

# UBUNTU NEWSFLASH



Issue 660 | 27 March 2025

WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

IT'S  
**YOUR VOICE**  
Internal newsletter of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation  
ubuntu diplomat

**UBUNTU**  
MAGAZINE

**UBUNTU**  
RADIO

If this newsletter doesn't load or images don't display, go to [www.dirco.gov.za/ubuntu-newsflash](http://www.dirco.gov.za/ubuntu-newsflash).



DEEPENING A CULTURE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & HUMAN RIGHTS

#HumanRightsMonth2025 #SocialJusticeRights4All

#GovernmentZA



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Tel: +27 12 351-1000 (24-hours)  
[www.dirco.gov.za](http://www.dirco.gov.za)

Download the Travel Smart App now from the  
Apple App Store and Google Play.



Travel Smart with  
**DIRCO**



#TravelSmartWithDIRCO



SOUTH AFRICA COMMITTED TO ADVANCING NATIONAL UNITY

*President Cyril Ramaphosa says since the advent of democracy, government has strived to build a society that recognises the injustices of the past while advancing reconciliation and national unity.*

“That is why as a country we have chosen 21 March as an occasion to recommit ourselves to the advancement of human rights for all,” President Ramaphosa said.

In his weekly newsletter, President Ramaphosa said since the dawn of democracy, South Africans have been able to exercise their rights freely, and many know that they can approach the independent courts and the institutions supporting democracy if their rights are infringed or violated.

“We can be proud that South Africans are confident they have a voice and a say in how their country is run, demonstrated by the fact that we have held successive free and fair elections since 1994,” President Ramaphosa said.



President Ramaphosa said in South Africa today, all citizens, African, white, Indian and coloured, male and female, enjoy equal rights and freedoms that the state is obliged to uphold, protect and advance.

“In South Africa today, there are constitutional protections guaranteed to all racial, cultural and linguistic groups, including their right to enjoy their culture and to use their language.

“As South Africans we should therefore reject the politics of divisiveness that is emerging in many parts of the world. In particular, we should challenge the completely false narrative that our country is a place in which people of a certain race or culture are being targeted for persecution.

“We should not allow events beyond our shores to divide us or turn us against each other. Since the end of apartheid, our country has been recognised globally for upholding human rights. The free flow of ideas and opinions are vital to democracy and to having a vibrant society,” the President said.

The President said even those with the most offensive views should know that in the democratic South Africa, and unlike in many other parts of the world, the constitution guarantees the right to freedom of expression, as long as it does not include incitement to violence or advocacy of racial and other hatred.

“Since we attained our freedom, South Africans have been steadfast in our solidarity with peoples everywhere who are facing persecution, discrimination and the violation of their rights.

“Human rights are universal and indivisible. As South Africa, we stand in solidarity with all those whose right to lead lives of dignity are being undermined by conflict and war. As a country we will continue to repeat our call for a renewed global human rights movement so that the rights and dignity of all people should be upheld.

“As we reflect on the state of human rights in South Africa during this month, let us be proud of our achievements as a country. At the same time, let us recommit ourselves to working together to ensure our human rights culture is upheld and strengthened,” President Ramaphosa said.

South Africa commemorates National Human Rights Day on 21 March to remember the Sharpeville massacre, where apartheid police killed 69 peaceful protesters against the regime in 1960.

March 2025 marks over six decades since the painful events of 21 March 1960, when 69 lives were lost in the Sharpeville Massacre. The massacre came to be as a result of citizens choosing to protest against the then pass laws of the apartheid government. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

.....

PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA CONCLUDES VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

*President Cyril Ramaphosa has concluded his Working Visit to the Republic of Namibia, where he attended the inauguration ceremony of President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.*





The ceremony, which coincided with the Republic's 35th Anniversary of Independence Day, was held on Friday, 21 March 2025, at the State House in Windhoek.

The President joined other Heads of State and Government who attended the ceremony to congratulate President Nandi-Ndaitwah on becoming the fifth and first female President of the Republic.

President Ramaphosa has described the occasion as a monumental celebration for women's empowerment, for embracing and recognising the role women play on the African continent and the opportunities given to women to show their capabilities and leadership.

“Our hearts are warm from what we witnessed here today—that the role of women has been fully embraced, and we also embrace it. As many countries on the continent, we wait for the moment when the women on our continent will rise to the top,” President Ramaphosa said.

The Working Visit provided an opportunity to reaffirm the strategic nature of the cordial bilateral relations between South Africa and Namibia and further consolidate bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

South Africa and Namibia enjoy excellent bilateral relations due to the deep fraternal and historic relationship cemented during the fight against colonialism and apartheid.

Namibia's stability and the interrelated ties with South Africa make the country a natural strategic partner not only in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), but also in the broader African Union (AU) context and globally.

President Ramaphosa said he is looking forward to working closely with the new President and her government to advance mutual political and economic interests and the integration of the African continent.

Both countries pursue Africa's renewal, South-South Cooperation, and the promotion of a rules-based international system.

The President was accompanied by the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

.....

## CONDOLENCES FOR FAMILY OF ASHWIN TRIKAMJEE

***President Cyril Ramaphosa has expressed condolences on the passing of the President of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha and Chairperson of the National Religious Leaders' Forum, Ashwin Trikamjee.***

Among others, Trikamjee was an esteemed lawyer and a Black Consciousness activist, who championed religious tolerance.

“Ashwin Trikamjee led a life of diverse pursuits, which he exercised to improve the lives of communities and the impact of organisations in which he served.

“We will miss his gentle, serene presence, wise counsel and humble yet industrious service to many sectors of our nation. May his soul rest in peace,” President Ramaphosa said.

In a press statement, the Presidency hailed Trikamjee's service as President of the then Natal Law Society, President of the Association of Law Societies of SA, Chairperson of the African Regional Forum of the International Bar Association (IBA) and member of the Human Rights Committee of the IBA.



“President Cyril Ramaphosa is deeply saddened by the passing of Ashwin Trikamjee, President of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha and Chairperson of the National Religious Leaders Forum. The President offers his condolences to the family, friends and associates of this outstanding icon of service to our nation who has passed on at the age of 80.

“As a Black Consciousness activist, he also led the Durban Central component of the Natal Indian Congress, and he was a Vice-President of the South African Football Association.

“Mr Trikamjee’s deep spiritual devotion extended beyond his Hindu affiliation as he advocated tolerance and collaboration among the diverse religious communities in our country,” the Presidency said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

## SOUTH AFRICA-DRC TO HOLD DIPLOMATIC CONSULTATIONS

***The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, held political and diplomatic consultations with his counterpart from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Thérèse Kayiwamba Wagner.***



Kayiwamba serves as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Francophonie for the DRC.

According to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, the Ministers plan to review the bilateral cooperation between South Africa and the DRC, focusing on commitments made during the 12th Session of the South Africa-DRC Bi-National Commission (BNC) aimed at strengthening this cooperation.

The meeting will take place on Thursday, 27 March 2025, in Pretoria.



Political ties between the two nations date back to 1997, when former President Nelson Mandela facilitated a meeting between the late President Désiré Kabila and Mobutu Sese Seko aboard a South African Navy ship in Pointe-Noire, Congo-Brazzaville.

Formal bilateral relations between South Africa and the DRC were established in 1992.

The department stated that these relationships are mainly conducted through the BNC, which was established in 2004.

The last session of the BNC took place in Kinshasa, DRC, on 6 July 2023. South Africa is scheduled to host the 13th session of the BNC.



“Since then, South Africa and the DRC have significantly strengthened their bilateral cooperation across various sectors, culminating in the signing of 38 bilateral agreements and memoranda of understanding.”

These legal instruments cover a broad spectrum of areas, including agriculture, defence, trade and investment, health, policing, energy, public service and administration, cooperative governance, transport, diplomatic cooperation, and immigration.

Meanwhile, the department said South Africa has significant investments in the DRC and is the second largest source of imports for the country.

“Many South African multinational companies have a large footprint in the country in several sectors, including, among others, infrastructure development, financial services, mining, construction and property development, retail, and so on,” the department added. – Source: [www.dirco.gov.za](http://www.dirco.gov.za)

## DEPUTY MINISTER BOTES TO HOST HIS PORTUGUESE COUNTERPART FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS

***The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes, will host the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal, Professor Nuno Sampaio, on Thursday, 27 March 2025, in Pretoria.***

The Working Visit will serve as an opportunity to review areas of bilateral cooperation, identify opportunities for further cooperation and address challenges impeding progress.

The meeting will further focus on the following key areas:

- Proposed cooperation on critical minerals with Portugal
- Expansion of scientific, technological, and innovative relations with Portugal



South Africa and Portugal maintain friendly political relations, and the two countries have strong historical and cultural ties.

Bilateral cooperation with Portugal is in line with South Africa's foreign policy objective of North-South Cooperation. The two countries are committed to developing mutually beneficial political and economic relations and technical cooperation.

– Source: [www.dirco.gov.za](http://www.dirco.gov.za)

## SOUTH AFRICA'S G20 SHERPA BRIEFS UN PLENARY ON KEY PRIORITIES

***An informal meeting of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly plenary was held on in New York to hear a briefing by South Africa's G20 Sherpa, Zane Dangor, as the country assumes the G20 Presidency from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025.***

The President of the General Assembly, Philemon Yang, emphasised the crucial role of the G20 in advancing global development goals. He stated, “As we advance the implementation of the Pact of the Future, the Group of Twenty (G20) will be critical to ensuring that inequities are addressed, more resources are provided, and better terms for development lending are negotiated.”

Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and UN Group of 20 Sherpa, underscored the G20's role in climate action. “The G20, as the world's largest economies, holds a pivotal role in keeping the 1.5-degree temperature rise limit within reach,” he said. Li added that South Africa's G20 Presidency presents an opportunity to strengthen collective actions for a successful COP30, particularly through partnerships like the Just Energy Transition Partnership.



South Africa has set the theme for its G20 Presidency as Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability. Addressing the UN plenary, Dangor elaborated on this vision: “Through solidarity, we seek to achieve a future that is people-centred, development-oriented, and inclusive.” He highlighted the interconnectedness of global challenges and stressed the importance of fairness and equality. “By advancing equality, we seek to ensure fair treatment, opportunities, and the advancement of all individuals, peoples, and nations, irrespective of economic status, gender, race, geographic location, or any other characteristics,” he said.

On sustainability, Dangor reinforced South Africa's commitment to policies that balance present needs with future generations. “We will be working to strengthen disaster resilience and responses. We are also focusing on means to ensure debt sustainability for low-income countries,” he stated. He further outlined plans to assess the high cost of capital for African and developing nations, a significant barrier to their growth. “The aim is to develop a comprehensive strategy to assess why some countries face disproportionately high capital costs that hinder their development potential.”

Dangor also highlighted South Africa's focus on financing just energy transitions and harnessing critical minerals for inclusive and sustainable growth. Additionally, he welcomed the African Union's recent inclusion in the G20, calling it an “important opportunity to amplify Africa's voice in global economic governance.” He stressed that Africa's development priorities and the broader concerns of the Global South must be firmly embedded in the G20 agenda.

The G20 is an intergovernmental economic forum comprising 19 countries and two regional unions—the European Union and, as of 2023, the African Union. Collectively, it represents 85 percent of the global economy, 75 percent of world trade, and 67 percent of the global population. With South Africa at the helm, expectations are high for a G20 term that prioritises inclusivity, sustainability, and equitable development for all. – Source: [www.africanews.com](http://www.africanews.com)



## DEPUTY MINISTER ALVIN BOTES LEADS SYMPOSIUM ON SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY APPROACH

*The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes, hosted a symposium on South Africa's foreign policy approach on Monday, 24 March 2025, in Sandton.*

The event was held in partnership with the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA). The symposium focused on South Africa's foreign policy priorities and addressed pressing diplomatic challenges. Additionally, the symposium assessed the sustainability of South Africa's regional security engagements, particularly its role in peacekeeping operations.

With the country holding the Group of Twenty (G20) presidency amid geopolitical tensions, discussions highlighted strategies for leveraging this position to advance global influence while mitigating diplomatic risks. – Source: [www.dirco.gov.za](http://www.dirco.gov.za)

SOUTH AFRICA TO PARTAKE IN PETERSBERG CLIMATE DIALOGUE

*The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, Dr Dion George, will this week represent South Africa at the 15th Petersberg Climate Dialogue (PCD), where the country will reinforce its commitment to climate action.*

“The dialogue will provide a strategic opportunity for South Africa to reinforce its commitment to climate action, advocate for equitable solutions that address the unique challenges faced by developing nations, and foster stronger international cooperation,” the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment said on Monday, 24 March 2025.



Taking place on Tuesday and Wednesday, the annual high-level conference, co-hosted by Germany and Brazil in Berlin, Germany, served as a crucial bridge between successive United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COPs), providing a platform for international dialogue on climate action and cooperation.

“Established in 2010 by former German Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel, the dialogue convenes selected nations to pave the way for successful negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

“The ministerial meeting provides an informal yet strategic space for countries to deliberate on key issues under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, including the global goal on adaptation, mitigation ambition, loss and damage from climate impacts, and the provision of international climate finance,” the department said.

The Minister used this platform as an opportunity to provide an overview of South Africa’s presidency of the G20 Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group.

“I look forward to sharing highlights about our five interrelated key priorities, including climate change and air quality, biodiversity and conservation, and land degradation, desertification and drought,” said Minister George. – Source: [SAnews.gov.za](http://SAnews.gov.za)

DEFENCE HOSTS DRC DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE AND VETERANS ON A WORKING VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA

*Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Veterans, His Excellency Guy Kabombo Muadiamvita of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is undertaking a Working Visit to South Africa to strengthen bilateral defence relations.*





The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Veterans, Minister Guy Kabombo Muadiamvita of the DRC, is currently on a Working Visit to South Africa from 24 to 27 March 2025. This visit aims to further strengthen and enhance the longstanding bilateral defence relations between South Africa and the DRC.

During his visit, Minister Muadiamvita will engage with South Africa’s Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Angie Motshekga, as well as senior military officials on key areas of defence cooperation and bolstering strategic defence capabilities between the two nations.

Minister Motshekga emphasised the significance of the defence partnership between South Africa and the DRC, stating:

“The defence collaboration between South Africa and the DRC is of paramount importance, not just for our two countries but also for the broader African continent. This partnership is crucial for fostering peace, security and stability across the region.” – Source: [www.gov.za](http://www.gov.za)



## MINISTER MOTSOLEDI TO OPEN SECOND G20 HEALTH WORKING GROUP MEETING IN KZN

**Health Minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi delivered the keynote address at the opening of the second meeting of the Group of Twenty (G20) Health Working Group on Wednesday, 26 March 2025.**

The meeting took place at the Capital Zimbali Resort in Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal, and will last until Friday, 28 March 2025.

The theme of the meeting was *Accelerating Health Equity, Solidarity, and Universal Coverage*.

Minister Motsoaledi was joined by Deputy Health Minister Dr Joe Phaahla, KwaZulu-Natal Premier Thami Ntuli, and KwaZulu-Natal Health MEC Nomagugu Simelane.

The event will also include several side events that provide a platform for delegates to engage in bilateral and multilateral discussions on various critical issues, including strengthening health systems and promoting equitable access to health services.

Key issues for discussion during the meeting and side events include financial protection for universal health coverage (UHC) and maintaining health financing amid a challenging global economy.

The meeting will also zoom in on strengthening investments and advancing UHC, bridging the equity gap to accelerate action to address the burden of non-communicable diseases, and responding to the global health financing emergency.

### South Africa hosts second G20 Health Working Group Meeting in KwaZulu-Natal



Dr Aaron Motsoaledi  
MINISTER OF HEALTH



**G20  
SOUTH  
AFRICA  
2025**

 **Wednesday, 26 March  
to Friday, 28 March 2025**

 **The Capital Zimbali, iLembe,  
KwaZulu-Natal**



#G20SouthAfrica #Rekaofela (We are Together) #BetterAfricaBetterWorld





The Department of Health has announced that a co-sponsored event focused on the elimination of cervical cancer will take place alongside this meeting.

Delegates from G20 countries, invited nations, representatives, and international organisations will be in attendance.

The first virtual G20 Health Working Group meeting was held in January as part of the country's G20 Presidency activities planned for this year.  
– Source: SAnews.gov.za

## MINISTER GEORGE LEADS G20 ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP

***Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Dr Dion George, will this week lead the Group of Twenty (G20) Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) as part of South Africa's Presidency of the G20.***

"It is expected that the outcome of this first virtual G20 ECSWG Meeting will provide strategic direction and a common understanding amongst G20 Member States on the key environmental and climate change priorities and deliverables," the Minister said on Sunday, 23 March 2025.

Taking place under the theme *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*, the Minister opened the meeting on Tuesday, by setting the scene for South Africa's presidency of the G20 ECSWG, provide an opportunity to discuss the five priorities and deliverables, and also present the proposed work plan for the G20 ECSWG for 2025.

The priority focus areas for South Africa's Presidency of the G20 ECSWG include:

- Biodiversity and Conservation: Implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the Biodiversity Economy
- Land Degradation, Desertification and Drought: Land Degradation Neutrality targets
- Chemicals and Waste Management: Sustainable Chemicals Management; Circular Economy; Waste Management; Waste to Energy; Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) implementation
- Climate Change and Air Quality: Just Transition; Loss and Damage; Adaptation, including Climate Resilient Development (CRD); Climate Finance and Air Quality
- Oceans and Coastal Management: Marine Spatial Planning—ocean governance; combatting marine plastic pollution.



The graphic consists of a purple rectangular background. In the top left corner is a circular logo with a globe and the letters 'G20'. Below it is the official G20 South Africa 2025 logo, which includes a colorful floral emblem and the text 'G20 SOUTH AFRICA 2025'. To the right of these logos is a portrait of Minister Dion George, a man with glasses and a beard, wearing a dark suit and tie. Below the portrait, the words 'ECONOMIC NEWS' are written in white, uppercase letters. At the bottom of the graphic, the title 'MINISTER GEORGE LEADS G20 ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP' is displayed in large, bold, white, uppercase letters.

The G20 ECSWG aims to enhance cooperation amongst all G20 members and invitees to address environmental and climate change priorities.

A total of three G20 ECSWG meetings and one ECSWG Ministerial meeting will be held in South Africa, with the first virtual meeting scheduled to take place from 25 to 28 March 2025, followed by the second meeting from 14 to 18 July 2025 at Kruger National Park, and the final meeting in October 2025 at Cape Town.

The ministerial meeting will be held back-to-back with the third ECSWG meeting in October 2025.

The department will also roll out outreach and awareness activities in the buildup to the three G20 ECSWG meetings throughout the country to amplify the messaging on the focus areas for the G20 ECSWG.

"The department will leverage South Africa's Presidency of the G20 to market and showcase the Kruger-Kirstenbosch-iSimangaliso Icon Status Strategy (KISS). Some of the meetings and activities will take place at these iconic world-class sites to showcase them on the global stage," the Minister said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

# THE SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMAN IN CHARGE OF THE UK GOVERNMENT'S R23 BILLION INVESTMENT POT

***Leslie Maasdorp is the current CEO of British International Investment (BII), a development financial institution of the United Kingdom (UK) Government, after serving across South Africa's private and public sectors.***

Maasdorp's career traces back to the trade union movement in apartheid-era South Africa. He went on to serve in several key roles within South Africa's democratic-era government. He earned a BA in Economics and Psychology from the University of the Western Cape and an MSc from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

He served as a special adviser to the Minister of Labour Tito Mboweni at the dawn of South Africa's democracy. He would become the Deputy Director-General of the now-defunct Department of Public Enterprises.



He played a key role in restructuring and privatising several state-owned enterprises following the democratic elections, which included preparing Telkom for its listing on the JSE.

In 2002, he was the first African to be appointed International Adviser to Goldman Sachs International. He contributed to the firm's strategic decisions and operations in emerging markets.

Maasdorp co-founded Yard Investment Holdings, a private equity fund company based in Sandton, in 2005. He was then appointed as the Vice-Chairman of Barclays Capital and the South African subsidiary Absa Capital.

He also served as the President for Southern Africa at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, focusing on growing the bank's presence in the region. He also served as the CEO of JSE-listed private educator provider AdvTech from 2014 to 2015. The company owns Crawford International, Varsity College and more.

In July 2015, Cabinet appointed Maasdorp vice president to represent South Africa at the New Development Bank in Shanghai, China. The New Development Bank is a multilateral development bank established by the first five Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) members, intending to mobilise resources for infrastructure and development projects.

He was appointed CFO by the bank and was a founding management team member. He was responsible for treasury, accounting functions and portfolio management. He was also in charge of managing the bank's credit rating and was a member of its investment committees.

Upon the expiration of his contract, Maasdorp was reappointed by Cabinet for a second term of three years.

Having established the global and domestic bond programmes, he raised over US\$15 billion during his tenure as CFO. He departed the renamed BRICS bank in July of last year.

Outside of his permanent roles, he served on the Binance Global Advisory Board in 2022, the world's largest cryptocurrency exchange by volume. He also held board positions at Absa, Telkom, Johnic, HCI, Cell C, Pangbourne Properties Ltd, and Prescient Asset Management.

## **British International Investment**

Maasdorp was appointed CEO of the BII at the end of 2024. Established in 1948, the BII invests about GB£one billion (roughly R23 billion) per year in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.



It is the UK government's primary vehicle for delivering climate finance in emerging markets and has investments in roughly 1 600 companies in 65 countries.

It also invests in financial services, healthcare, and technology and focuses on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.

Upon Maasdorp's appointment, BII Chair Diana Layfield said that his unique perspective and leadership qualities would build on the work of the outgoing CEO Nick O'Donohoe.

"His lived experience of many of our markets, his values and his deep personal passion for development will be immensely valuable as we continue to respond to the environmental, economic and social needs of our markets," said Layfield.

Maasdorp, who studied in London, was delighted to return to the city. He said that development finance institutions play a key role in the sustainable development of emerging economies.

"The private sector is the principal engine of economic growth and prosperity. BII plays a vital role in supporting economies to grow, create jobs and raise living standards in Africa, Asia, and beyond," he said. – Source: [www.businessstech.co.za](http://www.businessstech.co.za)

## SOUTH AFRICA SHINES AS NEW YORK FESTIVALS FINALISTS

*The New York Festivals 2025 Radio Awards has released a shortlist, celebrating groundbreaking audio storytelling from six continents.*



This year's shortlist spans a diverse range of categories, including audiobooks, podcasts, dramas, documentaries, news coverage, entertainment, and music specials. Entries were submitted by leading radio stations, networks, production companies, and independent creators worldwide.

South Africa's HOT 102.7FM has two finalist entries with *The Blind Spot* and *Derailed*, while Radio Workshop is a finalist with *Finding the Right Words*.

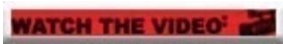
The Animation School and Hot 102.7FM were also shortlisted in the TV and Film category of the competition.

Submissions were rigorously evaluated by the esteemed Grand Jury, a panel of 100 distinguished industry professionals. Entries were judged on production values, creativity, storytelling, direction, writing, and audience engagement.

Winners will be announced during the New York Festivals 2025 Storytellers Gala virtual event on 22 May 2025. The event will feature global highlights, acceptance speeches, and insights from the industry's top voices. – Source: [www.bizcommunity.com](http://www.bizcommunity.com)

## JACK QUAID AND DREW BARRYMORE GUSH OVER CAPE TOWN'S MAGIC

**Jack Quaid fell for Cape Town, and Drew Barrymore couldn't agree more. The Hollywood stars gushed over South Africa's beauty, proving once again that the Mother City leaves a lasting mark on everyone who visits.**



Jack Quaid, the rising star known for his roles in *The Boys*, *Oppenheimer*, and *Scream*, recently sat down with Drew Barrymore on *The Drew Barrymore Show* to chat about his latest film, *Novocaine*. But the conversation quickly took a turn towards something else entirely. His deep appreciation for the Mother City.

Barrymore, who is adored worldwide for her warmth, wit, and legendary Hollywood career, was the first to bring up Cape Town, and she did so with an unmistakable sparkle in her eyes. Having filmed a movie there years ago, she shared just how much the city stole her heart.



"I was lucky enough to do a movie shot in Africa, and I fell in love with Cape Town," she said, beaming while referring to *Blended*, the 2013 romcom she filmed with Adam Sandler.

Quaid immediately agreed, jumping in with his own experiences of filming *Novocaine* in South Africa. He couldn't hide his enthusiasm as he described the magic of the city.

"What I loved the most was that I was staying at this place, and there was a pod of seals below my apartment!" he laughed, showing a video he had taken of the playful creatures.

The city, often ranked among the most beautiful in the world, has a way of enchanting visitors with its dramatic landscapes, rich history, and vibrant culture. Whether it's a casual stroll through the colourful streets of Bo-Kaap, a sunset hike up Lion's Head, or an afternoon spent at the world-renowned wine farms, there's an undeniable magic to Cape Town that lingers long after you leave.

But this isn't the first time Cape Town has captured the hearts of international stars.

Over the years, the city has played host to major Hollywood productions, travel influencers and global celebrities who can't stop singing its praises. It has consistently been recognised for its stunning scenery, top-tier hospitality, and world-class experiences, earning titles like Best City in the World and Top Travel Destination multiple times. – Source: [www.goodthingsguy.com](http://www.goodthingsguy.com)



**TYLA TAKES ANOTHER TRIUMPH: HELLO WORLD ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

**At the glittering 2025 iHeartRadio Music Awards, South Africa's Tyla took another triumph as she won the World Artist of the Year award.**

As the 2025 winner of the iHeartRadio Music Award's World Artist of the Year, Tyla's trajectory into stardom continues to track significantly. Not to mention, she's the first South African to win this title.

Tyla was nominated for three awards in total, including the R&B Song of the Year Award for *Water* (which surpassed the billion-stream mark recently) as well as Dance Song of the Year, for which the Marshmello remix of *Water* stood as a strong contender.

Despite being beaten out in these categories by Muni Long and Charli XCX, Tyla still toasted other artists like Central Cee and Burna Boy to claim World Artist of the Year, which marks yet another celebratory moment within her spectacular career.



Since she grabbed the world's attention with her talent and personality in 2023 (attention that hasn't wavered ever since), Tyla has been no stranger to hitting musical milestones.

On many of these occasions, she made history in the process—like when *Water* became the African song to achieve both Platinum status and double Platinum status in record time and when she became the first South African to win a VMA (Video Music Award).



Tyla also won her first Grammy at just 23 years old and claimed the International Achievement Award at the SAMAs.

An unapologetically proud South African, the Jozi starlet spotlights South Africa almost as much as South Africa spotlights her. Whether it's explaining local slang or talking about home fondly, Tyla certainly hasn't forgotten her roots. – Source: [www.goodthingsguy.com](http://www.goodthingsguy.com)

## KELIS SHARES BREATHTAKING ADVENTURES IN CAPE TOWN, INSPIRING A NEW NARRATIVE OF AFRICA



***Iconic singer and songwriter Kelis Rogers, known for her unique sound and boundary-pushing style, has taken to social media to share her awe-inspiring experiences during her recent visit to Cape Town, South Africa.***

**WATCH THE VIDEO**

The musician, who has made a point of exploring the African continent, showcased the stunning beauty of one of the world's most captivating locales.

In a series of posts on Instagram, Kelis expressed her sheer delight while visiting iconic landmarks such as Table Mountain and the Cape of Good Hope. Describing her journey up Table Mountain, she remarked, "It feels like you're literally in the heavens; that is insane."

The views from the summit, overlooking Cape Town and the sweeping Atlantic Ocean, are nothing short of breathtaking, and Kelis enjoyed a scenic ride on the famous cableway, which adds to the allure of this natural wonder.

The visit was not just about the majestic landscapes; it was also filled with unique encounters. While at the Cape of Good Hope, Kelis had an unexpected meeting with an ostrich, embodying the vibrant wildlife that SA is renowned for.

This is not her first visit to Africa. The multi-talented artist has travelled extensively across the continent, with previous visits to places including Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

She has consistently expressed her admiration for Africa, actively working to challenge single narratives that often depict a homogenised and negatively skewed image of the continent.

Kelis' authentic portrayal of her experiences serves not only as a celebration of Africa's rich tapestry of cultures but also invites others to redefine their perceptions and engage with the continent on a deeper level.

As she delves into her adventures, fans and followers alike are left inspired to explore the breathtaking landscapes and vibrant cultures that Africa has to offer. – Source: [www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za)

## SOUTH AFRICA'S PRUDENCE SEKGODISO MAKES HISTORY WITH GOLD MEDAL AT WORLD INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

***Prudence Sekgodiso etched her name in the annals of South African athletics by becoming the first South African-born woman to clinch a gold medal in the 800m at the 2025 World Indoor Championships.***

The 23-year-old middle-distance star produced a masterclass in strategy and speed to secure the gold in a thrilling final in Nanjing, China.

Sekgodiso became the second South African to win a medal at the Indoor Championships, following Akani Simbine's bronze in the men's 60m.

With the world watching, Sekgodiso capped off a masterful performance on the third and final day of the championships, finishing the race in an impressive time of 1:58.40 seconds.

Her journey to victory was punctuated by an exceptional sprint in the last 200m, where she surged ahead of Ethiopia's Nigist Getachew, who had been leading the race alongside her compatriot Tsiga Duguma.

Sekgodiso entered the final as the second-fastest qualifier, demonstrating her fine form since the start of 2025. Sitting in third place behind the Ethiopian duo for much of the race, the South African athlete timed her kick perfectly. With a powerful last lap, she broke loose, proving that she had the legs for the closing stages of the race.

While Sekgodiso basked in the glory of her victory, her compatriots also weren't as successful on Sunday, 23 March 2025.

Chris van Niekerk competed in the men's shot put, finishing 14th with a distance of 19.47m, while Cheswill Johnson leapt to a 12th place finish in the men's long jump, recording a best effort of 7.64m.

Sekgodiso, who qualified for the Olympics 800m final in Paris last year, has her eyes now set on the upcoming World Championships following her win at the Indoor Championships. – Source: [www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za)



## BAFANA BAFANA STRENGTHEN WORLD CUP QUALIFICATION BID WITH DOMINANT WIN OVER BENIN

***Bafana Bafana took a massive step towards the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualification with a composed 2-0 victory over Benin at the Felix Houphouet Boigny Stadium, extending their lead at the top of Group C.***

On a sweltering night in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, Hugo Broos' men weathered the Cheetahs' early resistance before striking with precision in the second half.





Lyle Foster found the breakthrough, finishing with the coolness of a seasoned striker. Then came Jayden Adams, fresh off the bench, applying the final touch to put the result beyond doubt.

With 13 points from six games, South Africa now comfortably leads the group, with Rwanda (8 points) and Benin (8 points) still chasing.

Nigeria (7), Lesotho (5), and Zimbabwe (3) remain in contention, but Bafana's destiny is firmly in its own hands as it edges closer to the grand stage in the United States, Mexico and Canada next year.

Bafana's World Cup qualification journey has taken an unexpected twist, with an administrative oversight threatening to dent their hard-earned progress. Midfield general Teboho Mokoena, instrumental in South Africa's campaign, should have been suspended for the Lesotho match after accumulating two yellow cards in separate qualifiers.

Yet, he played in last Friday's win—putting Bafana in potential breach of FIFA regulations. According to the rulebook, a player with two bookings across different matches must serve a one-game suspension.

Lesotho, however, missed their chance to challenge the error within FIFA's strict two-hour protest window, with an extended 24-hour appeal window, leaving the matter hanging in uncertainty.

If FIFA intervenes, South Africa could face a three-point deduction, which could shake up Group C and complicate Bafana's road to a World Cup ticket. For now, they can enjoy the fruits of their labour with a well-earned victory over Benin.

Despite the result, victory was not simple. It was another lesson in patience, persistence, and precision. It was not pretty at times, but when the moment came, Broos' men knew exactly how to strike.

Benin, stubborn and compact, parked a defensive wall so deep it felt like a fortress, forcing Bafana, who dominated and boasted a 65% ball possession, to stay patient.

Thapelo Morena came closest to cracking the code in the first half, racing down the right flank and beating his marker, only to fluff the final ball that could have set up Foster for a tap-in. Moments later, Ronwen Williams produced a stunning reflex save to deny Junior Olaitan's looping header—one of the few threats Benin managed to pose.

The second half, however, was Bafana's to own. Nkosinathi Sibisi, from deep inside his own half, launched a searching ball that found Fawaaz Basadien in space on the left. The Stellenbosch FC fullback surged forward, picked his moment, and squared it into the danger zone, where Foster muscled past his marker and slotted home off the upright—an ice-cold finish to break the deadlock.

Then came the killer blow. With fresh legs injected into the game, substitute Oswin Appollis sent in a teasing cross from a free-kick, and Adams—another late introduction—rose highest to nod home the second, sealing a crucial victory.

Bafana has one foot in the World Cup, but with four games to go—Lesotho (1 September), Nigeria (8 September), Zimbabwe (6 October) and Rwanda (13 October)—the job is far from finished. – Source: [www.news24.com](http://www.news24.com)



For back issues of Ubuntu NewsFlash, visit: [www.dirco.gov.za/ubuntu-newsflash](http://www.dirco.gov.za/ubuntu-newsflash)