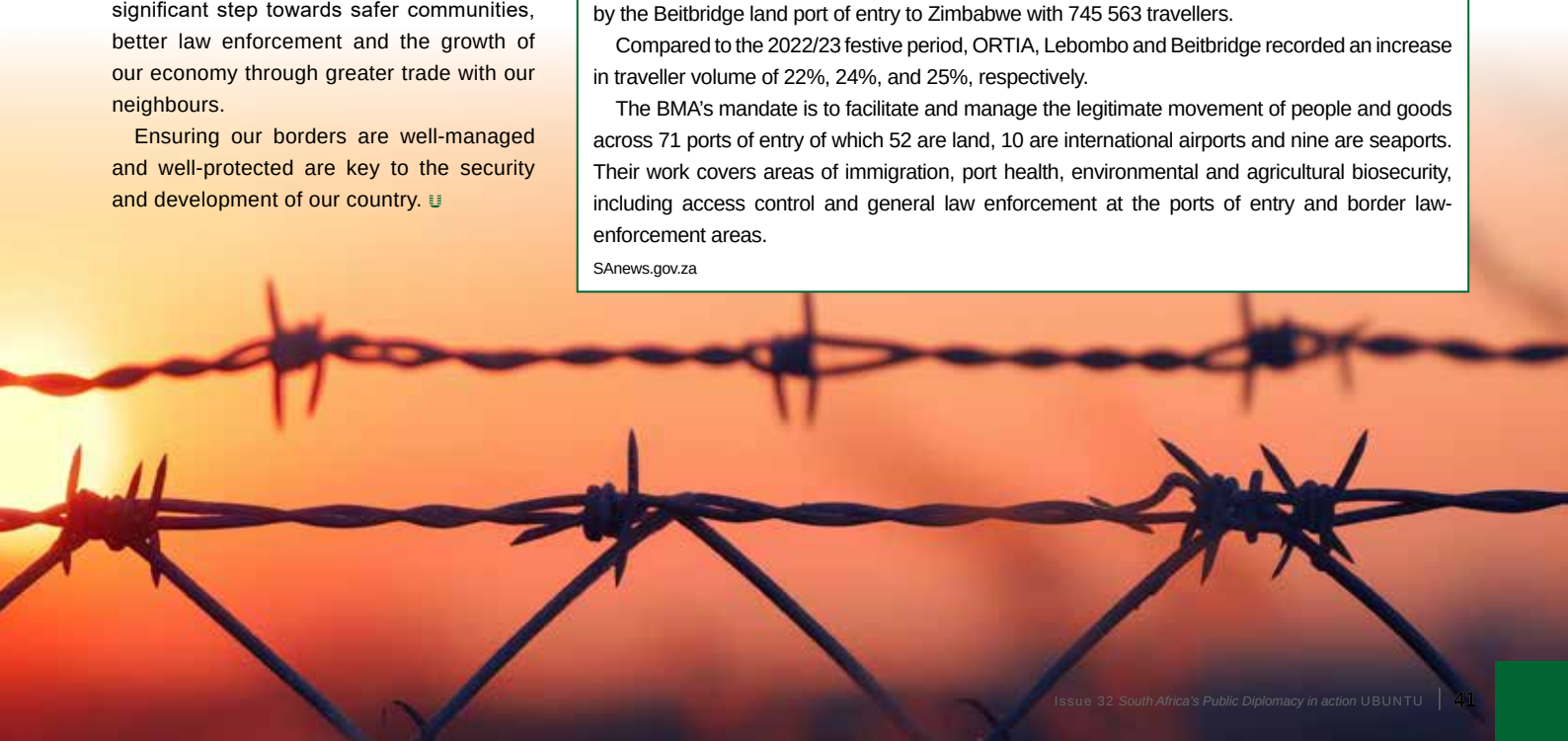
According to the data, OR Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) served the largest number of travellers – 993 759.

The Lebombo land port of entry to Mozambique came second with 755 066 visitors, followed by the Beitbridge land port of entry to Zimbabwe with 745 563 travellers.

Compared to the 2022/23 festive period, ORTIA, Lebombo and Beitbridge recorded an increase in traveller volume of 22%, 24%, and 25%, respectively.

The BMA's mandate is to facilitate and manage the legitimate movement of people and goods across 71 ports of entry of which 52 are land, 10 are international airports and nine are seaports. Their work covers areas of immigration, port health, environmental and agricultural biosecurity, including access control and general law enforcement at the ports of entry and border law-enforcement areas.

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Africa, the Law of the Sea and the International Tribunal for The Law of the Sea

It is clear that building on past contributions, African countries are beginning to assert their presence and articulate their maritime concerns more impactfully on the security agendas of international fora. In the same vein, African countries are increasingly taking charge of their own maritime affairs.

By Tshegofatso Johanna Ramachela, Research Associate
University of Pretoria

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) constitutes a comprehensive regime, which sets forth the rules that govern the world's oceans and seas and the use of marine resources. In the lead-up to the adoption of UNCLOS, African states played a key role in demanding, negotiating and influencing terms beneficial to the interests of the continent, and the global South.

In fact, when UNCLOS was adopted, no African state voted against or abstained from voting, and by 1992, 26 of 54 African states had ratified the convention. CEMLAWS (2016) describes this as "one of the greatest achievements of developing countries in international politics". At its core, this was a combined effort by African states and those of the global South to "reform the post-colonial legal and economic order" with the goal of ensuring access to the oceans and marine resources for the purpose of development. Initially, this reformation initiative was pursued within the Organisation of African Unity (OAU – now the African Union [AU]), but was subsequently undertaken by the Group of 77, in essence bringing together African states and the rest of the global South.

A significant contribution to the Law of the Sea prompted by the African negotiating bloc was the inception of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Under the Law of the Sea, the EEZ constitutes the 200 nautical miles in which a state has the sovereign right and legal jurisdiction to explore and harness its marine resources. In 1972, African states led by Kenya presented the Draft Articles on an Exclusive Economic Zone Concept to the Geneva Session of the UN Seabed Committee. Following this, the Addis Ababa and Mogadishu declarations by the Council of Ministers of the OAU recognised the right of littoral African countries to establish their EEZs. At the international level, it was African and South American states that were the first to endorse this idea, as it guaranteed equitable access to marine resources. Despite opposition to the EEZ concept by

some developed states who perceived it as adversarial to their fishery interests, military (naval) concerns and freedom of navigation, the EEZ earned consensus. Subsequently, the concept of the EEZ was expressed as customary international law and incorporated into the Law of the Sea.

Beyond this contribution, it was also African states that demanded the participation and rights of landlocked states to the provisions of the Law of the Sea. Undisputedly, since the 1970s, African states have played a central role in establishing, influencing and improving the Law of the Sea.

Africa and the High Seas Treaty

On 19 June 2023, during a UN meeting, the Treaty on the High Seas was adopted by consensus, after over two decades and six rounds of negotiations. The treaty is key to protecting the oceans, specifically the areas and biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), also referred to as international waters or the high seas.

Essentially, this falls outside the 200 nautical miles, or EEZs of all countries; thus, no country has exclusive rights or jurisdiction over these designated areas.

The high seas hold great significance: they make up roughly 60% of the world's oceans and are home to a range of both living and non-living marine resources, of which 13% is classified as "marine wilderness" (areas void of human impact).

During an interview with Judge Thembile Joyini, he pointed out the significant role played by the African negotiating bloc in advocating for the High Seas Treaty to be underpinned by the notion of the "common heritage of mankind". This concept, which is inherently linked to ethical concerns of international law, means that certain areas and resources and their benefits belong to all people. This concept also takes into consideration future generations. Judge Joyini maintains that the African bloc were "strong negotiators", that sternly advocated for the inclusion of an "access and beneficiary mechanism" as a key feature of the treaty.

> With less than two years remaining since the AU declared this as the Decade of the African Seas and Oceans, African countries require joint efforts, and combined negotiating power, to elevate their maritime issues, concerns and preferences on international security and development agendas, for the benefit of humankind as a whole.

This provision is clear in Part V, Articles 42 to 47 and Part VII, Article 52, which stipulate the provisions for "Capacity-building, Transfer of Marine Technology and Financial Assistance". Essentially, the BBNJ Agreement affirms that "states shall cooperate to assist each other, in particular developing states" in achieving the objectives of the treaty.

Over and above, the adoption of these articles, Judge Joyini confirmed that substantial consideration was accorded to "protect the special interests of African states", including safeguarding traditional (indigenous) maritime knowledge and practices. Once again, it is clear that in international fora, African negotiators promote terms that will not only benefit the continent, but the entirety of the global South, and humankind as a whole, both now and in the future.

Africa and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

ITLOS is composed of 21 independent members elected by secret ballot by the states parties to the convention. Each state party may nominate up to two candidates from among persons enjoying the highest reputation for fairness and integrity and of recognised competence in the field of the Law of the Sea.

No two members may be nationals of the same state and in the tribunal as a whole, it is necessary to assure the representation of the principal legal systems of the world and equitable geographical distribution; there shall be no fewer than three members from each geographical group as established by the General Assembly of the UN (African states, Asian states, Eastern European states, Latin American and Caribbean states and Western European and other states). Members are elected for nine years and may be re-elected; the terms of one third of the members expire every three years.

To date, the ITLOS has deliberated over a number of cases related to maritime boundary disputes in Africa, including but not limited to, *Case No 28 'Dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Mauritius and Maldives in the Indian Ocean, and Case No. 23 'Dispute concerning delimitation of the maritime boundary between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire in the Atlantic Ocean'*. In the case of the Kenya-Somalia maritime

The high seas hold great significance: they make up roughly 60% of the world's oceans and are home to a range of both living and non-living marine resources, of which 13% is classified as "marine wilderness" (areas void of human impact).



boundary dispute, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was the main authority involved. It is worth noting that where international maritime matters are concerned, Judge Joyini maintains that the ITLOS should constitute the "primary authority on the oceans" and all things related to legal-maritime affairs.

It is clear that building on past contributions, African countries are beginning to assert their presence and articulate their maritime concerns more impactfully on the security agendas of international fora. In the same vein, African countries are increasingly taking charge of their own maritime affairs. This does not mean that the role of extra-regional actors is no longer relevant, merely that they no longer hold the primary role in the African maritime environment.

Judge Joyini confirmed that the AU had made momentous strides toward the advancement of the continent's maritime objectives and well-being; however, there remains "a lot that must be done". This is true, especially where maritime security is concerned, and its importance toward advancing development agendas, namely Africa's blue economy objectives.

Judge Joyini further emphasised the importance of raising maritime awareness, specifically in relation to the unlocked development potential of the oceans. This speaks directly to Africa's blue economy potential, but to realise this, African states must play a central role. Echoing Judge Joyini, "African states must be more involved", they must take up active roles in asserting their agency and objectives in international forums, especially within the UN system.



With less than two years remaining since the AU declared this as the Decade of the African Seas and Oceans, African countries require joint efforts, and combined negotiating power, to elevate their maritime issues, concerns and preferences on international security and development agendas, for the benefit of humankind as a whole.

THE LAW OF THE SEA

In June 2023, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) announced the election of Advocate Thembile Elphus Joyini to serve as a judge on the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) from October 2023 to 2032.

The department labelled Judge Joyini as a seasoned diplomat, who served in New York as Counsellor for Legal Affairs and was the Chief State Law Adviser at DIRCO.

The father of two served as a Commissioner at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration from 1999 to 2001 and arbitrated many cases. He also acted as a judge of the High Court in Pretoria in 2019, presiding over several cases and penning 12 judgments.

"He has considerable experience in both domestic and international law. The African Union endorsed his candidature. Therefore, his election is also a victory for the continent, with a massive interest in implementing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, under which ITLOS was established.

"The department congratulates Advocate Joyini and wishes him success."

The ITLOS is an independent judicial body established by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

It deals with disputes relating to the delimitation of maritime zones, navigation, conservation and management of the living resources of the sea, protection and preservation of the marine environment and marine scientific research.

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A Great Day for South Africa at the United Nations: Professor Dire Tladi elected as Judge of the ICJ

President Cyril Ramaphosa offered his warm congratulations to Professor Dire Tladi of the University of Pretoria on his election by the United Nations (UN) as a judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In May 2023, Cabinet endorsed Prof. Tladi's nomination by the South African Government, together with South Africa's membership on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

By Masotsha Mnguni, Romi Brammer and Jaymion Hendricks (Election Task Team)
Department of International Relations and Cooperation

On 9 November 2023, Professor Dire Tladi was elected as the first permanent South African judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) – a historic moment for the country and the court; the successor to the Permanent Court of International Justice founded by the then League of Nations in 1920 .

In May 2023, Cabinet approved the nomination of Prof. Tladi as South Africa's candidate for election as judge of the ICJ for the term 2024 to 2033. He was subsequently endorsed as one of four African candidates (Egypt, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia and South Africa) by the African Union during its mid-term summit that took place in July 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.

On 5 February 2024, the terms of office of the following five members of the ICJ expired: Judge Joan E Donoghue (United States of America); Judge Kirill Gevorgian (Russian Federation); Judge Mohamed Bennouna (Morocco); Judge Patrick Lipton Robinson (Jamaica); and Judge Hilary Charlesworth (Australia). It was therefore necessary for the General Assembly and the Security Council to elect five judges for a term of office of nine years, starting 6 February 2024.

The election was held in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Statute of the ICJ, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and the provisional rules of procedure of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The General Assembly and the UNSC proceeded, independently of one another, to elect five members of the court to fill the upcoming vacancies.

According to Article 2 of the Statute, members of the court are elected, regardless of their nationality, from among persons of high moral character, who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices or are jurisconsults of recognised competence in international law.

Only one round of voting was required to have a conclusive result in the General Assembly. Further, five rounds of voting were required to have a conclusive result in the UNSC. With the list of successful candidates matching in both the General Assembly and the UNSC, the following candidates were elected as Judges Designate to the ICJ:

- Bogdan-Lucian Aurescu (Romania)
- Hilary Charlesworth (Australia)
- Sarah Hull Cleveland (United States of America)
- Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo Verduzco (Mexico)
- Dire Tladi (South Africa).

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The election of Prof. Tladi concluded what had been an intensive campaign comprising lobbying of member states in the capitals, Pretoria and New York; conclusion of several reciprocal agreements with members states; and the candidate's participation in panel discussions, seminars and networking, among many other efforts.

The fact that Prof. Tladi was a late entrant in the race makes his election to the ICJ, the first South African and the second-youngest candidate to ever serve on the bench, even more remarkable.

President Cyril Ramaphosa offered his warm congratulations to Professor Dire Tladi of the University of Pretoria on his election by the United Nations (UN) as a judge of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In May 2023, Cabinet endorsed Prof. Tladi's nomination by the South African Government, together with South Africa's membership on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

The ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the UN and one of the six principal bodies of the UN. The court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by states and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorised UN organs and specialised agencies.

The ICJ comprises 15 judges who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

Prof. Tladi is a leading International Law scholar whose accomplishments span different areas of the field, including academic, government service, diplomatic and practice.

He was Professor of International Law at the University of Pretoria and served as President of the South African Branch of the International Law Association and Executive Member of the International Law Association.

He served as Chair of the International Law Commission, an organ of the UN generally regarded as a feeder body for the ICJ.

He has published well over 100 academic publications (articles, books and chapters in books). He holds a BLC LLB (cum laude) from the University of Pretoria, LLM from the University of Connecticut and a PhD from Erasmus University, Rotterdam.

He was previously Legal Adviser of the South African Mission in New York and Special Adviser to South African ministers of international relations.

President Ramaphosa said: "Prof. Tladi's election as a judge of the International Court of Justice is an outstanding personal achievement in which the nation shares with great pride.

"We appreciate the confidence expressed by the United Nations in Prof. Tladi's capabilities.

"He becomes the newest member of a fraternity of South Africans globally who are in positions of service to the international community and making important contributions to the better world we seek to build.

"We wish Prof. Tladi well as he prepares to contribute to the court and its jurisprudence from the Palace of Peace in The Hague, Netherlands."

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LIBERATION HERITAGE:

Peter Magubane,

Courageous photographer who chronicled South Africa's struggle for freedom

> In 1999, Magubane was awarded the Order of Meritorious Service by President Nelson Mandela, who stated: "For his bravery and courage during the dark days of apartheid, Peter became a beacon of hope not only to thousands of journalists all over the world but also to millions of people across our country."

By Kylie Thomas
Senior Researcher and Senior Lecturer (Radical Humanities Laboratory, University College Cork), NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Peter Sexford Magubane, a courageous South African photographer whose images testify to both the iniquity of apartheid and the determination and devotion of those who brought about its demise, passed away at 91 years of age in early January 2024.

Magubane leaves behind a vast archive of extraordinary images, many of which continue to be the signature images of some of the worst atrocities committed by the apartheid regime.

The photographer suffered great losses during apartheid. In 1969, Magubane spent 586 days in solitary confinement. In 1976, his home was burnt down. He miraculously survived being shot 17 times below the waist at the funeral of a student activist in Natalspruit in 1985. His son Charles was brutally murdered in Soweto in 1992.

Despite the pain and suffering he witnessed and experienced, Magubane's photographs testify to the hope that is at the heart of the struggle for a just world.

Witness to momentous events

Magubane grew up in Sophiatown, a mixed-race area around 5km from the centre of the city of Johannesburg. He not only witnessed, but also took part in, many of the most significant events in modern South African history.

He was 16 years old when the white supremacist National Party came to power in 1948 and he came of age as the State introduced a series of repressive laws implementing the system of apartheid. These laws were to shape the course of Magubane's life.

They included the Group Areas Act (1950), which dictated where people were permitted to live based on the colour of their skin; the

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Population Registration Act (1950), which classified all South Africans by race; and the Native Laws Amendment Act (1952), which required all black South Africans to carry a "passbook". Referred to as the "dompas", the document was used to control and restrict the movement of black South Africans.

In 1955, Sophiatown was demolished and its 60 000 residents were forcibly removed. Magubane's family were forced to relocate to Soweto. His images focussing on life in the township were later to form the subject of several of his books.

In 1952, the Defiance Campaign saw widespread non-violent resistance to the hated *dompas* across the country. It was in this incendiary political atmosphere that Magubane found his calling as a photographer.

In 1954, Magubane began working at *Drum* magazine as a driver. The magazine, founded in 1951 and modelled on picture magazines like *Life and Picture Post*, was to take the lead in changing how black South Africans were represented in the media. Within three months, Magubane had taken up a position as a darkroom assistant. He soon began to work as a photographer under the tutelage of *Drum*'s chief photographer and picture editor, Jürgen Schadeberg. Magubane rapidly secured his place as one of the great photojournalists of his generation, alongside Alf Kumalo, Bob Gosani and Ernest Cole.

By the mid-1950s, it became mandatory for black women to carry passes and in 1956, 20 000 women, united under the banner of the Federation of South African Women, marched in protest to the seat of government, the Union Buildings in Pretoria. Magubane documented this march and continued to pay close attention to the central role of women in the struggle against apartheid throughout his career. Many of these images are collected in his 1993 book, *Women of South Africa: Their Fight for Freedom*.

Between 1956 and 1961, Magubane took photographs of the Treason Trial, which saw 156 national leaders tried for high treason after the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1956. Among the accused were leading members of the African National Congress and of the Congress Alliance, including Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Helen Joseph, Ruth First and Bertha Mashaba.

During this period, Magubane was arrested four times and frequently harassed and assaulted by the police.

He was one of the photographers who documented the immediate aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre on 1 March 1960. On that day, more than 7 000 people gathered outside a police station at Sharpeville, a place not far from the city of Johannesburg, to protest against being forced to carry passbooks. Arriving without their passes, their intention was to give themselves up for arrest.

Police officers opened fire and shot 13 000 bullets into the crowd. Official records stated that 69 people were killed and over 300 wounded, although recent reports suggest the casualties were much higher.

Magubane's photograph of a seemingly endless row of coffins receding into the distance, awaiting burial, their dark wooden surfaces almost white in the sun's glare, conveys the terrible magnitude of the massacre. Alongside the coffins are a priest in white robes and hundreds of mourners dressed in dark suits. A woman in a black dress stands near the mass gravesite and holds a white cloth to her mouth in a gesture of profound grief.

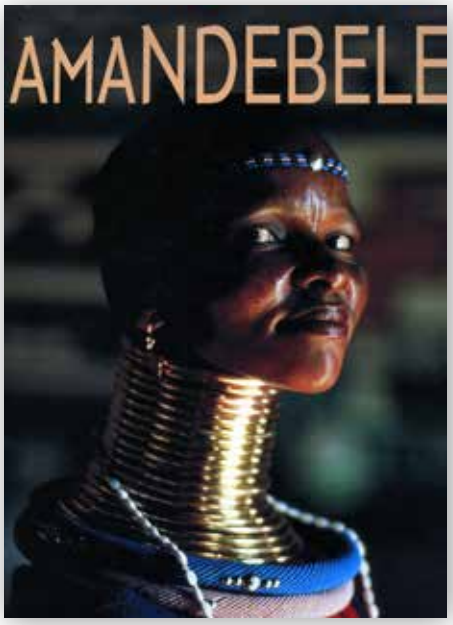
The image is both chilling and portentous – as curator Okwui Enwezor has noted: the events of that day produced the picture of the funeral as one of the central iconographic emblems of the anti-apartheid struggle. Magubane's images of Sharpeville were published in *Life* magazine and played a key role in bringing the brutality of the apartheid state to global notice.

On 16 June 1976, young people of Soweto rose up in protest against being forced to learn in Afrikaans. Magubane convinced the students of the importance of producing a visual record of the struggle.

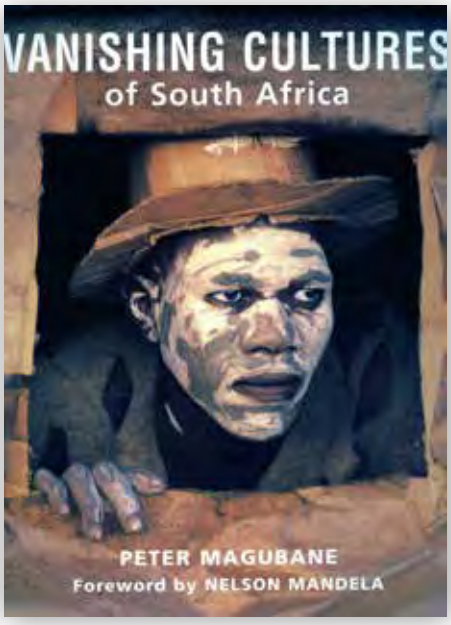
Photographs he took that day were published as a book, *Soweto 1976: The Fruit of Fear*, to commemorate the terrible events that took place that day, when the police killed between 400 and 700 protesters and injured thousands more.

Among the many powerful images Magubane made at that time, is a photograph of two women walking in a dusty street, their

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faces displaying signs of terrible pain. One of the women has a large tear in her abdomen, an open wound that forms a dark hole at the side of her body. Her slender hands are beautiful and their perfect smoothness accentuates the brutal rupture where her skin has been broken.

The immediacy of the image is striking and is all the more remarkable with the knowledge that the bullet that pierced the young women's body had just narrowly missed Magubane's face.

The archive

Magubane published more than 20 books. In 2018, his work was exhibited in a major retrospective, *On Common Ground*, alongside that of another renowned South African photographer, David Goldblatt.

In 1999, Magubane was awarded the Order of Meritorious Service by President Nelson Mandela, who stated: "For his bravery and courage during the dark days of apartheid, Peter became a beacon of hope not only to thousands of journalists all over the world but also to millions of people across our country."

He received numerous awards for his work, including the Robert Capa Award (1986), Lifetime Achievement Award from the Mother Jones Foundation (1997), the ICP Cornell Capa Award (2010) and several honorary doctorates. He served as Nelson Mandela's photographer from 1990 to 1994.

Magubane's indomitable spirit and compassionate vision live on through his work. *Hamba kahle*. (Go well.)

This article first appeared on *The Conversation.*



President Cyril Ramaphosa paid tribute to globally renowned photographer, Dr Peter Magubane, for fearlessly using his camera to capture the atrocities of apartheid while putting his life in danger.

"Despite all attempts to break his spirit and to take him away from his craft, he would not put his camera down. His work documenting apartheid helped shift global opinion against the regime. We have heard of how he would smuggle his cameras into hollowed-out bread, milk cartons and I am told even the Bible, to take pictures without the notice of the authorities".

Delivering the eulogy at Magubane's Provincial Official Funeral in Johannesburg, on 10 January 2024, President Ramaphosa said the apartheid regime did not care much for the lives it was extinguishing, but it cared a great deal about its image, especially about how it was portrayed to the rest of the world.

"Peter Magubane's images, and those of his peers, upended Hendrik Verwoerd's great lie that apartheid was benign benevolence, a system of the separate but equal, and so-called good neighbourliness. He used his camera to record the experiences and struggles of black South Africans during apartheid. These images reached the world's media and revealed to the international community the injustices that characterised South Africa at that time.

"As *The New York Times* obituary put it, Peter Magubane's images documenting the cruelties and violence of apartheid drew global acclaim but punishment at home, including beatings, imprisonment and 586 consecutive days of solitary confinement," the President said.

"His archive testifies to an extraordinary range. For many years, he was President Mandela's official photographer. Some of the most enduring images we have of Madiba were taken by his lens.

"He was there at the many turning points in the struggle against apartheid and covered the various states of emergency during the mid-1980s. There are his stark images that documented the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the 1976 Soweto uprising and the many other acts of violence unleashed by the regime.

"Later in life, he would go on to produce photography on heritage and culture. Among them is one of my favourites of his works, *The Vanishing Cultures of South Africa*. It is an extraordinary collection that documents the lives, customs and cultures of our country's ethnic groups," the President said.

President Ramaphosa noted that it was his depictions of everyday life for black South Africans living under apartheid for which he was best known.

"These images that he began taking in the 1960s, appeared in distinguished publications like *Drum* magazine, *Time* magazine, the *Rand Daily Mail* and others. One of his best-known images is of a black domestic worker stroking the hair of a white child seated on a 'Europeans Only' bench.

"The photograph got worldwide attention for the power of the disturbing scene that it conveyed. That photograph also painted a vivid scene of the meaning of apartheid. It was able to transport the lived experiences of black people in South Africa to many people in distant lands.

"As important as it was to him to document the violence and bloodshed, it was equally important to bring home to readers and viewers the true face of petty apartheid with its convoluted and ridiculous laws and rules," he said.

The President described him as a freedom fighter and one of the most fearless journalists the country has produced.

"Having read the many written tributes that have been penned by people who worked alongside him and were mentored by him, it is clear that the description of him as a legend is a fitting one," he said.

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They saw land as a source of life – a gift to mankind that nourishes, supports and teaches. In this tradition, South African producers have recognised that they now also have a responsibility to farm sustainably and act as custodians of the land, in order to preserve it for the use of our future generations.

About 95% of our wine is produced in the area known as the Cape Floral Kingdom (CFK). One of six such plant kingdoms in the world, it is the smallest, yet richest, home to over 9 600 plant species, more than in the entire northern hemisphere. The CFK is one of 36 recognised biodiversity hotspots, with 70% of the plants found here not found anywhere else on earth.

Sustainable Wine South Africa (SWSA) is the alliance between the Wine and Spirit Board (WSB), the Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) scheme and Wines of South Africa (WoSA). Together these organisations are driving the South African wine industry's commitment to sustainable, eco-friendly production.

LEADING THE WORLD IN PRODUCTION INTEGRITY

For over two decades there has been a strong focus on sustainability in the South African wine industry. The WSB, which administers the Wine of Origin (WO) scheme, also administers a scheme known as IPW, which was introduced in 1998.

Producers farm according to independently audited IPW guidelines to prevent further loss of habitat. These guidelines cover minimising the use of sprays, monitoring water usage and recycling the maximum water possible, as well as protecting the natural habitat. These guidelines are constantly improved and independent auditors audit the farms and cellars.



In 2010, South Africa launched the world's first industry-wide sustainability seal. Issued by the WSB, it guarantees a certified wine's environmental credentials according to measurable, auditable criteria. It also makes it possible for consumers to verify information simply by entering each seal's unique number on the SWSA website. Today, some 94.3% of wines certified in accordance with the WO scheme are meeting the requirements to carry the sustainability seal.

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Veteran anti-apartheid activist *Amy Thornton* remembered



President Cyril Ramaphosa, along with countless South Africans, mourned the loss of a woman who dedicated her life to the relentless pursuit of justice, equality and freedom for all.

On 7 September 2023, South Africa bid a heartfelt farewell to Amy Thornton, a dedicated veteran activist and esteemed member of the Order of Luthuli, who passed away at the age of 91. President Cyril Ramaphosa, along with countless South Africans, mourned the loss of a woman who dedicated her life to the relentless pursuit of justice, equality and freedom for all.

Thornton, born in Cape Town in 1932, was a remarkable figure in the struggle against apartheid. Her story is a testament to unwavering commitment, courage and resilience. Both her parents were actively involved in the struggle and it did not take long for Thornton to follow suit, taking part in her first campaign in 1948 when she was just 16 years old. She worked with the Communist Party of South Africa (now known as the South African Communist Party [SACP]) as well as the Springbok Legion, a progressive organisation made up of former soldiers who had returned from fighting against fascism in Europe, campaigning against the National Party during the 1948 general elections.

In 1950, she joined the Modern Youth Society (MYS), which was a progressive youth movement made up of mostly university students. It was through MYS that Thornton got involved in night school literacy classes for African workers at the docks in Cape Town. In 1952, when the Congress of Democrats (COD) was founded, Thornton was appointed secretary of the Joint Congress Committee, which included the COD, the African National Congress (ANC), the Coloured People's Congress and the South African Indian Congress.

In 1953, as part of the South African delegation to an international youth organisation called the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which was held in Bucharest, Romania, Thornton travelled to Romania as the representative of MYS. In the same year, she joined the SACP, which had since gone underground (it was banned by the apartheid government), where she actively campaigned against the Group Areas Act and Bantu Education Act. She was also involved in study classes held in informal settlements around Cape Town, namely, Blouvlei and Elsies River.

In 1955, Thornton was part of a delegation from Cape Town that was stopped by the police in Beaufort West on its way to Kliptown, Transvaal province (now Gauteng) to attend the Congress of the People. They were detained over the weekend and did not make it to Kliptown.

When the Treason Trial began in 1956, Thornton served on the Treason Trial Support Committee. That same year, she was one of the organisers of the historic 9 August anti-pass laws women's march to the Union Buildings in Pretoria. In addition, she also did voluntary research and editorial work for the *Guardian* newspaper (as well as its successors, as every successive title was banned one after the other).

She was banned for the first time in 1959 for two years, but this was extended multiple times until she eventually served a total of 14 years under banning orders. Part of her banning order meant that she was not permitted to be involved in anything to do with any educational institution – consequently, she lost her job as a nursery schoolteacher. Moreover, she was not allowed to attend any social gatherings, had to report to the police every week and was restricted to the magisterial district of Cape Town, greatly limiting her movements.

"Her contribution to numerous organisations throughout her career of activism played a notable role in the movement for liberation in South Africa. Her bravery, like so many other women in the face of the struggle, was an inspiration to all South Africans."

In 1976, after getting married and having four children, she started working for the Food and Canning Workers' Union part-time. In 1981, she became a founding member of the United Women's Organisation (UWO) and served as the deputy chairperson. The UWO was one of the key organisations in the establishment of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983. The UDF was instrumental in organising consumer boycotts and stay-aways and it played an important role in bringing about a fundamental change in the country's political landscape. Thornton was appointed as a patron of the UDF in 1983 and was among those who were detained during the two states of emergency.



She was also a member of the ANC regional leadership in Cape Town and served on the National Coordinating Committee for the Return of Exiles between 1990 and 1993.

She was recognised for her unwavering commitment to the liberation struggle, devoting her life to achieving a free and equal South Africa for all, with the National Order of Luthuli in Silver in April 2016. This award, which is one of the highest that the country bestows on South African citizens and prominent foreigners, is given to South Africans who have contributed significantly to the struggle for freedom, the advancement of democracy, nation-building, human rights, peace, justice and conflict resolution. The award was a further testament to her excellent contribution and unflinching commitment to the struggle for liberation and equality for all South Africans and her commendable bravery in the face of an oppressive regime.

In a message of condolences and tribute, President Ramaphosa said: "Amy Thornton lived a life of principled resistance, bravery and perseverance so that we could live in freedom today.

"She was one of many white South Africans who sustained the non-racial character of the liberation struggle.

"Her contribution and the risks she took on also disproved the often-stated claim that white South Africans didn't know what was unfolding in the country or that they had no agency to change policy or conditions in the country.

"Her contribution to numerous organisations throughout her career of activism played a notable role in the movement for liberation in South Africa. Her bravery, like so many other women in the face of the struggle, was an inspiration to all South Africans."

"Amy Thornton served our nation with great courage and tireless energy. May her soul now rest in peace."

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Evolution Revolution:

How a Cape Town museum exhibit is rewriting the story of humankind

> The story of humanity is everyone's story. A story of migration and mixing and adapting to new contexts. It is a story of the connection of people along the long-braided stream of our shared origins. It is important that we tell it that way.

By Rebecca Ackermann, Professor, Department of Archaeology and Human Evolution Research Institute, University of Cape Town; and Wendy Black, Chief Curator of Art and Social History, Iziko Museums of South Africa

Picture your typical human evolution museum display. You walk into a dimly lit space with glass boxes on white plinths or roped off areas. There are lots and lots of bones. Maybe a bit of history on how those bones were collected and pictures of the famous people – usually men – who collected them. Often, there are reconstructions of what these human ancestors might have looked like: dark-skinned and hairless ape-people, walking, mostly naked, holding stone tools, or even being hunted.

But where are you? How does such an exhibit show you who you are and how you came to be? We don't think it does. So, in 2018, we were among a group of human evolution researchers who decided it was time to do things differently. The result is *Humanity*, a new human evolution exhibit that opened in September 2023 at Iziko South African Museum in Cape Town.

The exhibit offers a close look at the problematic history of palaeoanthropology; it also attempts to decolonise the story of human origins. To do so, it looks at how human evolution has been portrayed in the past, in ways that reinforce Western biases and alienate and dehumanise living Africans. Then it works to remove those biases and make our understanding of human evolution scientifically accurate, broadly relevant and inclusive.

This is part of a broader reckoning happening in museum practice globally. Many institutions are reconsidering their collections and their roles as participants in colonial practice, including theft of artefacts and bodies. It is essential to consider how museums continue to alienate precisely the people who are owed reparations.

We learned an enormous amount while developing this exhibit, which is now a permanent fixture at the museum. Our hope is that these four central lessons could help other institutions locally and internationally to reconsider how they portray human evolution – and to understand why it matters.

A learning process

1. Make the co-creation process as inclusive as possible:

The *Humanity* exhibit was created through a collaborative process involving curators, researchers, collections managers, designers, conservators, educators, artists, heritage practitioners, community members, public participants, procurement specialists, service providers and administrators.

In this process, our plans changed often, when a diversity of lenses showed us where content and design missed the mark. The product is radically different from what we thought we would create. It is richer for that.

2. Lose the "great white explorer" narrative:

The history of human evolution is traditionally told as a story of white male exploration and discovery. South Africans learn in school and through the media about Raymond Dart, Robert Broom, Phillip Tobias, Lee Berger and other mostly foreign, English-speaking white men who are associated with important fossil discoveries in the country.

In contrast, we centred the exhibit's story on the diversity of people in South Africa and how that diversity came to be.

This was done through portraiture, genetic testing and interviews about cultural identity to explore, through individuals, what makes them "them". Interviewees spoke in the South African languages of their choice. This

exploration of our collective humanity was used as an inroad for understanding how evolution has worked to shape us into what we are today.

3. Own the problematic past:

Early South African palaeoanthropologists didn't only find fossils: they also often engaged in colonial, racist science, studying and measuring living people as models for our "primitive" ancestors.

Even the iconography of human evolution has racist, colonial overtones. A Google Image search for "human evolution" will turn up a trove of images depicting evolution as a line of hominins transitioning from more ape-like to more human-like. Often, the earlier ones are more hunched, hairier and darker, suggesting a link between black bodies and primitiveness, while the end product is a striding white man.

We put in place a number of interventions to deal with this legacy. The exhibit openly discusses race and racism, as well as the history of palaeoanthropology and institutions like Iziko Museum in propping up racist science. This is crucial because, although racial categories are meaningless biologically, they have had adverse social effects.

Museums are a Western notion. Putting heritage objects behind glass and on pedestals in sterile spaces is not only alienating, it can be downright offensive. The *Humanity* exhibit does not fit traditional museum aesthetics.

The theme of human connection is threaded through the whole exhibit. This shows how human evolution is not linear, but rather a braided stream – a view consistent with cutting-edge science. It also shows how the origin of our species is Pan-African and includes contributions from beyond Africa, and how this has made humanity more variable and more resilient.

4. Break the glass boxes:

Probably the biggest surprise as we developed this exhibit, at least for those of us raised going to museums, was how alienating museums actually are to most people.

Museums are a Western notion. Putting heritage objects behind glass and on pedestals in sterile spaces is not only alienating, it can be downright offensive. The *Humanity* exhibit does not fit traditional museum aesthetics. Instead, visitors are drawn into a welcoming space enveloped in a reed structure that resembles a giant basket, or a hut, staring up at the African sky. A wall of 100 handaxes is there to be touched, as are some important fossil casts. Gone are the scientific illustrations and realistically painted past landscapes. Instead, stories are communicated using art that is familiar to everyone – photographs, videos, animations, comic strips and graffiti.

Everyone's story

The story of humanity is everyone's story. A story of migration and mixing and adapting to new contexts. It is a story of the connection of people along the long-braided stream of our shared origins. It is important that we tell it that way.

This article first appeared on *The Conversation.*





The Iziko South African Museum

The South African Museum, founded in 1825 and situated in the historic Company's Gardens, has seen millions of visitors, attracted by the vast historical collection the museum has to offer, ranging from fossils to ancient insects and historical tools. A visit to this museum is not only culturally enriching, but the impressive natural collection will also ignite a spark of interest in learning more about the creatures with which we share our planet.

The South African Museum houses more than one-and-a-half million specimens of scientific importance. The collections now range from fossils, which are almost 700-million years old to insects and fish caught last week. There are also stone tools made by people 120 000 years ago, traditional clothes from the last century, and T-shirts printed yesterday.

The South African Museum was founded in 1825. In 1897 the Museum moved to its present building in the historic Company's Garden. Since then, millions of visitors have wandered its halls and corridors to be stimulated and inspired by its collections and exhibitions. They have left the Museum with a better understanding of the earth and its biological and cultural diversity, past and present.

www.iziko.org.za



Twenty years ago, South Africa had 40 qualified astronomers – all white.

How it's opened space science and developed skills since then

By mid-2023, the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme had produced 439 honours graduates and 215 master's degrees in Astrophysics and Space Science. Another 27 honours and 21 master's students are set to graduate shortly, and similar numbers of students will complete their degrees in 2024.

By Patricia Ann Whitelock, Former Director of the South African Astronomical Observatory (SAAO) and honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town, (SAAO); Daniel Cunnama, Science Engagement Astronomer, SAAO; and Rosalind Skelton, Southern African Large Telescope Astronomer and Head of Research at the SAAO, National Research Foundation

South African astronomy started an important journey two decades ago, when an initiative to attract and train future scientists in the field welcomed its first group of students under the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme.

World-class facilities have been established during this period, the most notable of which are the Southern African Large Telescope (SALT) and the MeerKAT radio telescope, a precursor to the international Square Kilometre Array (SKA). They add to the South African Astronomical Observatory and Hartebeesthoek Radio Observatory, which existed already.

The National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme has played a vital role in ensuring that these facilities were not simply operated for the benefit of international partners. It has also contributed individuals with crucial data analysis skills to the country's growing high-tech workforce.

As astronomers who were part of this journey – organisers, contributors and beneficiaries – we are using the 20th anniversary date to reflect on the programme's impact and its significance for the country.

South African astronomy started an important journey two decades ago, when an initiative to attract and train future scientists in the field welcomed its first group of students under the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme.







The history

South Africa's astronomical history, spanning over 200 years, took a leap in 2000 with the Cabinet's approval of the construction of SALT.

Beyond its scientific impact, the idea was to attract and nurture young talent, addressing shortages in scientific and engineering fields in South Africa.

At the time, there were only about 40 astronomers with PhDs in the country. All were white. This was the result of the racially skewed education system during the apartheid era.

In 2001, astronomers began preparing for SALT and future projects. The SKA emerged as an opportunity to host a big international radio telescope which could, among other things, investigate the beginnings of the Universe. Unfortunately, the shortage of South African astronomers posed a threat to the success of the two projects and to Africa's participation.

Developing a pipeline

Becoming a professional astronomer requires a PhD in Astronomy, Physics or a related subject. It takes about 10 years to qualify after completing secondary school. At that time, fewer than 1% of black school leavers qualified to study for a BSc in Physics or Astronomy.

It became clear that universities needed to start cooperating if the landscape was to change. The country's small astronomical community was spread across eight universities and two national facilities.

A decision was taken to pool resources to establish the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme. In this way, university lecturers and professionals at the national observatories could all contribute to teaching, while students could choose from a wide range of research projects.

This collaboration, including the organisation that became the South African National Space Agency (SANSA), focussed on guiding students through honours and master's degrees. It emphasised cooperation over institutional interests and targeted young scientists, especially those from previously disadvantaged communities.

The primary objectives were clear:

- attract students post-Bachelor of Science
- recruit from other countries in Africa
- entice school leavers into BSc Physics programmes
- make participation in the programme a selling point for all participating universities.

Bursaries covering basic needs were crucial to attract smart students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Funding from private foundations, particularly from the Ford Foundation, the Mellon Foundation and the Canon Collins Trust, added to very basic grants from the National Research Foundation.

Today, the Government's Department of Science and Innovation is the primary funder.

Grants are adequate, rather than generous. Nevertheless, students have developed successful careers through the programme, transforming astronomy and space science in South Africa and beyond.

Programme participant Pfesesani van Zyl said: "The journey to SALT was a truly transformative experience for me … As a child growing up in a small town, the notion of pursuing a career in astronomy seemed like an unattainable dream, especially as a female of colour… However, that visit shattered those limiting beliefs."

As former beneficiary Roger Deane, now a professor at the University of the Witwatersrand, put it, "the programme was pivotal in giving us exposure to the leading astronomers in the country… This was extremely helpful in assessing astronomy as a career."

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Track record

By mid-2023, the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme had produced 439 honours graduates and 215 master's degrees in Astrophysics and Space Science. Another 27 honours and 21 master's students are set to graduate shortly, and similar numbers of students will complete their degrees in 2024.

A 2023 survey of programme graduates had 230 respondents, including 53 graduates from 19 other African countries. The largest numbers were from Uganda, Madagascar, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia and Sudan. Many have returned home.

Former participant Miriam Nyamai said: "Collaboration with international researchers through the programme enabled me to do world-class research, attend international conferences and give talks on my work."

Impact

The impact of the programme's graduates extends far beyond academia. Many have embarked on successful careers across diverse sectors, including industry, education and government.

Graduates have participated in exciting astronomical discoveries. These include producing the first images of black holes with the Event Horizon Telescope, finding some of the most distant galaxies yet known, and using SALT to investigate the remnants of some very massive binary stars and unusual active black holes at great distances.

The work of many individuals has been recognised by national and international bodies and programme graduates are in key teaching and research posts in South African universities. Over 30 are employed in the astronomy national facilities and SANSA, while some have prestigious positions elsewhere in the world. South Africa now has over 200 qualified astronomers, not all of them from the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme.

Nevertheless, it remains a challenge to fill vacant astronomer posts in South Africa. Many factors contribute to this, including funding, opportunities outside academia and the lack of clear career paths. The National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme can only ever be part of the solution to these complex systemic problems.

Future directions

The programme has evolved since its establishment. Students now have to navigate extensive volumes of intricate data of different kinds, from various sources. Machine learning and artificial intelligence are indispensable. Students must know what these tools can and cannot do as they push the boundaries of our comprehension. This is a challenge for both students and their mentors.

The main obstacle now lies, as it did 20 years ago, in helping university staff to collaborate across institutions in such a way that their work is recognised and rewarded.

This requires senior administrators to understand that inter-university collaborations are an investment in their own institutions as well as in the advancement of South African science.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the National Astrophysics and Space Science Programme, a two-day symposium was organised in January 2024, hosted at the University of Cape Town in South Africa.

This article first appeared on *The Conversation*.





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Collaborating on road infrastructure development will drive Africa's integration ambitions

Achieving Africa's integration goals is intrinsically linked with the development of the continent's road infrastructure. By working closely together, roads agencies have an important role to play in helping to enable regional free trade, connectivity and turn Africa's integration ambitions into a tangible reality.

By Thabiso Malahleha
Head of Strategy, South African National Roads Agency Limited

Thanks to rapid technological progress in the world, transport systems from road design and structure innovations to vehicle-tracking solutions and the provision of real-time traffic surveillance, have evolved for the better in recent years. These advances have enabled continued growth in the number of people and vehicles making use of roads across the world – and that growth necessitates that the development, management and maintenance of the world's physical road infrastructure at the very least keeps pace, or even accelerates over time.

In light-duty vehicles alone, the Fuel Freedom Foundation estimates that by 2050, there will be about three billion vehicles on the road worldwide, up from one billion at present. In Africa, the automotive industry is expected to grow from 1.33 million units in 2023 to 1.78 million units by 2028. Over the same period, African cross-border freight transport is expected to grow by about 4.5% as multiple African trade agreements and the increasing penetration of e-commerce in the region come to fruition.

This increase in trade and vehicles needs to be catered for through, among other things, further road infrastructure development on the continent, serving as a catalyst for economic integration and growth. The significance of improved

The South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) is not merely the custodian of South Africa's national road network; it embodies a commitment to fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the African continent. SANRAL's long-term strategy, Horizon 2030, expresses the aim to explore international cooperation and business opportunities, particularly through collaboration and the sharing of expertise.

connectivity across the continent cannot be overstated and this need is recognised by governments, agencies and institutions within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and beyond.

Collaborating towards integration

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement and its commitment to developing and creating extensive trade-related infrastructures, aim to create a single market for goods and services, enabling better movement of both people and goods across the continent. With the region's trunk road network carrying African trade worth an estimated US$200 billion annually, these corridors will stimulate inter-regional trade and market integration, as well as expand Africa's participation in the global trading arena.

The Maputo Development Corridor and Kazungula Bridge development are examples of transnational projects that have proved to be game changers for economic development, trade and mobility.

The Maputo Development Corridor, the first regional application of the economic corridor concept, links South Africa's Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the highly industrialised Gauteng provinces with Mozambique's Port Maputo. The 590-km N4 highway plays a significant role in facilitating market access, building integrative infrastructure and bringing countries together.

The Kazungula Bridge development, linking Botswana and Zambia, has opened new opportunities for trade and tourism in the SADC. Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana are all within a distance of 100km and the border can handle significantly more trucks per day than the previous boat service, reducing the time and cost of moving freight, promoting growth and encouraging tourism.

Of course, bringing life to economic corridors requires significant collaboration efforts to drive the construction of roads and bridges, establish processes and regulations, ensure funding and coordinate the logistics that bring it all together.

The SADC bloc has been a major driver of harmonising various regional road infrastructure policies and adopting plans and strategies to guide development into the future, while organisations such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) play an essential role in investment into roads infrastructure that supports cross-border trade.

Sharing knowledge and skills

The South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) is not merely the custodian of South Africa's national road network; it embodies a commitment to fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the African continent. SANRAL's long-term strategy, Horizon 2030, expresses the aim to explore international cooperation and business opportunities, particularly through collaboration and the sharing of expertise.

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In line with this, SANRAL established a strategic partnership with the Development Bank of Southern Africa to enable road infrastructure development and promote the agency's expertise to other African markets. With 25 years' experience as a provider of road infrastructure and a source of considerable expertise in the fields of engineering, tolling, asset management and operations, SANRAL pursues opportunities to build the capacity of other road authorities on the continent by providing commercial engineering advisory services where feasible.

SANRAL is home to an important pool of expertise with experienced professionals who have participated in the design and construction of the agency's priority projects such as the iconic Msikaba Bridge, part of the N2 Wild Coast Road upgrade; and the Mount Edgecombe Interchange, the largest interchange in the southern hemisphere.

SANRAL collaborates with African roads authorities in, for example, Botswana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, to bring other large projects to fruition. The agency frequently hosts visits by other African road authorities and aims to accelerate critical skills and professional capacity for road construction in South Africa and the broader African region through its Technical Excellence Academy.

Participation in fora such as the Association of Southern African National Roads Agencies further facilitates the sharing of information and knowledge and prioritises the improvement of road safety standards across the SADC.



Climate-resilient roads

As the impact of climate change continues to grow, road infrastructure must evolve to become more climate resilient. By incorporating innovative engineering solutions to withstand extreme weather conditions, governments and roads agencies must ensure the longevity and adaptability of road networks, contributing to a sustainable and environmentally conscious future.

Internationally, significant work is being done to find climate-resilient solutions for road surfaces and in South Africa, SANRAL's commitment to working towards a sustainable transportation system is evident in its collaboration with the Sustainable Transportation Research group in Civil Engineering at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The group is researching the performance of sustainable road materials, including the use of advanced asphalt technology and alternative solutions; investigating nano-emulsions, recycled plastic and modified recycled concrete; and considering innovations such as self-healing asphalt and pavement sensing.

Achieving Africa's integration goals is intrinsically linked with the development of the continent's road infrastructure. By working closely together, roads agencies have an important role to play in helping to enable regional free trade, connectivity and turn Africa's integration ambitions into a tangible reality.





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Young physicist blazes trail in science and innovation

"I aim to continue bridging the gap between academia and industry, applying cutting-edge research to real world problems. One of my primary aspirations is to serve as a role model and inspire young black South Africans, particularly those from under-represented backgrounds, to pursue careers in science and academia."

By Sihle Manda
Public Sector Magazine

Dr Edward Nkadimeng is employed as a researcher at National Research Foundation's (NRF) iThemba LABS as part of the Technology Innovation Platform for the delivery of prototype South African electronics for the upgrade at the *Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire* more commonly known as CERN, the largest particle physics research facility in the world.

He has been instrumental in the development and optimisation of the project's Low Voltage Power Supply (LVPS) system. These are complex electronics systems that are required to operate under harsh radiation conditions for at least 15 years.

"Our goal is to deliver South African-manufactured electronics for this critical upgrade at CERN, contributing to the advancement of particle physics research for the ATLAS experiment. My work focusses on the development of test benches and the analysis of data to ensure the durability, reliability and performance of the LVPS system," he explained.

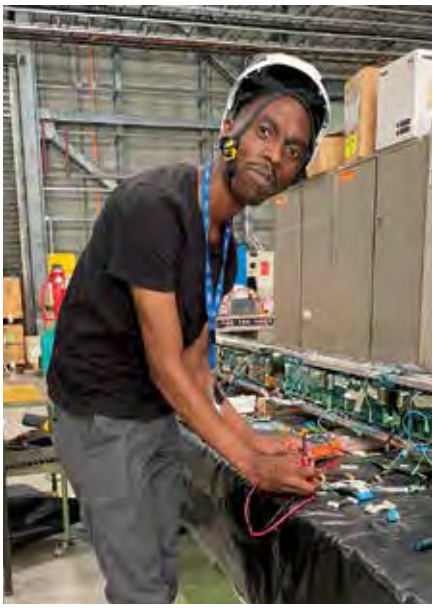
Dr Nkadimeng's work focusses on the development of test benches and the analysis of data to determine the properties and performance of the LVPS system. He and his team collaborate and contribute to the advancement of particle physics research for the ATLAS experiment. Through collaboration with international associates, his team has been able to leverage expertise and resources to enhance South Africa's capabilities in cutting-edge technology and innovation. His groundbreaking work is already earning him some acknowledgement. In June 2023, the *Mail & Guardian* recognised Dr Nkadimeng as a leading innovator in Technology and Innovation in its 200 Young South Africans initiative.

The recognition by the *Mail & Guardian* was "an incredibly humbling experience". "It serves as validation for the hard work, dedication and impact that my research and innovation efforts have had in advancing technology and driving societal progress. This recognition not only motivates me to continue pushing boundaries but also inspires other young Africans to pursue their dreams and make a meaningful contribution to their fields," he added.

Despite the accolades, Dr Nkadimeng continues to work hard. His biggest aspirations revolve around fostering innovation, driving technological advancement and making a positive impact on society. "I aim to continue bridging the gap between academia and industry, applying cutting-edge research to real world problems. One of my primary aspirations is to serve as a role model and inspire young black South Africans, particularly those from under-represented backgrounds, to pursue careers in science and academia."



> His journey showcases the transformative power of education, resilience in the face of challenges and a deep passion for scientific exploration.



"I want to show them that it is possible to break barriers and succeed in fields traditionally dominated by certain groups. By increasing representation and diversity, we can foster a more inclusive and equitable scientific community. I also aspire to make significant contributions to the field of particle physics through rigorous research and innovative discoveries," said Dr Nkadimeng.

Fascination with science

Dr Nkadimeng has come a long way from his early days growing up in Emalahleni. His interest in science deepened during his undergraduate studies at the University of the Free State, where he completed a Bachelor of Science (BSc) Degree in Physics and Chemistry in 2016. Driven by his fascination with understanding the fundamental principles of the universe, he decided to further his studies in the field of experimental particle physics.

Dr Nkadimeng went on to complete his BSc (Honours) Degree in Physics at the University of the Free State in 2018, followed by his BSc (Honours) at the University of the Witwatersrand and a PhD in Experimental Particle Physics at the same institution in 2022.

Throughout his academic journey, he has actively engaged in diverse projects, including machine learning, firmware development for electronic boards and radiation test campaigns for CERN electronics. Dr Nkadimeng said these experiences broadened his skillset and allowed him to apply his knowledge to a wide range of scientific challenges.

His journey showcases the transformative power of education, resilience in the face of challenges and a deep passion for scientific exploration. "While a career in science was not initially part of my plan, my early fascination with computers and technology fuelled my passion for problem-solving and innovation. As I grew older, I realised that a career in physics would provide me with the opportunity to explore my interests and contribute to pushing the boundaries of knowledge and technology," he said.

STEAM for economic growth

Dr Nkadimeng said that while the country had made progress in promoting Science, Technology, Engineering Art and Mathematics (STEAM), more could still be done. "Increasing investment in research and development, both through government funding and private-sector partnerships, is critical. It is also essential to improve access to technology and digital infrastructure, particularly in underserved areas," he added. "This includes expanding broadband coverage and providing more affordable devices to improve digital literacy and skills. Additionally, fostering a thriving tech start-up ecosystem and prioritising sustainable and socially responsible innovation is crucial for promoting STEAM and driving long-term economic growth."

One of the proudest moments in his career was being appointed to co-convene the official ATLAS Tile Calorimeter Phase II lower voltage (LV) and LV DCS working groups. The role, spanning from 2020 to 2023, allowed him to lead a team of experts in the development and implementation of critical components for the upgrade of the ATLAS experiment at CERN. "Being entrusted with such a significant responsibility in a prestigious international collaboration is a testament to the expertise and leadership I have demonstrated in my field," he says.

His other achievement was achieving a pass for the ATLAS Final Design Review by introducing the latest design of Electronics. "This accomplishment showcased my expertise and contribution to the field of experimental particle physics. It demonstrated the effectiveness of my research and innovation efforts, contributing to the development of cutting-edge technologies for scientific research.





Meetings Africa 2024: The entire continent benefits from its successes

There is an air of optimism sweeping the tourism sector following the sector's robust recovery and stellar performance last year.

By Patricia de Lille
Minister of Tourism

South Africa hosted Meetings Africa 2024 from 26 to 28 February 2024 at the Sandton Convention Centre – one of the most significant business events this year.

There is an air of optimism sweeping the tourism sector following the sector's robust recovery and stellar performance last year.

There is a collective anticipation within our sector as we eagerly aim to finally surpass all the pre-pandemic figures, especially concerning the number of international visitors who come to our shores.

This year represents a defining moment, and I am hopeful that it is the year in which we will be able to proudly declare our full recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and stride confidently towards a more sustainable tourism sector.

Information released by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) recently gives all the indication that we will indeed reach pre-pandemic arrivals this year.

The unleashing of remaining pent-up demand, increased air connectivity and a stronger recovery of Asian markets and destinations, are expected to underpin a full recovery by the end of 2024.

The report from the UNWTO also singled out the Middle East, Europe and Africa as the strongest performers for arrivals in 2023.

The latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer shows that Africa recovered 96% of pre-pandemic visitors.

These latest figures are extremely encouraging and are supported by our latest figures where we recorded 7.6 million international arrivals between January and November 2023. This was a remarkable 51.8% increase when compared with the same period in 2022.

The numbers show that the tourism sector is successfully driving travel to South Africa while shaping cultural exchanges and contributing to inclusive economic growth.

Africa continued to lead the way during the first 11 months of 2023 as South Africa welcomed 5.8 million visitors from the rest of the African continent marking a significant 75.5% of all arrivals, compared to the same period in 2022.

The hosting of the 2024 edition of Meetings Africa could not have come at a more opportune time.

Building from successes recorded in previous years, Meetings Africa 2024 enhanced the already upward trajectory of our sector's performance.

This year's event saw the attendance and participation of more than 350 exhibitors, 350 buyers, multiple members of local and international media and a gathering of over 3 000 delegates.

The international buyers were drawn from 51 countries, including some key source



markets such as the United States, India, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Germany, Brazil, Poland, Russia and Singapore.

These figures will surely translate into tangible economic benefits.

Last year's edition of Meetings Africa was a notable success as it attracted 273 hosted buyers and 355 exhibitors from 22 African countries and welcomed more than 2 900 attendees.

According to an economic impact study conducted by SA Tourism, the 2023 Meetings Africa event's total contribution to the South African economy was R388.5 million.

> The numbers show that the tourism sector is successfully driving travel to South Africa while shaping cultural exchanges and contributing to inclusive economic growth.

This comprised a direct economic contribution of R133.9 million and a further R254.5 million generated through indirect and induced impacts.

In addition, the verified figures show that Meetings Africa 2023 contributed to creating or maintaining 753 jobs within the South African economy. These included 451 direct jobs, 61 indirect jobs and 241 induced jobs.

Meetings and business events are an integral part of our tourism sector's success and for its contribution to the economy.

Since the beginning of the 2023/24 fiscal year, the SA National Convention Bureau (SANCB), in conjunction with South Africa's business event industry, have sourced and submitted 63 bids to host international meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions in South Africa between 2024 and 2029.

These 63 bids have a combined estimated economic value of over R1.2 billion and the potential to attract more than 46 000 international and regional delegates to South Africa during the same period.

South Africa has been successful in securing 16 bids (meetings, incentives and conferences) for the 2023/24 financial year, which is great news for the economy. These successful bids will bring in a total of R71million between 2024 and 2025, as well as attract 2 505 international and regional delegates.

The SANCB invested R5.7 million for the current financial year in bid submissions through its bid support programme to attract business events that align with the National Government's development priorities.

The conferences will also help to spread business events across the region, and they will take place in various locations, including Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Cape Town, Sun City, Parys, Skukuza and Potchefstroom.

When it comes to Meetings Africa, this event extends beyond mere macro-economic advantages; it encompasses the micro-economic benefits that stem from its hosting. Meetings Africa extends its reach beyond established businesses in the business events value chain by providing ample opportunities for small businesses within the ecosystem.

As an inclusive platform, the event fosters growth, enabling a diverse array of

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enterprises to thrive and contribute to the vibrancy of the industry.

Over the years, Meetings Africa has become a vehicle for advancing SMMEs within the sector.

This year was no different. In addition to networking opportunities for SMMEs and emerging entrants, Meetings Africa 2024 also provided opportunities for market access, business, skills development, and capacity-building through targeted seminars and workshops.

An integral component of Meetings Africa is the dedicated Business Opportunity Networking Day (BONDay) preceding the event. BONDay comprises educational sessions fostering thought leadership, knowledge-sharing and insights into global trends and local perspectives, proving particularly advantageous for SMMEs.

This year's BONDay hosted speakers from across the continent, with breakaway sessions delving into barriers and opportunities, innovation and technology trends, as well as sustainability and transformation.

Additionally, a specialised Speed Marketing Session during BONDay cast the spotlight on diverse product categories, serving as a business linkage platform for global buyers and media.

Through initiatives like the Sustainability Village, the event also fostered market access.

The Sustainability Village is a lively mini marketplace that showcases high-quality local products made by craftspeople and entrepreneurs. The economic and other benefits of hosting the event will reverberate even outside the walls of the Sandton Convention Centre and beyond the three days dedicated to the event.

The event serves as a rallying call for us to champion the African continent as a coveted destination for business events and as a tourist destination. We must leverage this platform to narrate our compelling story as Africans.

Through pre- and post-event tours, selected buyers and media personnel got a chance to experience the authentic taste of our beautiful country by visiting other parts of South Africa outside Gauteng.

This allowed us to profile our unknown gems, especially in the small towns and dorpies across the country, ensuring that those communities were not left behind.

This is not only a win for the host city, Johannesburg, the host province, Gauteng, or even our country, South Africa, alone. Meetings Africa is a Pan-African trade show; thus, the entire continent benefits from its successes.

This is an essential platform for us as Africans to collaborate and present the continent's compelling narrative to global buyers and audiences.

The event serves as a rallying call for us to champion the African continent as a coveted destination for business events and as a tourist destination. We must leverage this platform to narrate our compelling story as Africans.

This growth resonates from Cape Town to Cairo and from Morocco to Madagascar, benefitting every community and the myriad small players within our diverse industry. In our joint efforts, we must also prioritise promoting intra-continental travel, a pivotal factor in our recovery.

Simplified visa rules and expanded airline routes, courtesy of carriers like Kenya Airways and RwandAir, have enhanced accessibility to these destinations for business travellers. This collaboration sets the stage for mutual learning and progress.

A thriving business events industry in Africa will not only generate substantial social and economic impacts for our people but also drive the overall development of our continent.

In the inspiring words of the African Union anthem: "Let us all unite and toil together, to give the best we have to Africa, the cradle of mankind and fount of culture, our pride and hope at break of dawn. O Sons and Daughters of Africa, Flesh of the Sun and Flesh of the Sky let us make Africa the Tree of Life."


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Unusual ancient elephant tracks had our team of fossil experts stumped – **how we solved the mystery**

The feeling of shaking and vibration, which the San call *thara n|om*, is vital to the San healing dances, including the elephant song and elephant dance. Lines of energy, called *n|om*, are regarded as a vibrant life-giving force that animates all living beings and is the source of all inspired energy.

By Charles Helm
Research Associate, African Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience, Nelson Mandela University

Over the past 15 years, through our scientific study of tracks and traces, we have identified more than 350 fossil vertebrate track sites from South Africa's Cape south coast. Most are found in cemented sand dunes, called aeolianites, and all are from the Pleistocene Epoch, ranging in age from about 35 000 to 400 000 years.

During that time, we have honed our identification skills and have become used to finding and interpreting track sites – a field called ichnology. And yet, every once in a while, we encounter something we immediately realise is so novel that it has been found nowhere else on Earth.

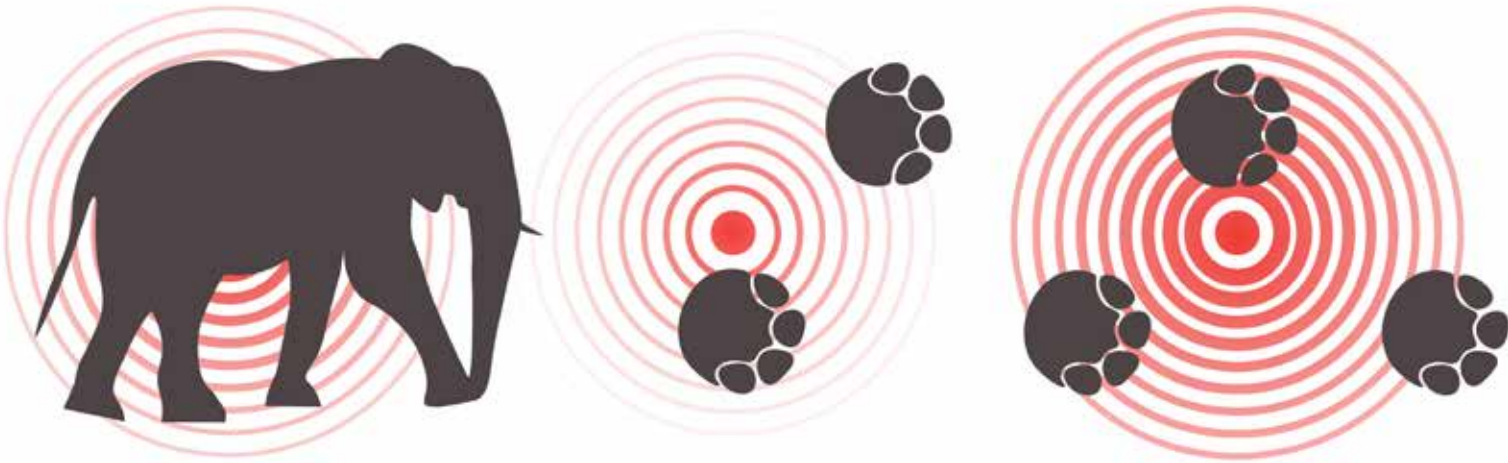
Such a moment of unexpected discovery happened in 2019 along the coastline of the De Hoop Nature Reserve, about 200km east of Cape Town. Less than two metres away from a cluster of fossil elephant tracks was a round feature, 57cm in diameter, containing concentric ring features. Another layer was exposed about 7cm below this surface. It contained at least 14 parallel groove features. Where the grooves approached the rings, they made a slight curve towards them. The two findings, we hypothesised, were connected with each other and appeared to have a common origin.

Elephants are the largest, heaviest land animals. They leave large, deep, easily recognisable tracks. We've documented 35 fossilised elephant track sites in our study area, as well as the first evidence of fossilised elephant trunk-drag impressions.

Elephants, like another group of massive land creatures, dinosaurs, can be viewed as geological engineers that create minor earth-moving forces on the ground they walk(ed) on. This can be related also to a remarkable ability that elephants possess: communicating by generating seismic waves. These are a form of energy that can travel under the surface of the Earth.

The feature we found in 2019 seemed to reflect just such a phenomenon: an elephant triggering waves that rippled outwards. After additional investigation and a thorough search for alternative explanations, we could report in a recently published study that we believe we've found the world's first trace fossil signature of seismic, underground communication between elephants.

Elephants, like another group of massive land creatures, dinosaurs, can be viewed as geological engineers that create minor earth-moving forces on the ground they walk(ed) on. This can be related also to a remarkable ability that elephants possess: communicating by generating seismic waves. These are a form of energy that can travel under the surface of the Earth.



Elephant seismicity

Since the 1980s, an ever-increasing body of literature has documented "elephant seismicity" and seismic communication through infrasound. The lower threshold of human hearing is 20Hz; below that, low frequency sounds are known as infrasound. Elephant "rumbles", originating in the larynx and transmitted into the ground through the limbs, fall within the infrasonic range.

Infrasound at high amplitude (it would seem very loud to us if at a slightly higher frequency) can travel further than high frequency sounds, over distances as great as 6km. Elephants have an advantage here. Lighter creatures cannot generate low-frequency sound waves through vocalisation. It is thought that long-distance seismic communication can allow elephant groups to interact over substantial distances and it has been shown that sandy terrain allows the communication to travel furthest.

Continuing the elephant-dinosaur analogy, we considered the multitude of publications on dinosaur tracks. We are aware of only a single example that exhibits possible concentric rings within a track, from Korea, and none that involve parallel grooves. This suggests something unique about elephants that generates concentric rings within tracks and leads to the associated groove features. Elephant rumbling provides a plausible explanation.

In our scenario at De Hoop Nature Reserve, we postulate that vibrations from rumbling travelled down the elephant limb and created the concentric ring features. They are reminiscent of some of the patterns that become evident when sprinkling sand onto a vibrating surface. The surface on which the concentric rings appear must have been just below the dune surface at the time. The parallel grooves would then represent a trace fossil signature of subsurface communication. We're not yet sure how old the trace fossil is; we've sent samples for testing.



Elephant seismicity is a relatively new field of study for scientists. However, those who have lived close to elephants won't be surprised at the idea of the animals communicating through vibration. Indeed, vibrations from elephant rumblings can sometimes be felt (rather than heard) by the astute observer. And it appears that this knowledge is not just recent.

The rock art experts on our team have identified and interpreted rock art that suggests the indigenous San people appreciated and celebrated this knowledge in southern Africa thousands of years ago. Elephants were of profound importance to the San and were prominently featured in their works of art. Several rock art sites appear to contain paintings of elephants in relation to sound or vibration.

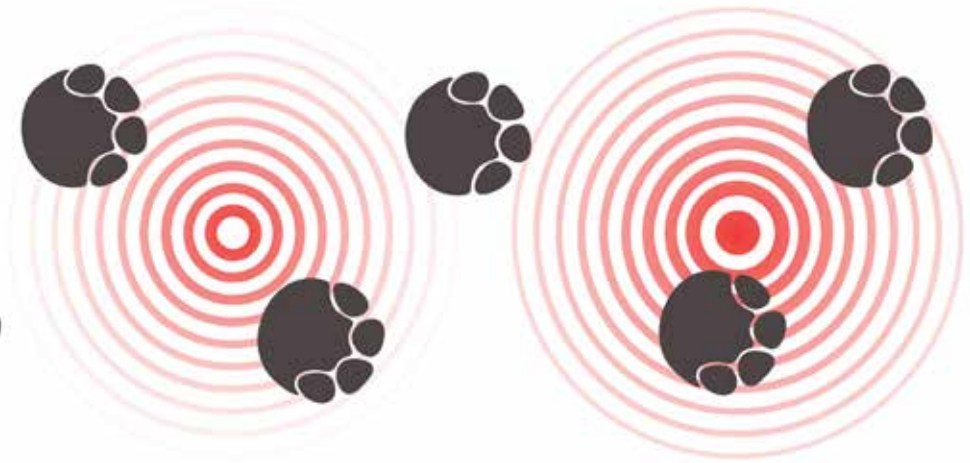
For example, at the Monte Cristo site in the Cederberg the artist has painted 31 elephants, in several groups. They are in a realistic arrangement. Fine red lines surround each elephant; zigzag lines touch the abdomen, groin, throat, trunk and specifically the feet. Many zigzag lines link the elephant to the ground. The finest lines are closest to the elephants and every elephant is connected to this set of lines. These are in turn connected to broader lines surrounding the elephant group, which radiate out and away from the elephants as concentric rings.

This is interpreted as the San artist's probable illustration of seismic communication between elephants. The feeling of shaking and vibration, which the San call *thara n|om*, is vital to the San healing dances, including the elephant song and elephant dance. Lines of energy, called *n|om*, are regarded as a vibrant life-giving force that animates all living beings and is the source of all inspired energy.

We believe that an understanding of elephant seismicity requires the integration of three bodies of knowledge: research on extant elephant populations, ancestral knowledge (often manifested in rock art) and the trace fossil record.

That elephant seismic communication might leave a trace fossil record has never been reported before, or even postulated. Our findings may have the potential to stimulate multidisciplinary research into this field. This could include a dedicated search for sub-surface patterns in the sand in the vicinity of modern rumbling elephants.

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.





Meteorite discovery: unusual finds by South African farmer add to space rock heritage

The South African Heritage Act No. 25 of 1999 classifies South African meteorites as national heritage items that cannot be damaged, removed, exported or traded without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Agency.

By Roger Lawrence Gibson
Professor of Structural Geology and Metamorphic Petrology, University of the Witwatersrand

Meteorites – fragments of rock that have fallen to Earth from space in spectacularly fiery meteors – have been the subject of public fascination, awe, myths and even religious worship for thousands of years.

In recent decades, they've become a cosmic Rosetta Stone for scientists investigating the birth throes of our solar system and the organic life it hosts. Meteorites are therefore rightly classified by many countries as an integral part of communal natural heritage and are sought after by museums and private collectors.

South Africa, where I research meteorites, is one such country. In late 2021, my colleagues and I were alerted to an exceptional opportunity. Gideon Lombaard, a farmer in the Northern Cape province, reached out to us because he suspected that he had found two meteorite fragments. If proved true, these would be the first meteorite discoveries in South Africa in over 40 years.

After subjecting the fragments to a range of tests, we were able to show that the two fragments, despite being found only a kilometre apart, were unrelated – that is, they must have come from different meteor events.

In August 2023, the Meteoritical Society's nomenclature committee, which adjudicates all new meteorite submissions, formally accepted our proposal that the two fragments were different meteorites. They approved our suggested names – Brierskop and Wolfkop – after landmarks near their discovery sites.

Mr Lombaard's double discovery raises South Africa's tally of confirmed meteorites to 51 – the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. Namibia has 18 confirmed meteorites, Botswana 12, Zimbabwe four and Lesotho and Eswatini one each. But, compared with the over 14 000 meteorites recovered from the Sahara Desert, the number of

recovered southern African meteorites is extremely small. A concerted national meteorite education awareness and search programme could thus reap great benefits.

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What is a meteorite?

A meteorite is a piece of rocky space debris that survives collision with Earth. Meteorites are usually discovered by someone who notices an unusual rock while out walking (called a "find"). However, around 2% of meteorites are classified as "falls" because they are retrieved after witnessed meteor fireball events.

The meteorite family comprises several different types of rocks. A very small proportion of the approximately 72 000 meteorites recovered globally to date are actually pieces blasted off the surfaces of the moon and Mars by giant impacts. The overwhelming majority appear to have originated in the asteroid belt that lies between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. They are the shrapnel from past collisions between some of these asteroids that were ejected into orbits that have ended up crossing Earth's path.

Discovery and forensics

Finding meteorites is not easy, which makes Mr Lombaard's twin discoveries all the more significant. Because they originate in outer space, meteorites commonly contain iron in either metal or sulphide forms, both of which begin to deteriorate rapidly when they come into contact with free oxygen and water.

It is thus not surprising that nearly 80% of all meteorites have been found where arid climates aid their preservation, namely Antarctica and the Sahara Desert. Meteorites typically become coated in a dark fusion crust during their fiery passage through the atmosphere. That makes the white Antarctic ice and the pale-coloured Sahara bedrock and sand perfect backdrops for searchers.

Mr Lombaard discovered the two meteorites during routine farming activities. The Brierskop meteorite is a 21.19g chondrite, which he found on 18 September 2018. Chondrites are the oldest rocks in our solar system, dating back 4.567 billion years. It was only after he found the Wolfkop stone (also a chondrite, weighing 90.26g) one km away from the Brierskop site on 27 August 2021, that he reached out to determine whether these were, as he suspected, meteorites. Contacting an expert is the best approach if you think you've found a meteorite.

The initial pictures he sent were very promising; our primary task was then to establish whether they represented two pieces from a single fall or had originated from separate falls.

Our analysis, which involved slicing a small piece from each stone and grinding it down to produce an ultra-thin wafer through which light from a microscope could pass, was able to show that the meteorites have distinct differences.

Brierskop contains less iron metal and less iron in its main silicate minerals than Wolfkop. The chondrules (particles in the rock) are much better preserved in Brierskop, indicating that they experienced less heating in the parent asteroid before the impact collision that liberated it. We then used the greater oxidation (rust) of the Wolfkop stone to suggest that its fall predated that of the Brierskop meteorite.

South Africa's meteorite heritage

The South African Heritage Act No. 25 of 1999 classifies South African meteorites as national heritage items that cannot be damaged, removed, exported or traded without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Agency. The Meteoritical Society also requires that meteorites are properly stored and conserved at accredited institutions such as museums and universities for future research. Wolfkop and Brierskop are now stored at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, which is an accredited repository.

An average of between 10 and 50 meteorites are estimated to hit Earth's surface every day. Technology will help drive new discoveries. In recent years an increasing number of countries have installed camera networks (such as NASA's CAMS) designed to record the trajectories of meteor fireballs that can then be triangulated to try to locate the fall site. The power of citizen science is also being harnessed in many places in the form of volunteer ground searches for fallen meteorites.

Prior to the two recent discoveries, the *Meteoritical Bulletin Database* listed 49 meteorites as having been satisfactorily proved to be from South African sites. Mr Lombaard's double find takes the country's meteorite inventory above 50. There's no doubt that more are just waiting to be found.

This article was first published on *The Conversation*.



De Berg Nature Reserve declared **30th Ramsar site**



De Berg Nature Reserve is located along the headwaters of the Dwars River in the highest part of Mpumalanga, approximately 20 kilometres north of the town of Dullstroom and lies adjacent to the Verloren Valei Ramsar Site.

By Barbara Creecy
Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs

The declaration of De Berg Nature Reserve as South Africa's 30th Ramsar site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance has been a welcome announcement.

The Ramsar Convention encourages the designation of sites containing representative, rare or unique wetlands, or wetlands that are important for conserving biological diversity.

The conservation and restoration of wetlands is crucial to achieving many of our national and global sustainable development goals. Estuaries, marshes and *vleis*, rivers and lakes and the biodiversity that they preserve matter for our health, food supply, tourism and jobs.

Wetlands are vital for humans, ecosystems and our climate, providing essential ecosystem services such as water regulation, including flood control and water purification.

Through the Working for Wetlands Programme, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has invested over R1.4 billion in the rehabilitation of 1 873 wetlands and created 43 662 jobs.

The programme commenced in the year 2000 and is being implemented in all nine provinces of South Africa by a dedicated team of experts working closely with communities.

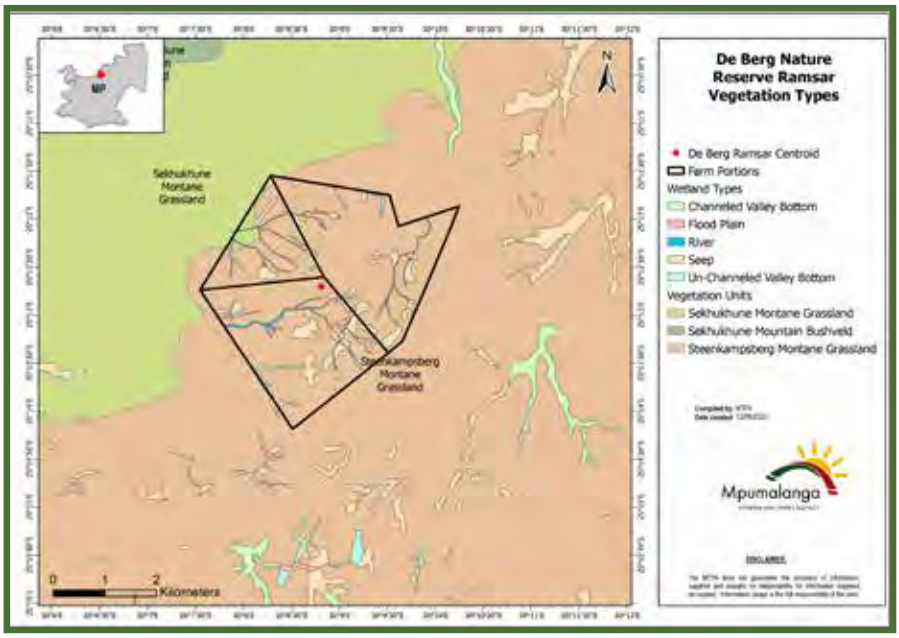
De Berg Nature Reserve is located along the headwaters of the Dwars River in the highest part of Mpumalanga, approximately 20 kilometres north of the town of Dullstroom and lies adjacent to the Verloren Valei Ramsar Site.

At an elevation of just over 2 300 metres above sea level, the Ramsar site contains the highest altitude wetlands in Mpumalanga, consisting of numerous valley bottom, seep wetlands and mountain streams, and represents some of the most pristine and habitat diverse watercourses in the South African grassland biome.

The Ramsar site, which is a biodiversity hotspot, not only supports numerous pristine headwater wetlands but also numerous



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threatened, critically endangered and vulnerable species of plants and animals.

The site falls within the Lydenburg and Sekhukhune centres of plant endemism, and has a total of 878 indigenous plant species, which includes 30 plant species that are threatened and near threatened, and includes a new species of Bulbine, (*B decastroi*), which can be found in the valleys of the reserve.

This site also has 18 species of frogs, 71 reptile species, 432 bird species and a 120 mammal species, including Vandam's girdled lizard (*Smaug vandami*), various crane species such as blue crane and grey-crowned crane and mountain reedbuck.

Many of these species are also rare and vulnerable species. They include flocks of up to 30 of the vulnerable Southern Bald Ibis, which roosts on the cliffs above Ibis Falls, one of 10 iconic waterfalls that can be found at the site.

Although wetlands cover less than 3% of South Africa's land area, they offer diverse benefits that enrich human well-being.

Wetlands are increasingly regarded in South Africa as socio-ecological systems as opposed to only ecological systems.

Many of the country's wetlands are in urban areas and are often the last remaining open areas for recreational use by the public.

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) – an entity of DFFE – is also actively contributing to wetland conservation through its comprehensive approach to mapping and understanding this critical ecological infrastructure, emphasising that informed action today can make a significant difference for the future of wetlands, human well-being and biodiversity.

Strategic water source areas are crucial to South Africa's water security, and various SANBI projects provide insight into land use and protection levels in these strategically important national assets.

The designation of De Berg Nature Reserve as South Africa's 30th Ramsar Site under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance coincides with World Wetlands Day (2 February) which was commemorated under the theme *Wetlands and Human Wellbeing*.

Once designated, these sites are added to the Convention's List of Wetlands of International Importance and become known as Ramsar sites. In designating a wetland as a Ramsar site, countries agree to establish and oversee a management framework aimed at conserving the wetland and ensuring its wise use.

Through the development of partnerships to monitor, protect and rehabilitate wetlands, by ensuring our wetlands are kept free of litter and invasive alien plant species and by ensuring that we follow best practices to ensure that wetlands are sustainably used for their services we show our appreciation for and acknowledge the value of wetlands and ensure that they remain in place to provide future generations with the same services.







Penguins at Boulders Beach, Cape Town

Flying the FLAG

Inspiring young minds: Dricus du Plessis' journey to victory



In the heart of Toronto, fans from all corners of the world came together, gathering in anticipation, ready to witness history in the making. They were there to cheer on their favourite fighters, but for the South African faithful, the moment they had been waiting for had finally arrived. Dricus du Plessis, the pride of South Africa, was about to take on the ultimate challenge in mixed martial arts – a chance to claim the coveted Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) title.

The fight against Sean Strickland was nothing short of epic. It may have ended in a split decision, but for Du Plessis, it was the culmination of years of dedication, hard work and relentless determination. As the judges' scores were announced, the arena erupted and the first South African to hold a UFC belt was declared.

Du Plessis, like the legendary Springboks who conquered the Rugby World Cup, has proven that South Africans can rise to the occasion on the global stage. He showcased his tenacity, skill and unyielding spirit throughout the five-round battle, leaving no doubt that he deserved to be the champion.

What struck a chord with everyone, both in the arena and back in South Africa, was Du Plessis's immediate gesture after the victory. He asked for the South African flag, proudly draping it over his shoulders. It was a heartfelt reminder that this win wasn't just about him; it was a moment of immense pride for our nation. It sent a powerful message that South Africa can compete with the best in the world, not only in the realm of sports but in every aspect of life.

Dricus du Plessis' journey to UFC glory is more than just a personal achievement; it's an inspiration to countless youngsters with dreams of making it big in the world of sports. His victory reminds them that hard work, dedication and unwavering commitment can lead to success beyond imagination. His journey, from a relatively unknown fighter to a UFC champion, is a testament to the power of dreams and the unwavering pursuit of greatness.

Dricus du Plessis, the South African who dared to dream and worked tirelessly for 15 years, has left an indelible mark in the world of mixed martial arts. He has shown the world that even in the most challenging and competitive environments, intelligence and ingenuity can shine through. Du Plessis's victory is not just a win; it's a beacon of hope for athletes worldwide who aspire to achieve greatness.

www.thenewspaper.co.za

How Gqeberha artist Pola Maneli's work made its way to the world



Pola Maneli, a Gqeberha artist, got his big break unexpectedly. Now, his work has graced the cover of New York's most famous magazine and was sold to an Oscar-winning director.

Maneli's work has travelled a long way from the Eastern Cape. For the Gqeberha artist who decided to post some of his university work on social media, what would come thereafter was a whirlwind of unexpected moments.

After the Gqeberha artist shared an editorial illustration project that he did for his degree on Instagram, the "calls" from New York came. "I got a random email from *The New Yorker* for an illustration for a piece in the wake of the killing of George Floyd in 2020 in the US," Maneli shared in speaking to his former university, Nelson Mandela University. *The New Yorker* loved what he created and soon more illustration opportunities came, including the biggest yet.

In 2023, the artist got the chance to be part of creating one of the most iconic magazine covers, which featured Dr Martin Luther King for the annual MLK edition. A ton of thoughts surrounding socio-political discourse went into the creation, but Maneli chose to spotlight a very important side to the historical figure that isn't always spotlighted – that of being a father and a husband. A human.

Not only was the cover a big success, but it also caught the attention of Spike Lee. The Oscar-winning director ended up calling Maneli in what he describes to have been a "wild, wild, experience." "He told me that he'd like to purchase the original drawing of the cover."

Not to mention, Lee also went on to put Maneli's work in an art exhibition in Brooklyn. Of his interaction with Lee and gratitude to *The New Yorker*, Maneli shared: "We spoke about Johannesburg, art, politics, Brooklyn and his ties to Dr Martin Luther King Jr's family and his love for Morehouse College. Later, he purchased the original pen and graphite drawing of my *The New Yorker* cover, and I was content for that to be the end of the story.

"But, in keeping with his generous spirit, he's included that piece in his Brooklyn Museum exhibition, *Creative Sources*, a look into his history, passions and sources of inspiration. Insane. I am grateful beyond words to Spike, the Brooklyn Museum and the folks over at *The New Yorker* magazine's art department for the countless opportunities."

Today, Maneli celebrates having been in multiple publications, including *The Atlantic* and *The New York Times*, as well as a "Google Doodle." Despite his work being all over the world, he still calls Gqeberha home and has made his university, community and young artists from South Africa looking up to him, incredibly proud.

www.goodthingsguy.com

AFCON 2023: Bafana Bafana's rise to glory and national pride

In the aftermath of Bafana Bafana's valiant effort against Nigeria in the semi-finals of the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), a sense of pride and optimism permeated the air.

While the loss may have halted Bafana Bafana's march to the final, it did not dim the collective smile that adorned the faces of South Africans nationwide. This tournament had been a beacon of hope and progress for our national team, instilling a renewed belief in their capabilities.

The journey through AFCON 2023 had been nothing short of transformative for Bafana Bafana. The experience gained by the players, both on and off the pitch, was valuable.

From facing formidable opponents to navigating the pressures of international competition, each match provided valuable teamwork, resilience and sportsmanship lessons.

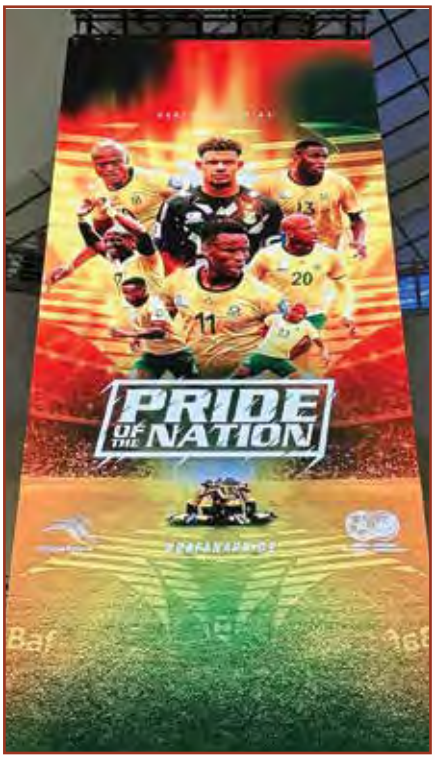
For the starting eleven, as well as those who didn't see as much game time, each moment had been an opportunity to learn, grow and contribute to the team's collective effort. The bonds forged in training sessions and team meetings fostered a sense of unity and camaraderie among the players.

To those players who may have felt disheartened by limited playing time, they were urged to embrace the bigger picture. Their mere presence in the squad signified a recognition of their talent and potential to serve their nation.

Every training session, every team meeting and every matchday experience was a steppingstone towards their personal and collective development.

Additionally, heartfelt wishes for a speedy recovery to those players who sustained injuries during the tournament. Their contributions, both on and off the pitch, were instrumental to the team's success.

Congratulations to Bafana Bafana and the entire tactical team for their exemplary performance throughout AFCON 2023. Your dedication, resilience, and passion for the game have brought joy to millions and rekindled the flame of hope for South African football. Well done, Bafana Bafana. The nation salutes you.



By Dr Andile Sokani on www.iol.co.za

Cape Town to host the Earthshot Prize 2024: A milestone for environmental innovation

Cape Town is set to host The Earthshot Prize 2024, marking a significant event on the global environmental calendar. This will be the first time the prestigious event is held on the African continent, signalling a growing recognition of Africa's crucial role in addressing global environmental challenges.



The Earthshot Prize, initiated in 2020 by Prince William, aims to search for inspiring and innovative solutions to problems facing the planet and is coming to Cape Town this November.

The event, dubbed Earthshot Week 2024, will span five days, culminating in an awards ceremony that celebrates 15 of the world's most promising environmental solutions. The Earthshot Prize is built around five key objectives, namely to:

- protect and restore nature
- clean our air
- revive our oceans
- build a waste-free world
- fix our climate.

These goals reflect a comprehensive approach to ensuring a sustainable future for our planet.

South Africa's selection as the host country is particularly poignant, given the continent's vulnerability to climate change despite its minimal contribution to global warming. Africa is home to a wealth of innovative environmental solutions and nearly 400 of this year's Earthshot Prize nominees are based in Africa, showcasing the continent's potential to drive global change.

The Earthshot Prize Awards Ceremony in Cape Town will not only spotlight the finalists' groundbreaking work but also bring together a diverse group of innovators, Earthshot alumni, partners, investors and philanthropists. This convergence aims to foster inspiring conversations and actions that can catalyse further solutions for protecting and restoring our planet.

Hannah Jones, CEO of The Earthshot Prize, emphasises the urgency of this decade, dubbed the "Earthshot Decade," to make significant strides in reducing CO2 emissions and protecting our natural world. The prize serves as a reminder of the power of human ingenuity and determination to overcome environmental challenges and create a sustainable future.

The prize's presence in Africa for the first time is a testament to the continent's burgeoning role as a hub of environmental innovation. It highlights the importance of supporting and scaling the solutions that emerge from regions most affected by climate change. The Earthshot Prize 2024 in Cape Town is not just an awards ceremony; it's a global platform that shines a light on the critical environmental work being done worldwide and the collective action needed to ensure a thriving planet for future generations.

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A look-back at South Africa's Grammy tally



South Africa's Grammy tally is stacking up thanks to a recent win by Tyla.

Beyond being hilarious, resilient, hopeful and helpful, South Africans are talented. According to a viral tweet on X by Africa Facts Zone, "South Africa has 13 Grammys, the highest in Africa." But there are actually more names that have contributed to South Africa's Grammy Tally, which makes the award count higher.

- Black Coffee: one Grammy and one nomination
- Dave Matthews: two Grammys and 16 nominations
- Ladysmith Black Mambazo: five Grammys and 17 nominations
- Lebo Morake: one Grammy and one nomination
- Miriam Makeba: one Grammy and nine nominations
- Nomcebo Zikode: one Grammy and one nomination
- Phil Ramone: 14 Grammys and 32 nominations
- Robert John "Mutt" Lange: five Grammys and 20 nominations
- Soweto Gospel Choir: three Grammys and five nominations
- Tyla: one Grammy and one nomination
- Trevor Rabin: one Grammy and six nominations
- Wouter Kellerman: two Grammys and four nominations
- Zakes Bantwini: one Grammy and one nomination

Special mentions go to Doja Cat (Amala Ratna Zandile Dlamini), who is half South African and has one Grammy, and Trevor Noah, who has hosted the Grammys for four consecutive years.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Eleven lions rescued from Sudan find home in South Africa



Sudan is currently facing heavy conflict, which has seen the need for organisations to evacuate animals that are being housed in the capital of Khartoum.

In November last year, Four Paws International evacuated 48 wild animals from the area. They were transported to Wad Madani for safekeeping, and brought to South Africa, where they are being kept at a big cat sanctuary.

The conflict has been ongoing, and these lions were left traumatised, weak and emaciated. They responded well to the care offered to them by the Four Paws teams and once their strength was up, were transferred to the care of Lionsrock Big Cat Sanctuary. Here they will continue to recover.

As Four Paws has a strict no-breeding policy, the rescued lions will be "spayed" to avoid any breeding in captivity. They are being placed in four interconnecting enclosures, separated by gender and behaviour and once settled in, the male lions will undergo vasectomies.

"We are glad that the tireless efforts of the Four Paws team, with the support of the Sudanese authorities and our global network, paid off. These 11 lions are ambassadors for hope and they symbolise a need for change in how humans treat animals.

"Sadly, more and more conflicts arise all around the world, causing humanitarian crises but also posing a threat to captive animals dependent on human care. We work globally not only to rescue wild animals from cruel and dangerous conditions but also to prevent their suffering in the first place.

"As we see the lions step on the grass in their new home after being stuck in the middle of a conflict zone for months, we are dedicated to care for and protect them for the rest of their lives. They will hear no more sounds of fighting or witness suffering among each other but enjoy the natural surroundings of our South African sanctuary," says Four Paws CEO and President, Josef Pfabigan.

Lionsrock Big Cat Sanctuary was chosen because it was established by Four Paws in 2006. It is one of 13 sanctuaries around the world that works alongside the organisation, taking in rescued big cats, including lions, tigers and leopards.

There are currently over 100 big cats at the sanctuary, rescued from private keeping, circuses, zoos or conflict zones all across the globe.

The sanctuary encompasses a total area of 1 250 hectares. The land is also inhabited by other typical South African species that live freely like zebras and antelopes, as well as a wide variety of bird species that have found refuge on the property.

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South African Virgin Olive Oil takes global crown in prestigious awards

De Rustica Estate, nestled beneath the majestic Swartberg Mountains, has achieved a feat of remarkable proportions, making South Africa swell with pride.

At the esteemed "International Quality Awards for Extra Virgin Olive Oil" – The EVOOLEUM Awards – De Rustica claimed the absolute best award, marking a significant milestone for South African olive oil on the global stage.

The gala, held earlier this year, at Espacio Rastro Madrid, stood as the pinnacle of recognition for Extra Virgin Olive Oil excellence, drawing producers from across the globe.

The South African Olive Industry Association proudly announced this momentous victory, extending heartfelt congratulations to De Rustica Estate and its visionary founder, Rob Still.



Still, a South African mining entrepreneur, embarked on the journey of De Rustica with a fervent desire to contribute meaningfully to his homeland. In 2005, driven by a passion for olive oil and a deep-seated connection to the land, Still set out to create something authentically South African and truly exceptional.

Inspired by his mother's love for landscape gardening, Still's childhood explorations of Johannesburg's diverse gardens instilled in him an appreciation for the beauty of nature. With meticulous planning and a keen eye for detail, he commissioned a comprehensive study to identify the perfect location for his olive farm.

The Klein Karoo, with its ideal climate and fertile soil, emerged as the chosen site, resonating with Still's personal connection to the region.

In late 2006, the planting of olive orchards commenced, spanning the picturesque landscapes of the Oude Muragie, Le Roux and Grootkruis properties. Today, De Rustica Estate sprawls over 125 hectares. The accolade bestowed upon De Rustica Estate reverberates far beyond the borders of South Africa. Spain's Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Luis Planas, personally congratulated the estate, acknowledging its pivotal role in elevating South African Extra Virgin Olive Oil to global prominence. De Rustica's Collection, Coratina, emerged victorious among 61 Spanish Extra Virgin Olive Oils in the Top 100, reaffirming South Africa's position among the world's finest producers.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Two world's best wins for Waterfall City

At the prestigious annual International Property Awards ceremony held at the iconic Savoy Hotel in London earlier this year, Waterfall Management Company (which recently rebranded to Waterfall City Management Company) walked away with the coveted Best International Mixed-use Architecture 2023-2024 award for Waterfall City.

It also won the Best International Developer Website for www.waterfallcity.co.za.



These international accolades were preceded by three Best in Africa 2023-2024 awards, including: Best Mixed-use Architecture, Best Development Marketing and Best Developer Website, with the latter two accredited to both Waterfall City Management Company and Attacq, the strategic development partner of Waterfall City.

Entries were judged based on criteria ranging from design layout and quality, architecture, services and security, to innovation, originality, marketing and commitment to sustainability.

Over and above these achievements, Balwin Properties were crowned the Best Leisure Development in Africa for the Munyaka Lifestyle Estate located in Waterfall City. The International Property Awards, now in its 32nd year, celebrates the very best projects and professionals in the industry across 45 residential and commercial categories.

Awards are split into four sectors namely, Architecture, Development, Interior Design and Real Estate, across nine regions covering Africa, Asia Pacific, Arabia, Canada, Caribbean, Central & South America, Europe, United Kingdom and the United States.

Over the past year, a panel of over 90 independent expert judges studied and assessed more than 2 000 entries from 126 countries to finally arrive at the winners.

Willie Vos, Chief Executive Officer of Waterfall City Management Company, said; "Receiving international recognition across various segments of these awards, such as architecture and marketing, continues to reinforce the excellent work that numerous teams involved in Waterfall City are delivering.

"There is so much passion and innovation that goes into every detail that makes up Waterfall City. From the state-of-the-art design of our buildings to the user-friendly interface of our website, it's about achieving excellence in all we do.

"And we look forward to continuing to create a place where people love to be – a smart city so admired, safe and sustainable that there is no better place to live, work, play and prosper. We are super proud of these awards and congratulate all our teams and partners involved on these achievements."

www.bizcommunity.com

Leanne Maiden: The first South African woman to conquer the world's toughest row

Despite calling herself an "ordinary woman," Leanne Maiden has done a most extraordinary thing. She has officially completed the World's Toughest Row and became the first South African woman to do it.



Maiden can cast any notions of her being an "ordinary woman" out the porthole because she finished the 3 000-mile journey.

An achievement that's made history, Maiden took something of a midlife crisis spurred by lockdown and turned it into an incredible adventure where she sailed the waves of resilience, isolation, bravery, pressure and dreams across the Atlantic on her boat, *Rieka*.

Maiden boasted her South African flag on Saturday, 17 February 2024, when she celebrated the end of the 5 000-kilometre odyssey she hoped would help charities in need and inspire minds in need of inspiration.

The row took her 66 days and five hours from La Gomera to Antigua. On the water, December to February became a lifetime.

To embark on an endurance challenge of this magnitude takes an extraordinary kind of willpower. To do something despite the doubt, is what puts the extra to the ordinary.

Besides preparations, weather conditions and other side effects that come with living on your own on a boat for so long, nothing will make or break your experience quite like willpower – and in that, Maiden has taught anyone who has ever thought they were not special enough to do something, a life lesson.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Eight-year-old dance sensation, "Klein Kwagga", steals hearts on *The Kelly Clarkson Show*



Eight-year-old dance prodigy, "Klein Kwagga", captivated audiences on *The Kelly Clarkson Show* with his mesmerising performance and infectious energy.

Hailing from South Africa, Dirkco Jansen van Nieuwenhuizen, also known as "Klein Kwagga", has charmed his way into the hearts of millions across the nation with his mesmerising moves and infectious energy but now he's reaching people around the world with his feature on *The Kelly Clarkson Show.*

It all began with a simple act that sparked a global phenomenon – a young kid's passion for dance, ignited during his sister's annual concert, swept across the Internet like wildfire. Who would have thought that a performance fuelled by love and enthusiasm would catapult "Klein Kwagga" into the spotlight, captivating audiences far and wide?

With every graceful step and exuberant twirl, Dirkco captured the essence of joy, his effervescent spirit radiating through every movement. His video, showcasing his talent and the power of unbridled passion, quickly became a sensation, garnering over 10 million views on TikTok within a matter of days.

The world is witnessing a new chapter in "Klein Kwagga"'s journey as he graced the esteemed stage of *The Kelly Clarkson Show.* With its illustrious history adorned with 15 Daytime Emmy awards, including accolades for Outstanding Talk Show Entertainment and Outstanding Talk Show Host, *The Kelly Clarkson Show* is the daytime show any dancing star would dream to be on.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Kingsley Holgate's Afrika Odyssey reaches Northern Africa



Legendary South Africa-based explorer Kingsley Holgate and his team are two-thirds of the way through their 41st humanitarian and geographic expedition which began in June 2023, and are now gearing up to reach some of the wildest and most isolated regions in central, north and west Africa.

Utilising new Defender 130s, the Afrika Odyssey expedition that began in June 2023, has already surpassed 40 000 kilometres along some of the most treacherous routes in Africa, withstanding torrential rains, excessive heat and record-floods in the past eight months.

This expedition is delving into the wild heart of 12 diverse African countries and has a strong conservation, culture and community focus. The aim is to reach 22 unique wildlife reserves, managed by the conservation NGO African Parks in partnership with the government of each country.

"Over the past 30 years of adventuring in every country on the continent, we've come to realise that Africa's iconic biodiversity and wildlife is under immense threat," said Kingsley. "For a long time, we've been asking the question: is there hope for Africa's wild spaces as well as the people who depend on it, in the face of burgeoning global demand for natural resources?"

"That's what spawned the idea for this expedition and there's good news. We've been privileged to see first-hand the incredible work being done to protect and restore vast tracts of wilderness and the frontline fight against criminal networks that profit from illegal trade in wildlife, logging and mining. We've heard gut-wrenching, personal stories of loss from rangers on the front line, alongside uplifting stories of hope that bear witness to the revival happening in many countries thanks to proactive governments and the positive impact it is having on both wildlife and neighbouring communities."

The expedition has now reached 15 of the 22 wildlife regions on their list. Starting in the northern tip of the Namib desert at Iona National Park in south-western Angola, it has journeyed through nine national parks in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi; reached the furthest and highest source of the White Nile in the mountainous rainforests of Nyungwe in Rwanda; tackled a difficult route to two remote wildlife parks in South Sudan; and nearly lost the expedition Defenders to the worst floods in 20 years at Garamba National Park in the remote north-eastern corner of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Afrika Odyssey expedition is also providing humanitarian support to communities living alongside these wildlife regions.

"Unusually high rainfall in the East and Central African regions have escalated malaria cases, especially in young children and babies," said expedition leader Ross Holgate. "The whole team also contracted malaria while in East Africa and we know from personal experience how deadly malaria can be. So, we've distributed over 7 600 long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets to date on this journey. With one mosquito net protecting on average a mum and two children, that's nearly 23 000 people safe from malaria."

"We've also provided 1 800 reading glasses to poor-sighted, mostly elderly people in these isolated areas. Additionally, conservation education forms an integral part of this expedition. Through our Wildlife Art programme, we've helped educate thousands of children living alongside African Parks-managed protected areas about the values of caring for their environment. They are the future guardians of these wildlife gems and it's important to pass on the baton of conservation, to ensure they continue to benefit from Africa's wildlife resources in the coming years."

"Ahead lies the most difficult part of the expedition, to reach seven wildlife regions in Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Chad and Benin," continued Holgate. "We'll be tackling dense rainforest conditions, difficult river crossings, vast desert and rocky mountain terrain where water and fuel will be hard to come by, as well as potential security threats. The logistical issues for this chapter are extreme."

Veteran expedition member 'Shova Mike' Nixon, one of only three people in the world to have completed all 19 Cape Epic Mountain bike races, will attempt to cycle 600 kilometres on a specially adapted Evo-bike through Chad's Sahel and Sahara desert to reach the World Heritage Site of Ennedi Natural and Cultural Reserve near the Libyan border.

The Afrika Odyssey's Scroll for Conservation – with hundreds of pages already filled with inspiring messages from community leaders and beneficiaries, park rangers, conservation partners and government envoys – will also complete the journey, as will the well-travelled Zulu calabash that is collecting symbolic water from all 22 African Parks-managed protected areas.

"We trust that the Zen of Travel will continue to ride with us," concluded Kingsley. "We need to showcase the inspirational potential of Africa's people and wild places – it is not all doom and gloom. We're raring to go for chapter three of this incredible journey, continuing the humanitarian work and meeting more passionate individuals who are dedicating their lives to this beautiful continent's wild heart and rural communities."

www.goodthingsguy.com

South Africa's Musa Motha joins Calum Scott on *America's Got Talent* stage

Calum Scott took to the *America's Got Talent* (AGT) stage to perform for the Grand Finale and South Africa's very own Musa Motha joined for a goosebump-worthy performance.

You Are the Reason by Scott is a powerful love ballad about overcoming obstacles to be with the one you love – it's goosebumps all on its own but add in the phenomenal talent of South African dancer Musa Motha and it's more than one can handle.

Motha was in Hollywood, taking part in *AGT: Fantasy League*. Motha, who became a household name after his remarkable journey on *Britain's Got Talent* in 2023, continues to inspire audiences globally with his resilience and talent.

During his time at AGT, he earned Simon Cowell's Golden Buzzer and left the audience in tears. His performance with Scott is notable because Calum got his own start thanks to being part of *Britain's Got Talent* in 2015 and also earned Simon Cowell's Golden Buzzer.

Scott gave Musa some words of encouragement for his journey ahead, win or lose.

"You are such an inspiration; you're so incredible; it is a pleasure and an honour to share the stage with you and this is just the beginning. No matter what the result is, you



are going to be a superstar!" Motha called the moment a dream come true and an honour. While Musa Motha did not go on to win the show, he won the hearts of the American and global public.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Ronwen Williams wins AFCON's best keeper award, Bafana Bafana gets fair play award



Ronwen Williams won the Africa Cup of Nations' Goalkeeper of the Tournament Award, announced after the final where hosts Ivory Coast sent the country into delirium beating Nigeria 2-1 in Abidjan.

Bafana Bafana also won the Fair Play Award and was the bronze medallists.

Bafana Bafana captain Williams' heroics helped his team to a first third-place finish since 2000 and included an unheard-of four stops in the penalty shoot-out in the quarterfinal against Cape Verde.

After a 2-0 defeat against Mali in Bafana Bafana's opener he kept five clean sheets. These came in the 4-0 group stage win against Namibia, 0-0 draw against Tunisia and 2-0 last 16 win against Morocco. There was also the 0-0 extra-time result in the quarterfinal against Cape Verde and goalless full-time third-place playoff result against the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Williams conceded a goal in the 1-1 result after extra time in the semifinal against Nigeria, who won on penalties. He made two saves in the third-place penalty shoot-out. After the two goals against Mali, the South African keeper only conceded once again in six matches.

Despite such impressive statistics, the Mamelodi Sundowns star would have had stiff competition from Nigeria keeper, Stanley Nwabali, who interestingly also plays in South Africa, for Chippa United.

Nwabali conceded twice in the final. Before that he conceded in the Super Eagles' opening 1-1 draw against Equatorial Guinea, then kept four clean sheets going into the final.

The Fair Play Award is determined by the total number of yellow and red cards accumulated by each team and was awarded to Bafana Bafana.

Africa Cup of Nations prize winners:

- Winners: Ivory Coast
- Finalists: Nigeria
- Third: South Africa
- Fourth: Democratic Republic of Congo
- Best Player: William Troost-Ekong (Nigeria)
- Golden Boot: Emilio Nsue Lopez, five goals (Equatorial Guinea)
- Best Goalkeeper: Ronwen Williams (South Africa)
- Fair Play Team: South Africa.

www.timeslive.co.za

South African boxer Jackson Chauke defeated Kaisy Khademi in London, winning the IBO Flyweight world title



Jackson Chauke showed his resilience and boxing prowess in the International Boxing Organisation's (IBO) Flyweight Championship match, walking away with the victory and winning title.

Jackson went up against Afghan-British boxer Kaisy Khademi in the minimum weight class. Jackson is known for his aggressive fighting style, but that, combined with his skill, endurance and years of experience, earned him the points needed to take the title.

The match has been called a round-for-round nail-biter as the opponents went hit for hit through twelve rounds. In the end, by way of a unanimous vote, the judges named Jackson Chauke, World Champion.

While Chauke's career has been predominantly local, he has competed internationally. He has held the World Boxing Council (WBC) International flyweight title since 2019.

The Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Zizi Kodwa, congratulated South African boxer Jackson Chauke for winning the vacant International Boxing Organisation (IBO) flyweight title.

"I congratulate Chauke for his excellent and inspirational achievement. He has raised the country's flag sky high. Chauke is an inspiration not only to South African boxers but to all athletes for his dedication and commitment to the sport. These qualities have driven Chauke to the IBO flyweight title at 38 years of age," Minister Kodwa said.

The Minister said Chauke was an experienced fighter who won a silver medal in the men's flyweight boxing event at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia.

Chauke has had a stellar career, which has culminated in his IBO flyweight title victory.

www.SAnews.gov.za I www.goodthingsguy.com

South African twins star in fascinating food Netflix documentary

A Netflix documentary is shaking up the dinner table and South African twins are stars in the study. If you haven't watched *You Are What You Eat: A Twin Experiment* and you care about your body, this is definitely some food for thought.

The docuseries puts a Standford University Study into the spotlight as it seeks to compare two ways of eating (omnivore versus vegan) to chalk down what the impacts of both are.

Because every person is so incredibly different in their genetic makeup, it is often difficult to get accurate results for these kinds of studies as the researchers indicate. So, in a first for this kind of diet comparison, the study cleverly called on the most genetically similar individuals – twins.

Not only does the show take us on the journey of the experiment's stars, but it also explores so many different avenues of food. From tracing why we are predisposed to eating what many of us eat in our daily lives, to exposing lesser-known truths in the agricultural industry and guiding us on how both of these impact the Earth.

Needless to say, the show is about a lot more than which diet is healthier. Each twin is given



one of the diets to follow for eight weeks. Despite being set in the United States, subjects came from different backgrounds, including the twins from South Africa.

Beyond the information-rich content of the show, Pam and Wendy Michelson bring fun, warm and playful flavours to *You Are What You Eat.*

The two live, work and laugh together and proudly represent their home city of Durban. As chefs who have their own catering business, *Amawele*, they are also committing to showing South Africa off proudly through a deep love for our food culture.

Of course, being part of the study meant that one of the twins had to give up meat, a base of many South Africans' favourite dishes. However, the creation of vegan biltong had us feeling a lot of respect for these two who wore their Rainbow Nation badges so proudly.

www.goodthingsguy.com

Creation Wines wins the 2024 V d'Or Award for Best Brand Experience

Dubbed the "Oscars of Wine" by Committee Chairperson Michael Chapoutier, the V d'Or celebrates business innovation and corporate social responsibility commitments among global producers in the wine and spirits industry. The V d'Or is sponsored by VINEXPO in Paris, France.

Among an impressive list of nominees across the world, the international judging panel chose Creation as the winner of this prestigious award. It is based on five key criteria, including the innovative and original quality of the brand experience, its personality and consistent quality.

According to the V d'Or committee, Creation's category represents the significant contribution brand experiences make in the wine industry.

"This is such an important recognition for Creation," says Brand Creative Director and co-founder, Carolyn Martin. "It is a journey we began over two decades ago with sustainability and innovation at the heart of what we do and key to how we chartered our course. We are blessed with a beautiful setting in the Hemel-en-Aarde and an enviable climate for producing fine wines such as our flagship chardonnays and pinot noirs.

"Creation's fine wine alchemy is a rare blend of art, science, our people and a sense of place. We live by 'what grows together, goes together' and create pairing menus that reflect the region. No one leaves our table without some sense of the journey we have taken together and the role they have played. This is what creates a memorable experience."

Submissions called for an extensive and 360-degree exploration of the brand. Judges were exposed to how Creation wines are affected by its terroir, reflecting a true sense of place. The entry also covered the importance of team contribution: the Creation team is encouraged to bring individual culinary heritage to the table, introducing their guests to unique, indigenous tastes and aromas. At the same time, wine lovers experience wines of rare balance, elegance and finesse. The combination results in a wellness experience with leaving guests feeling positively transformed and revitalised.

Of critical importance is Creation's impact on the surrounding community. Not only are Creation teams recruited locally, but they are also given vital technical and soft skills training. The team's support of the Pebbles Hemel-en-Aarde project, which provides schooling and nutritional meals to children from the local community, is well recorded. Creation now selects graduates from this project to develop what could become a life-changing career, starting in the tasting room or cellar.

"Making Creation's experience relatable is critical to our success and a positive influence on wine tourism," says Martin. It has been a stellar 2023/24 for Creation. The V d'Or Award follows



Creation's position as number one in Africa and number four on the World's Best Vineyards list. The estate furthermore scored 95 points for the Art of Creation Pinot Noir 2022 in the international Decanter Pinot Noir blind tasting, positioning them in the top five of the 273 wines tasted. In a recent Robert Parker Wine Advocate review of South African wines, the 2022 Creation Art of Pinot Noir came up tops among the 501 wines tasted, scoring an impressive 95 points.

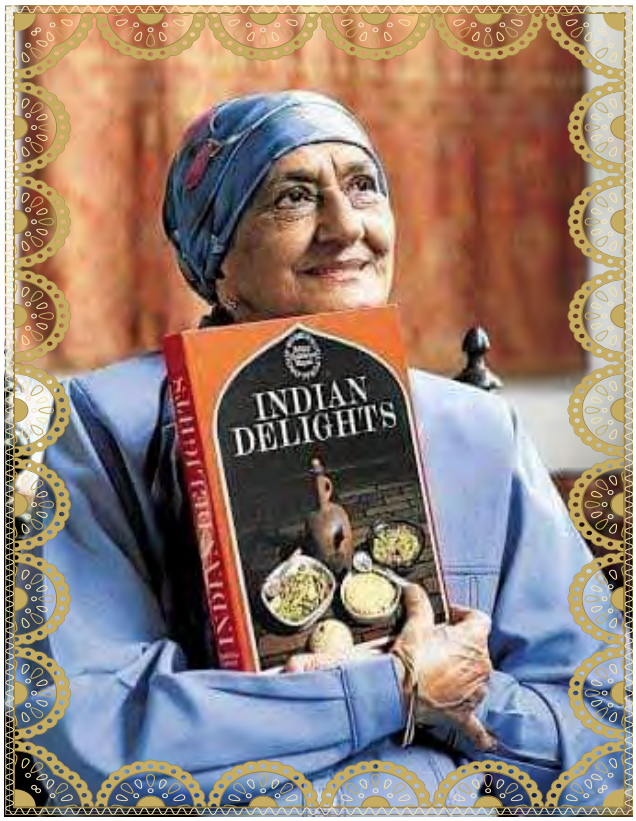
Creation was also placed first in two categories at the Great Wine Capitals Regional Best of Wine Tourism Awards: Wine Tourism Services and Art and Culture. What's more, the estate was awarded one-star status in The Eat Out Awards, South Africa.

www.creationwines.com





Table mountain, Cape Town



Zuleikha Mayat:

South African author and activist who led a life of courage, compassion and integrity

She embodied principled, faith-based, socially committed, inspired leadership based on special talents and indomitable resilience and upheld the dignity of all with whom she associated.

By Saleem Badat
Research Professor, History Department, University of the Free State

Few Indian South African women have achieved wider public recognition than author, human rights and cultural activist Zuleikha Mayat, who passed away on 2 February 2024. An honorary doctorate from the University of KwaZulu-Natal was just one of many awards bestowed on her during a life that spanned almost 98 years.

Mayat was a remarkable pioneer, evocative writer, public speaker, civic worker, human rights champion and philanthropist. She was a staunch supporter of Palestinian freedom and an end to Israeli apartheid and genocide.

I am a scholar of social justice issues in South Africa and have known Mayat for 49 years, through my friendship with her children. I assisted her with her last book and recently penned an e-book about her incredible life.

She embodied principled, faith-based, socially committed, inspired leadership based on special talents and indomitable resilience and upheld the dignity of all with whom she associated. In an interview in 2019 she said that she hoped to be remembered as "someone who interacted with everyone, no matter who they were, without prejudice".

Early life

She was born on 3 August 1926 in Potchefstroom in South Africa's North West province, the third-generation child of Indian-South African shopkeepers of Gujarati origins. In a country marked by racial divides even before the advent of apartheid in 1948, she learnt from her grandfather – as she later wrote – that intermingling across social divides and boundaries was important, as was "learning the languages and folkways" of other social groups.

Her father was generous to poor people and drummed into her, she later reflected, that "others have a share in our incomes". For her "the Bounty of God is not just for a select few but must be shared" so that all "can benefit".

The young Mayat read voraciously but racialism stifled her formal education. After Grade 6 at the Potchefstroom Indian Government School, there was no secondary school for Indians. Segregation (1910 – 1948), the precursor to apartheid, which legally entrenched racial classification and enforced segregation in all walks of life, meant separate schools for different "races" and the schools for whites would not enrol her.

Patriarchy also played a role. She was one of seven siblings; boys, like her three brothers, continued secondary education in other towns or cities "but sending daughters away was almost unheard of". And, so, her ambition to become a doctor was thwarted.

At age 14, as described in her 1996 book, *A Treasure Trove of Memories: A Reflection on the Experiences of the Peoples of Potchefstroom*, she discovered that she "had a gift as a writer, an intellectual orientation, and a capacity for expressing strong views".

In 1961, she edited the famous *Indian Delights*, a recipe book, which flew off the bookshelves "like hot samosas at a buffet". Several new editions have been published and it remains one of the best-selling books in South Africa today.

Mayat was a remarkable pioneer, evocative writer, public speaker, civic worker, human rights champion and philanthropist. She was a staunch supporter of Palestinian freedom and an end to Israeli apartheid and genocide.

A correspondence course boosted the "English in which (she) would come to write" prolifically. Later, she achieved a certificate in journalism.

A letter to the editor

1944 was a turning point. An 18-year-old Mayat posted a letter, signed "Miss Zuleikha Bismillah of Potchefstroom", to the newspaper *Indian Views*, which was published in Gujarati and English. The editor was MI Meer, father of human rights activist and scholar Fatima Meer. He published the letter, in which she "argued for higher levels of education for girls" in a "style that revealed not only a principled passion concerning this matter but also her sharp wit".

In 1954, aged 28, she invited friends to her small apartment in the coastal South African city of Durban. After supper, the Women's Cultural Group was founded. It sought to mobilise women for social change.

Fatima and her husband Ismail Meer roped Mayat and her husband Mohammed into their revolutionary activities. While hiding from the apartheid authorities, activist and future President Nelson Mandela slept at the Mayat home a few times.

In 1961, she edited the famous *Indian Delights*, a recipe book, which flew off the bookshelves "like hot samosas at a buffet". Several new editions have been published and it remains one of the best-selling books in South Africa today.

Between 1956 and 1963, Mayat contributed a weekly column to *Indian Views*. Her column, *Fahmida's World*, brought what academics Goolam Vahed and Thembisa Waetjen have described as her "signature liveliness and humour, as well as a sharp moral eye, to bear on various topics".

In her columns, she criticised social hierarchies, "ethnic and class prejudices" and racist and inhuman conduct, and commented on "the ethical triumphs and breaches of daily life".

Mayat was involved in numerous institutions and organisations. These included the McCord Zulu Hospital, Shifa hospital, Black Women's Convention, South African Institute of Race Relations, the Natal Indian Blind Society, and schools, old-age homes and mosques.

And, throughout her life, she wrote.

A life of writing

In 1966, she compiled *Quranic Lights*, a book of prayers. *Nanima's Chest* appeared in 1981 to promote the appreciation of traditional Indian textiles and clothing.

A Treasure Trove of Memories: A Reflection on the Experiences of the Peoples of Potchefstroom (1996) recounts growing up and life in her home town. South African scholar Betty Govinden called the book "an important contribution to autobiographical fiction in this country".

History: Muslims of Gujarat was published in 2008, the result of "inner urges" that compelled her to probe into her family's distant past.

A year later came *Dear Ahmedbhai, Dear Zuleikhabehn: The Letters of Zuleikha Mayat and Ahmed Kathrada 1979 – 1989*, based on 75 letters exchanged between herself and anti-apartheid giant Ahmed Kathrada that covered culture, politics and religion.

Then in 2015, she published *Journeys of Binte Batuti*, a travel memoir. And at age 95, Mayat published *The Odyssey of Crossing Oceans*, an enthralling and expansive narrative by a consummate storyteller, which embodied some of her philosophy of life.

Justice and peace for all

Post-1994, when democratic elections were held for the first time in South Africa, Mayat continued her fight for equity and social justice. She spoke out and marched against local and global injustices.

She was acutely aware that for many the world was an inhospitable place. She sought, like Nelson Mandela, "justice for all", "peace for all" and "work, bread, water and salt for all" – for people to be "freed to fulfil themselves".

This article first appeared on *The Conversation.*





Adventure tourism and extreme adventures in South Africa

And so the adventure begins...

Adventure tourism is important in South Africa because it provides an opportunity for tourists to explore the country's natural beauty while also contributing to the local economy.

Adventure tourism involves travelling to remote areas, exotic and possibly hostile areas for exploration or travel. Extreme adventures are a popular category within adventure tourism and it has grown exponentially all over the world in recent years with tourists visiting destinations previously undiscovered.

COVID-19 has driven enormous growth and participation across the extreme and adventure sports industry. With the world confined to the indoors during worldwide lockdowns, people yearned for adventurous and "outside" oriented activities to partake in. This has driven almost doubled participation and global equipment sales compared to 2019, leading to most retailers globally being totally sold out. A large faction of this growing community has been from the 12 to 24 demographic.

Governments across the world are now pushing adventure sports-based initiatives with the understanding of the positive physical and mental health benefits, job creation, infrastructure investment, education, tourism drive and sustainable environmental contributions these adventures have to offer. Adventure tourism is important in South Africa because it provides an opportunity for tourists to explore the country's natural beauty while also contributing to the local economy.

South Africa is a country with rich assets, excellent climate and an extensive array of adventure experiences on offer. Adventure tourism offers a strong growth opportunity in South Africa where post-pandemic national imperatives include transformation in rural areas, job creation, geographic spread and the development of sustainable tourism products. Adventure tourism has significant potential to uplift local communities through local economic development strategies due to the relatively low capital needed to establish many activities considered as adventure tourism.





When it comes to extreme adventures there is nowhere in the world to rival South Africa

With high mountains, raging rivers, deserts, dense forests, plains alive with big game and over 3 000 kilometres of coastline; South Africa boasts a vast number of high-octane adventures that are guaranteed to get the adrenalin pumping.

If aerial adventures are your preference, you can leap off a bridge with only a bungee cord around your ankles to arrest the plunge; scream in fear and delight as you swing off bridges or high wires into deep gorges; feel the rush as you zipline over the ocean or forest; brave a freefall into a system of nets strung across the inside of a cooling tower; abseil off sheer, overhanging cliffs; skydive out of tiny planes; paraglide off high ridges or golden dunes; or sign up for stomach-churning flights in acrobatic planes.

Many of these thrills are record holders – Gauteng is home to the world's highest Suspended Catch Air Device (SCAD) freefall; KwaZulu-Natal has the world's highest gorge swing and the fastest cable tour in southern Africa; the Original Extreme Zip Slide in North West was the world's longest, highest and fastest zip slide for its first six years of operation; while the adrenalin highs of the Eastern Cape include Africa's only SkyWalk Tour and the third-highest bungee in the world.

With momentous surf generated in the fringing Atlantic and Indian oceans and roaring rivers tumbling to the sea from its mountainous interior, South Africa offers fresh water and marine thrills aplenty. Running massive river rapids is exhilarating whether in a six-person rafts, plastic kayaks or one-person inflatable tubes.

"Kloofing", or canyoning as it's known in the rest of the world, is arguably even more extreme. Popular in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and the Western Cape, it entails compulsory jumps into brown, tannin-stained pools, abseiling down waterfalls and swimming through deep pools. The coastal equivalent – coasteering – involves scrambling over rocky promontories, jumping into the choppy seas and swimming across wild bays.

South Africa has the biggest and most radical surf break on the continent. Daring scuba divers can expect intimate encounters with various species of shark, rays, whales and other denizens of the deep while the unqualified can snorkel with seals and eyeball sharks and crocodiles from the relative safety of a cage. Perfect wind conditions and gorgeous beaches and lagoons have made South Africa a kitesurfing and wind-foiling mecca.

South Africa is world-renowned as an extreme cycling destination. There are numerous spots where courage and mountain biking skills can be tested on gnarly downhills, but the ultimate rush is in

▶▶











Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal's dramatic Drakensberg mountains where you're whisked by helicopter to 2 000m before hitting the trail. If fast downhill adventures are your addiction, sandboarding down high dunes is epic.

Complete novices can try scaling the country's precipitous cliffs and iconic peaks on roped adventures with experienced rock climbers. Spelunkers will find plenty of adrenalin rushes in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West and the Western Cape where extreme caving guides lead the way into deep subterranean caverns and fissures.

Although by definition taking part in extreme pursuits carries risk; skilled, top-notch operators and guides ensure that in South Africa the highest standards of safety are maintained. All equipment is provided and no prior experience is generally required.

The weather is reliable and extreme adventures in South Africa are generally quickly and easily accessible. The good news is that they are also extremely good value. But what seals South Africa as the planet's number one destination for adrenalin addicts is that, unlike many other countries, extreme adventures in South Africa are not all clustered in one location but spread across the country.

Kloofing Suicide Gorge,
Grabouw, Western Cape
The name of this stunning gorge deep in the Cape's Riviersonderend mountains gives a good idea of what to expect from this adventure. It is a big day out that includes some tough hiking through pristine fynbos before setting off down the gorge where you will tackle jumps, some of them compulsory, of up to 14m. The kloofing section is only 1.3km but takes around two hours to complete, which indicates the technicality of the route.

Bungee jumping,
Bloukrans Bridge, Western Cape
First a zip line to the launch site and an introduction to the jaw-dropping exposure you are about to plummet into. Then a 216-m jump into the dizzyingly deep and spectacularly beautiful Bloukrans Gorge located on the Garden Route.

River rafting,
Clarens, Free State
Every list of extreme adventures must include some wild and wonderful white-water rafting. The Ash River in Clarens sports some classic grade 3 and 4 rapids and maintains a consistently high level of water. There is nothing quite like bucking, twisting and lurching through roaring water and working as a team to keep your raft from tossing you into the maelstrom.

Skydiving,
Cape Town, Western Cape
Freefall at 230km/h and experience a rush to shake up every fibre in your body. A tandem skydive allows you to go from earth-bound novice to highflyer in a matter of hours. While you are falling through the sky near Cape Town, feeling totally out of control, your experienced tandem pilot will be keeping everything together.

Big swing or gorge swing,
Oribi Gorge, KwaZulu-Natal
On the South Coast of South Africa, the world's highest gorge swing awaits the committed extreme adventurer who wants to keep adding to their list of longest, highest, fastest and steepest experiences. Leaping off a cliff next to a rushing waterfall, you will swing in an arc of over 100 m (33 storeys) finally coming to rest in the beautiful Oribi Gorge.

Heli mountain biking,
Winterton, KwaZulu-Natal
The breathtakingly beautiful Drakensberg mountains are big adventure country for climbers, hikers and mountain bikers. And it just got a whole lot more extreme for competent mountain bikers. Take a helicopter ride with your bike up to 2000-m elevation and take full advantage of the open ridge paths, rock gardens and super steep and fast singletrack.

Zip lining,
Mossel Bay, Western Cape
The Garden Route's Mossel Bay offers adrenalin seekers an extreme zipline experience to rival the very best outdoor adventures. Imagine soaring over sea cliff's and across wild and treacherous Indian Ocean rollers on a zipline so long (1.1 km) that you can't see where it ends. You'll be wheeling with seabirds and, on big swell days, dragging your feet through the white crests of waves.

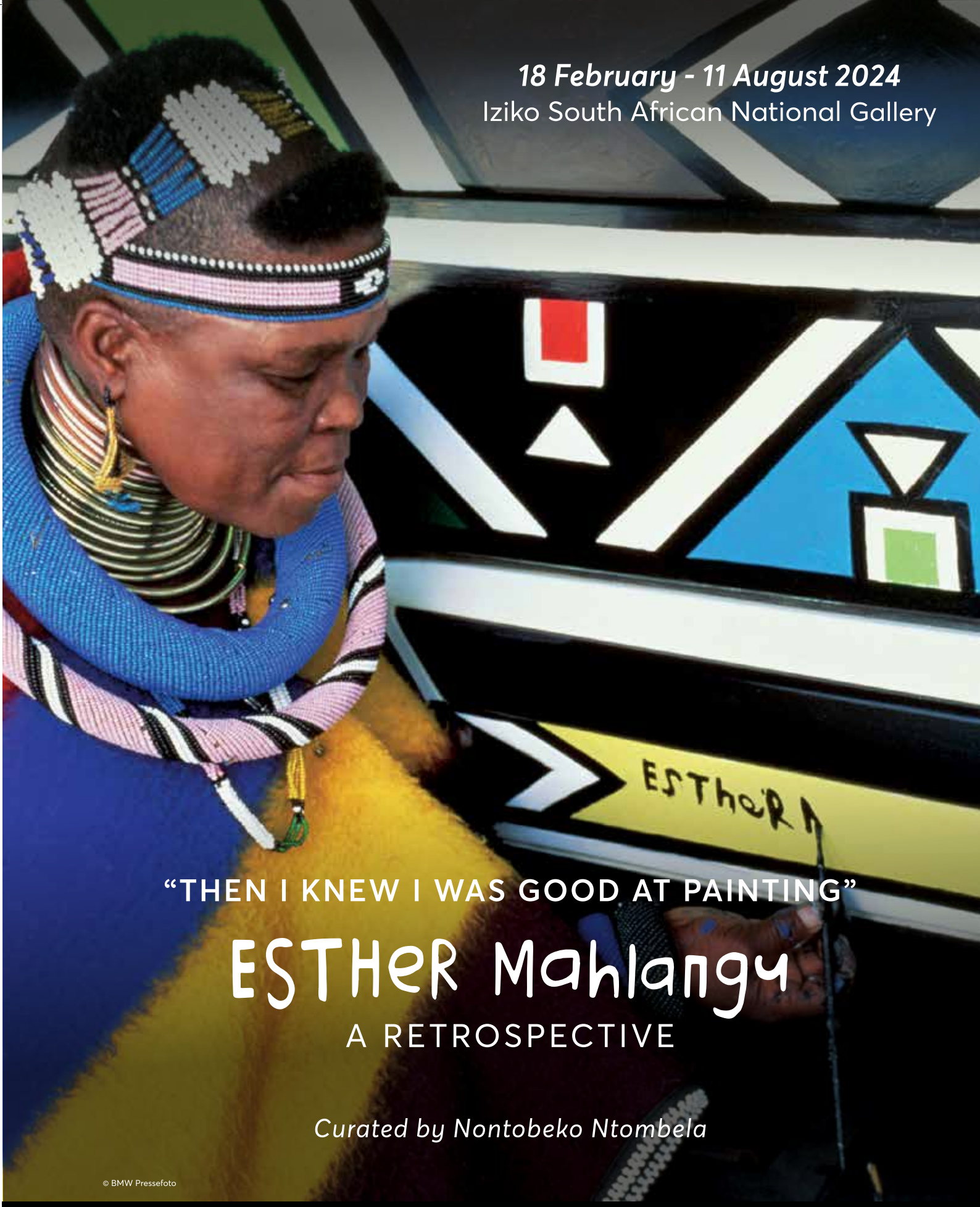
SCAD,
Soweto, Gauteng
In the supercool urban environment of Soweto, SCAD Soweto Towers offer a free fall experience to rival your most hectic falling nightmare. You'll rise towards the light at the top of the Western Cooling Tower, hang suspended there just long enough to get your heart rate pounding and then drop like a stone into a giant net.

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Opera in Cape Town:

Critics trace how a colonial art form was reinvented as African

"Africanisation" has been a process in which opera was made relevant to local South African audiences.

By Wayne Muller, Publications Editor/Research Fellow, Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation, Stellenbosch University

Many people thought that classical opera in South Africa – regarded as a Western, colonial art form that was the preserve of white people during apartheid – would die with democracy in 1994. Instead, the opposite happened. Black singers emerged as the new stars and the format of opera began to be Africanised for new audiences. Critics mapped this transformation as Cape Town established itself as a hotbed of the new opera. One such critic was Wayne Muller, who became an academic and wrote a PhD on the view of these changes. Now he has a book on the subject called *Opera in Cape Town: The Critic's Voice*. We asked him five questions.

How was opera established in South Africa?

Like most things Western European, opera in South Africa is part of a colonial legacy. Sources – from various journal articles and the South African Music Encyclopaedia (1979 – 1986) – refer to the early 1800s as the time when opera came to South Africa via Cape Town.

Travelling theatre companies from Europe staged mostly lighter operas, such as French *opéra comique*. As time went by, more of these theatre companies came to Cape Town and travelled to the interior of the country. Eventually, some of these artists and producers immigrated to South Africa, and so local opera production started to take shape.

In 1831, German composer Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* was performed in Cape Town and billed in a newspaper, *The South African Commercial Advertiser*, as the first "serious" locally produced opera.

Since the early 1800s, there has been a process of the professionalisation of opera, which can be seen, for instance, in the building of theatres and the training of opera singers at tertiary level. And, to put it simply, in this way, opera became established and evolved as the art form that is performed in South Africa today.

How did critics track opera's transformation?

My research on opera in post-apartheid South Africa looked particularly at how two Cape Town daily newspapers reported on the transformation of opera from the middle 1980s when apartheid was starting to unravel. I studied reviews of productions, news reports and other articles. Initially, one sees a survivalist approach in arts reportage that highlighted a political "attack" on Western art forms and questioned the place of indigenous art within the new democracy. Soon it became about "how do we ensure the survival of opera while doing the politically correct thing of giving indigenous music the same status".

Also, critics expressed (albeit subtly) surprise at the emergence of black opera singers because the apartheid narrative had been that opera was the domain of white South Africans. Eventually in classical music and opera, critics' writing started showing an embrace of a hybrid form of Western classical and indigenous music that came about in

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opera during the 1990s. Looking at the past 30 years, it seemed that opera critics (writing mostly for a white readership) negotiated with their readers for an acceptance of emerging operatic aesthetics and expressions that were distinctly African.

How did opera become "Africanised"?

In the book, I chart how opera became South African opera. "Africanisation" has been a process in which opera was made relevant to local South African audiences. Some scholars also refer to this as the indigenisation of opera. Already during the apartheid era, operas were translated into English and Afrikaans as a means of localising them. But the setting and music remained European in nature. Following translation, changing the *mise-en-scène* from Europe to local settings became a means of "Africanisation". A good example is a 1997 production of Italian composer Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème*. It was renamed *La Bohème Noir* (black) and was set in the township of Soweto instead of Paris. Now, the staging was set in a South African context, but the music was still European.

By the early 2000s, "Africanised" productions not only had a local setting, but the original music was merged with indigenous music and indigenous instruments were also included, such as in productions of Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth* and English composer Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. Later, themes were adapted to be locally relevant, such as a version of Hungarian composer Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow*, set in an imagined African state with new character names and retitled, *The Merry Widow of Malagawi*.

But the most pertinent "Africanisation" of the operatic genre has been the composition of new South African operas with original music and stories – like South African composer Mzilikazi Khumalo's *Princess Magogo kaDinuzulu*. Since 1995, there have been more than 20 South African operas performed in the country, and I think each of them in their own way represents a distinct way of reinterpreting opera within a (South) African context.

Concurrently, we saw a transformation in opera with the emergence of black opera singers. The Choral Training Programme at the now defunct Cape Performing Arts Board (known as Capab) was established in 1993 and played a key role in providing vocal training, particularly to black singers, as a means of enabling transformation in opera. And since then, we have seen many black singers embracing opera, with the likes of Pretty Yende and Levy Sekgapane becoming star singers in the big opera houses of the world.

How reliable are just a few critics in telling history?

I believe it is a reliable historical perspective if one qualifies that it is an historical account from that specific perspective. It can never be a 360-degree type of history (and the book does not claim this). There are other ways of looking at and interpreting sources on opera that could also constitute a history. However, what I have found is that our archives are inadequate to write a "full" history and much research still needs to be done from other perspectives and sources. So, this book is rather a means of capturing the historical patterns and trends in opera that have been documented by opera critics in newspapers – journalism being the first rough draft of history, as the phrase goes.

This article first appeared on *The Conversation*.



The Iconic Heritage Tunnel Project shines as a historic tribute to Mossel Bay

With each meticulously crafted tile, the 92-panel mosaic artwork decorating the tunnel walls is destined to become one of the most captivating and expansive mosaic showpieces ever witnessed in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Iconic Heritage Tunnel project at Pinnacle Point, located just outside the picturesque coastal town of Mossel Bay, embarked on its historic journey in August 2022. Spearheaded by the passionate Pinnacle Point Arts and Culture Association of Mossel Bay, this monumental mosaic project is poised to leave an indelible mark on South Africa's cultural heritage.

With each meticulously crafted tile, the 92-panel mosaic artwork decorating the tunnel walls is destined to become one of the most captivating and expansive mosaic showpieces ever witnessed in the Southern Hemisphere. Stretching over an impressive 55 metres, the tunnel serves as a gateway to the renowned Eden Bay Beach, beckoning adventurers and history enthusiasts alike to tread its path and explore the Pinnacle Point caves.

On Heritage Day, 24 September 2022, Mayor Dirk Kotzé unveiled the first four panels of the project. As the tunnel's left and right walls metamorphose into a mesmerising canvas, the story of Mossel Bay's rich history unfolds before visitors' eyes.

The left wall of the tunnel stands as a testament to Mossel Bay's past, paying homage to its diverse cultural heritage and key historical milestones. Emblems of national unity, such as the South African flag and the iconic figure of Nelson Mandela, find their place amid depictions of the esteemed clubhouse and golf course. Modern Mossel Bay emerges alongside the district's storied past, the legacy of Bartolomeu Dias, the Khoisan culture, the enigmatic Pinnacle Point caves and the ancient land of Gondwana.

On the right wall, a captivating representation of the Marine Lift in the Mossel Bay area comes to life, celebrating the marine wonders that grace the region's coastline. Sea life in all its splendour, pristine beaches and majestic whales create an awe-inspiring symphony of art.

As the project progresses, the skilled hands of local artists and dedicated volunteers from the Pinnacle Point Estate continue to shape this masterpiece.

Currently, 50 panels stand as a testament to the tireless efforts invested in this cultural landmark. And yet, there remains future work to be done, as the project looks ahead to completing the roof and floor, thereby culminating in a breathtaking tribute to the past and present of Mossel Bay.

The artistic brilliance of the tunnel's mosaic acquires even greater significance due to its association with the Pinnacle Point caves. These sacred caverns, bearing witness to the lives of Middle Stone Age people some 170 000 years ago, have been designated a Provincial Heritage Site. The tunnel serves as a symbolic pathway, connecting the modern world to the ancient realms of human existence, while underscoring the importance of preserving South Africa's collective heritage.

In the years to come, as visitors traverse the tunnel to Eden Bay Beach or embark on a quest to uncover the secrets of the Pinnacle Point caves, they will do so in the company of history, culture and art entwined. The Iconic Heritage Tunnel project at Pinnacle Point stands not only as a testament to human ingenuity, but also as a timeless monument to the storied legacy of Mossel Bay and its enduring place in the tapestry of South Africa's history.

This article first appeared on *www.thenewspaper.co.za*.





















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Mossel Bay is a harbour town of about 120 000 people on the Garden Route of South Africa. It is an important tourism and farming region of the Western Cape.

Mossel Bay is situated exactly halfway between Cape Town and Gqeberha and is therefore a popular stopping-off and resting point on the itineraries of visitors to the Western and Eastern Cape provinces.

The town's economy relied heavily on farming, fishing and its commercial harbour, which is also the smallest in the Transnet Port Authority's stable of South African commercial harbours, until the 1969 discovery of natural offshore gas fields led to the development of the gas-to-liquids refinery operated by PetroSA. Tourism is another driver of Mossel Bay's economy.

The origin of the name Mossel Bay (the Bay of Mussels) has to do with the ascendancy of the Dutch shipping merchants in the late 16th and the early 17th centuries. In one account, the explorer, Cornelis de Houtman, named the place Mosselbaai when he stopped there in 1595, while in another, the Dutch Admiral, Paulus van Caerden, named it when he came ashore on 8 July 1601.

“We found it a lovely land, without many trees, but with deer and elephants. Apart from water, we got little refreshment except for mussels, and therefore gave it the name of Mossel Bay.”

The town is a major attraction for adventure tourism and offers deep-sea fishing, scuba diving, white shark cage diving, whale watching, sky diving and the longest-over-the-ocean zipline.

In addition, the history of the town – with Mossel Bay being the site of the first contact between European explorers and indigenous people – and its cultural attractions are important features.

The Bartolomeu Dias Museum Complex is the largest of the museums in Mossel Bay. Originally designed to celebrate the arrival of Dias and his crew on 3 February 1488 and to protect the "Post Office Tree", the complex now offers a wider look at the history of Mossel Bay from environmental, archaeological and cultural perspectives.

Mossel Bay is at the centre of some of the most significant archaeological discoveries ever made regarding the origins of modern humans and has a strong archaeological tourism product to support it.

Archaeologists Dr Peter Nilssen and Jonathon Kaplan first identified Pinnacle Point’s historic significance during an environmental impact assessment in 1997 ahead of the construction of the Pinnacle Point Golf Estate and adjacent Garden Route Casino. Investigating seaside cliffs below the estate, they immediately recognised the value of the fossilised sediment piled high against the cave wall, which was later shown to contain a deluge of archaeological evidence, including the remains of stone artefacts, pieces of shell, charcoal from fires, pigment in the form of ochre, shards of bone and debris from the manufacture of tools.

The original cave is one of 54 heritage sites ranging from open shell middens to geological and cave sites and represents one of the densest concentrations of Stone Age sites in the world. They were declared a Western Cape Provincial Heritage Site in 2012, an initial step in a bid towards gaining recognition as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation World Heritage Site. The Pinnacle Point caves have been the focus of intense scientific research by a multidisciplinary team of more than 40 scientists from around the world, led by the Arizona State University’s Institute of Human Origins and Nelson Mandela University’s Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience in South Africa.

The Pinnacle Point sites are at the centre of the archeologically rich Cape south coast, a 600km stretch of coast from Langebaan (west of Cape Town) to Robberg (Plettenberg Bay) and are archaeologically important for at least two significant reasons: They changed the way scientists contemplated the origins of “modern” humans (Homo sapiens) and they hold a unique record of the climate from about 400 000 to 30 000 years ago.

Until very recently, it was believed “modern human behaviour” – such as the making of composite tools with intricate stone blades and points, which represents a major development in mental capacity – first appeared in Europe about 50 000 years ago. Evidence at Pinnacle proves such behaviour dates back as far as 160 000 years or more.

There is also early evidence of art and symbolic behaviour, stone tool heat treatment, micro lithic technology (sharpened stones for arrows) and the first systematic use of seafood in the human diet.

In addition, inferences on the paleoclimate and palaeolandscape suggest a unique set of environmental circumstances – including ocean currents, a broad continental shelf and sweeping plain and vegetation supported by the geological substrate – that may have been conducive to the survival of coastal Pleistocene (Ice Age) hominine communities.

www.pinnaclepointestate.co.za I www.factsnippet.com I www.visitmosselbay.co.za






















Mosaic Tunnel Project



Celebrating 365 Years of South African Wine

The Wine Harvest Commemorative Event is not only a tribute to the origins of South African wine, but also a testament to the nation's enduring vinicultural legacy.

The South African wine industry is gearing up to celebrate a significant milestone in 2024: The 365th anniversary of its first wine production. This historic event dates back to 2 February 1659, as recorded in a diary entry that read, "Today, praise be to God, wine was made for the first time from Cape grapes." This remarkable legacy makes the 365th anniversary a momentous occasion for wine enthusiasts worldwide.

The highlight of this celebration was the annual Wine Harvest Commemorative Event on 1 February 2024. Held at the historic Groot Constantia estate, under the pediment of the Cloete Cellar, the event honoured the birth of South African wine and its rich heritage. The event paid tribute to individuals and organisations who have significantly contributed to the success of South African wine, recognising achievements in various categories, including Visionary Leadership, Growing Inclusivity, Wine Advancement and Viti- and Viniculture.

An integral part of the celebration was the blessing of the harvest, a tradition observed globally. This ceremony expresses gratitude for past harvests and seeks protection for the upcoming ones. In South Africa, the wine industry emphasises the importance of maintaining a balance between agriculture and nature, ensuring sustainable growth and biodiversity preservation.

Dr Ivan Meyer, Western Cape MEC of Agriculture, highlighted the significance of the event in acknowledging the industry's achievements and inspiring hope across the entire wine value chain. He pointed out the industry's extensive impact, with over 269 096 direct and indirect employment and an additional 36 406 jobs in wine tourism. The industry's growth is further evidenced by the export of 368.5 million litres of wine in 2022. Currently, more than 2 487 farmers cultivate about 89 384 hectares under vines,

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committed to conservation and sustainable farming practices.

Rico Basson, CEO of South Africa Wine, invited the wine industry, tourism sector and partners, both locally and internationally, to participate in celebrating this historic event. The Wine Harvest Commemorative Event is not only a tribute to the origins of South African wine, but also a testament to the nation's enduring vinicultural legacy.

Jean Naudé, CEO of Groot Constantia, expressed enthusiasm for hosting the prestigious event, a tradition for the estate.

"Made possible through the support of sponsors Groot Constantia, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Wesgro, South Africa Wine, Standard Bank, Checkers, Die Burger and Cape Town Tourism, the Wine Harvest Commemorative Event is held at a very significant time of the year: on the eve of the birthday of the South African wine industry."

This article first appeared on *The Newspaper*.







Tyla wins Grammy for Best African Music Performance



Tyla, clinched her first Grammy Award at the youthful age of 22. This victory marked a significant milestone not only in Tyla's burgeoning career, but also in the recognition of African musical talent on a global scale

Tyla has won the 2024 Grammy for Best African Music Performance with her hit song, *Water*, marking a significant milestone in her incredible career.

In a moment that left her almost speechless, Tyla Laura Seethal, known simply as Tyla, clinched her first Grammy Award at the youthful age of 22.

This victory marked a significant milestone not only in Tyla's burgeoning career, but also in the recognition of African musical talent on a global scale. The inaugural year of the Best African Music Performance Category showcased the richness and diversity of the continent's music scene, featuring esteemed nominees such as Asake and Olamide, Ayra Starr, Burna Boy and Davido, featuring Musa Keys.

Among these talented artists, Tyla emerged triumphant, highlighting her exceptional artistry and the resonance of her music.

"I never thought I would say that I won a Grammy at 22 years old. If you don't know me, my name is Tyla and I'm from South Africa."

Tyla, the 21-year-old singer and songwriter from Johannesburg, is also set to perform at one of the world's biggest music festivals, Coachella 2024, from 12 to 19 April. She will share the stage with the likes of Lana Del Rey, Doja Cat, Tyler, the Creator and the reunited No Doubt as headliners of the two-weekend event in Indio, California.

Tyla has been making waves in the global music scene since her debut single, *Getting Late*, featuring Kooldrink, went viral in 2019. She signed with Epic Records in 2021 and released her international hit, *Water*, in 2023, which became the first song by a South African soloist to enter the US Billboard Hot 100 in 55 years. She has also been nominated for a Soul Train Music Award, a MOBO Award and two South African Music Awards.

Tyla is known for her fusion of R&B, pop and amapiano, a South African genre of house music. She has cited Rihanna, Ciara, Beyoncé and Aaliyah as her musical influences. Tyla's self-titled debut album is scheduled for release on 1 March 2024. She has described it as "a reflection of my journey, my growth and my love for music". She has also hinted at some collaborations with other artists but has not revealed any names yet.

Tyla is ready to take over the world with her talent, charisma and style. She has said that her goal is "to inspire people, especially young girls, to follow their dreams and never give up". She is definitely one to watch at Coachella 2024.



"I never thought I would say that I won a Grammy at 22 years old. If you don't know me, my name is Tyla and I'm from South Africa."

Tyla Laura Seethal was born 30 January 2002 in Johannesburg. She has been known to proudly identify as coloured and comes from a family of Zulu, Indian, Mauritian and Irish descent. She matriculated from Edenglen High School in 2019 and was the school's head of culture in that year. While at school, she had begun posting original songs and covers to her Instagram account, as well as sending them out to a number of figures in the music industry. She was subsequently discovered by her first manager, Garth von Glehn, who then organised her first recording sessions. She was studying towards a degree in Mining Engineering before she decided to commit to her music career full time.

In late 2019 after finishing high school, Tyla released her debut single, *Getting Late*, featuring the production from Kooldrink, which achieved national success. Filmed by her own manager intermittently throughout the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, the accompanying music video was released in January 2021. It amassed several million views on YouTube and was nominated for Music Video of the Year at the 28th South African Music Awards in 2022.

She signed a recording contract with Epic Records through a joint venture with Fax Records in the United States (US) in May 2021. She followed up this effort with the singles, *Overdue* in October 2021 and *To Last* in November 2022.

Tyla's first public performance occurred in 2023 during the Dolce and Gabbana afterparty at Milan Fashion Week, following the release of her single, *Been Thinking*, which earned Tyla her first chart placements of her career on the Billboard Mainstream R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay and Rhythmic Airplay charts.

Heven Haile of Pitchfork described it as a "slick club anthem that channels the seductive pop-R&B hits of mid-2000s Ciara and Rihanna". Tyla then joined Chris Brown as the opening act for his *Under the Influence* Tour. In May 2023, she released the single, *Girl Next Door*, featuring Nigerian singer Ayra Starr. She also later released the song *Water* in July 2023 as the lead single from her upcoming self-titled debut studio album.

After spawning a viral dance challenge on the social media platform TikTok, the song became a top 10 hit in the US, United Kingdom and Australia, among several other countries. It also made Tyla the youngest-ever South African and the first South African soloist in 55 years to enter the US Billboard Hot 100, following Hugh Masekela's *Grazing in the Grass* in 1968.

Tyla posted videos of herself dancing to the song and performing it on stage – prompting fans to want to try it themselves. The hashtags #TylaWater and #TylaWaterChallenge have over 448.6 million views combined, and the song has been used in over 500 000 videos on the app as people post themselves mimicking her moves.

She performed the song live on *The Bianca Show* in Sweden and *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* in the US. Its accompanying music video, released on 7 October 2023, accumulated three million views on YouTube in three days. Tyla was then featured on a remix version of the song *Girls Need Love* by Summer Walker, released as part of the latter's *Girls Mix* extended play in October 2023.

In December 2023, she announced the March release of her debut studio album, *Tyla* (2024) and simultaneously released three tracks: *Truth or Dare*, *On and On* and *Butterflies* as promotional singles from the project. Tyla performed a medley of *Water* and *Truth or Dare* on the season 24 finale of *The Voice* on 19 December 2023.

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Vuyo Mabheka's inspiring journey: A solo exhibition in the heart of Paris

In a celebration of creativity, culture and resilience, Mabheka stood in the spotlight as one of the select 15 artists chosen to showcase their exceptional work at the Salon Approche Art Fair in Paris.

Vuyo Mabheka, a former Of Soul and Joy student, triumphed with his award-winning *Popihuise* series at the *Salon Approche* Art Fair in Paris from 9 to 12 November 2023, showcasing a visually stunning narrative that explores his childhood memories and the transformative power of art.

In a celebration of creativity, culture and resilience, Mabheka stood in the spotlight as one of the select 15 artists chosen to showcase their exceptional work at the *Salon Approche* Art Fair in Paris.

This prestigious event, renowned for its curated approach to photography, boasted a unique solo presentation by Mabheka, whose *Popihuise* series clinched the special Jury Prize at Images Vevey 2023/24.

The *Salon Approche* Art Fair, founded in 2017, distinguishes itself by exclusively showcasing artists who push the boundaries of photography, standing out with its dedication to solo presentations that highlight the individuality and uniqueness of each artist's vision.

Born in 1999 in Libode, Eastern Cape, South Africa, Mabheka later relocated to Thokoza, Johannesburg. In 2017, he discovered his passion for photography through the Of Soul and Joy project, and in 2023, he joined Afronova Gallery as a represented artist.

Mabheka's *Popihuise* series, named after the Xhosa vernacular version of the Afrikaans word for doll's house, is a poignant exploration of his childhood memories and the toys that provided solace in the face of life's challenges.

In June 2023, Mabheka was honoured with the esteemed Grand Prix Images Vevey Special Jury Prize Award for his *Popihuise*.

This international photography competition attracted entries from around the globe, with Mabheka's submission shining brightly among 564 projects from 65 countries.

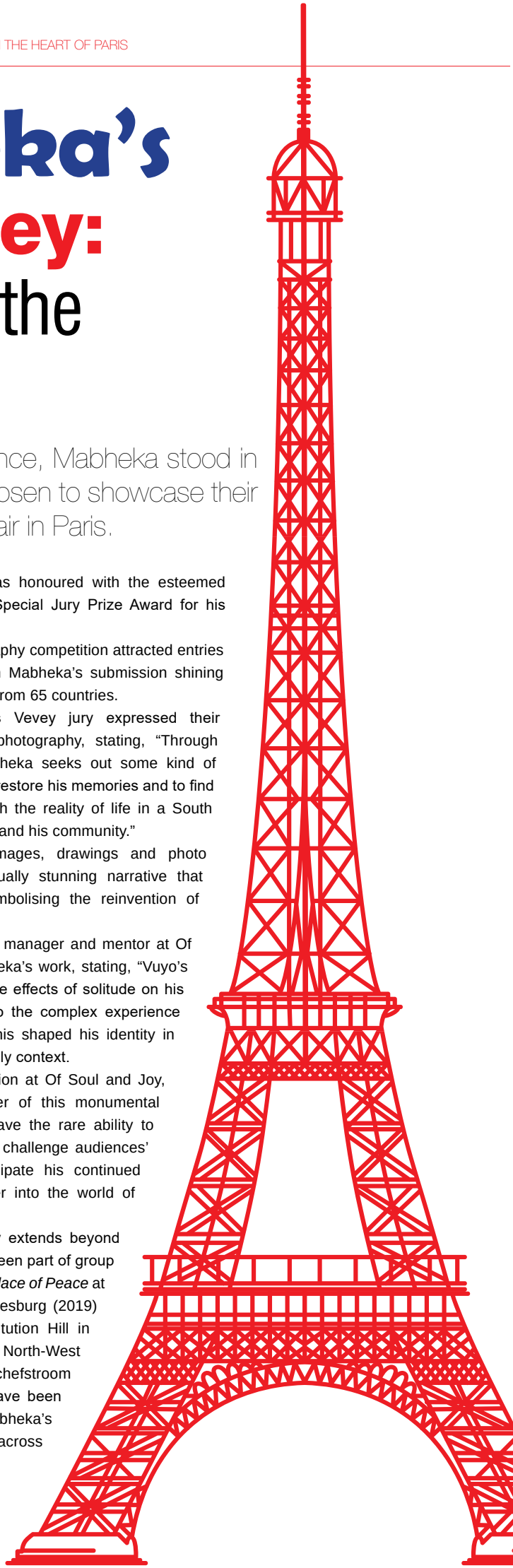
The Grand Prix Images Vevey jury expressed their admiration for Mabheka's photography, stating, "Through his photography, Vuyo Mabheka seeks out some kind of expressive truth as a way to restore his memories and to find a way to come to terms with the reality of life in a South African township, for himself and his community."

Through collaged still images, drawings and photo collages, he creates a visually stunning narrative that references *Umkokotelo*, symbolising the reinvention of structures in his life.

Jabulani Dhlamini, project manager and mentor at Of Soul and Joy, praises Mabheka's work, stating, "Vuyo's images powerfully convey the effects of solitude on his creativity, bearing witness to the complex experience of his childhood and how this shaped his identity in relation to his social and family context.

"Vuyo embodies our mission at Of Soul and Joy, and we couldn't be prouder of this monumental achievement. His images have the rare ability to accommodate, engage, and challenge audiences' perspectives, and we anticipate his continued growth as he delves deeper into the world of photography."

Mabheka's artistic journey extends beyond this solo exhibition. He has been part of group exhibitions like *In Thokoza: Place of Peace* at Stop Sign Gallery in Johannesburg (2019) and *Inganekwane* at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg (2021) and North-West University Gallery in Potchefstroom (2022). These exhibitions have been steppingstones, allowing Mabheka's unique voice to echo across different platforms.



> Through collaged still images, drawings and photo collages, he creates a visually stunning narrative that references *Umkokotelo*, symbolising the reinvention of structures in his life.



Of Soul and Joy, the creative platform that ignited Mabheka's artistic spark has been a transformative force in Thokoza, southeast of Johannesburg. Initiated by Rubis Mécénat and Easigas, this programme empowers the township's youth by providing professional skills in photography. Over its 10 years of existence, Of Soul and Joy has been instrumental in revealing young photographers who now make a living from their art, participate in international festivals and are represented by prestigious agencies and galleries.

As Vuyo Mabheka stepped into the spotlight at the *Salon Approche* Art Fair, it was more than an exhibition; it was a celebration of talent, resilience and the transformative power of art. His journey, from the vibrant landscapes of South Africa to the cultural hub of Paris, showcased the positive impact of initiatives like Of Soul and Joy, shaping the destinies of young artists and bringing their stories to the world stage.

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100 years of radio in Africa:

From propaganda to people's power

This year's celebration of the 100-plus years of radio offers us an opportunity, as African media scholars, to reflect on the historical significance, cultural relevance, political power and social impact of the medium on the continent.

By Sisanda Nkoala, Associate Professor, University of the Western Cape; Christina Chan-Meetoo, Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication, University of Mauritius; Jacinta Mwende Maweu, Senior lecturer in Philosophy and Media Studies, University of Nairobi; Marissa J Moorman, Associate Professor of History, Indiana University; Modestus Fosu, Associate Professor in Language and Communication Studies, University of Media, Arts and Communication, Ghana Institute of Journalism; and Stanley Tsarwe, Lecturer in Journalism, University of Namibia

Radio is thriving across Africa. Exact figures are difficult to come by because audience research differs across countries. But studies estimate radio listenership to be between 60% and 80% of the continent's 1.4 billion population.

In contrast to many Western countries, where there has been a shift towards streaming and podcasts, traditional radio continues to be widely embraced in Africa. Because of poor literacy levels and uneven access to the Internet and technological infrastructure, old-fashioned radio remains a reliable and inclusive medium.

This year's celebration of the 100-plus years of radio offers us an opportunity, as African media scholars, to reflect on the historical significance, cultural relevance, political power and social impact of the medium on the continent. We home in on examples from the regions we've studied to demonstrate this rich history.

Early years

The story of radio in Africa starts with its introduction to serve colonial interests. Cameroonian scholar Francis Nyamnjoh argues that as soon as it had established itself as a mass medium in the 1920s, European states were quick to realise the part radio could play in realising their desire to swallow up weaker cultures around the globe. Historians note that it also allowed Europeans in the colonies to connect to home, their culture and their languages.



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In the early 1920s, amateur radio enthusiasts had already begun tinkering with the technology. The first official broadcast seems to have been on 18 December 1923 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In East Africa, radio was first introduced in Kenya in 1927 and in West Africa to Sierra Leone in 1934.

United Kingdom (UK) media scholar, Graham Mytton, writes that the arrival of radio in West Africa's British colonies – The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Nigeria – marked a turning point.

Until then, radio had been broadcast by wireless transmission. When it was introduced in Sierra Leone, Ghana (1935) and Nigeria (1936), it was "via wired services – subscribers had loudspeakers (linked by wire to the radio station) installed in their homes to receive the service … these were created with native African listeners in mind".

Then, in 1936, the British colonial administration decided to develop radio broadcasting throughout its African colonies.

Propaganda

Colonial powers such as the UK and France upped their radio transmission efforts after the outbreak of the second World War in 1939. The 1940s were marked by the introduction of indigenous language broadcasts by colonial powers wanting to influence public opinion and garner support for their war effort. While the British broadcast to Africa in some African languages, France broadcast only in French.

This laid the groundwork for future developments. After the war, the British officially adopted a policy of extending broadcasting services across most of its African colonies.

In Kenya, for example, the first broadcast service for Africans began in 1953, transmitting in local languages during the state of emergency declared in 1952 to suppress the Mau Mau uprising.

Academics have argued that despite being designed mainly for propaganda, radio in Africa was always far more multifaceted and slippery than was intended by colonial powers.

It also offered the "ability to create new and sometimes unruly publics".

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Resistance radio

The 1950s saw the expansion and transformation of radio in Africa. Radio stations across British, French and Belgian colonies rapidly increased as people under colonial rule increased their efforts to achieve independence.

In the mid-1950s the oldest liberation station in Africa, *Radio Freedom*, was established as an underground station in Zambia by South Africa's resistance movement. It would air its first formal broadcast in 1963.

In Angola, radio expanded with the outbreak of war in 1961 between liberation movements and the Portuguese colonial state.

Liberation movements in neighbouring countries used radio for war reporting amid colonial censorship. For their part, colonial state radio fostered the emergence of local artists' music as part of their colonial propaganda.

Independence and state control

From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, the number of radio-receiving sets increased fivefold, from 90 sets per thousand people in Africa to 450.

In some respects, the 1960s was a golden era for African radio. A wave of independence movements birthed new nations as radio technology was becoming more affordable.

Many newly independent countries established national broadcasting services, like The Gambia in 1965. This expanded the reach of radio and the opportunity to embrace local languages, music and cultural programming. In Nigeria, the Broadcasting Corporation expanded to cover the whole country.

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But some newly independent countries that had inherited state-controlled broadcasting systems also censored content deemed critical or threatening, restricting freedom of expression.

With independence in Angola in 1975, for example, the new leaders saw radio as a tool for nation-building but tightened their grip after a coup attempt in 1977.

In many African countries, Angola included, post-colonial state control of radio continues. Zimbabwe's radio sector, for example, is thriving. But state control remains strong, with biased licensing for national radio and restrictive laws for community radio stations.

The Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation was established in 1964 and still operates as a state broadcaster. Despite funding through public licence fees and advertising, it's perceived to promote government agendas.

Radio has also been used to promote nefarious political ends. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda stands as a painful example. The infamous *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* disseminated hate speech and incited violence against the Tutsi minority.

Private commercial stations

Over the last 40 years, many African countries have liberalised their economies and their media regulations, issuing commercial and community radio licences.

In Ghana, for example, radio primarily served elite interests until the 1990s, when private ownership diversified the industry. By 2022, Ghana boasted 513 radio stations, ranging across public, commercial, community, campus and foreign broadcasts.

An essential development has been the emergence of indigenous language radio. This has produced culturally resonant content and prioritised community issues. But challenges persist. Some stations are affiliated with political or business interests and increased attacks on journalists pose risks to media freedom and diversity.

In recent decades, Kenya's radio landscape has transformed to over 200 stations. Private commercial stations now dominate broadcasting in local languages.

In Mauritius, airwaves were liberalised in 2002, introducing private stations. Talk shows, especially in the Mauritian Creole language, have revolutionised radio.

Private radio has expanded to digital platforms, engaging audiences through live streams and social media, creating both competition and sensationalist coverage.

Radio now

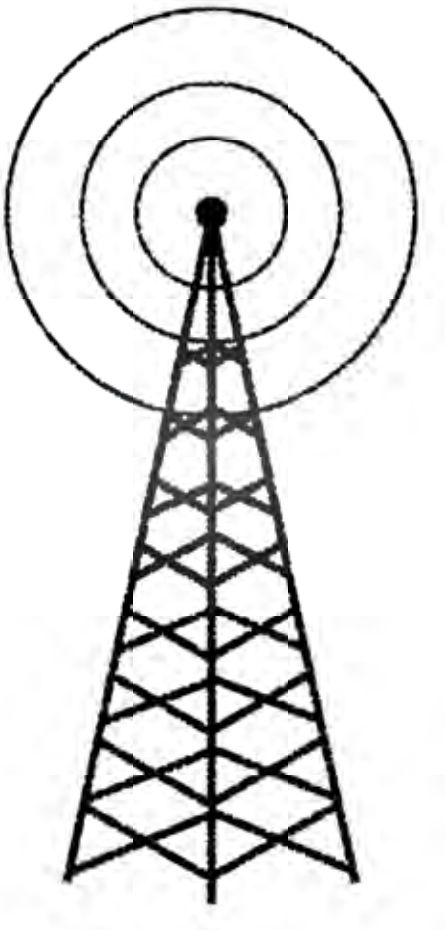
Digital convergence is reshaping radio consumption, blurring audience patterns.

This isn't happening uniformly across the continent. Digital platforms face challenges, such as the digital divide and economic inequality.

Radio's influence is likely to endure, with podcasts complementing rather than replacing traditional broadcasts. A 2022 survey across 34 African countries found radio was "overwhelmingly the most common source for news". This is a testament to its enduring influence and unique ability to connect with diverse audiences – even a century after its introduction.

This article first appeared on *The Conversation*.





The South African Government joined the global community in celebrating World Radio Day on 13 February 2024 under the theme, *Radio: A Century Informing, Entertaining and Educating*. This year's theme underscored the rich history and diverse contribution of radio to our society.

For over a century, radio has played a pivotal role in informing, entertaining and educating societies and it has been a critical tool for communication, connecting people across vast distances and diverse cultures. Its ability to transcend barriers of language and geography makes it a powerful instrument for promoting inclusivity and fostering unity among the country's diverse communities.

In South Africa, radio has historically been a cornerstone of democracy, serving as a platform for dialogue, debate and the exchange of ideas. It has played a crucial role in promoting social cohesion, advancing human rights and amplifying the voices of marginalised groups.

The Acting Director-General for the Government Communication and Information System, Nomonde Mnukwa, said: "Radio remains a reliable source of information and a catalyst for positive change. It has also been a constant companion to millions of South Africans, providing them with essential news, entertainment and valuable educational content. Importantly, the affordability and accessibility of radio makes it an essential medium, particularly in remote and disadvantaged communities."

As the world celebrated World Radio Day, government recognised the invaluable contributions of broadcasters, journalists and producers who work tirelessly to bring quality programming each day.

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