



Mzansi News



South African Embassy, 17th Floor, Sason Hogi Towers, 12 Abba Hillel Silver Street, Ramat-Gan, Tel 03-5252566, Website: www.sais.co.il

Editorial Comments: By Ambassador Sisa Ngombane

The highlight of the financial year 2015/2016, has been the visit of the Presidential Special Envoys on the MEPP, Dr Zola Sikweyiya and Mr Aziz Pahad on 22-23 June 2015. The Presidential Special Envoys visited Israel as part of their wider tour of the Middle East region which included visits to Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and the United Nations Special Co-ordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr Nickolay Mladenov.

Also, on 29th April 2015, the South African Embassy in Tel-Aviv, Israel hosted and celebrated the 21st Freedom Day of our country at the Official Residence. Once more this occasion presented an opportunity to showcase South Africa as a country and a vital part of the African Continent. It was noted at this celebration the big efforts under way to prevent power blackouts with approval of contracts on solar, wind and other renewable sources of energy.

The Mission also participated in the 2015 event of the American International School at the campus of the school in Even Yehuda where an international cultural display by various countries was on show.

South Africa is also a country with a lot of engagements that are taking place whether in diplomacy, education, science and technology and amongst other sectors and these are reflected in the newsletter.

Yours sincerely

Ambassador Sisa Ngombane

SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL DAY 2015: TEL AVIV

BY POLITICAL SECTION

South Africa National Day was hosted at the Official Residence on the 29th of April 2015. The HOM, Ambassador Sisa Ngombane delivered the Official Message which focused on both political and economic matters which underpin the SA-Israel Bilateral relations.



SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION 2015

Ambassador Ngombane and Ms Ngombane together with staff from the Tel Aviv and Ramallah missions at the Official Residence.



SA MISSION PARTICIPATES IN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL 2015 INTERNATIONAL FAIR ON 17 MAY 2015

The South African Embassy took part in an international fair at the American International School on Sunday the 17th of May 2015 in Netanya. There were participants from many countries including South Africa, Angola and Kenya from Africa. Germany, Poland, Sweden, India, the USA as well as Israel and Mexico.



Foreign Policy

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SPECIAL ENVOYS TO ISRAEL

The Presidential Special Envoys on MEPP, Dr Zola Skweyiya, Mr Aziz Pahad as well as Ambassador Dangor visited Israel as part of their wider regional tour of the Middle East including Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon amongst other areas.

In Israel, the Special Envoys held meetings with the United Nations Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, Mr Nickolay Mladenov, Dr Dore Gold: Director-General of the Israeli MFA, and civil society groupings in the form of the ECF.

The Special Envoys indicated that they were in the region to get a sense of what the critical issues are regarding Israel and Palestine and especially as it relates to the possible resumption of peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine.

BUSINESS NEWS

SA RETAIL
MOGUL
CHRISTO
WIESE BUYS
BRITAIN'S
NEW LOOK
FOR \$1.2
BILLION

African investment **heavyweight Brait SE** said it will pay \$1.2 billion for **virtually all of budget clothes retailer New Look**, giving it a substantial presence in Britain's fiercely competitive fashion retail market. The deal puts Brait, **whose top shareholder is South African retail mogul Christo Wiese**, in the middle of the crowded British high street, where **New Look vies with Primark, part of AB Foods, Next and H&M.**

New Look, owned by private equity groups Apax and Permira, as well as founder Tom Singh, **has 600 stores in the UK and Ireland and trades from a further 200 across Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and Asia including China** where it wants to expand.

It is the **second big deal in a month for Brait**, one of Africa's largest investment houses which is also **buying fitness chain Virgin Active**. New Look, which **also operates in France, Poland and Belgium**, pulled a planned stock market listing in 2010 amid turbulent financial markets. It has stuck with its strategy of investing in private companies, including **British supermarket chain Iceland Foods** and South Africa's Premier Foods, the biggest maker of local staples such as maize meal and bread.

Source: SA the Good News via Reuters

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

\$20 BILLION FOR PROPOSED SHALE GAS PROJECTS IN THE KAROO

South Africa will gazette final regulations for **shale gas exploration in June**, two years after releasing draft rules and as companies reconsider investments due to volatile oil prices and delays in awarding licenses.

In March, Royal Dutch Shell said it was pulling back from its shale projects in South Africa's semi-arid Karoo region which is believed to hold up to **390 trillion cubic feet of technically recoverable reserves**. Shell had applied for an exploration license covering more than **95,000 square km**, almost a quarter of the Karoo.

A study commissioned by the company said extracting 50 trillion cubic feet or **12.8 percent of potential reserves**, would add \$20 billion or 0.5 percent of GDP to the South African economy every year. Besides Shell, Falcon Oil and Gas in partnership with Chevron, and Bundu Gas have applied for exploration licenses.

"We have taken into consideration the issues of water and regulations are going to address this sufficiently, providing proper guidance on how to undertake hydraulic fracturing," said Thibedi Ramontja, director general in the department of mineral resources.

EDUCATION

Identifying the need to develop talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds, Deloitte has partnered with Leap Science and Maths Schools, exposing learners to job shadowing and a career in financial services. South Africa suffers from a severe skills shortage across a wide range of industries, most notably in the medical, accounting, engineering and IT fields. It is estimated that there are currently almost one million jobs that are vacant for highly skilled workers, a tragic irony in a country that faces such high unemployment, especially among the youth.

**Deloitte
supports
science and
maths learners**

Seeing the huge need for good quality science and mathematics education, Deloitte formed a partnership with LEAP Science and Maths Schools in 2009 where they provide the organisation with CSI funding, support and resources. LEAP currently has six independent high schools serving 960 students from marginalised communities, including Langa in Cape Town and Alexandra in Johannesburg. LEAP Schools' results speak for themselves. From 2005–2013 LEAP has seen 600 young people pass matric, with an average pass rate of 93%, way above the national average of 69%, with 75% achieving bachelors and diploma passes.

South Africa Hosts AU Summit

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

South Africa has hosted the 25th AU Summit in Johannesburg and Pretoria, from the 7th to the 16th of June 2015. The meetings took place at the Sandton Convention Centre as well as at the Head Office of the Department of International Relations and Co-operation in Pretoria. The summit had different working and sub-groups which convened on the sidelines including Senior Officials preparatory meeting, Ministerial Conference as well as Heads of State Meeting and the Assembly of the AU itself in an inclusive manner. The Republic of Zimbabwe was elected at the January 2015 Summit to be the chair until the January 2016 Summit and, as such, the Republic of Zimbabwe presided over the Summit as chair, starting with the Meeting of the Permanent Representatives Council followed by the Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, both of which were held in Johannesburg.

This Summit retained the theme of the January Summit, which was “2015: Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development Towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”. The theme is in line with our aspirations as a continent as contained in Agenda 2063, and is also very relevant considering that it takes place midway through the decade 2010-2020, which has been declared by the AU as the “Decade of Women”.

The meeting of the PRC came out with a draft agenda for the Summit, which will be presented to the Executive Council for consideration and approval.

AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

On 16 January this year, International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda opened a preliminary examination into the situation in Palestine.

Palestine, now a state party to the Rome Statute of the ICC, also made a declaration under article 12(3) of that statute, accepting jurisdiction of the ICC over alleged crimes committed in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, since 13 June 2014.

All this is momentous history, but there are some preceding facts that should not be forgotten. This is not the first time the Palestinian situation, and Israel's alleged crimes, have come into the ICC's orbit.

In response to crimes allegedly committed during Operation Cast Lead (Israel's invasion of Gaza in December 2008), the Palestinian Authority (PA) lodged a declaration with the ICC on 22 January 2009 to encourage an ICC investigation.

At that time, however, the PA only had 'observer entity' status at the United Nations (UN) and was not, in UN parlance, a 'non-member state'. On this basis the ICC's previous prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo, concluded that Palestine could not join the Rome Statute or ask the court to investigate a situation.

Taking the legal features of the Palestinian referral as examples, one begins to see the possibilities and challenges of accountability for ICC crimes in Palestine. For Africans, of course, the important point is that the court has been asked to open a preliminary examination outside of Africa. All who are concerned for the court are well aware that its exclusive focus to date on African situations has left the ICC with a severe legitimacy problem on the continent, and confirms the skewed and unequal nature of international criminal justice. The Palestinian referral is then not only a great moment in the history of the Palestinian people: it comes at a vital juncture in the court's history.

Out of Africa?

The Palestinian referral to the ICC