

UBUNTU NEWSFLASH



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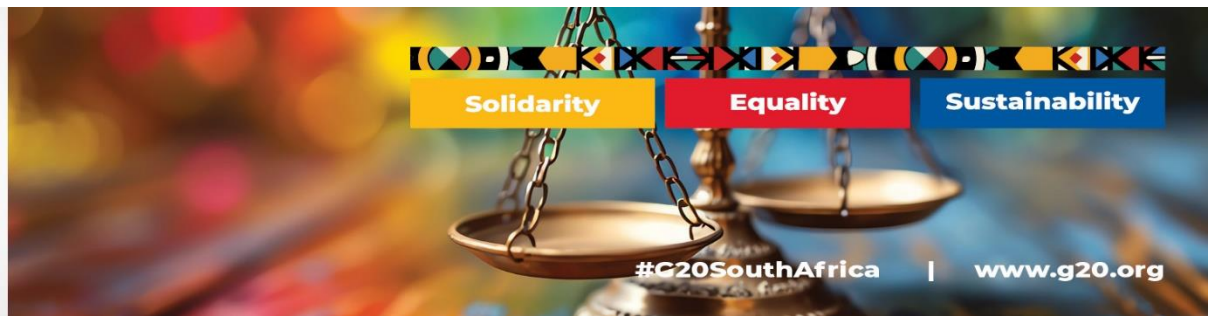
WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

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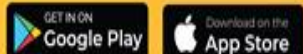
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GLOBAL CHALLENGES REQUIRE G20 COUNTRIES TO WORK TOGETHER

President Cyril Ramaphosa has emphasised the importance of the Group of 20 (G20) members working together to overcome unprecedented challenges, including slow and uneven growth, rising debt burdens, persistent poverty and inequality, and the existential threat of climate change.

WATCH THE VIDEO

"We are not moving quickly enough or boldly enough to address these global challenges. We must collectively target a step-change in our efforts to improve the lives of all of our people and protect future generation," the President said on Wednesday, 26 February 2025.

Addressing the opening of the first meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Cape Town, the President said at this time of global uncertainty and escalating tension, it is now more important than ever that the members of the G20 work together.

“The erosion of multilateralism presents a threat to global growth and stability. We know from the experience of past decades that a fair, transparent and inclusive rules-based international order is an essential requirement for economic stability and for sustained growth.

“At this time of heightened geopolitical contestation, a rules-based order is particularly important as a mechanism for managing disputes and resolving conflict. It is vital to ensuring that the rights and interests of the vulnerable are not trampled beneath the ambitions of the powerful,” he explained.

The first citizen said one of the greatest impediments to growth, development and stability is the persistence of inequality within and between countries.

“The pursuit of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal on reducing inequality is as much of an economic imperative as a social imperative. As the G20, we need deliberate and coordinated efforts to focus on inclusive growth based on responsive trade and investment to grow the incomes of poor nations and the poorest in society.

“We need to ensure equal access to opportunities, especially for women and young people. For nations to flourish, equality and prosperity must be available to everyone—regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, or economic status.

“The pursuit of equality is an imperative for wealthy and poor countries alike. That is why South Africa has placed solidarity, equality and sustainability at the centre of its G20 Presidency,” the President said.

Priorities

In line with the original mandate of the G20 to promote strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth, South Africa has identified four priorities for its G20 Presidency.

The first priority is to take action to strengthen disaster resilience and response.

“The increasing rate of climate-induced natural disasters is disproportionately affecting countries that can least afford the costs of recovery and rebuilding.

“When repeated disasters lead to widespread damage of infrastructure, economic activity is disrupted and livelihoods are destroyed,” the President said.

He said innovative financing and insurance mechanisms must be put in place by the global community, including international financial institutions, development banks and the private sector to scale up funding for disaster prevention and post-disaster reconstruction.

“Our second priority is to ensure debt sustainability for developing economies. In recent years, low- and middle-income countries have seen their levels of sovereign debt and the cost of servicing that debt rise substantially.

“The combined external debt stock of low-income countries more than doubled in the decade to 2022. Debt service costs are increasingly crowding out spending on education, healthcare and other social services, as well as infrastructure needed for economic development,” the President said.

He stressed that the work of the International Financial Architecture Working Group and other working groups will be particularly important in improving the Common Framework for Debt Treatment, accelerating the reform of multilateral development banks, and strengthening capital flows to emerging markets.

“Our G20 Presidency will be addressing the high cost of capital faced by developing economies as one of the main barriers to sustainable growth. The G20 must show leadership in addressing the imbalances that persist in the global economy and filling the significant gap in funding required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



“The third priority of South Africa’s G20 Presidency is to mobilise finance for a just energy transition. Significantly more funding is required to limit global temperature rise in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement and to do so in a manner that is equitable and just.”

South Africa has pioneered the use of country platforms to coordinate funding through the Just Energy Transition Partnership.

“We continue to advocate for greater concessional and grant funding to support the energy transition in developing economies. G20 member countries should lead the way in demonstrating ambition on climate action in the lead-up to COP30 in Brazil later this year.

“The need to rapidly scale up adaptation funding is particularly important, as those countries that have contributed the least to climate change are now most vulnerable to its effects. We must also scale up the use of innovative financing instruments, improve coordination among funders, and unlock the potential of carbon markets to create new and diverse sources of funding,” the President said.

South Africa’s fourth priority for the G20 Presidency is to harness critical minerals for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

“We need a G20 framework on green industrialisation and investment that promotes value addition to critical minerals close to the source of extraction. We need to promote the development of low-carbon manufacturing value chains, which can support decarbonisation while promoting growth.

“As minerals extraction accelerates to match the needs of the energy transition, the countries and local communities endowed with these resources must be the ones to benefit the most,” said President Ramaphosa. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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CALL FOR GLOBAL SOLIDARITY AT G20 FOREIGN MINISTERS’ MEETING

President Cyril Ramaphosa has urged global leaders to embrace inclusivity, cooperation and reform as South Africa steers the Presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) for the first time.



Speaking at the opening of the G20 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting at Nasrec in Johannesburg on Friday, 21 February 2025, President Ramaphosa emphasised the significance of hosting the G20 Leaders’ Summit on African soil.

The Foreign Ministers Meeting, hosted by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, took place under South Africa’s G20 Presidency theme of *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*.

“Africa is home to some of the world’s fastest-growing economies and faces unique challenges, such as the impact of climate change, development needs, and the effects of global trade dynamics.

“The Summit’s location underscores the need for African voices to be heard on critical global issues, like sustainable development, the digital economy, and the shift toward green energy,” President Ramaphosa said.

The President said this was a great opportunity to promote greater collaboration between African nations and the rest of the world.

He highlighted pressing global challenges, including geopolitical tensions, climate change, economic inequality and food insecurity, warning that the world’s fragile coexistence was under threat.

“These challenges are interconnected. They require responses that are inclusive and coordinated. Yet, there is a lack of consensus among major powers, including in the G20, on how to respond to these issues of global significance,” he said.

He called for greater consensus among major powers within the G20 to address these issues.

The President also highlighted that there are just five years to 2030, the deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

He said the international community committed to this ambitious agenda to end poverty and hunger, to protect the planet, to achieve gender equality, universal education and health coverage, and to promote decent work and sustainable economic growth.

“Our commitment to achieving these targets must not waver. The nations of the world look to the G20 for leadership on the most pressing issues confronting our world.

“Just as cooperation supported the progress of early humans, our modern-day challenges can only be resolved through collaboration, partnership, and solidarity,” he said.

President Ramaphosa said this was why South Africa had placed solidarity, equality, and sustainability at the centre of its G20 Presidency.

“We would like our G20 Presidency to be one in which all voices are heard and in which all views count. The G20 represents over two-thirds of the world's population.

“Its decisions and policies must reflect the needs and aspirations of all who form part of the G20 family,” he said.

He also called on the G20 to seek to reflect the needs and aspirations of all people who call this planet home.

A call for UN and global financial system reforms

With the United Nations (UN) marking its 80th anniversary, President Ramaphosa reiterated South Africa's call for reforming the UN Security Council, the multilateral trading system, and the international financial architecture to make them more representative and responsive to today's realities.

“The UN must change accordingly. We continue to call for the UN Security Council, the multilateral trading system and the international financial architecture to be reformed to make them more representative, more agile, and more responsive to today's global realities.

“As the G20, it is critical that the principles of the UN Charter, multilateralism, and international law remain at the centre of all our endeavours,” the President asserted.

President Ramaphosa also addressed ongoing global conflicts, including the wars in Ukraine, Sudan, the Sahel, and Gaza.

He welcomed the recent ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, calling it a crucial first step toward lasting peace and urging diplomatic solutions to global conflicts.

“As the G20, we must continue to advocate for diplomatic solutions. Our own experience as South Africa is that the peaceful resolution of conflict through inclusive dialogue is the foremost guarantor of sustainable, lasting peace,” he said.

Key priorities for South Africa's G20 Presidency

Outlining South Africa's vision for its G20 Presidency, President Ramaphosa identified four key priorities, which include strengthening disaster resilience and response, ensuring debt sustainability for low-income countries, mobilising climate finance for a just energy transition, and harnessing critical minerals for sustainable development.

He emphasised the need for international financial institutions and the private sector to scale up post-disaster recovery efforts, particularly in vulnerable nations.

With many developing economies burdened by high borrowing costs, he called on G20 leaders to renew efforts in addressing debt sustainability, especially in Africa.

On the third priority, President Ramaphosa urged developed nations to fulfil their obligations in supporting developing economies' green energy transitions, in line with global climate agreements.

Turning to the last priority, the President proposed an inclusive G20 framework on green industrialisation and investment to promote value addition and beneficiation of critical minerals. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA TO HOST UKRAINIAN COUNTERPART

President Cyril Ramaphosa has announced that he will soon host Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in South Africa for a State Visit.

This follows a constructive engagement between the two leaders, during which they reaffirmed their commitment to an inclusive peace process to end the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Taking to social media on Friday, 21 February 2025, President Ramaphosa expressed optimism about the discussions, emphasising South Africa's dedication to fostering dialogue between the warring nations.

"I welcome the constructive engagement I had with President @ZelenskyyUA [Zelenskyy] and I look forward to hosting him in South Africa soon for a state visit. We both agreed on the urgent need for an inclusive peace process that involves all parties in finding a resolution to the conflict and securing a lasting peace.

"South Africa remains committed to supporting the dialogue process between Russia and Ukraine," President Ramaphosa said in a post on X.

This development comes as South Africa continues to advocate for peaceful negotiations rather than military interventions in the war that began nearly two years ago. As a member of the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) bloc alongside Russia, South Africa has often walked a diplomatic tightrope, calling for peace while maintaining strategic ties with Moscow.

President Ramaphosa was part of the African Peace Initiative, which saw a delegation of African leaders travel to Kyiv and St. Petersburg in June 2023 in an attempt to mediate the crisis.

The mission comprised the presidents of Senegal, the Comoros, Zambia, and South Africa, together with the Prime Minister of Egypt and envoys from the Republic of Congo and Uganda.

The leaders presented a ten-point proposal that they believe can contribute to various efforts that have been made by various parties to bring the conflict to an end.

The mission sought to encourage dialogue, protect grain exports crucial to African nations, and explore a path toward de-escalation.

While South Africa has faced criticism over its perceived closeness to Russia, President Ramaphosa has consistently defended the country's non-aligned stance, arguing that diplomatic engagement with both parties remain the best path toward a resolution. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



SOUTH AFRICA AND JAPAN FOSTER RELATIONS

The friendship and collaboration between Japan and South Africa—as an essential factor in the advancement of peace, prosperity, and mutual understanding—have been reflected upon at Deputy President Paul Mashatile’s meeting with Japanese Ambassador to South Africa, Fumio Shimizu.

The Deputy President received a courtesy visit from newly appointed Ambassador Shimizu in Cape Town, on Tuesday, 25 February 2025. Shimizu is hosting a high-powered Japanese delegation in South Africa to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and the meeting of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, alongside a number of G20 workstream meetings.

At Tuesday’s meeting, South Africa and Japan reaffirmed their strong diplomatic and economic partnership, with Mashatile emphasising Japan’s role in South Africa’s economic growth and investment landscape.

"In particular, the Deputy President appreciated the continued strengthening of South Africa-Japan cooperation in several sectors, including politics, trade and investment, science and innovation, education, energy and development cooperation," The Presidency said in a statement on Tuesday.

Deputy President Mashatile highlighted Japan's role as one of South Africa's most significant economic partners, particularly in the automotive industry, technology, skills development and mineral beneficiation. He expressed optimism about increasing Japanese investments in local manufacturing, job creation and infrastructure projects.

"In Japan, we see the potential for the increase of already sizable investment in our economy, especially in the automotive industry, technology and skills development, commercialisation and manufacturing, as well as machinery for mining and mineral beneficiation, which are among the key economic drivers in South Africa," Deputy President Mashatile said.

The Deputy President and Ambassador Shimizu committed to strengthening cooperation in various sectors, including science and innovation, education and energy. The Deputy President will undertake a working visit to Japan next month to solidify trade relations and attract further investment.



South Africa also eagerly anticipates the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) in Yokohama this August, which is expected to further bolster economic ties between Japan and the African continent. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

DEPUTY PRESIDENT MASHATILE, CHAIRMAN OF CHINA COUNCIL FOR THE PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE MEET IN PRETORIA

Deputy President Paul Mashatile has welcomed China's plan to host the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Ministerial Coordination Meeting alongside the China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo in June 2025.



He emphasised that such events would strengthen economic ties between Africa and China and help improve collaboration to speed up projects in industrialisation, infrastructure development, agricultural modernisation, and green initiatives.

According to the Deputy President, these efforts align with the goals of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, which is essential for the continent's advancement.

The Deputy President on Thursday, 20 February 2025, received a courtesy visit from the Chairman of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), Ren Hongbin.

The CCPIT is a significant Chinese economic promotion organisation that reports to the State Council.

Its role is to facilitate and promote trade and investment with foreign countries by assisting Chinese companies in international business and supporting foreign companies operating in China.

It has more than 400 000 Chinese business members, the majority of whom are from State-owned enterprises (SOEs).

This visit to the Deputy President follows the successful second State Visit to China by President Cyril Ramaphosa in September 2024 and other business activities, including the South Africa China Presidential Business Forum, a private discussion with 20 important Chinese investors, and the Presidential Business Programme in Shenzhen.

The Presidential Business Programme focuses on key investors in China's main technology and innovation centre.

According to The Presidency, the Chairman’s visit was mainly focused on following up on the implementation of the outcomes of the ninth FOCAC Summit held in Beijing in 2024, as well as optimising the trade and investment environment for better cooperation between South Africa and China.

The Deputy President told the Chairman that President Ramaphosa was encouraged by the number of Chinese companies he interacted with in Beijing and Shenzhen last year, who all expressed a wish to increase their investment exposure in South Africa.

“We continue to prioritise new investments in targeted sectors and enlarge the beneficiation and manufacturing base in South Africa, especially in the automotive and energy, which will contribute to local job creation, technology, and skills transfer,” said the Deputy President.

The Deputy President took the opportunity presented by the visit to mobilise Chinese businesses to attend the Business 20 (B20) meetings of the G20 in South Africa this year.

The Chairman also invited South Africa to attend the third China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) that will be hosted by the CCPIT in Beijing in July.

The CISCE is one of the four national-level trade and investment conferences hosted in China yearly.

The second CISCE was held in Beijing in November 2024 and was addressed by the Vice President of China, Han Zheng. – Source: www.dirco.gov.za

FOREIGN MINISTERS’ MEETING BACKS SOUTH AFRICA’S G20 PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES

The Group of Twenty (G20) Foreign Ministers have thrown their weight behind South Africa’s Presidency priorities, which focus on sustainable development and debt sustainability for low-income countries, among others.

Other priorities of South Africa’s G20 Presidency are strengthening disaster resilience; mobilising finance for a Just Energy Transition; and harnessing critical minerals for inclusive growth and development.

This is according to the International Relations and Cooperation Minister Ronald Lamola, who addressed the media at the conclusion of the first Foreign Ministers’ Meeting on Friday, 21 February 2025.



The Minister said the two-day meeting which began on Thursday, 20 February 2025 at the Nasrec Expo Centre in Johannesburg, was productive.

“Let me first express South Africa’s deep appreciation to you all for what has been a very productive First Foreign Ministers’ Meeting under South Africa’s G20 Presidency. I further thank the members of the G20 Troika, Brazil, and the United States of America for their support and cooperation during our G20 Presidency,” said the Minister.

The meeting also outlined Task Force One’s focus on inclusive economic growth, industrialisation, employment, and reducing inequality.

Task Force Two focuses on food security, while Task Force Three addresses artificial intelligence, data, governance, and sustainable development innovation.

“Furthermore, we have proposed the additional initiatives—the review of the work of the G20, a cost of capital review, a broadened compact with Africa 2.0, and an initiative on critical minerals,” said the Minister.

South Africa also took note of the fruitful discussions and inputs on the various priorities and high-level deliverables which will enrich various streams of work during 2025.

“We can assure you that all the views expressed will be considered as we progress with our work during this year. We look forward to the active participation and contributions of all your delegations,” the Minister added.

He said the Ministers reaffirmed G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation.

The gathering also stressed the G20’s commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting the need for urgent action to accelerate efforts to reaffirm the group’s strong commitment to the SDGs in line with South Africa’s theme of *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*.

The leaders also noted the impact of ongoing conflicts on economic development and the attainment of SDGs, with a focus on sustainable investments in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

“Concerning the ongoing conflicts and wars in Africa, the Middle East and Europe, the meeting reiterated that all states must act in a manner consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the UN [United Nations] Charter.”

Guided by international law, Minister Lamola announced that there was an agreement to support all efforts towards a just peace in Ukraine, Palestine, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and other major conflicts around the globe.

The leaders also touched on the importance of elevating African voices in the G20 and addressing pressing global challenges.

The Minister also underscored the need to reform the international system of global governance, inclusive of the international financial architecture, the multilateral trading system, and the multilateral development banks.

The meeting “further stressed the need to reform the UN to make it fit for purpose and relevant to the current international reality. This includes the Security Council.”

Also under discussion was the importance of multilateralism, the need for the reform of the UN and the upcoming Financing for Development Conference in Seville, Spain, and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP) in Belém, Brazil.

“South Africa undertook to present a four-stage roadmap of this proposed G20 review, including a briefing on the proposed approach and survey methodology which will involve the participation of G20 members, guest countries and invited stakeholders.”

According to the Minister, the final report will be presented for adoption at the final G20 Sherpa meeting taking place from 16 to 19 November 2025.

President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the opening of the meeting on Thursday where he urged global leaders to embrace inclusivity, cooperation and reform as South Africa steers the Presidency of the G20 for the first time. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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SOUTH AFRICA’S G20 PRESIDENCY PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO FOSTER AU PARTNERSHIPS

South Africa’s Presidency of the Group of Twenty (G20) presents a valuable opportunity to foster collaboration and strengthen partnerships with the African Union (AU) in key priority areas, says International Relations and Cooperation Deputy Minister Thandi Moraka.

“We want to urge you that all of you as the people of Africa, consider yourselves as the Presidents of the G20. It is our own collective effort,” Moraka said on Monday, 24 February 2025.

She believes that this leadership role allows for enhanced partnerships and the ability to address pressing challenges facing the continent collectively.

The Deputy Minister addressed attendees at the opening ceremony of the Permanent Committees’ session for the sixth Pan-African Parliament (PAP) on Monday.

Last week, International Relations and Cooperation Minister Ronald Lamola announced that the G20 Foreign Ministers have thrown their weight behind the South African G20 Presidency priorities, which focus on sustainable development and debt sustainability for low-income countries, among others.



The first Foreign Ministers' Meeting also highlighted the importance of elevating African voices in the G20 and addressing pressing global challenges.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister Moraka welcomed the PAP support amidst pressure from the White House.

"I'm also pleased to hear that PAP will be tabling a motion here in this sitting where you are going to rally behind the South African government amidst the current threats that are emerging from the White House, where the President of the United States (US) is threatening to impose sanctions on us as the people of South Africa.

"And really, it is pleasing to hear that PAP is willing to say, not one of our own, not in our name, we'll defend what is best for the African people," she said.

The new US administration has implemented changes in Washington's trade and foreign policies and cut aid to most African countries.

She was hopeful that the new leadership of the AU Commission will bring "fresh ideas and also an invigorated resolve to respond to the challenges that we desperately need to address as the people of the continent of Africa, including the process of achieving and championing the Agenda 2063".

According to the AU, Agenda 2063 is Africa's development blueprint to achieve inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development over a 50-year period.

The Deputy Minister believes that it is high time Africa moves beyond just mere words and moves towards actioning African solutions for the continent.

The opening of the PAP was held under the auspices of the AU's 2025 theme: *Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations*.

"We want to call upon the Pan-African Parliament to make it a point that the theme is being realised by all of us because we have been victims of the slave trade. We have been victims of colonialism. We have been victims of racial discrimination, as the people of the continent of Africa. So, we can't shy away from addressing issues of reparatory justice."

Meanwhile, Moraka stressed the need for peaceful conflict resolution and congratulated the newly elected African Union Commission leadership.

She also highlighted South Africa's commitment to addressing challenges like democratic governance and peace.

The Deputy Minister also spoke about issues of food and energy insecurity, as well as inadequate infrastructure and emphasised the potential of Africa's mineral resources to benefit the continent's people.

The Deputy Minister said she looks forward to the addressing of the long-outstanding matter of the hosting of the women's conference by the PAP this year. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

SOUTH AFRICA PARTICIPATES IN UNGA MEETING MARKING RUSSIA, UKRAINE CONFLICT ANNIVERSARY

South Africa has voted in favour of a General Assembly resolution, presented by the United States of America with amendments by the European Union (EU), which reiterates that the principal purpose of the United Nations (UN) is to maintain international peace and security and to peacefully settle disputes.

It further reaffirms the commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, extending to its territorial waters; implores a swift end to the conflict and further urges a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace between Ukraine and Russia, in line with the UN Charter and the principles of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States.

This comes as the UN General Assembly met in New York on Monday, 24 February 2025, on the third anniversary of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

“South Africa continues to call for the urgent cessation of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in order to prevent the further loss of life and the destruction of Ukraine’s infrastructure. Every effort must be made to de-escalate the conflict.

“South Africa remains firmly committed to the need for a peaceful and negotiated resolution of the conflict within a rules-based system centred on international law, including the respect for human rights and the principles of the UN Charter,” said the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in a statement.

It said the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states remain inviolable.

Consequently, South Africa supports all efforts to bring the conflict to an end and welcomes all efforts to bring about negotiations.

“We remain steadfast in our commitment to peaceful resolution of the conflict through a negotiated settlement with all parties to the conflict having a seat at the table.

“Consistent with the African Peace Initiative we have always maintained that a commitment to inclusivity is key to delivering the buy-in of all Parties to the conflict and to providing acceptable solutions to both parties,” said the department.

It added that countries are at a point of inflection in this conflict with the urgency to seize the momentum towards a negotiated settlement.

Head of UN Peacekeeping and Political Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, emphasised that the Russian invasion has “undermined the very foundations of the international order”.

She also reminded delegates that since 24 February 2022, the conflict has resulted in the tragic loss of at least 12 654 Ukrainian civilians, including 673 children.

In light of the recently adopted Security Council resolution, UN News reported that DiCarlo stressed the need for peace in Ukraine to be “just, sustainable, and comprehensive”.

She said such peace must align with the Charter of the UN, international law, and the resolutions passed by the General Assembly, including those enacted during Monday’s emergency special session. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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AFRICAN COUNTRIES URGED TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Dr Dion George, has called on African countries to act with resolve and clarity of purpose on issues of climate change.

This, as the Minister attended the annual Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.





The meeting, which took place on the sidelines of the 38th African Union (AU) Summit, was where Heads of African States and Government considered climate issues of strategic importance to the continent.

During this session, the Coordinator of CAHOSCC, Dr William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, delivered his report, which highlighted various developments since the last meeting in 2024.

The report included reflections on the outcomes of the 29th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in November 2024 and the implications for Africa, the CAHOSCC report from the meeting held on the margins of the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2024, updates from the Africa Climate Initiatives and Commissions, and the operationalisation of the Africa Climate Summit outcomes.

The CAHOSCC meeting also considered and submitted a draft decision on key climate change issues for adoption by the AU Assembly.

While delivering his intervention at the meeting, Dr George reiterated the need for African countries to "act with resolve and clarity of purpose" and went on to highlight the opportunities to do so through South Africa's G20 Presidency.

"The Minister is leading on the G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG), which has the overall objective to advance the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through focusing on a number of priorities and deliverables," the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment said in a statement.

These include focusing on adapting to climate change and building resilience, addressing loss and damage, the just transition, and mobilising climate finance.

The other priority areas include biodiversity and conservation, addressing land degradation, desertification and drought, and sustainable chemicals and waste management, as well as oceans and coasts.

Following a request by Dr George in his intervention, the meeting resolved to request the AU Commission to convene a consultative meeting with AU Member States to deliberate about the priorities and proposed deliverables for the ECSWG prior to the first virtual meeting of the Working Group in March 2025. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



INTERNATIONAL VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST



DEAN MACPHERSON
MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Dean Macpherson's Middle East visit, backed by Infrastructure South Africa, aims to boost investor interest in the infrastructure pipeline.

Dates: 19 February 2025 – 1 March 2025



MINISTER MACPHERSON UNDERTAKES WORKING VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Dean Macpherson is from 21 to 28 February undertaking an official working visit to the Middle East.

The visit will include Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.

The Minister is joined by the MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure in Limpopo, Ernest Rachoene and the Chairperson of the eThekweni Municipality Economic Development and Planning Committee, Themebuhle Ntuli.

The visit forms part of the Minister's commitment to attracting infrastructure investment into South Africa, which will help turn the country into a construction site, boost economic growth, and create jobs.

In each country, the Minister and his delegation will meet with his state counterpart or equivalent, sovereign wealth funds, state-owned entities, and private sector businesses that can invest in South African infrastructure projects.

The Middle East represents an untapped market for South African infrastructure projects, with limited investment having taken place in the past.

– Source: SAnews.gov.za

SOUTH AFRICA POSITIONED TO NAVIGATE CHALLENGING GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION

Amidst a fragmented geopolitical landscape, the President and CEO of the World Economic Forum, Børge Brende, has expressed support for South Africa's Group 20 (G20) Presidency.



"In such a polarised, fragmented world as [the] backdrop of this G20 leadership, I think South Africa is especially well positioned to handle this very complicated geopolitical situation," Brende said on Tuesday, 25 February 2025.

Brende was addressing Business 20 (B20)—the official dialogue forum for domestic and international business communities. In his address, he stated that South Africa has extensive experience in managing competition and its history.

"It's not an easy G20 to take on, but that's a reality with the geopolitical backdrop that [it] is happening against," Brende said.

He said the current geopolitical situation is a priority for everyone, making the global business voice more crucial than ever.



"The last weeks have shown us we have to fasten our seat belts and even getting people that don't agree [with us] in the same room is almost an achievement. I saw that in Davos this year when people don't agree [with you] they don't want to even discuss [matters]. But to break impasses at least, you must start with the dialogue, sit in the same room, and say, 'This is important to me'.

"Sherpas can then try to find some solutions because the solutions are so incredibly important," he said.

With South Africa set to host the G20 Leaders' Summit later this year, Cape Town hosted the two-day B20, which began on Monday. Western Cape Premier Alan Winde previously said that the province and Cape Town look forward to welcoming the world once again.

The gathering focused on the theme *Inclusive Growth and Prosperity through Global Participation*.

Brende said the private sector has a key role to play in mobilising investment, driving innovation, and finding solutions to shared challenges.

"That means that if you want to get anything done, you also must work with the business sector. That's the only way to also get investments and fresh money," he explained.

He described Africa, with its fast-growing economies and young workforce, as poised to shape the future. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) alone has the potential to unlock US\$450 billion in economic gains over the next decade.

The World Economic Forum, he said, has a long-fostered collaboration between business and government, and is committed to supporting this effort through initiatives such as the First Movers Coalition that pushes for green technologies.

“Now is the time for the B20 and G20 to work together to accelerate sustainable growth, strengthen global trade, and ensure that economic progress benefits all.

“South Africa’s long-standing commitment to cooperation serves as a powerful example of what is possible when we find common ground.”

Brende also touched on the key challenges including climate change, cybercrime, and the need for global consensus on issues like carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions and cybersecurity.

Despite the geopolitical tensions, Brende stated that the global economy is expected to grow by over 3% this year.

“Trade is expected to grow by 3%; however, the growth we are seeing in trade is not coming from traditional manufacturing goods. Digital trade and services are projecting significant growth. The biggest game changers over the next few years will be new technologies.”

He said the technological advancements, particularly in artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, could boost productivity by 10% in a decade. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

SOUTH AFRICA MAKES STRIDES TOWARDS REMOVAL FROM FATF GREY LIST

The National Treasury has expressed satisfaction with the progress being made to remove South Africa from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list.



This follows an announcement by the FATF on Friday, 21 February 2024, in which it upgraded four of the six outstanding action items at the conclusion of its latest plenary meetings in Paris, France.

The FATF is the international standard-setting body that oversees global compliance with anti-money laundering rules. The FATF grey list refers to the FATF’s practice of publicly identifying countries with strategic AML/CFT deficiencies.

The FATF maintains two such lists, with one being jurisdictions under “increased monitoring” that are actively working with the FATF to address strategic deficiencies in their regimes” and secondly “high-risk jurisdictions subject to a call for action” that are not actively engaging with the FATF to address these deficiencies.

South Africa was greylisted by the FATF in February 2023 for not complying with international standards that relate to money laundering and addressing illicit financial flows.

According to the National Treasury, South Africa has now addressed or largely addressed 20 out of the 22 action items outlined in its Action Plan. The two remaining items are expected to be addressed in the reporting period from March 2025 to June 2025.

“This would enable South Africa to be considered for delisting from the FATF grey list in October 2025,” National Treasury said in a statement.

The FATF Plenary adopted the report and recommendations of the Africa Joint Group on 21 February 2025 and noted South Africa’s progress in its public statement: “Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring—21 February 2025” (FATF Update on grey-listed countries February 2025).

The National Treasury commended the collaborative efforts of financial and non-financial regulators, beneficial ownership registries, and law enforcement agencies in securing the upgrade of the four action items.

“National Treasury welcomes the efforts of financial and non-financial regulators and beneficial ownership registries and its law enforcement users in securing upgrades for the four action items they were directly responsible for in the current reporting cycle.

“Treasury also notes the ongoing efforts by all the law enforcement agencies to demonstrate the significant progress in respect of the two action items not yet upgraded, relating to the investigation and prosecution of serious and complex money laundering and of terrorist financing,” Treasury said.

The FATF statement issued after its Plenary states the following in relation to South Africa:

“Since February 2023, when South Africa made a high-level political commitment to work with the FATF and ESAAMLG to strengthen the effectiveness of its AML/CFT regime, South Africa has taken steps towards improving its AML/CFT regime, including by demonstrating that all supervisors apply effective, proportionate, and effective sanctions ensuring competent authorities have timely access to accurate and up-to-date BO information on legal persons and arrangements and applying sanctions for breaches of violation by legal persons to beneficial ownership obligations.

“South Africa should continue to work on implementing its action plan to address its remaining strategic deficiency on demonstrating a sustained increase in investigations and prosecutions of serious and complex money laundering and the full range of TF activities in line with its risk profile,” said the FATF.

“The decision by the FATF Plenary to extend the reporting cycle for the two action items on investigations and prosecutions for serious and complex money laundering and terror financing activities reflects the fact that these are the most demanding goals of every country’s systems for combating money laundering and terrorist financing, particularly since they require a country to demonstrate that the improvements made are sustained over successive reporting periods,” Treasury explained.

Treasury emphasised that South Africa continues to address both outstanding action items by June 2025 to enable an exit from grey listing by October 2025.

“Our investigation and prosecution teams are working closely in terms of a prosecution-guided investigation strategy to ensure that we demonstrate the sustained progress as required by FATF. These improvements are critical not just for getting off the grey list, but, critically, for strengthening the fight against crime and corruption,” Treasury said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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SOUTH AFRICA WELCOMES FIRST VISITORS FROM CHINA THROUGH NEW VISA INITIATIVE

The digital Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS) visa initiative is bearing fruit with the first group of visitors from China having arrived in South Africa over the weekend.

Home Affairs Minister Dr Leon Schreiber, along with Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille and other government and tourism stakeholders, welcomed the first group of visitors from China through the TTOS visa initiative.

The 15 tourists arrived on Saturday, 22 February 2025, through the Cape Town International Airport in the Western Cape.

The ministers were delighted to welcome the tourists and a tour guide who arrived in South Africa only a few days after their visas were processed through the Department of Home Affairs visa initiative.

“This was an exciting moment in this groundbreaking initiative where the TTOS is providing a faster and more seamless process for visas for travellers from India and China. Together with the Department of Home Affairs, we have worked tirelessly to make this happen, and I commend Minister Schreiber and the team in the Department of Home Affairs for the swift implementation of this new and improved visa initiative,” Minister de Lille said.

Last year, an Interministerial Committee with the Department of Tourism, the Department of Home Affairs, the State Security Agency, and Operation Vulindlela in The Presidency was established to tackle the visa regime issues.



Home Affairs announced that the groundbreaking TTOS will significantly ease the process and allow for a seamless visa application process for travellers and tour operators from India and China.

From 12 February 2025, the first group of 65 approved tour operators from South Africa, India, and China started processing visa applications through the TTOS.

India and China have been identified as two key source markets for South Africa to grow arrivals due to the high number of tourists who travel internationally from these countries.

Currently, South Africa only receives 41 600 arrivals from India and 79 700 from China, a minor share of the country's total arrivals for 2024 which stood at 8.9 million total international arrivals.

“The TTOS is a massive win for the tourism and business events sector and the Department of Tourism will use the new visa initiatives as enablers to grow tourism arrivals to South Africa, which will in turn drive inclusive economic growth and job creation,” Minister de Lille added.

Through targeted outreach engagements in India and China, the country has also been sharing the developments of the TTOS, the Electronic Travel Authorisation, and Digital Nomad Visas with these two key source markets to ensure that more tour operators register and use these new and enhanced visa processes.

“We are extremely excited about these visa developments and what it means for the growth of the tourism sector. We have no doubt that the TTOS will exponentially increase arrivals from India and China, which will stimulate demand across the tourism and services sector,” the Minister said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

MINISTER PATRICIA DE LILLE OPENS 2025 EDITION OF MEETINGS AFRICA

On Tuesday, 25 February 2025, Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille, together with tourism and business events sector leaders, officially opened the 2025 edition of Meetings Africa.



“We are once again delighted to host Meetings Africa. This is an even more exciting event this year as South Africa chairs and hosts the G20, a historic occasion as this gathering takes place on African soil for the first time.”

– Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille



Meetings Africa is a proudly Pan-African gathering that embodies the very best of Africa's business events industry. The event is not just a trade show; it is a powerful platform where ideas meet opportunity, where connections spark innovation, and where Africa stands together to showcase its limitless potential.

This year, we reaffirm our commitment to positioning Africa as a global powerhouse in the Meetings Incentives Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) sector in a historic year as South Africa becomes the first African country to host the G20 Meetings.

The Meetings Africa trade floor proudly represents 26 African nations, eager to engage with top global buyers from across the world.

Delegates include governments, businesses, entrepreneurs, global partners, and business events professionals from around the world. This year, we are proud to welcome over 360 exhibitors from 26 African countries, with first-time delegates from Chad, Guinea, Morocco, and Madagascar.

The Department of Tourism is once again proud to have funded the participation of 25 South African small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism sector to showcase their businesses at Meetings Africa this year.

Through funding by the department, we have removed the financial barrier for these businesses and have provided them with an opportunity to connect with the leaders in business events, secure partnerships and deals that will help their businesses and our economy grow.

A key feature at this year's Meetings Africa is a panel discussion on the newly launched Trusted Tour Operator Scheme visa initiative where Minister de Lille will be joined by Minister of Home Affairs, Dr Leon Schreiber to discuss the impact of this groundbreaking initiative for the tourism and business events sectors.

Meetings Africa is a powerful economic growth enabler as it provides the business events sector with opportunities to connect with partners and buyers from all over Africa and the world. Last year, Meetings Africa injected an estimated R420 million into South Africa's economy, of which R215 million was to the Johannesburg economy.

Meetings Africa is focused on investing in people and showcasing South Africa's quality-assured facilities and venues, and together, positioning Africa as the go-to destination for world-class business events. Meetings Africa is more than just an annual event—it is a Pan-African showcase of excellence, where our strengths come together to unlock new possibilities for the industry. – Source: www.gov.za

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CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW CAPE WINELANDS AIRPORT SET TO START THIS YEAR

Construction on the new Cape Winelands Airport is officially scheduled to begin this year. This is according to recent reports, which say that the Cape Winelands Airport is closer to reality with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process nearing completion and funding arrangements taking shape.



As per *Travel News*, construction is planned to begin later this year, pending regulatory approvals, including the Environmental Impact Assessment expected by mid-2025. Completion on the airport is targeted for late 2027 or early 2028.

“We are really excited about the airport expansion. There are so many benefits to a commercial airport in this part of the region, and we know that this development will be a catalyst for growth,” Deon Cloete, the managing director of Cape Winelands Airport, previously stated.

“We see ourselves as an important part of the regional value chain, which is a responsibility we take seriously,” Cloete added.

What can we expect from the new airport?

The R7 billion airport upgrade and development will include a 3.5km runway, a terminal building, retail outlets, an aircraft hangar, an adjacent hotel as well as vineyards as part of the landscaping aesthetics to portray the region's wine culture.

There will also be open spaces that include a plaza, a conference centre, a wine-tasting experience, an outdoor amphitheatre for events of up to 5 000 people, and an aviation museum.

In the controlled airside area of the airport, a portion of the land will include a botanical garden with a diverse collection of indigenous fynbos.

The airport will also offer a range of contemporary amenities and services designed to enhance the travel experience.

These include efficient check-in counters with advanced technology for swift processing, as well as spacious and comfortable waiting lounges with ergonomic seating. – Source: www.sapeople.com

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SOUTH AFRICA'S WATERFALL CITY WINS WORLD'S BEST MASTERPLAN

In big news for South African innovation, South Africa's Waterfall City is basking in the international spotlight following impressive wins at the International Property Awards.

Held in London, the prestigious awards ceremony saw Waterfall City Management Company walk away with the “Best International Masterplan 2024-2025 win”—an award that recognises the innovative, world-class urban design framework making the smart city thrive.

Additionally, the highest international accolade was followed up by Waterfall City being named Best Masterplan Africa 2024-2025.

Though Waterfall City already has five Best International Mixed-use Development awards to its name, this was the very first time the smart city entered the Masterplan category. Specifically created last year by the International Property Awards association for large-scale developments covering a minimum of 20 000 m², the category saw formidable competitions clamouring to claim the World’s Best spot.



Over the past year, an independent panel of over 100 industry experts studied and assessed hundreds of entries before determining the winners. In the Masterplan category, candidates were judged based on criteria that ranged from design and land use to architecture and sustainability.

“The fact that Waterfall City has been chosen as the very Best in the World winner of the International Property Awards’ new Masterplan category is a huge honour,” CEO of Waterfall City Management Company Willie Vos reflected.

“As Africa continues to attract interest as an emerging economic investment hub, we are proud to be playing a role in representing the continent on a global stage, showcasing local talent and ability. Such international recognition not only emphasises the innovative excellence that has gone into planning the growth of this smart city but is also a reward for all the hard work that my team, along with our partners and stakeholders, continues to put into this development—work and dedication that I am so proud of.” – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

PUMPKIN EXPORT BOOM: “WE ALWAYS KNEW SOUTH AFRICA HAD POTENTIAL”



A Dutch company has been cultivating and exporting organic pumpkins and sweet potatoes from South Africa specifically for the European market.

When it comes to fresh produce, South Africa’s most famous exports to Europe and elsewhere are arguably its citrus, table grapes, and stone fruit.

Local avocados are also popular abroad, while blueberries have become one of South Africa’s fastest-growing export crops.

There isn’t much that doesn’t thrive under the South African sun, as Europe turns to South Africa to complement its pumpkin-growing cycle.

The South African pumpkin season is now in full swing at Q-Cape—a Netherlands-based company that has spent the last decade cultivating organic pumpkins and sweet potatoes in South Africa for the European market.

Thanks to South Africa’s reverse growing season, Q-Cape have been able to seamlessly fill supply gaps from their South African suppliers when European harvests end.

“The moment the European supply runs out, we switch to South Africa,” Leo Stoker, Head of Procurement/ Sales at Q-Cape, told Fresh Plaza.

Covering a cultivation area of 73 hectares on South Africa’s West Coast and in the Northern Cape, the company focuses on orange Hokkaido pumpkins as well as butternut (referred to as butternut squash in Europe).

“The outlook for this year is promising,” Stoker added.

“The harvest has gone well, the quality of the pumpkins looks excellent, and the market conditions are favourable.”

Q-Cape primarily serves Germany, Austria, France, and Scandinavia, with Germany having the biggest demand.

While expansion beyond Europe is a possibility, the company’s focus remains on strengthening its current ties and serving the European market.

To that end, Stoker sees South Africa as having a strategic advantage.

“We have long believed in the opportunities South Africa has to offer,” he said.

“South Africa is an excellent region for growing vegetables with its fertile soil and sunny climate.”

“With cultivated areas shrinking across Europe, this presents significant growth potential for a country like South Africa.”

Q-Cape’s South African squash season runs from January to June, followed by southern European and Dutch supplies.

“In June and July, most retailers source their pumpkins from southern Europe, before switching back to the Dutch season at the end of July,” noted Stoker.

The company also sources orange-fleshed organic sweet potatoes from its South African growers between April and September. – Source: www.thesouthafrican.com

SOUTH AFRICA’S POST-PRODUCTION TALENT AND EXPERTISE SHOWCASED IN WILL SMITH’S *BEAUTIFUL SCARS*

Crafted by the local post-production and VFX company The Refinery, Will Smith’s music video, “Beautiful Scars”, showcases South Africa’s rising impact on the global film and music scene, placing the country’s post-production talent and expertise centre stage.



The video, a cinematic tribute to *The Matrix* that showcases South Africa’s technical skill, talent, and expertise in post-production, is more than just a high-profile project; *Beautiful Scars* is proof that South African talent can deliver Hollywood-calibre work at a competitive rate.

Full-scale collaboration

Originally brought on to create behind-the-scenes content, The Refinery soon found itself entrusted with the full post requirements of the video, directed by *Bad Boys 3 & 4* filmmakers Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah.

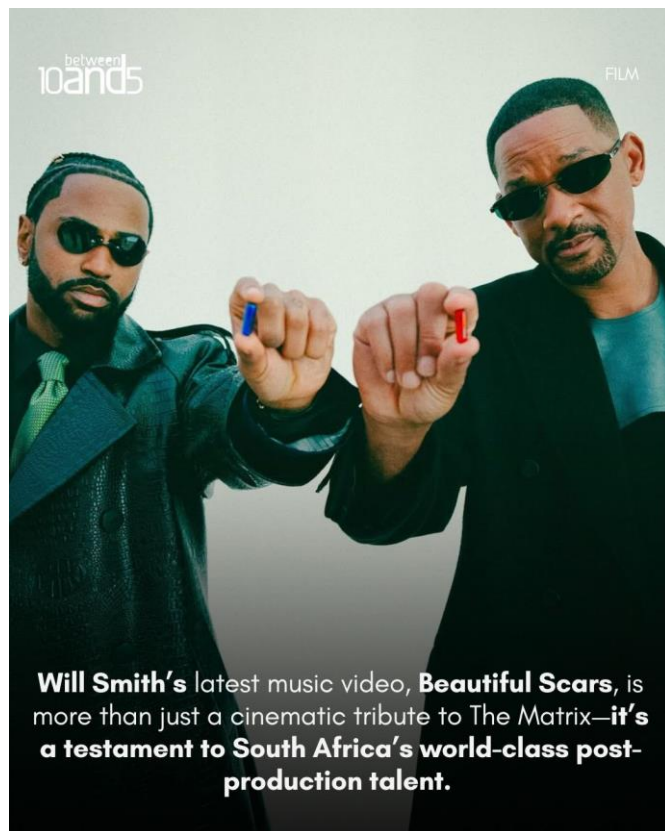
The decision to consolidate the entire process under one roof was a strategic one.

“Because we offer top-tier, full-service post-production, it made sense to hand this over to one company that could do it all,” says CEO of The Refinery, Alastair Orr.

“When every second counts, you can’t risk miscommunication or cross-company errors. You need precision, trust, and a team that thrives under this kind of pressure.”

Beautiful Scars: A story in every frame

Inspired by the Japanese art of Kintsugi—the art of embracing imperfections and making them beautiful—the video blends sleek, modern tech with grainy, nostalgic VHS aesthetics to craft a visually stunning narrative.



For Smith, this project goes beyond a music video; it's a reflective exploration of roads not taken, including his well-documented decision to turn down the role of Neo in *The Matrix*.

"This is a deeply personal piece for Will, and we felt that energy from the start," Orr shares.

"The video itself is a beautiful scar, a testament to the idea that every crack tells a story. It's about risk-taking, falling, rebuilding, and discovering that the gold isn't just in what you lost—it's in what you gained by piecing it back together."

How it all began

"This started like most good stories: unexpectedly," Orr explains.

He says they have worked hard to build a reputation for slick, high-quality post-production in South Africa. What they did not realise was that their reputation had travelled to Westbrook, Will Smith's company.

"When they reached out, we knew something special was in the works."

The synergy between teams was instant.

"Everyone involved wanted to create something memorable," Orr says.

"We didn't take this on just because of the name attached. We said yes because the project felt alive—because the people behind it cared as much as we do."

Smith shared on Instagram: "This was the most fun I've had making a video in a long time."

Pushing the limits of technology and creativity

The video was shot using cutting-edge LED volume technology, the same groundbreaking approach used in *The Mandalorian*.

Unlike traditional green screens, LED volumes allow actors to interact with real-time digital environments, creating a seamless, immersive experience.

"It's an incredible tool, but it comes with challenges," Orr explains.

"Unlike green screens, where adjustments can be made in post, LED volumes capture everything as-is.

"That forced us to innovate and problem-solve in creative ways and our VFX team, led by Rory Mark and Eddie Addenhall, absolutely nailed it."

Orr handled the editing, Liam Traynor managed the colour grade, and Charles Singleton crafted the sound design and mix. Post-producer Ariye Mahdeb kept the workflow seamless, while Simone Fanti ensured all VFX shots were delivered on time.

"The whole Kintsugi philosophy behind *Beautiful Scars* wasn't just in the concept—it became part of how we worked," says Orr.

Every challenge, he says, added something to the final cut.

"This was a true team effort and in the end, the video itself became its own beautiful scar. The obstacles we faced and overcame are what made it something we're incredibly proud of."

A milestone for South African film and post-production

But Orr emphasises that it is not just about having the right tools.

"It's about the creativity, the problem-solving and the passion our teams bring,"

He explains that the project had challenges.

"But we stepped up and created something extraordinary."

He says that when companies take a chance on South Africa, they're not taking a risk.

"They're investing in a team that can produce work that stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the best in the world."

As *Beautiful Scars* gains international recognition, The Refinery is poised to take on even more global projects, further cementing South Africa's reputation as a powerhouse in film and television post-production.

More than just a high-profile project, *Beautiful Scars* is proof that South African talent can deliver Hollywood-calibre work at a competitive rate.

“We hope this opens the door for more collaborations like this, where we continue proving that South Africa isn’t just a great place to shoot—it’s a place where world-class content is made,” says Orr. – Source: www.bizcommunity.com

HISTORY MADE: SOUTH AFRICA CLINCHES FIRST-EVER HOCKEY WORLD CUP MEDAL

For the first time in history, South Africa are medallists at an FIH World Cup, after beating Belgium in the bronze medal match.



South Africa secured their first-ever medal by edging past Belgium 6-5 in the third-place playoff of the FIH Indoor Hockey World Cup in Poreč on Sunday, 23 February 2025.

South Africa won two of their three pool games (against Croatia and Poland) and lost one (against Austria) to book their place in the playoffs.

First up was a quarter-final against Iran, a contest that South Africa dominated en route to a 6-0 victory and a maiden semi-final berth. Unfortunately, they came up short in the last four matches, going down 6-1 to Germany.

That result placed them on a collision course with Belgium in the third-place playoff and bronze medal showdown on Sunday.

In a nail-biting encounter, South Africa narrowly edged Europeans, with Mustapha Cassiem (three), Dayaan Cassiem (two), and Hans Neethling (penalty) scoring the six goals between them.

The victory sees South Africa secure a podium finish and bag a medal at the Indoor World Cup for the first time in history, despite limited funding and a shortage of resources compared to some of their more accomplished counterparts from around the globe.

In terms of standout players, one can look no further than 22-year-old Mustapha Cassiem, who hit the back of the net no less than 17 times in South Africa's six games in total. The next best scorer with five goals was Dalpiarro Langford, while Dayaan Cassiem and Neethling finished with four each and Litha Kraai with two. – Source: www.sapeople.com

CROQUET GREAT REG BAMFORD CAPTAINS SOUTH AFRICA IN AUSTRALIA

Cape Town-born Reg Bamford captained the South African national team to a creditable sixth-place finish at the World Team Croquet Championships Tier 1 in Tasmania in Australia last weekend.

The main aim for the team was to avoid a relegation battle for eighth place, which they managed to achieve in fine style.

As a result, “AmaCrockoCrocko” will remain in the Tier 1 top division for at least another four years.

Bamford congratulated his teammates William Louw and Andrew Hobbs for their achievements. Judith Hanekom was the fourth member of the South African team.

Tough draw

The South African quartet was drawn in a tough Block A alongside the United States (US), Egypt and Spain.

South Africa finished third following two defeats (against the US and Egypt) and a draw against Spain.

They moved into the Plate round alongside Spain and the third- and fourth-placed finishers from Block B, England and Ireland.



South Africa topped the Plate standings after two wins (against Ireland and England) and another draw against Spain. That moved them into the playoff for fifth-sixth place, where they went down 8-1 to England.

Who is Reg Bamford?

Reg Bamford is an internationally renowned name in the sport of croquet. Now 57, Bamford dominated world croquet in recent decades, having first competed at the highest level in the mid-1980s.

He is the only player to have won both versions of the World Championships (Golf Croquet and Association Croquet) and held both titles simultaneously in 2013.

Bamford has won the Association Croquet World Croquet Championship five times (2001, 2005, 2009, 2012, and 2020), and the WCF World Golf Croquet Championship twice (2013 and 2017).

He has won the British AC Open Championship 12 times and the British GC Open Championship 12 times, the premier events in the UK of each code. He was ranked 29th in the 100 Best Sportspeople in the World for the year 2020 by Sports Pedia.

Off the sporting field, Bamford is a qualified Chartered Accountant, having completed his articles at Deloitte South Africa in 1992.

He went on to establish Sable International, a company that offers services to expats and high-net-worth individuals.

Meanwhile, as reported by *The South African* website, Reg Bamford competed in last year’s Cape Town Cycle Tour.

Bamford took on the challenge of the 109 km route, crossing the finish line in a time of 5:56:28 according to the official SportSplits tracking app.
– Source: www.thesouthafrican.com

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EXCITEMENT BUILDS FOR SOUTH AFRICA’S FIRST EVER SAFARI RALLY IN THE FIA WORLD RALLY-RAID

In just three months, South Africa will host the much-anticipated Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) World Rally-Raid Championship (W2RC) Safari Rally, and local motorsport fans are eagerly awaiting the high-calibre entries.

Taking place from 18 to 24 May 2025, the South African Safari Rally will be the first W2RC event on local soil and will be sponsored by Toyota Gazoo Racing. This event will serve as the third round of this year’s W2RC season.



Archie Rutherford, CEO of the South African Safari Rally, expressed his excitement over the event: "We've had a fantastic response and great interest from around the world for this new addition to the World Rally-Raid Championship calendar. Our team is hard at work ensuring we deliver a truly world-class event for competitors, media, and spectators."

Among the impressive entrants in the Ultimate (T1+) category, rally enthusiasts can expect to see multiple Dakar Rally champion Nasser Al-Attiyah from Qatar and nine-time World Rally Champion Sébastien Loeb of France, both competing for the Dacia Sandriders team. Al-Attiyah has claimed all three rally-raid titles since the series began in 2022.

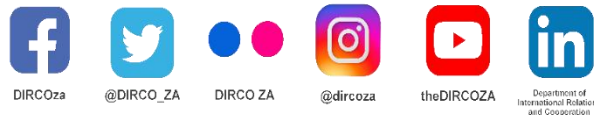
While Toyota Gazoo Racing has yet to confirm its entries, their track record from Dakar gives reason to expect strong participation. The Ford M-Sport team has also submitted two entries, following their successful debut of the new Ford Raptor at Dakar this year.

Other notable entrants include the X-Raid Mini JCW crews of Joao Ferreira (Portugal) and Denos Krotov (Kyrgyzstan), as well as three South African-built Century Racing cars. These will be driven by Dakar stage winner Mathieu Serradori (France), Benoit Frentin (France), and Rik van den Brink (Netherlands). Additionally, the locally-built Neil Woolridge Ford Ranger Evo Plus will feature Brazilian Cross Country champion Marcos Baumgart behind the wheel.

Red-Lined Motorsport will have a full lineup of six vehicles in both Revo and VK56 models, driven by a mix of local and international drivers, including Philip Botha, Danie Ludick, Jayden Els, and Gerhardt and Nickus Heinlein.

The entry list also includes two South African-built WCT Volkswagen Amaroks, with German Daniel Schröder and South African Henri Köhne at the helm.

The event will feature numerous exciting entries in the Challenger Class and the SSV (Side-by-Side) vehicle categories, with more top-ranking teams expected to submit their entries following the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge. Rally-raid enthusiasts are in for plenty of action and excitement when the W2RC heads to South Africa this May. – Source: www.joburgetc.com



For back issues of Ubuntu NewsFlash, visit: www.dirco.gov.za/ubuntu-newsflash