

# UBUNTU

## NEWSFLASH



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WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER \* THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS & COOPERATION

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THE YEAR OF:  
*Charlotte*  
**MAXEKE**  
THE MEANING OF FREEDOM  
UNDER COVID-19

#FreedomMonth2021  
#2021YearOfCharlotteMaxeke

f @GovernmentZA

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## SA WELCOMES NEW AMBASSADORS AND HIGH COMMISSIONERS

President Cyril Ramaphosa on Wednesday, 14 April 2021, welcomed new ambassadors and high commissioners-designate from nine countries, at a ceremony held at the Sefako Makgatho Presidential Guesthouse in Tshwane.



The ambassadors and high commissioners-designate were nominated by their respective governments to serve in diplomatic missions in South Africa. The ambassadors are to advance diplomatic relations between their home countries and South Africa.

Handing over their letters of credence to President Ramaphosa, the ambassadors emphasised the need to strengthen the existing relations with the Government of South Africa.

The senior diplomats who are officially taking up the reins in South Africa are from the following countries:

- Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
- Republic of Korea
- Hungary
- Federative Republic of Brazil
- Republic of Lithuania
- Republic of Kenya
- Republic of Cameroon
- Republic of Panama
- Federal Republic of Nepal

– Source: SAnews.gov.za

# CALL FOR AFRICAN MEDICAL SUPPLIES MANUFACTURING FACILITY

President Cyril Ramaphosa says the continent needs to build a vibrant and innovative African medical supplies manufacturing capability that meets the health needs of the continent's people.

Addressing the High-Level Virtual Conference on Africa's Vaccine Manufacturing for Health Security on Monday, 12 April 2021, the President said throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Africa had demonstrated that it had extensive and substantial capabilities, resources and skills to address the challenges given rise to by the pandemic.

"Our task now is to harness all these capabilities, and to draw on the experience of the past year to build a vibrant and innovative African medical supplies manufacturing capability that meets the health needs of the continent's people. This means that in the medium term, we need to expand existing capabilities into regional hubs that serve the continent as a whole," President Ramaphosa said.

The President noted initiatives like the Africa Medical Supplies Platform, which has pioneered new ways of ensuring access to vital personal protective equipment, as well as diagnostics and therapeutics.

"Through our own continental institutions, we have mobilised substantial resources to support the health response to this pandemic. Importantly, leaders of the continent have demonstrated the political will to act decisively in the face of the threat to health and well-being," he said.

The President said to build a medical supplies manufacturing capability, Africa needed to harness its own continental capabilities and identify opportunities for collaboration across several countries of the continent.

"We also need to forge sustainable partnerships with entities in both the developed world and the developing world. Partners in various countries could offer technological expertise, financing and investment. Countries such as India and Brazil could provide guidance on how they developed their own generic pharmaceutical industries.

"Such collaboration should form the basis of a longer-term strategy to develop a pharmaceutical industry that can achieve continental scale – taking advantage of the large, growing and increasingly integrated African market," he said. President Ramaphosa said the private sector would be essential to the success of this effort.

"In addition to domestic government spending and regional financial commitments, the public and private sector will need to invest in such initiatives. We will also need capacity-building in the form of skills and knowledge transfer to ensure we can sustain local manufacturing," the President said.

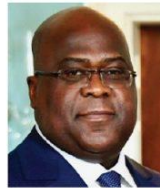
In ensuring an effective response to the current pandemic, the continent must strengthen its ability to both respond to future health emergencies and to achieve health security.

"The vision of a strong African medical supplies and vaccine manufacturing capability that responds effectively to the health needs of the African people is bold and ambitious, but is achievable. From the experience of the past year, I am confident that Africa is closer now than ever before to the fulfilment of this vision," the President said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



## VIRTUAL CONFERENCE EXPANDING AFRICA'S VACCINE MANUFACTURING

THEME  
AFRICA'S VACCINE MANUFACTURING  
FOR HEALTH SECURITY



H.E. Felix Tshisekedi  
Chairperson of the African Union and  
President of Democratic Republic of Congo



H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa  
President of South Africa and  
AU COVID-19 Champion



President Paul Kagame  
President of Rwanda and  
Chairperson, AUDA-NEPAD



H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat  
Chairperson of the African Union  
Commission



Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus  
Director-General, World Health Organization



Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala  
Director-General, World Trade Organization



Ms. Winnie Byanyima  
Executive Director, UNAIDS



Dr. Vera Songwe  
UN Under-Secretary-General  
and Executive Secretary of the  
Economic Commission for Africa



Prof. Senait Fisseha  
Director of Global Programs,  
Susan Thompson Buffet  
Foundation



Monday 12th and  
Tuesday 13th April 2021



13:00 – 19:00 (EAT) on both days

To register:

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_U31MVT0xQIWY51LbsEKT-w](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_U31MVT0xQIWY51LbsEKT-w)

For more information contact:

Dr. Nicaise Ndembi | [NicaiseN@africa-union.org](mailto:NicaiseN@africa-union.org) Ms. Sergut Dejene | [SergutD@africa-union.org](mailto:SergutD@africa-union.org)

## SA MUST FORGE A NEW ECONOMY IN A GLOBAL REALITY

**President Cyril Ramaphosa says South Africa must forge a new economy in a new global reality.**



“We have to both recover the ground that we have lost due to the Coronavirus pandemic, and to gain new ground by placing our economy on a fundamentally different growth trajectory,” President Ramaphosa said in his weekly newsletter on Monday, 12 April 2021.

He said the country’s economic recovery plan was not about a return to what was, but about transformation to what is next.

“One of the concrete ways that we can do this is by harnessing the job-creating potential of the digital economy, whose growth has only been accelerated by the Coronavirus pandemic,” President Ramaphosa said.

He said it was remarkable that South Africa was ranked first in the world as a destination for global business services often called business process outsourcing in a survey of over 600 executives from eight key sourcing markets, including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

“This is truly a remarkable achievement. In a short space of time, our country has propelled itself from a relatively unknown destination for offshore customer service delivery, in the shadow of large competitors such as India and the Philippines, to the very forefront of the global industry.

“The story of how this was achieved holds important lessons for what we can do if we work relentlessly as government and social partners towards a common goal,” President Ramaphosa said.

South Africa has several advantages that make it an attractive destination for business services.

“First, we have sophisticated digital infrastructure, including mobile networks and high-speed broadband.

“Second, we have a young, dynamic and skilled workforce that delivers a world-renowned quality of service, along with deep knowledge in technology and financial services. Thirdly, we have a high level of English proficiency, and finally, we are positioned in a similar time zone to our key export markets.”

According to President Ramaphosa, these unique attributes have provided the country with a strong foundation to work from. Government introduced the Global Business Services Incentive just over two years ago to encourage investment and support job creation in the sector. The incentive has been successful in reducing costs and attracting new investors to South Africa. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

## MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE ON THE PASSING OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE PHILIP, DUKE OF EDINBURGH

**President Cyril Ramaphosa has, on behalf of the Government and people of South Africa, expressed his deep condolences to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom, on the passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.**

As the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip was the longest-serving consort in the history of the British monarchy.

Prince Philip passed away on Friday, 9 April 2021, at the age of 99.

President Ramaphosa says South Africa’s thoughts and prayers are with Her Majesty, the Royal Family, the Government and people of the United Kingdom as they mourn their loss.

The President says Prince Philip was a remarkable public figure who lived an extraordinary life and who will be fondly remembered by many people around the world.



## SADC COMMITS TO FINDING SOLUTION TO MOZAMBIQUE ATTACKS

**Southern African Development Community (SADC) heads of state have reiterated commitment to contribute towards the efforts of bringing about lasting peace and security, as well as reconciliation and development in the Republic of Mozambique.**

This amid a spate of attacks in the country's Cabo Delgado Province in the last few weeks.

The leaders condemned the violence during last week's Extraordinary Double Troika Summit in Maputo, Mozambique. During the meeting, the heads of state expressed concern over the security attacks in what have left dozens murdered and thousands displaced.

During the meeting, the heads of state and government received a report on the situation.



“[They] noted with concern, the acts of terrorism perpetrated against innocent civilians, women and children in some of the districts of Cabo Delgado Province of the Republic of Mozambique; condemned the terrorist attacks in strongest terms; and affirmed that such heinous attacks cannot be allowed to continue without a proportionate regional response,” reads the statement.

They expressed heartfelt condolences and sympathies to the Government and people of the country, particularly the bereaved families, on the loss of their loved ones.

The leaders conveyed the region's full solidarity with Mozambique and reaffirmed the SADC's continued commitment to contribute towards the efforts to bring about lasting peace and security, as well as reconciliation and development in the Republic of Mozambique.

The summit directed an immediate SADC Organ technical deployment to the country and the convening of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ by 28 April 2021. The committee is expected to report to the Extraordinary Organ Troika Summit to be held in Mozambique on 29 April 2021.

“The Double Troika Summit, commended HE President Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi of the Republic of Botswana, and Chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation for spearheading the work of the Organ,” reads the statement.

The summit also commended Mozambique President Jacinto Nyusi, and Chairperson of SADC, for his leadership and for convening the summit.

During the meeting, the heads of state and government also paid tribute to late Tanzania President, Dr John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, who was the out-going Chairperson of SADC, by observing a minute of silence. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

## DEPUTY MINISTER BOTES HOSTS THE SPANISH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

**The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Alvin Botes, on Thursday, 15 April 2021, hosted the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Spain, Cristina Gallach Figueras, for the 13th South Africa-Spain Consultations.**

The two deputy ministers' discussions focussed on reviewing and strengthening bilateral relations, especially trade and investment, facilitating cooperation and exchange of best practices on the COVID-19 pandemic, exchanging notes and facilitating cooperation on regional and multilateral issues.

The South Africa-Spain Consultations were established in terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, signed in December 2000, which serves as the main forum for coordinating bilateral relations between the two countries.

The 12th South Africa-Spain Bilateral Consultations were held in Madrid, Spain, in November 2018, and was co-chaired by then Deputy Minister Luwellyn Landers and his Spanish counterpart at the time, Fernando Martin Valenzuela Marzo. During this meeting, both sides agreed to explore cooperation in the areas of science and technology, tourism, sports and recreation and arts and culture.

In 2018, a Declaration of Intent was also signed between the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Spain on Cooperation in the field of water resources.



The Spanish Government considers South Africa as an important and essential role player in Africa and a strategic international partner due to the country's position and participation in international structures including BRICS, G-20, the United Nations and the African Union.

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## PARLIAMENT CONGRATULATES MATHU JOYINI AND MOTUMISI TAWANA ON THEIR NEW APPOINTMENTS

**The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation has congratulated the South African Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), Ambassador Ms Mathu Joyini, who was elected to serve as Chairperson, as endorsed by the Africa Group in New York.**



The Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, Tandi Mahambehlala, said women's empowerment and gender equality were cornerstones of South Africa's foreign policy. "It is our belief that during her Chairship, Ambassador Joyini will seize the opportunity to align women's issues to the aspirations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Cedaw)."

The committee has observed with concern that the women's human rights agenda has come under threat from member states, who have increasingly politicised and polarised the issue. The committee trusts that during her tenure, Ambassador Joyini will steer the commission's agenda to ensure that South Africa's and Africa's views on the rights of women influence a global outcome that will prioritise Cedaw.



The committee also congratulates the South African Consul-General in New York, Motumisi Tawana, for being unanimously elected as Chairperson of the African Consul Generals in New York.

The African Chambers of Commerce cooperates with the United States (US) to promote trade and economic development through technology transfer and public-private partnerships between the US and Africa. "We believe that he will use the Chairship as a platform to advance South Africa's and Africa's economic interests," said Ms Mahambehlala.

The committee recognises Consul-General Tawana has shown keen interest in the promotion of and expansion of business, trade, tourism and investment opportunities between South Africa and the Americas.

The committee applauds the two heads of mission for their selfless work, as recognised by the international community within which they work. The South African flag is flying high because of their efforts and dedication.

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## DEVELOPED COUNTRIES URGED TO REVISIT CLIMATE-CHANGE TARGETS

The 30th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change has urged developed countries to revisit their climate-change mitigation targets while also urging them to provide support to developing countries.

In a joint statement at the conclusion of the 30th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change on Thursday, 8 April 2021, ministers said the substantial gaps in mitigation, adaptation and support provided by developed countries to developing countries in the pre-2020 period must be counter-balanced by ambitious climate-change action by developed countries in the post-2020 period.



“They urged developed countries to revisit their targets on mitigation under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, and fulfil their commitments of providing support to developing countries,” said the Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) ministers.

The two-day virtual meeting, hosted by India, got underway on Wednesday and was chaired by Prakash Javadekar, the Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change of the Republic of India.

In addition, the ministers emphasised the necessity for the Glasgow Climate Change Conference to deliver a breakthrough on financing for developing countries, noting that finance is the key enabler of enhanced ambition and climate action. This is particularly at a time when developing countries are facing multiple developmental challenges and the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Developed countries shall provide new and additional, sustained, predictable, adequate and timely finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support to developing countries with a significant public funded component, with less conditionality and more reasonable co-financing requirements, open markets and carry out practical technological cooperation, which will serve as the basis for mutual trust and for the comprehensive and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.”

The ministers said such support must not exacerbate the existing debt crisis confronting many developing countries. Also known as COP26, the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference is scheduled to be held in Glasgow, the United Kingdom, in November 2021.

The meeting, which was attended by South Africa’s Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, welcomed South Africa’s offer to host the 31st BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change in 2022. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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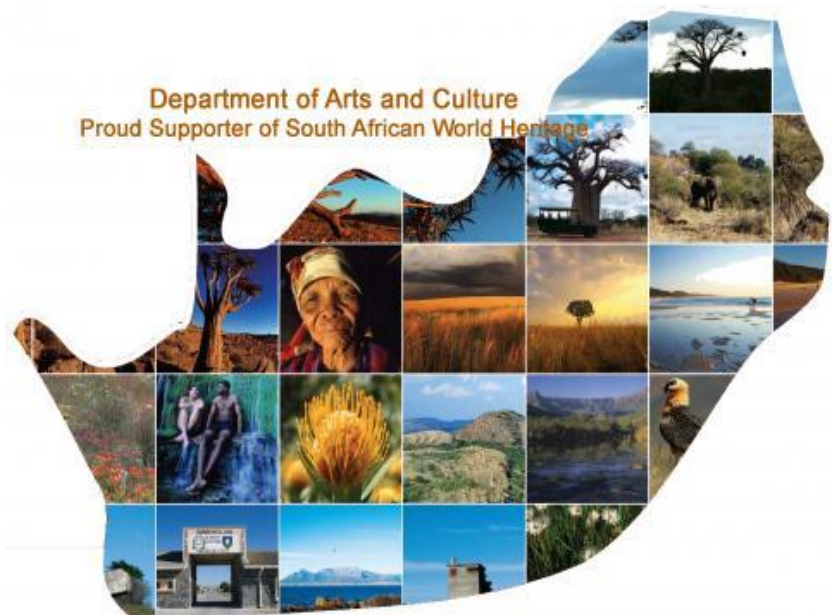
## AFRICA URGED TO PROTECT HERITAGE SITES

The Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa, has called on African ministers of culture to work together and support engagements geared towards the profiling, protection and promotion of the continent’s heritage properties.

Addressing the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on Sites of Memory and World Heritage Convention in Africa on Friday, 9 April 2021, he encouraged ministers to reflect on the operationalisation of the concept of science associated with memories of recent conflicts within the framework of the World Heritage Convention in Africa.

“For Africans, sites of memory are intended to celebrate, commemorate and acknowledge the successes of the leaders of our continent in our efforts to build nations, increase global awareness about African heritage and to mobilise cooperation for its recognition.

“They are also intended to highlight progress Africa has made, while reflecting upon the common challenges that arise from the implications of our history, our memory. Our memory sites associated



to recent conflicts tell our recent stories on the routes of African independence and this is also the expression of African narrative and history in the world,” Minister Mthethwa said in his virtual address.

He said the ministers needed to rectify the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance.

Adopted by the African Union (AU) in 2012, the charter charts the way for Africa’s renewal and stimulates the creative and heritage economy of the continent.

“We are making a special plea to all the member states to facilitate the rectification of the charter. Our seriousness and commitment by ministers of culture will be judged by history,” he said.

The four-day virtual African Experts’ Meeting on Sites of Memory and World Heritage Convention in Africa was organised and hosted by the Government of South Africa in partnership with the African World Heritage Fund.

It encompassed African ministers, government officials and experts involved in the management of cultural heritage in Africa.  
– Source: SAnews.gov.za

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## THE AFCFTA MUST BE USED IN AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

**The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) must be seen as a pillar of the broader development integration agenda, says Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Fikile Majola.**

Deputy Minister Majola said integration was seen as essential to overcoming the limitations of small fragmented economies established under colonialism.

The Deputy Minister made these comments in his address to the Progressive Business Forum’s (PBF) webinar on trade opportunities for South African businesses in Africa on Thursday, 8 April 2021.

He said the AfCFTA brought the African continent a step closer to realising the historic vision of an integrated market and creating a basis for increasing intra-African trade.

“We must complement and consolidate parallel African Union work on infrastructure and industrial development pillars and build supply capacity to take advantage of more open African markets. We also need to take to heart that for sustainability and legitimacy to prevail, the benefits of the AfCFTA must be shared across all member states,” he said.

He noted that countries across the continent were engaged in restoring their economies in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

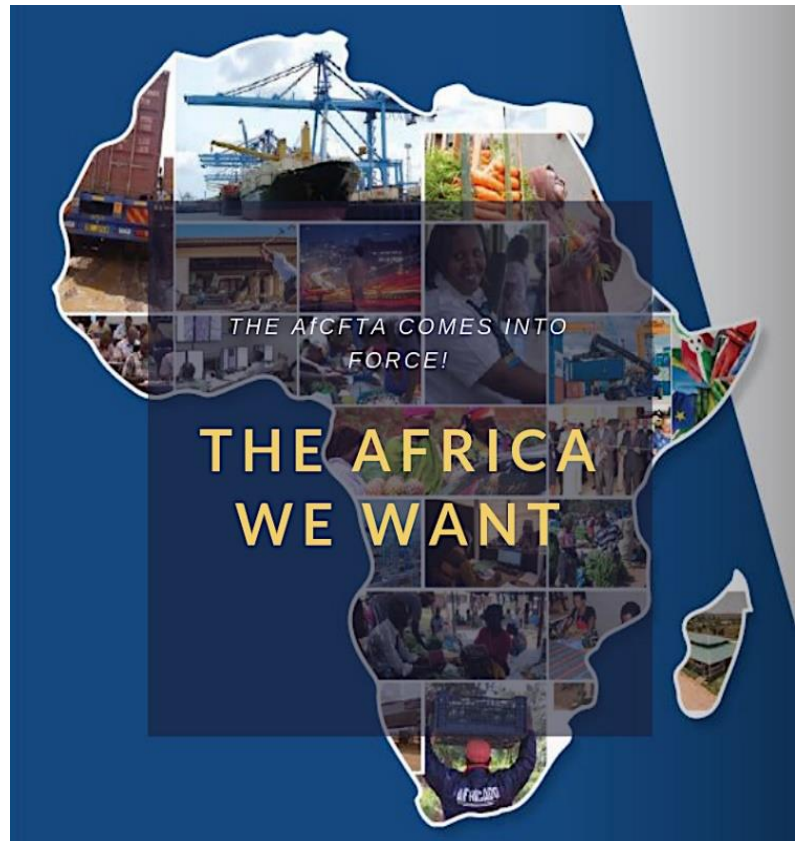
“One of the instructive lessons learned from this crisis is that economic resilience is critical. It is critical to build up industrial capabilities, trade and supply chains across African countries.

“Greater supply-chain resilience needs to include efforts to spread risk by enabling the greater geographic spread of manufacturing. This resonates with bringing to fruition the goal of the ‘Made in Africa’ initiative. We have to seize the opportunity presented by the AfCFTA, which is aimed at boosting intra-Africa trade,” said the Deputy Minister.

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of the AfCFTA, Wamkele Mene, called for the acceleration of Africa’s industrial development without disconnecting from the rest of the continent.

He also called for single set of rules for trade and investment on the African continent.

“This AfCFTA Agreement captures the future of the African economy, and we must strive for a focus on connecting small and medium enterprises to digital platforms to the extent that tariff liberalisation is properly sequenced and calibrated to active industrial development measures, the process can support wider economic development and growth,” said Mene. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



## SA RANKED TOP GLOBAL BUSINESS SERVICES SECTOR LOCATION

**South Africa has been ranked as the top global business services sector location for 2021, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic) has announced.**



“In a boost to business confidence, South Africa has won an award as the top global location for business process services, in a sector that is rapidly expanding locally and exporting call centre and related services to other parts of the world,” said the department on Friday, 9 April 2021.

South Africa was named as the Most Favoured Offshore CX Delivery Location for 2021, in the Annual Front Office BPO Omnibus Survey on Thursday, 8 April 2021.

The department welcomed the achievement for the country’s business service industry, which has positioned itself as one of the premier locations internationally for business services.

“The business services sector, which includes call centres, technical support and back and front office services for major multinationals and South African firms, has seen exceptional growth in recent years, and has been a major source of job creation for young South Africans.”

Ranked number two last year, South Africa has beaten stiff competition from India, the Philippines, Malaysia, Poland, Egypt and Northern Ireland to claim the top award for the first time.

Growth in the sector has been driven by strong support by government, through the incentives offered by the dtic. This support has helped to showcase the talent, technology and know-how of South Africans and to allow them to compete against the best in the world.

The department said sector-growth was interrupted by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic that led to closure of businesses in many parts of the world.

“However, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Ebrahim Patel, issued regulations during the lockdown that enabled call centres supporting local and global essential services to continue to operate, where firms in other locations could not,” said the dtic.

Further support was provided by the Presidential Jobs Fund during the pandemic.

Together with the dtic incentives, the Jobs Fund has supported 14 300 new jobs in the sector with R1.9 billion in export revenue.

“This sector is a large and growing employer of labour. The ‘reimagined industrial strategy’ outlined by President Cyril Ramaphosa in 2019 laid the basis for growing established sectors (like clothing, poultry, sugar and steel) and emerging or new sectors (such as call centres, the green economy and digital industries),” said Minister Patel.

The Minister noted that industrial development was no longer only about manufacturing.

“Industrial development is no longer only about manufacturing – productive services like business process services and film-making are examples of new job-creators that we are actively backing.

“The digital revolution is placing greater emphasis on provision of strong, technical support through call centres. Firms in the sector want to be located close to a source of skilled workers. The rapid expansion of business process services is a tribute to the skills of young South Africans and evidence of what South Africa has to offer as a business and investment destination,” he said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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## SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES CONTINUE TO PERFORM WELL

**South Africa’s Special Economic Zones (SEZs) continue to thrive despite the challenges brought on by COVID-19, says Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Nomalungelo Gina.**

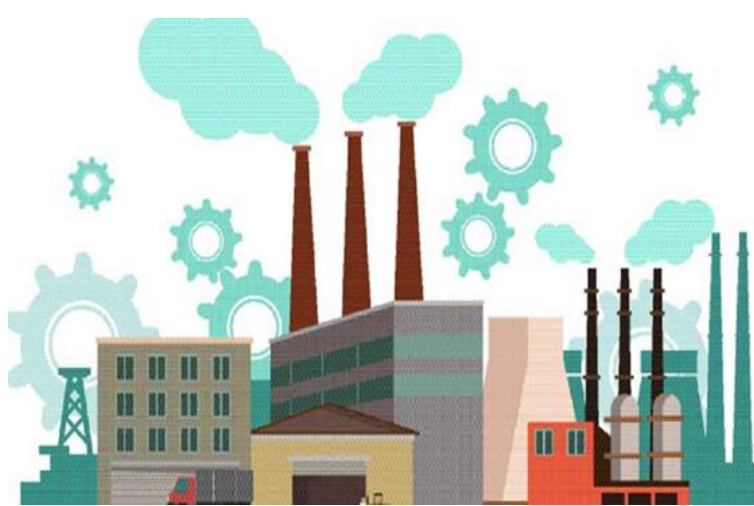


In a statement on Tuesday, 13 April 2021, Deputy Minister Gina said the SEZ programme continued to attract investors.

“This has seen the value of operational investments increasing from R17.7 billion by the end of the third quarter of the 2019-2020 financial year to R19.5 billion by the end of the third quarter of 2020-2021 financial year.

“This is a positive increase of R1.8 billion. During the same period, the number of investments have increased from 129 to 143,” said the Deputy Minister.

As part of the economic recovery and reconstruction plan, South Africa is using the SEZs to reignite manufacturing-led industrialisation in an accelerated manner.



“As government, we are happy that although the SEZ programme is relatively new in South Africa (started in 2014), it has and continues to attract significant number and value of investments in various regions.”

She said the rapid growth of the Coega, East London, the Dube Trade Port as well as the Tshwane Automotive SEZ demonstrated this.

The SEZ programme is one of the country’s important tools that government has introduced to drive economic growth and regional development.

The programme is used as a critical tool for accelerating the country’s industrial development agenda.

“The purpose of the SEZ programme is to attract foreign and domestic investments, increase the number and value of exported products, accelerate the development of industrial infrastructure, help accelerate the beneficiation of the country’s resource endowments, and create decent jobs.”

Some of the achievements made by the programme during the 2020/21 financial year include:

- The Tshwane Automotive SEZ is completing the construction of 12 factories with the private investment value of R4.33 billion. The investments are expected to create more than 2 000 jobs.
- The Dube Trade Port secured new investments worth approximately R600 million, and the investments are expected to create 841 jobs.
- Coega has signed four new investors that are estimated to be valued at approximately R49 million and are expected to create an estimated 101 new jobs.
- Saldanha Bay is completing the construction of two manufacturing facilities with an investment value of R380 million. These are expected to create approximately 90 direct jobs.
- Richards Bay is completing the construction of an edible oil factory and Titanium Dioxide factory with a combined private investment value of R5.8 billion. About 600 direct jobs are expected to be created.
- The East London Industrial Development Zone completed the construction of nine investor facilities and the expansion of three existing facilities. These facilities will create an additional 1 534 manufacturing and services jobs and these will be operationalised within the next two years.

The Deputy Minister said the number and value of operational investments were expected to increase by almost R10 billion during the current financial year due to investments that are currently under construction. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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## GOVERNMENT WELCOMES IMF'S UPDATE ON SA ECONOMY

**Government has welcomed the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) revised upward growth outlook of South Africa from 2.8% to 3.1% for 2021.**

In a statement issued on Wednesday, 7 April 2021, the Ministry in The Presidency: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, said the upgrade affirmed the robustness of the country’s economy and positive economic interventions despite tough conditions. The projected 3.1% growth follows a period where economic activity decreased by 7.0% in 2020 compared with 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Based on historical data, this is the biggest annual fall in economic activity the country has seen since at least 1946. Prior to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic activity in South Africa increased by 0.2% in 2019, following an increase of 0.8% in 2018,” reads the statement.

The annual real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 0.2% in 2019 was primarily led by increased economic activity in finance, real estate and business services, as well as general government and personal services. The IMF growth projection revision is attributed to the additional fiscal support in large economies and the global roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines.

## Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP)

Acting Minister in The Presidency, Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, said: “Government is confident that the economy will recover with the diligent implementation of the ERRP and the vaccination programme through continued collaborative efforts of government and its social partners”.

She added that as the country gradually returned to normalcy, the ERRP had become a rallying point towards the eventual reconstruction and recovery of all sectors of our economy.



“Government is confident that the ERRP will rebuild the base of our economy and also believes that a full recovery is possible. All the targeted actions being undertaken by government will inevitably restore economic growth and protect the livelihoods of our people,” said the Ministry.

“The plan has eight key priority areas of action to urgently stabilise and stimulate economic growth while building confidence and competitiveness. It also focusses our nation’s efforts to pursue new sources of growth as we work hard to rebuild and grow the economy.”

Furthermore, the country’s R6.2-trillion spending envelope over the 2019 – 2024 Medium Term Expenditure Framework gives expression to the ERRP. Government has also committed to a R791.2-billion infrastructure investment drive, which is South Africa’s fastest-growing area of spending.

As indicated by the IMF, government acknowledges that South Africa has a long road ahead.

“Our success requires all South Africans to come together in a social compact to embrace the reconstruction and recovery of our economy as a shared responsibility. By working together, we can create much-needed jobs, get our economy back on track and achieve economic dignity for all South Africans,” the Ministry said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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## BRICS BANK GRANTS SA SECOND R14.5BN COVID-19 LOAN

**The New Development Bank (NDB) of the BRICS group of nations has approved a second \$1-billion (R14.5 billion) loan to South Africa’s government to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, the bank said on Thursday, 8 April 2021.**



“The loan will support the Government of South Africa in its efforts to contain the economic fall-out of the pandemic and start economic recovery,” the bank said in a statement.

Last year, the NDB provided South Africa with a US\$1-bn loan to cushion the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.

The 2021 budget, presented in February, forecast a record deficit of 14% of gross domestic product in the fiscal year that ended in March. BRICS member states, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, set up the NDB to mobilise funds for infrastructure and development projects in their own countries and other developing nations. – Source: Reuters

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## MINISTER MKHIZE: AFRICA SHOULD PRODUCE ITS OWN VACCINES

**Africa should be able to have capacity to manufacture and distribute its own biotechnology to develop vaccines as COVID-19 continues to sweep the globe.**

Speaking during the webinar on World Health Day on Wednesday, 7 April 2021, Health Minister, Dr Zweli Mkhize, said depending on other continents should be the thing of the past.

“We should take it as an urgent assignment to make sure that come other pandemics in the future, Africa is capable of manufacturing its own requirements, whether it’s protective gear, pharmaceutical products, diagnostic vaccines and equipment,” he stressed.

Minister Mkhize believes that the continent should not be reliant on other countries as this poses challenges to better respond to the outbreak as many African countries scrambled to get their hands on life-saving COVID-19 vaccines.



“It’s quite a challenge to rely on other various countries when the entire continent has no access to the manufacturing capacity of vaccines,” he said.

“I think this is a lesson that we must learn now and never be put in a situation where our response is very much dependent on other countries serving their own domestic interests first, while the continent benefits last in the queue.”

He has called on Africa to be self-sufficient, citing Aspen Pharmacare, which is the only drug manufacturer on the continent that is currently producing the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 jabs.

“This needs to be changed for the future,” he added.

Meanwhile, the Minister called for action and pleaded that complacency and individualism be left behind.

#### **Universal healthcare**

In addition, he said African governments should continue to lift the most vulnerable from poverty and disenfranchisement by elevating economies, culture and identity.

He said no one should be left behind as governments work towards combatting the spread of COVID-19.

In the meantime, nations should secure a reputable, accessible and sustainable social safety net to protect the vulnerable from the pandemic.

Minister Mkhize acknowledged that South Africa remained one of the world’s most unequal societies, plagued by income disparities.

“The most vulnerable of our people still struggle to access quality health and services, while those in higher-income groups benefit significantly from the health system, irrespective of whether they utilise public or private services.”

He said the public sector served 84% of the country’s population, while the private sector primarily through medical aid schemes catered for the remaining 16%.

He believes the implementation of the National Health Insurance is a critical intervention to restructure the core components of the healthcare system, which will allow better use and access to medical care.

According to the World Health Organisation Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, inequality is not a new problem.

“But COVID-19 has brought it into sharp focus. The pandemic has pushed an estimated 120 million people into extreme poverty, and significantly increased gender inequalities, with more women than men leaving the labour force.”

Dr Ghebreyesus said health inequalities made the world less safe and less sustainable.

“As we build back from COVID-19, it’s vital to invest in better health services and remove the barriers that prevent so many people from using them – so more people have the chance to live healthy lives.” – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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## **SOUTH AFRICAN CITRUS WILL SOON BE ON SALE IN THE PHILIPPINES FOR THE FIRST TIME**

**Consumers in the Philippines will, for the first time this year, find South African citrus on shelves.**

South African citrus growers now expect to export as many as 158.7 million cartons of fruit in 2021. And, for the first time ever, some of those fruit will end up on shelves in the Philippines.

Several South African agricultural sectors are seeing a remarkable year. For citrus, local consumption will absorb some of the huge harvest, but new export markets will help, said Justin Chadwick, CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association.

The Bureau of Plant Industry in the Philippines recently signed the final administrative agreement that allows South African citrus to be imported.

The agreement comes after more than a decade since the South African citrus industry began negotiating to gain entry into the Philippines market, a nation of 108 million people.



"Importers in the Philippines can now happily apply for permits to receive South African fruit into the Philippines," said Chadwick.

Export volumes are projected to be high across different types of fruit, with an increase of 29% expected in soft citrus, an increase of 16% expected in grapefruit, and Valencia oranges' exports expected to be up 5%.

Lemons and navel oranges, on the other hand, are expected to see only marginal export increases.

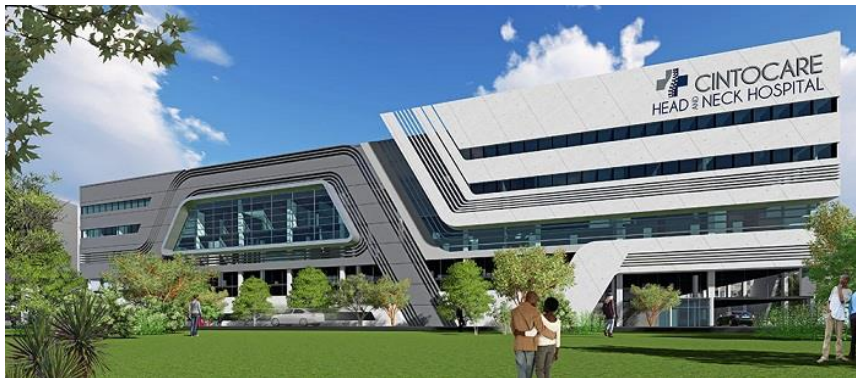
Exports to Zimbabwe and eSwatini are expected to grow a combined 13%, to 4.4 million cartons.

The association expects continued growth in volumes, and forecasts R6.8 billion in foreign exchange earnings over the next three years. – Source: [www.bussinessinsider.com](http://www.bussinessinsider.com)

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## NEW HIGH-END HOSPITAL COMPLETED IN PRETORIA

**Listed property group Growthpoint has announced that it has completed the development of a 11 000 square metre surgical hospital in Pretoria**



The R470-million Cintocare Hospital in the Menlyn Main precinct was constructed as a high-performance clinical centre, focussed exclusively on head, neck, spinal and vascular surgery – only the fifth of its kind in the world that features its specialised surgical mix and clinical business model, the group said.

Construction began in July 2018 and was completed on time at the end of 2020.

"The hospital is the first of its kind in many aspects. Africa's first certified green hospital, Cintocare

incorporates numerous sustainable design and management features, earning a 5 Green Star Custom Healthcare design certification from the Green Building Council of South Africa.

"Healthcare facilities with green design have been found to deliver 15% faster recovery rates, a 22% reduction in need for pain medication, an 11% reduction in secondary infections and an 8.5% reduction in hospital stays. Cintocare is also South Africa's first hospital to generate its own oxygen on demand using an installed PSA (Pressure Swing Adsorption) plant," the group said.

The property comprises seven levels – three for parking; one for the plant room; and three clinical and consulting levels.

The development partnership delivered the full suite of services for the 100-bed hospital. It incorporates 15 consulting rooms and five theatres, including one hybrid theatre, with the potential to increase this number to eight.

Disciplines offered include neuro and spinal surgeons, maxillofacial and oral surgeons, ear, nose and throat surgeons, plastic and reconstructive surgeons and a vascular surgeon, as well as specialist physicians, paediatricians and intensivists. Its services include radiology, pathology, physiotherapy, audiology and speech and swallowing therapy. – Source: [www.bussinessinsider.com](http://www.bussinessinsider.com)

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## TWO UCT ACADEMICS CLINCH COVETED GOOGLE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS

**Associate Professor Amir Patel and Dr Moholola Tsoeu have been admitted to Google's research scholar programme. They are the only Africans in the programme's 2021 cohort.**

Two University of Cape Town (UCT) academics have become the institution's first recipients of Google's research scholar programme.

Associate professor Amir Patel and Dr Mohohlo Tsoeu — from UCT's electrical engineering department and its new African Robotics Unit — are also the only Africans in the programme's 2021 cohort. The programme supports early-career researchers working in fields relevant to the search engine giant, providing "unrestricted gifts to support research at institutions and focussed on funding world-class research".

The recipients must be in computer science-related fields to be eligible for the award.

Patel has been awarded a scholarship in the "machine perception" category and Tsoeu in the "natural language processing" category.

"It feels amazing to be recognised by Google, one of the largest tech companies in the world. It is also exciting and encouraging for us to be mentioned among some of the world's top universities in the field of robotics and artificial intelligence," said Patel. Tsoeu said: "It is a positive affirmation that our research is important, has the potential to have great impact and that we have the intellectual capital to deliver."

The research project that earned Patel's award aims to provide "deeper insight into the abilities of the world's greatest animal athletes (located in Africa), such as the cheetah".

It looks into how they can "robustly traverse through the unstructured world" and says its findings will prove "vital for legged robots if they are ever to leave the confines of the laboratory".

The biggest obstruction to a universal understanding of animal movement is measuring and modelling whole-body motion in the wild, said Patel. He said his project proposes a deep learning-based motion capture system, WildPose, which "leverages complementary sensor data to remotely obtain high-speed, whole-body 3D animal kinematics in the field from a single view". According to Patel, the WildPose system will enable videographers to capture biomechanical data from animals, such as cheetahs and lions, in the wild using a single hand-held device, creating a new source for data collection.

"This research is important as it will allow us to measure the motion of animals in the wild at an unprecedented level," said Patel. "I believe this award will help me further my goal of moving biomechanics beyond the confines of the laboratory."

Tsoeu's winning project aims to contribute to the "development of comprehensive, high-quality language corpora for indigenous South African languages".

It will also investigate and develop novel and high-performance machine-learning algorithms aimed at application areas such as automatic speech recognition, translation and text-to-speech/sign technology, he said.

He said these applications were in the growing area of human-machine interfacing "but more importantly in the SA context, they contribute towards bridging the human language divide and improve equal access and participation to restore the dignity of currently marginalised groups such as the deaf and hard of hearing communities". – Source: [www.timeslive.com](http://www.timeslive.com)



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## SA'S "MY OCTOPUS TEACHER" WINS BAFTA FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY

**The Bafta Awards took place on Sunday night, 11 April 2021, and a South African documentary took home one of the top prizes.**

Broadcast at from London's Albert Hall without an audience because of Coronavirus restrictions, the awards went ahead despite a period of national mourning for the death of Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth, on Friday, 9 April 2021.

South Africa's entry, *My Octopus Teacher*, won the prize for Best Documentary.

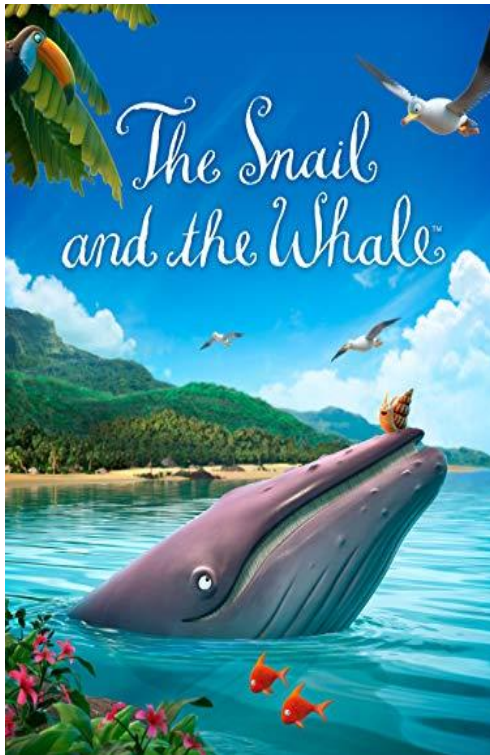
The 2020 Netflix Original documentary film, directed by Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed, documents a year spent by filmmaker Craig Foster forging a relationship with a wild common octopus in a South African kelp forest.

An excited and emotional Pippa Ehrlich accepted the award on behalf of the team. The film is also nominated for an Academy Award which will be handed out later this month. – Source: [www.news24.com](http://www.news24.com)



## SERIES ANIMATED BY SA FIRM UP FOR INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION AWARD

**South African animated and directed series “The Snail and the Whale” is up for another prestigious international award this week.**



South Africa has an incredible film industry that sees both local and international productions made here each year.

One locally animated international production has been nominated for an Annie Award. On 16 April 2021, *The Snail and the Whale* is competing for Best Animated Special Production at the Annie Awards, one of the biggest awards globally for the animation industry.

Based on the bestselling picture book written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler (creators of the modern classic *The Gruffalo*), *The Snail and the Whale* follows the amazing journey of a tiny snail who longs to see the world and hitches a ride on the tail of a huge humpback whale. Radio Times calls the animation “a beautiful visual treat”; Animation World News hails it as “enchanting” and *Variety* describes it as “audacious ... adorable... charming.”

*The Snail and the Whale* won the 2020 Venice TV Award for Children/Youth, as well as Best Voice Performance (for Oscar nominee Sally Hawkins as the snail) at the 2020 British Animation Awards, where it was also nominated for Best Longform Animation and Best Use of Sound.

Animated in Cape Town by Triggerfish and produced by Magic Light Pictures, *The Snail and the Whale* is directed by Max Lang and South African Daniel Snaddon, who previously collaborated on the Anecy-winning *Stick Man* and the international Emmy-winning *Zog*.

*The Snail and the Whale* has already won eight international awards at the likes of the British Animation Awards, Cartoons on the Bay, New York International Children’s Film Festival, The Venice TV Awards, and the BANFF Rockie’s Awards. – Source: [www.goodthingsguy.com](http://www.goodthingsguy.com)

## SA'S “MOFFIE” FLIES THE FLAG HIGH IN THE US

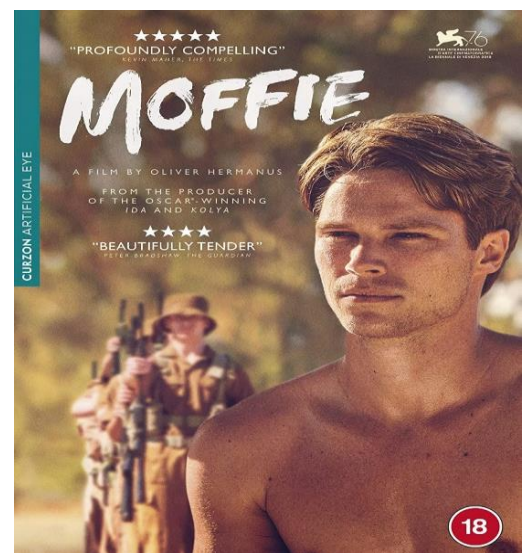
**South African director Oliver Hermanus continues to fly the flag high with his 2019 movie, “Moffie”.**

The movie made waves in the United States after it was recently released in selected theatres, on digital and video-on-demand platforms via IFC Films.

*Moffie* explores the life of a closeted young boy serving his mandatory military service during apartheid in 1980s.

The film is an adaptation of André-Carl van der Merwe’s memoir, which exposes the psychological violence of institutionalised homophobia

The film originally premiered as part of the Venice Film Festival’s Horizons section in 2019 and later played at the London Film Festival, going on to receive three nominations at the British Independent Film Awards.



According to Variety, the film established Hermanus as “arguably Africa’s foremost queer filmmaker”.

At the weekend, film industry and review website, *IndieWire*, said the film was “one of the best films about gay repression ever”.

Movie critics also gave the film positive reviews on the International Movie Data Base (IMDb) and Rotten Tomatoes.

Speaking to the *New York Times* about the film and the lack of black figures in it, Hermanus said it was a reflection of the crumbling of apartheid.

“I wanted the film to be from the perspective of white SA and that was its reality,” said Hermanus.

“I see it as a portrait of the factory, how men were being made in the service of an ideology. That relates to their treatment of women, their treatment of other races, how they potentially become the men we identify as problematic today.”

He said he didn’t want to make “another gay-centric relationship” drama set in the army.

“I was more interested in the hurt and indoctrination than the protagonist’s catharsis,” Hermanus said. “I wanted it to be a serious portrait of this generation.” – Source: [www.timeslive.co.za](http://www.timeslive.co.za)

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## 2023 NETBALL WORLD CUP BOARD APPOINTED

With South Africa hosting the 2023 Netball World Cup (NWC), the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Nathi Mthethwa, has announced the NWC board.



**NETBALL  
WORLD CUP**

Addressing a media briefing on Tuesday, 6 April 2021, the Minister said the Cape Town International Convention Centre would host the 2023 NWC from 17 July to 8 August 2023.

South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee Chief Operations Officer, Patience Shikwambana, has been appointed chairperson of the board.

Other board members include:

- City of Cape Town Councillor, JP Smith: Member of the Mayoral committee
- Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport Chief Director - Sport and Recreation, Dr Lyndon Bouah
- President - Netball Africa and Member of the International Netball Federation, Cecilia Molokwane
- Netball SA CEO, Blanche de le Guerre
- Department of Sport, Arts and Culture Deputy Director-General: Recreation Development and Sport Promotion, Sumayya Khan. – Source: [SAnews.gov.za](http://SAnews.gov.za)

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## BEAST SIGNS FOR ROC NATION

Roc Nation Sports, the management agency headed by Jay Z, has announced the signing of former Springbok prop Tendai “Beast” Mtawarira.

Mtawarira is the most capped front-row player in South African international rugby, having played 117 times for the Boks. He made his debut in 2008 before winning the famous 2009 B&I Lions series.

Mtawarira finished his 11-year international career in style by lifting the Webb Ellis Cup as a Rugby World Cup winner in 2019 after a dominant performance in the final.

He also hold the record for the most Super Rugby caps for the Sharks (159), which earlier this year also entered a strategic partnership with Roc Nation Sports.

The 35-year-old has been keen to find the next stage in his career after retiring from all forms of rugby after the COVID-19 pandemic cut short a stint with Old Glory DC in America's MLR.

"I am thrilled and truly honoured to be involved with Roc Nation Sports. The brand is dynamic and forward thinking and that's exactly what I need in this next chapter of my life."

Roc Nation Sports president, Michael Yormak, was equally enthused about the signing.

"Roc Nation Sports is delighted and honoured to have Beast as a part of our growing family. He is a legend of the game with a remarkable story. We look forward to helping him grow his brand and legacy on a global stage in this exciting new chapter of his career."

Beast now joins Springboks Siya Kolisi and Cheslin Kolbe as well as England international Maro Itoje in a growing list of rugby talent on Roc Nation's books. Proteas fast bowler Lungi Ngidi has also signed with the agency. Roc Nation will manage Mtawarira's brand, commercial entities and philanthropic ventures. – Source: sarugbymag.co.za



## TATJANA SCHOENMAKER SETS NEW AFRICA RECORD AT SA SWIMMING CHAMPS

**Tatjana Schoenmaker laid down a marker when she set a new national record in the 50m breaststroke on Day 1 of the SA Aquatics Championships at the Newton Park Swimming Pool on Wednesday, 7 April 2021.**

Schoenmaker, who won the gold medal in the 100m and 200m breaststroke at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, also set a new African record in the process.

The 23-year-old finished in a time of 30.42 in the heats to emerge as the fastest qualifier for Wednesday evening's final.

Lara van Niekerk was second fastest in 31.35. – Source: www.thesouthafrican.com



## LIZELLE LEE ICC WOMEN'S PLAYER OF THE MONTH

**South Africa's Lizelle Lee on Tuesday, 13 April 2021, won the International Cricket Council (ICC) women's player of the month award for March.**

Lee played four women's One-Day Internationals against India where she scored a century and two half-centuries, which saw her move to the top of the Women's ODI batting rankings.

Lee said: "I am happy and honoured to receive this award. Such accolades are a great way to keep me motivated and to continue to work even harder on my game."

"A big thank you to my teammates for their support as this would never have been possible without them."

Commenting on Lee's performance in March, Ramiz Raja representing the ICC Voting Academy said: "It is not easy scoring those many runs in alien batting conditions."





It is always a challenge to adjust from bouncy pitches to slow low turning tracks and Lizelle did magnificently.”

South Africa win the five match series 3-1 with a match to spare last month.

Two of Lee’s knocks in the series were unbeaten - with her scores of 83 and 132. In fact, Lee’s knock of 132 unbeaten was her best in the format, and her third hundred in 50-over internationals.

In the T20 International series, Lee posted scores of 8, 70 and 12 as South Africa won the three-match series 2-1 as India bagged a consolation victory in the final clash. – Source: African News Agency (ANA)

## GERDA STEYN BREAKS 25-YEAR-OLD SA MARATHON RECORD

**Comrades Marathon queen Gerda Steyn broke the 25-year-old South African marathon record when she finished ninth in Siena, Italy, in 2hr 25min 28sec.**



Irvette van Zyl ended 13th in 2:28.40 to become the 13th South African athlete to obtain a qualifying standard for the Tokyo Olympics.

So far she is only the third South African woman to have achieved a qualifying standard for the Games, after Steyn, who had beaten the 42km criterion with a 2:26.51 last year, and Dom Scott in the 10 000m.

Racing in wet, windy and cold conditions, Steyn sliced more than a minute off the 2:26.35 mark Colleen de Reuck set at the Berlin marathon in September 1996.

Elana Meyer’s 2:25.15 at the 1994 Boston Marathon isn’t regarded as an official record because it was done on an aided course. – Source: [www.timeslive.co.za](http://www.timeslive.co.za)



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