



17 March 2015

The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation

Overview: Vote 6: International Relations and Cooperation

1. South Africa's foreign policy activities

Since 1994, South Africa has worked hard to establish itself not only as a continental, but also a global player. It has been hosting many conferences of note, driving the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD 2001), participating in peacekeeping, playing mediation roles to facilitate conflict resolution and playing significant and strategic roles in the African Union and United Nations system.

2. The mandate of the Committee

The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (the Committee) is a committee of Parliament mandated by the sections 55 and 92 of the Constitution of South Africa,¹ to oversee and ensure accountability in the formulation and conduct of South African foreign policy. Consequently, the Committee conducts oversight on activities of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (the Department), its policies, financial spending patterns, administrative issues, and it holds the Department accountable for its operations and functions. The Committee is an important mechanism for ensuring oversight over the conduct of South Africa's international relations and cooperation policy.

The focus of the assessment by the Committee is on the performance of the key programmes of the Department comprising of Administration, International Relations, International Cooperation, Public Diplomacy and State Protocol and International Transfers. The Department's performance is measured against its own set targets as identified in the Strategic Plan of 2015-2020. The performance of the Department is measured against the aspirations of the National Development Plan 2030; and is also measured against Government's key priorities identified in the President's State-of-the-Nation Address (SONA) of February 2015 and the Government's Medium Term Strategic Framework 2014-2019. Other key measures comprise of the moral values and principles that underpin the country's foreign policy. The source documents for this analysis include the 2015 Estimates of National Expenditure (ENE); the 2015 State of the Nation Address; the Delivery Agreement for Outcome 11 (2014-2019) as well as the Department's Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

¹ Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996

3. The mandate of the Department

The overall mandate of the Department is to work for the realization of South Africa's international relations policy objectives. The foundation of South Africa's foreign policy is built on a desire to promote South Africa's national interest and values, the African Renaissance and the creation of a better world for all².

The President is ultimately responsible for South Africa's foreign policy. It is the prerogative of the President to appoint heads of South Africa's diplomatic missions, receive foreign heads of diplomatic missions, conduct inter-state relations and enter into international agreements³. Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (the Minister), however, is entrusted with the formulation, promotion and execution of South Africa's foreign policy and with the daily conduct of its international relations.

The Minister assumes overall responsibility for all aspects of South Africa's international relations, albeit in consultation with the President. The Minister also liaises and consults with members of the Cabinet on overlapping issues and on the priorities and programmes of other departments that bear an international relations element. In the same breath, other Cabinet ministers are required to consult the Minister on their international role.

According to the Department's Strategic plan 2015-2020, the Department is further responsible for regulation and implementation under the following Acts:

The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act, 2001 (Act 51 Of 2001): The Act establishes the Fund (ARF) to enhance cooperation between the South Africa and other countries, in particular, African countries. This is achieved through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development.

The Foreign States Immunities Act, 1981 (Act 87 of 1981): This Act regulates the extent of the immunity of foreign states from the jurisdiction of courts of the Republic and provides for matters connected therewith.

The Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001 (Act 37 of 2001): This Act provides for the immunities and privileges of diplomatic missions and consular posts and their members, heads of state, special envoys and certain representatives of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, and other international organizations and of certain other people. Provision is also made for immunities and privileges pertaining to international conferences and meetings held in South Africa.

The Department is also a custodian of international agreements (bilateral and multilateral) concluded by the Republic in terms of relevant constitutional provisions (sections 231(2) and 231 (3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

4. Planned policy initiatives

² Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Strategic Plan 2015-2020

³ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, Section 84 thereto

The Department conducts its affairs and operations in a global environment, with circumstances and conditions which are often vastly different and diverse from the policy context within South Africa, which governs the Public Service. The Department intends tabling a Foreign Service Bill to cater for the unique work environment in which it operates. It is envisaged the Bill will allow the Department to fulfill its administrative and management responsibilities within the framework of the South African legislation. It would also create the necessary flexibility to address the challenges posed by it operating in a global level.

South Africa's outgoing cooperation funding has been governed by the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund 2000 (ARF). This fund has catered for initiatives between South Africa and other countries that relate to the promotion of democracy and good governance among others. At the operational level, the Fund has been experiencing challenges due to strategic and operational inefficiencies within the fund.

As a consequence of these challenges over the past years, in 2009 Cabinet approved the proposal for the establishment of the South African Development Agency (SADPA), as the body to manage, coordinate and facilitate all South African official outgoing development cooperation programmes and projects. There are processes to table a Partnership Fund for Development Bill in Parliament, aimed at an improved coordination of South Africa's diverse development partnerships.

4. National Development Plan (NDP)

With regard to international relations and cooperation chapter, the national development plan focused on the need to enhance South Africa's position in the region and the world, and to increase trade and investment. The plan further states that the country's foreign policy should be shaped by the interplay between diplomatic, political, security, environmental, economic and regional dynamics that define international relations. The plan envisions the country positioning itself as one of Africa's powerhouses, leading development and growth on the continent; and deepening integration with the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) group of countries.

5. Performance delivery environment

Foreign policy is conducted in a very unpredictable and insecure global environment which was caused in part by the severe global economic downturn. That also had a negative impact on the Department's operational budget as the Government's own budget came under pressure, albeit at a time of greater international demands and obligations.

The Department has executed its mandate against the background of an ever-changing political and economic environment. The international environment is characterized by major shifts in global political, economic, social and cultural dynamics that impacted on different parts of the world. The shifts include: the emergence of new economic powers; the new phenomenon of media and social networks which leave governments faced with the increased tension between upholding freedom of speech and expression, while seeking to manage the flow of information; environmental change; heightened demand for scarce resources and the changing nature of conflict and insecurity. In order to survive in this environment, South Africa had to shape its domestic and foreign policies to respond to global drivers and trends⁴.

⁴ Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Globalisation continues to accelerate the shift in the balance of political and economic power towards the emerging economies. The trading patterns continue to shift to new markets, with notable growth in South-South trade between the emerging economies. A lack of adequate infrastructure and industrial capacity remains a significant obstacle to stimulating intra-African regional trade. Intra-African trade is essential as an important driver of development and regional integration in Africa as is the case with other regions of the world like European Union and Asia.

The world population growth is skewed across the wealth lines with the developed world dealing with an aging population, and developing countries experiencing a youth bulge. This demographic pattern has huge social and political impact as well as serious economic consequences.

Countries that are dependent on oil and gas will remain vulnerable to energy shocks and instability in oil-producing regions. Increased energy demands carry the potential of inter and intra-state competition, resulting in heightened risk of tensions over access to the resources.

The impact of the recent global economic crisis has had impact on development assistance to developing countries. It gave rise to nationalistic and conservative governments resulting in a trend of falling share of aid going to sub-Saharan Africa.

South Africa is implementing its diplomacy of Ubuntu towards achieving its national interests within a very complex and dynamic environment. South Africa's national interest is largely based on eradicating poverty, unemployment and inequality. The main element is that South Africa's national interest is, however, not framed in narrow nationalistic terms, it recognises the importance of others in the region and on the continent⁵.

The National Development Plan recommended a thorough analysis of the political and economic costs and benefits of South Africa's strategic representation and actions abroad.

Alongside this issue, the Committee identified a need for the alignment between the mandate of the Department with the organisational structure. The Committee recommended that training and policy analysis remain of strategic importance for the execution of the mandate of the Department. The Committee had also recommended that there was a need for a dedicated official (chief operating officer), who would focus on operational issues (non-political matters) emerging on a daily basis around the work of the Department. These operational details do not necessarily depict the uniqueness of the mandate of the Department, but have had the ability to render the Department a qualified audit report in 2014/15 financial year.

The Department has since taken positive steps to, in close consultation with the Department of Public Service and Administration, review its organisational structure, and it's reflected in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Each branch is now clearly aligned to a budget programme. This was embarked upon to ensure that there is a synergy between the essential human resource requirements which will enable the Department to achieve its legislative and political mandate.

⁵ Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Strategic Plan 2015-2020

6. Measurable Objectives of the Department

The Strategic plan 2015-2020 has been categorized into six key priority areas in order for the Department to contribute to a better life for all South Africans as pronounced through the State of the Nation Address 2015, with the aim of responding to the domestic priorities as announced by government for the 2015-16 financial year as follows:

- Enhancing the African Agenda and Sustainable Development;
- Strengthening political and economic integration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- Strengthening of South-South Relations;
- Strengthening of Relations with the formations of the North;
- Strengthening of Political and Economic Relations;
- Participation in the Global System of Governance.

The spending focus over the MTEF will be on advancing national priorities through economic and political relations; participating in global governance for a; advancing an equitable, just and representative rules-based multilateral system; a sustainable developed and economically integrated Africa; and regional integration of SADC; engagements with the North and consultations with the countries and groupings of the South.

7. Overview of departmental budget programmes and themes

The programmes are key areas from which the performance of the Department is assessed.

Programme 1: Administration

The programme has been allocated R 1, 418.5 billion for 2015/16.

Main objective: The purpose of the programme is to provide leadership, management and support services to the Department. It consists of 4 budget sub-programmes, and each is linked to branch. It is aimed to develop overall policy and manage the Department with the intention of ensuring an efficient, effective, economical and fully capacitated department. The programme is responsible for spending on corporate services, office accommodation and foreign fixed assets, compensation of employees, travel and subsistence, operating payments, leases, computer services and capital expenditure. Expenditure under this programme has been increasing largely due to the challenge of managing a geographically decentralised department that incurs expenditure in multiple currencies. Currency fluctuations affect budget totals as they are not predictable.

According to the Department's Strategic Plan 2015-2020, the Department continues to operate in a dynamic environment that combines varying legislative and monetary regimes that impact on its foreign policy operations. In 2015, South Africa maintains diplomatic relations with countries and organizations through 126 missions in 108 countries abroad, and through the accreditation of more than 160 countries and organizations resident in South Africa. The total number of employees in the Department (both in South Africa and foreign missions abroad) were projected to increase from 989 in 2013/14 to 1074 in 2016/17.

The strategic objectives of Programme 1: The programme is responsible to provide and manage a secure ICT infrastructure; provide enhanced financial management; minimise risks through compliance with security prescripts; monitor the reliability of and integrity of financial and operating information through conducting internal audits; and support the Department with an efficient, economical and fully capacitated department.

Current status (baseline): There is a disparity between Human Resource, finance and administration systems. The Department received a qualified audit report in 2014/15 financial year; the security strategy was developed and implemented but the Department did not receive a 100 per cent compliance with required standards; the vacancy rate is at 13.5 per cent; signed performance agreements for Senior Management Service (SMS) at 90.6 per cent; conducted internal audits; and ad-hoc risk assessment conducted.

Five year targets (2020): The Department desires a fully integrated and secure information and communication system; it wishes to receive an unqualified audit report; comply 100 per cent with minimum security standards; it intends to reduce vacancy rate within the national minimum of 10 per cent; review performance and conduct annual assessments at the agreed time; it will endeavour to provide proactive research and advise on unfolding foreign policy trends; and perform risk assessments according to the required high levels.

The Department has identified the following risks to its performance under this programme as follows: There is a challenge with inadequate accountability of partner departments to the missions' structures; the Department has been faced with inadequate implementation of ICT governance processes; it has recorded an inadequate ICT service delivery; lack of coordinated knowledge management systems; experienced lengthy decision-making processes and was faced with inadequate emergency responses. The Department has already identified mitigating strategies which will position it to better manage and respond to the possible risks.

Programme 2: International Relations

The programme has been allocated R 2, 931.7 billion for 2015/16.

Main objective: The purpose of this programme is to strengthen political, economic and social partnerships in the various regions of the world. This programme will operate under sub-programmes Africa; Americas and Caribbean; Asia and the Middle East and Europe. It is aimed to contribute to the realisation of national priorities through strengthened bilateral cooperation with individual countries of the South and the North, prioritising increased exports of South African goods and services; increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with technology transfers into value-added industries and mineral beneficiation; as well as increased inbound tourism and skills enhancement.

These objectives link to the strategic objective of strengthening South Africa's political, economic and social relations with targeted countries through the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits to reflect national priorities, the African Agenda and Agenda of the South. This programme is set to assist the Department to contribute to the achievement of the vision and goals as stipulated in the NDP towards establishing and managing bilateral structures and mechanisms for achieving foreign policy objectives.

In 2014/15 financial year, foreign representation continued through 47 diplomatic missions in Africa; 32 diplomatic missions in Asia and Middle East; 18 diplomatic missions in Americas and Caribbean and 28 diplomatic missions in Europe.

Risk management: Non-adherence by the three spheres of government to the Measures and Guidelines for the Enhanced Coordination of South Africa's International Engagements; unfunded mandates due to shortfalls in budget caused by foreign currency fluctuations; and inappropriate composition of official delegations. Mitigating measures have been identified.

Programme 3: International Cooperation

The programme has been allocated R 466.9 million. The purpose of the programme is for participation in international organisations and institutions in line with South Africa's national values and foreign policy objectives. The programme has four sub-programmes namely: Global systems of governance; Continental cooperation; South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation. The key objectives of this programme are to:

- **Global Governance:** To contribute towards a reformed, strengthened and equal rules based multilateral system that will be responsive to the needs of developing countries and Africa in particular;
- **African Agenda:** Enhance the African Agenda and strengthen the African Union and its structures; advance the implementation of NEPAD programmes; contribute to processes for peaceful resolution of conflicts, peace missions, elections observer missions and post conflict reconstruction and development.
- **Political and economic integration of SADC:** Contribute to processes to create an enabling environment supportive of political and economic integration, and effective functioning of regional organisation.
- **South-South cooperation:** To strengthen and consolidate the competitive and complementary strength of countries and groupings of the South.
- **North-South cooperation:** To pursue a developmental approach with strategic formations of the North.

Potential risks mentioned under this programme are: non-adherence by the three spheres of government to the Measures and guidelines for the Enhanced Coordination of South Africa's International Engagements when engaged in international forum; lack of adequate representation in regional and multilateral organisations; shifting of international focus away from Africa to other pressing international issues; lack of coherence and coordination on African positions; and inadequate inter and intra-departmental coordination on multilateral issues.

Linkages to the NDP: Institute aggressive trade and foreign investment policies to place the country on a more competitive path.

Programme 4: Public Diplomacy and Protocol Services

The programme has been allocated R246.3 million in 2015/16.

Public diplomacy promotes a positive projection of South Africa's image; communicates foreign policy positions to both domestic and foreign audiences; markets and brands South Africa abroad. This sub-programme completed a perception study in 2013/14, and completed a Public Diplomacy strategy in 2014/15. Its linkages to the NDP is to the effect that Public diplomacy is fundamental to South Africa's projection of soft power.

Protocol Services facilitates incoming and outgoing high level visits and ceremonial events, coordinates and regulates engagement with local diplomatic community. It provides protocol advice to the various spheres of government, facilitates hosting of international conferences and manages state protocol lounges and guesthouses.

The risks associated with this sub-programme are that of non-compliance with the requirements of Protocol and ceremonial prescripts; and uncoordinated international visits by different spheres of government.

Programme 5: International Transfers

This programme has been allocated R635.2 million for 2015/16. It enables South Africa to honour its financial obligations and voluntary contributions to international organisations. It facilitates transfers of annual membership contributions or fees to international organisations under the mandate of the Department (UN, AU, and SADC). The sub-programme also provides for yearly transfers to recapitalise the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund, a public entity of the Department, as a contribution to its operations.

The identified risks under this programme are the foreign exchange fluctuations; and non-payment of assted contributions by partner departments.

8. Long term infrastructure and other capital plans

Due to the uniqueness of its mandate, the Department executes its mandate beyond the borders of South Africa. This phenomenon places high demand on the Department for the provision of accommodation, facilities, goods and services that allow optimal efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of its mandate. Apart from providing for its own needs, the Department is also responsible for facilitating the provision of accommodation and movable assets for partner departments which have representation abroad⁶. Currently South Africa is represented in 108 countries globally and conducts business from 125 diplomatic and consular missions.

The Department is thus responsible for two distinct property portfolios: the local property portfolio comprising its Head Office building in Pretoria; state protocol lounges at three international airports in Cape Town, Durban and OR Tambo; two diplomatic guesthouses; as well as office accommodation for the United Nations, Pan African Parliament and the NEPAD Secretariat.

The international property portfolio comprise chanceries, official residences and staff houses. The majority of staff houses are leased while a small number are state-owned. The Department projects that it will continue to prioritise acquiring land and properties; and assess existing properties to determine which ones would require renovations or maintenance works.

9. Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)

The Headquarters of the Department and guesthouses were constructed under a PPPs arrangement. The same facilities management company maintains the properties on behalf of the Department. The Department pays a unitary fee for the services – R101 million per annum for the Office and guest houses. The PPPs agreement will continue until September 2034.

⁶ Department of International Relations and Cooperation Strategic Plan 2015-2020

10. Description of entities including core mandates

The Department has one entity, the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF). After 1994, the democratic government took a deliberate decision to establish a Fund, to promote development assistance and consolidate peace and reconstruction in Africa. The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund was thus established in 2000 pursuant to an Act of Parliament, the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act (Act no. 51 of 2000).

The ARF is located in the Department, under the supervision of the Director-General. Transfers to the Fund are included in the monies appropriated to the Department. Consequently, the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (the Committee) oversees the activities of this Fund. The main reason for the piloting of the ARF was to give practical effect to the vision of an African Renaissance, for the revival of economic and social development agenda for Africa. Thus, the strategic approach of the ARF is couched in pursuance of South Africa's foreign policy objectives as well as Africa's developmental agenda.

The fund's mandate is to provide funding for initiatives between South Africa and other countries. The initiatives relate to the promotion of democracy and good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflicts, socioeconomic development and integration, human resource development and infrastructure development. Countries in need of assistance apply for funding from the fund. Since 2006, the expenditure on projects funded by the fund has been declining due to strategic and operational inefficiencies within the fund.

On 2 December 2009, Cabinet approved the proposal from the Department for the establishment of the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA)⁷. It is aimed to function as a body/agency to manage, coordinate and facilitate all South African official outgoing development cooperation programmes and projects.

11. Linkages with municipalities and provinces (Para-diplomacy)

The parallel activities of an international nature undertaken by municipalities and provinces are important to the country. The only challenge has been with coordination of such activities with the Department. The Committee may also engage these arms of state to ensure compliance with the norms and values of the country's foreign policy.

12. The Department's Annual Performance Plan 2015/16

According to the Estimates of National Expenditure, the Department has been allocated a reduced budget of R5, 698.6 billion, compared to a R5, 871.3 allocated in 2014/15. Cabinet has approved budget reductions, among others, of R335.3 million in 2015/16; this will be effected on non-essential goods and services, compensation of employees and transfers to the ARF. The reduction will be effected over three years. The Department will allocate its budget in alignment with its strategic objectives. The spending focus in the MTEF period will be on advancing national priorities through economic and political bilateral relations; participating in global governance forums; advancing a rules-based multilateral system; a sustainable developed and economically integrated Africa; and the regional integration of SADC. There will be a concerted focus on economic diplomacy to contribute to South Africa achieving the vision and goals contained in the NDP.

⁷ African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund: Strategic Plan 2015-2018

Participating in global governance forums

The Department will continue to participate in international meetings with the aim of influencing the outcomes of such forums to reflect national interest, and agenda of Africa and the South, especially on issues relating to resolution of international conflicts and address underdevelopment and eradication of poverty. Development and security are better addressed through the United Nations system as the vehicle for the advancement of global consensus. The reform of the UN system will remain on the agenda. For the period from January to December 2015, South Africa will negotiate as Chair of the G77 and China.

Continental cooperation

The Department will continue to participate in multilateral forums, including the African Union (AU) structures. The MTSF tasks the Department with increasing the uptake of South Africa's quota in AU structures from 30 per cent (which translates to 8 of 27 posts filled) to 60 per cent (16 posts filled).

The Department continues to support post-conflict reconstruction and development and participate in political reform in the Great Lakes region. In the medium term this will include operationalising the tripartite agreement between South Africa, Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in support of the peace and security framework agreement for the Great Lakes region. The Department will continue its support to the deployment of SADC intervention brigade in the DRC; it will work with Department of Defence to operationalise the AU peace and security architecture; and participate in the political processes to restore order and stability in the Central African Republic, DRC, Libya, Somalia and South Sudan.

Southern African Development Community (SADC): In this period, the Department will be involved in reviewing the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP); and in conceptualising the processes for establishing a free trade area, led by the Department of Trade and Industry.

South-South cooperation

South Africa is committed to strong cooperation among countries and groupings of the South, and to the development of common positions on political, economic, social and human rights issues essential for an effective response in addressing the historic marginalisation of countries in the South. For the period from January to December 2015, South Africa will negotiate as Chair of the G77 and China. In the medium term, South Africa will participate in meetings of the Non Aligned Movement, G77 plus China, 7th BRICS summit, IBSA ministerial, FOCAC summit among others.

North-South cooperation

South Africa intends to continue pursuing the beneficial political and economic relations with countries and formations of the North. These remain as major actors in the international system and substantial sources of development assistance and foreign direct investment. In the medium term, South Africa aims to have engagements with the European Union; Korea; Nordic countries and with TICAD (Japan and Africa).

Enhancing Department's operational capacity

The Department operates in a global environment, under conditions that are often significantly different from those defined by the policy context for public service in South Africa. To address these differences, the Department has reviewed the legislative framework governing its operations and intends to table the Foreign Service Bill over the medium term.

There is a new structure which processes around it are still being finalised. The drive seems to be towards a Department that is cost effective and aligned to budget programmes in its international activities. The process is to integrate the financial, human resource and administration systems of the Department.

The Department's international property portfolio consists of 133 state owned properties and 800 rented properties. Presently, the Department spends about R575 million per year on leases in countries where it does not own properties. The Department intends to conduct a feasibility study on the viability of developing an acquisition and disposal strategy, including risk assessment and cost benefit analysis elements. The feasibility study will promote a shift towards property ownership over rental; will examine different funding models, including public private partnerships.

All state owned properties are maintained annually from operational funds allocated to individual missions. At present, the Government owns 25 chanceries, one consulate, 35 official residences, 66 staff houses, 16 plots of vacant land and one parking bay⁸.

Over the medium term, the Department intends to complete the construction of chanceries and official residences in Tanzania, Malawi and the Netherlands. The Department also intends to enter into a public private partnerships for construction of chanceries in India, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Mali, Botswana and Uruguay.

Spending on infrastructure increased from R205.2 million in 2011/12 to R213.5 million in 2014/15, and is expected to increase to R223.7 million in 2017/18. The funding is earmarked for infrastructure development, the acquisition of land and buildings, the renovation and refurbishment of state owned infrastructure.

Development cooperation

Over the medium term, South Africa intends to redefine outgoing development cooperation. It has reviewed the current institutional and policy arrangements for outgoing development cooperation, and plans to table the Partnership Fund for Development Bill. The Bill seeks to repeal the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act 2000 (ARF), and provides a legislative framework for establishing the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA) to replace the fund.

South Africa's strategic role in SADC, AU and NEPAD, continues to influence the policy direction and programme priorities of these institutions, aimed at achieving an African continent that is integrated, prosperous and peaceful; driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena. In this regard, the ARF is part of the instruments of South African government used to achieve these key strategic objectives.

In the same breath, South Africa has contributed to the drafting of the African Union's Agenda 2063 through, among others, convening of national consultative forum. Agenda 2063 seeks to address the challenges still facing the African Union, such as, combatting unconstitutional changes of governments, underdevelopment, poverty, security, infrastructure development, operationalization of the African Peace and Stability Architecture, youth unemployment and marginalisation of women in economic activities among others. The ARF contributes to some of these strategic and key programmes of the AU.

The organisational environment of the ARF has improved. An Advisory Committee has been established to manage the fund and make recommendations to the Ministers of the Department and of Finance. The ARF will continue to assist in humanitarian situations, on requests for election observer missions, post conflict reconstruction, capacity building, and

⁸ Department of International Relations and Cooperation, Annual Performance Plan 2015/16, pg 108

peace keeping and in requests aimed at deepening democracy and promoting human rights in Africa.

13. Assessment of the road travelled since 2009 to date

The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (the Committee) has a proud tradition of engagement in South Africa's foreign policy. It continues to address various issues aimed at enhancing the conduct of South Africa's foreign policy. It has engaged in issues from human rights, engagement with civil society, para-diplomacy, assisting in shaping conduct of foreign policy in the region, Africa and the world, to economic diplomacy, among other important issues.

The Committee has made a number of recommendations to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (the Department), as part of its oversight, and in an effort to enhance the way South Africa relates and engages in international relations. The Department has, over the years, responded positively and walked this road benefitting from guidance from the Committee.

A number of recognisable oversight related milestones can be noted from the Department's Strategic Plan 2015-2020. Issues which emanated through the Committee's oversight have found expression in the current document, and these include:

- Consider prioritising spending as the budget of the Department is affected by foreign exchange fluctuations;
- The structure of the Department should link to the budget programmes;
- Foreign policy be informed by domestic policy priorities;
- Participation in international meetings be measured by South Africa's input and influence of the outcomes of such forums;
- Improvement of systems around the Asset Register;
- Improvement of systems relating to the operations of the African Renaissance Fund;
- Filling of positions in allocated quotas in international organisations; and seeking strategic positions in strategic international organisations;
- Assess the benefits of owning vs leasing property in the missions;
- Consider developing a strong public diplomacy strategy;
- Consideration of having South Africans as Locally Recruited Personnel (LRPs) in the missions;
- Explore having a position of a chief operations officer to deal with operational matters of the Department;
- Address the issues around para-diplomacy;
- Consider engagements with the SADC region towards regional integration

The Committee, therefore, is at the stage where it will monitor compliance with and implementation of the strategies and turnaround strategies put in place by the Department, and look into emerging trends in the conduct of South Africa's foreign policy for the Committee to make its political input. The Committee's future areas of focus should be in regard to the issues raised as risks in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

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