

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2024 – 2025



international relations
& cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)

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Department of
International Relations
and Cooperation



**international relations
& cooperation**

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A. EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY STATEMENT

I hereby present the Annual Performance Plan (APP) of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) for the year 2024/25.

The APP reflects the priorities of the Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025, which is in turn informed by our national interests and priorities as outlined in the National Development Plan. South Africa's international engagements are premised on the need to advance the development priorities of developing countries and promote an equitable rules-based multilateral system, as identified in Priority Seven of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF).

South Africa's foreign policy is driven by our commitment to address the needs of our people and to work towards creating a more just and equitable country, region and world. The APP forms a strategic roadmap of how the department plans to achieve its goals in the most effective ways.

This year we are celebrating 30 years of democracy and this gives us a chance to reflect on the many successes of our international relations over the past three decades. Not only has South Africa formulated progressive foreign policy positions, but we have punched above our weight on the global stage, hosting numerous international conferences; serving a number of terms on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC); and on the UN Human Rights Council; and we have been part of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) partnership of the most influential and economically powerful emerging economies that are championing the agenda of the global South. We have exercised leadership at all levels within the African Union (AU) as we work towards Agenda 2063; contributed significantly to the creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA); and led and supported conflict resolution efforts both on the continent and abroad.

As we approach the end of the MTSF 2019 - 2024, we should take a step back and reflect on some of our major achievements during this period. South Africa served as a non-permanent member state of the UNSC for the period 2019 to 2020. South Africa's last year in the council coincided with our



DR GNM PANDOR

**Minister of International Relations
and Cooperation**

Chairship of the AU in 2020. This presented South Africa with a unique opportunity to advance the African Agenda in both institutions. A highlight of our term as Chair of the AU was the appointment of President Cyril Ramaphosa as co-Chair of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) High-level Facilitation Council. During its Chairship, South Africa actively sought to promote equal access for all African countries to COVID-19 vaccines.

South Africa became the Chair of the South African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation in August 2020, and in 2021/22, and has made important contributions to bringing peace and stability to the region. South Africa assumed a two-year term on the AU Peace and Security Council in April 2022 and is working towards intensifying efforts to resolve conflicts on the continent.

The commencement of trading under the AfCFTA on 1 January 2021 signalled a concrete achievement under South Africa's leadership as AU Chair, one that will significantly boost African economic development for many decades to come.

Multilateralism remains an important focus of South Africa's foreign policy and in the coming year, we will continue to push for the reform of the UNSC into a more representative and democratic body. During 2024/25, South Africa will also focus on preparations for serving as Chair of the Group of Twenty (G20) in 2025 and for G20 ministerial meetings and the summit. As the only African country in the G20, we will continue to place the African continent and the global South on the agenda of the G20 to synchronise policies, such as Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We are pleased that the AU has become a permanent member of the G20 and we will work closely with the AU to advance the African Agenda.

While there is much to celebrate, the department is confronting major financial constraints given the decreases in the budget that have been put in place by government. This is impacting on our ability to fill vacant posts, especially those of senior managers and to leverage the necessary resources to effectively fulfil our mandate. I would, however, like to commend our officials for striving to do more with less and working even harder to ensure that our foreign policy is implemented to the best of our ability.

Our primary objective as a department is to ensure that our diplomacy contributes to addressing the needs of the people of South Africa, which means tackling the triple challenges of

unemployment, poverty and inequality more urgently. This is why economic diplomacy is a key component of the work of our missions abroad and of our officials at head office. Attracting foreign investment and boosting levels of trade, particularly intra-African trade, is what will spur economic growth and create jobs at a time when we are facing high unemployment and stagnant growth. We need to continue asserting the narrative that South Africa is a prime investment and tourist destination and that the country is open for business.

South Africa's reputation as a country that champions human rights and that continues former President Nelson Mandela's commitment to a moral foreign policy has been reinforced by the case brought before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague this year. The massive goodwill that this decision has generated worldwide, as people continue to express their solidarity with the Palestinian people, has reignited excitement and support for South Africa. South Africa took this case to the highest judicial body in the international system in the hopes of saving lives and defending the rights of the Palestinians to life, dignity and security, and to ensure that countries cannot continue to violate international law and the Geneva Convention with impunity. President Ramaphosa has hailed the ICJ ruling on provisional measures as a "victory for international law, for human rights, and above all, for justice." It has put South Africa on the right side of history.

Unfortunately, Israel has so far ignored the ruling of the ICJ and the matter will have to be taken up by the UNSC to be enforced. The UN peace and security architecture, however, is clearly conflicted and not able to give effect to the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people or to protect them from grave war crimes and genocide. The veto power wielded by individual states cannot be permitted to thwart international justice, making the reform of the UNSC extremely urgent.

South Africa has prioritised the path of peace in all armed conflicts and we are doing what we can to bring the parties to the table to end the bloodshed not only in Gaza, but also in Ukraine, Sudan, South Sudan, the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and elsewhere.

Our department has supported President Ramaphosa in his African peace initiative on Ukraine. For the first time ever, a group of seven African leaders embarked on a joint peace mission beyond the borders of our continent to work towards bringing peace to a foreign war zone. In June last year, the delegation of African leaders met the protagonists in both Ukraine and Russia

and made concrete proposals on the way forward. Our most senior officials have participated and played a pivotal role in the subsequent peace discussions on Ukraine that have been held in Copenhagen, Jeddah, Malta and Davos. While the discussions have been fruitful, for any breakthrough to be achieved Russia will need to be part of the peace talks. We remain steadfast in our commitment to working towards the peaceful resolution of this conflict and continue to stress that dialogue, mediation and diplomacy are the only paths to end the war.

The momentous shift in global geopolitics makes this a pivotal year for BRICS. BRICS cooperation supports South Africa's regional, continental and global objectives. The five core members of BRICS have forged a comprehensive strategic partnership and will continue working towards developing a more equitable, balanced and representative global governance system.

The XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg in August last year turned out to be one of the largest and most important meetings of the developing world in recent years. We are pleased to have so far welcomed four new countries as fully fledged members of BRICS – the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Confirmation of Saudi Arabia's membership is pending. The BRICS foreign ministers were also tasked to develop a BRICS partner country model. BRICS expansion will contribute to building a more equitable and just multipolar world order that will better reflect the balance of power in the international arena and increase the role of emerging developing countries in global decision-making processes.



DR GNM Pandor, MP
Minister of International Relations and Cooperation
Executive Authority
27 March 2024

Following last year's BRICS Summit, finance ministers/reserve bank governors were tasked to consider the use of local currencies and payment instruments and platforms. This is an important development in terms of trade within the global South. Russia will host the BRICS Summit this year and considers these issues key priorities. The summit will be held under the theme *Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security*.

Whether within BRICS, the G20 or at the UN, South Africa will continue to advance the African Agenda as a priority. We will continue this year to enhance regional integration within SADC and on the continent through the AfCFTA. It is critical to the development of the continent to ensure higher levels of intra-African trade, so that we can grow economies of scale which can compete more effectively in global markets. South African companies are poised to play a key role in taking up the opportunities that this presents for preferential access to other African markets. We look forward to the Coordination Mechanism for Economic Diplomacy facilitating a closer partnership between government and business, in order to provide leadership to our government-wide effort to promote our economic interests.

Our department is working hard to strengthen its existing institutional capacity in order to enhance our ability to achieve our strategic objectives over the next five years. This work includes aligning the structure of the organisation to better implement its strategic plan. We believe that we have drastically improved our financial management in keeping with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) and our human resources directorate is constantly improving people management, as well as the strategic use of digital technology.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to all officials of the department for their enduring commitment and spirit of excellence in carrying out our mandate and serving the people of South Africa. We will continue to keep the South African flag flying high in all that we do.

B. ACCOUNTING OFFICER STATEMENT



MR Z DANGOR

Director-General

**Department of International Relations and
Cooperation**

South Africa's foreign policy is guided by the Constitution and its founding principles. Foreign policy is an important tool that contributes to the realisation of the National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030 through the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF). On the basis of our identity as an African country, South Africa's foreign policy is driven by a clear and critical understanding of our national, regional and continental priorities in a multipolar world where the geostrategic politics of the continent are becoming increasingly central to global political and economic competition for natural resources and market share. The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), being the lead department in pursuit of South Africa's foreign policy objectives, continues to manage and coordinate the other domestic role-players contributing, directly or indirectly, to the achievement thereof.

The strategic focus of DIRCO is guided by the NDP: Vision 2030, as unpacked in the MTSF 2019 – 2024, which is in line with the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the United Nation's (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The department is further guided by the policy directives of South Africa's political principals, especially the President's State of the Nation Address.

Reflection on 2023/24

Because of the tight link between South Africa's National Interest and Africa's stability, unity and prosperity, the African Agenda continues to be at the centre of our foreign policy trajectory. South Africa remains a relevant and significant player in issues relating to the regional agenda, both through various bilateral and multilateral platforms. During 2023/24, South Africa continued to enhance regional integration within SADC and on the continent through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

During 2023/24 we continued to confront challenges in the international arena as a result of the war between Russia and Ukraine that has brought about major tensions in global politics, increased food insecurity, and the rising cost of food and basic products. Africa was more affected by the conflict than any other continent. South Africa is not indifferent to what is going on in Ukraine. We are deeply concerned about the continuing conflict, the loss of lives and the deteriorating humanitarian situation. We continue to advocate for an urgent and sustainable resolution to the war in Ukraine, based on a negotiated settlement involving all stakeholders. At the same time, we have maintained our non-aligned position with regard to the war.

The African Peace Initiative and its 10-point approach to end the conflict, led by African heads of state, has value precisely because it is supported by many countries on the African continent. South Africa, in particular, has not isolated Russia on the international stage, but has rather consistently called for dialogue between the conflicting parties. Africa has positioned itself as a key player in international affairs, especially in relation to upholding a multilateral global order based on international law. This stance has placed South Africa in the advantageous position of being able to engage with both the

parties in the conflict (which countries and regions have not been able to do). This has been pursued in the interest of its peaceful resolution and averting further negative impacts on the continent and the developing world.

South Africa condemned the attack on civilians by Palestinian fighters on 7 October 2023, killing a large number of people and seizing about 240 hostages. However, due to Israel's disproportionate response and assault on Gaza, which constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity, South Africa filed proceedings at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for the crime of genocide to be investigated.

The scale of deaths in Gaza is a direct result of the unlawful actions by Israel against the people of Gaza. South Africa has called for an immediate ceasefire. Under the laws of occupation, which form part of the law of armed conflict, Israel does not have the "right to defend itself" using military means, as Israel is an occupying power. This is a fact, not an allegation, as confirmed by the ICJ. As the occupying power, Israel can use tools applicable to the rule of law, including policing powers to deal with criminal actions. An occupying state cannot exercise control over territory it occupies and simultaneously launch a military attack on that territory, claiming that it is "foreign" and poses an exogenous national security threat. The notion of Israel's right to defend itself through military means has been used erroneously by some, and deliberately by others, to justify the unlawful use of force by Israel on the people of Palestine in Gaza and the West Bank.

President Cyril Ramaphosa has stated that South Africa stands in solidarity with the people of Palestine and supports their inalienable right to self-determination. South Africa supports peace in the Middle East, but for as long as Palestinian territory remains occupied, justice remains elusive, their rights ignored and abused, freedom denied, and peace will remain unachievable. The United Nations (UN) membership must rise to make the rights for which it stands tangible for the people of Palestine. We have a responsibility, as the nations of the world, to spare no effort in finding a just, lasting and peaceful solution based on internationally agreed parameters enshrined in the relevant UN resolutions.

As the only African country in the G20 and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS), as well as being one of the top 10 strategic partners of the European Union (EU), South Africa, during its Chairship of BRICS in 2023, continued placing the African continent and the global South on the agenda of BRICS to synchronise policies, such as Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

South Africa hosted a successful BRICS summit in August 2023, under the theme *BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism*. During the summit, six new members were invited to join the grouping, namely the Argentine Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. On 1 January 2024, four of the six countries that were invited to join, formally joined BRICS. The Argentine Republic and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did not accept the invitation.

Priorities for 2024/25

During 2024/25 South Africa will, as previously, actively participate in the structures of SADC and the AU and will complete its two-year membership of the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC) during 2024.

South Africa maintains strong political relations with the countries of the Americas and Europe, as

well as Asia and the Middle East, and these partnerships contribute tangibly towards progress on the priorities identified in the NDP. Through our missions abroad, we will continue to promote increased inward tourism, trade and investment opportunities from our bilateral partners, in line with the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP). As South Africa's foreign policy implementation is guided and shaped by its National Interest, we will continue to utilise high-level bilateral meetings to advance our wide-ranging objectives in these specific fields. DIRCO's international network of missions is a strategic asset that is being leveraged to realise maximum return on the investment it represents for the people of South Africa.

Unfortunately, as we start this new financial year, the economic challenges we face as a country persist. Now, more than ever, South Africa has to grapple with the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality. DIRCO will, therefore, during 2024/25, continue with its focus on economic diplomacy to contribute to improving the livelihoods of all South Africans. This work will build on the foundation of the ERRP, which remains the common programme to rebuild the economy.

DIRCO also has to contend with an environment that is impacted by regional, continental and global developments, fluctuations and disruptions. The war between Russia and Ukraine, and the situation in the Middle East, do not show signs of ending soon, and during 2024/25 South Africa will have to determine how it can best mitigate the negative impact of these two conflicts on ordinary South Africans. These two conflicts are contributing to exacerbating global instability, a possible looming financial crisis, rising inflation and interest rates, volatile energy prices, food insecurity and global supply chain challenges. As a government and people, South Africa stands firm in our call for justice for the oppressed Palestinian people, for their rights and aspirations to be fulfilled, for the immediate cessation of hostilities and for accountability for the deplorable killings of civilians in the assault on Gaza. We maintain that peace will not be possible until Palestinians are free.

We will continue our support for a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, characterised by equitable freedom and security, where citizens of both states can live in prosperity. We know much has been done to make this improbable, but we must continue all efforts for peace and freedom for the people, not only of Palestine, but also for those of Western Sahara and the blockaded people of Cuba.

Multilateralism remains a focal point of South Africa's foreign policy and engagements are premised on the need to advance the priorities reflected in the NDP and the development priorities of developing countries. The UN remains the most important multilateral institution and the centre of global governance. Therefore, engagement with the UN and active participation in its processes, are of vital importance to South Africa and the advancement of the country's foreign policy priorities. A key priority in South Africa's engagement with the UN is to continue to advance the reform of the existing global governance architecture, with a view to improving its responsiveness to the needs of, and challenges faced by, developing states. The UNSC does not reflect current global political and economic realities and a key priority is to advance the reform of the existing global governance architecture with a view to improving its responsiveness to the needs of developing states.

In 2022, South Africa was elected to serve on the Human Rights Council (HRC) for the period 2023 - 2025. We have completed a successful first year of our term on the council. South Africa's participation in the HRC during 2024/25, continues to be inspired by our strategic objectives. This is where South Africa can play a constructive and meaningful role and promote international cooperation and multilateralism in the field of human rights.

The main aim of South Africa's membership and participation in the HRC is to achieve the following foreign policy goals:

- to pursue South Africa's national interests
- to promote our values
- to contribute to the development of a rules-based system of interstate relations (multilateralism)
- to help create a global environment that is conducive to peace, development, respect for the rule of international law, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, and the development of Africa.

Regarding South-South Cooperation, South Africa will continue to pursue mutually beneficial cooperation among countries and groupings of the South. The aim will be to develop common positions on political, economic, social and human rights issues, as an effective response to addressing the historic marginalisation of these countries. South Africa will continue to leverage strategic regional groupings such as BRICS, India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) to improve trade flows and build consensus in multilateral groupings.

With regard to North-South dialogue, the Western European countries and the European Union (EU) remain South Africa's biggest trade and investment partners and an important source of skills and technology transfer and acquisition, and tourism. The significant number of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits from these countries in the 2023/24 financial year was a demonstration of the importance that these countries attach to their relations with South Africa. South Africa is the only African country, and one of 10 countries globally, that has a strategic partnership with the EU. Much of the focus will remain on the various aspects related to our economic relations and analysing possible new areas of cooperation, such as the move by the EU to digitalisation and the green economy. It is hoped that issues that currently impact on the growth of the partnership, such as those concerning citrus, as well as other sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade imposed by the EU on South African agriculture products, over several years, will be resolved in the near future.

DIRCO, as a national department, remains committed to sound corporate governance and has developed various internal control mechanisms to strengthen corporate governance. Internally, there are various management structures and committees in place with terms of reference that meet on a regular basis. These management structures will continue to serve as mechanisms to improve corporate governance and decision-making and enhance communication.

During 2024/25, the department will continue to deliver a professional Protocol Service to the President, Deputy President, Minister, and Deputy Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation, as well as other Cabinet ministers and departments. It also provides an advisory service to all spheres of government on all matters related to protocol.

It should, however, be noted that the 2024/25 Annual Performance Plan (APP) is being delivered in an environment that is still characterised by fiscal constraints. The department has embarked on a process to develop identified systems to improve operations' efficiencies and effectiveness in automating business processes.

I am pleased to announce that the department showed an improvement with regard to the audit opinion, moving from a qualified opinion to an unqualified opinion with matters of emphasis. The department will continue efforts to improve internal controls in an attempt to work towards

achieving a clean audit.

I also wish to inform that the department has nearly completed the process of organisational renewal as a tool to assist the organisation to achieve its identified strategic objectives.

During 2023/24, the department was able to identify critical vacancies for advertisement and filling. It is hoped that this process will contribute towards making DIRCO more effective and efficient.

The Foreign Service Act (FSA), 2019 (Act 26 of 2019) and its regulations came into force on 25 August 2022. The purpose of the FSA is to professionalise the Foreign Service and provide a legislative mandate to the department by providing for the management, administration, accountability and functioning of a professional foreign service and the operational requirements that are suitable and supportive of the operations of the Foreign Service in a global environment. During 2023/24, the department actively commenced with the development of the necessary regulations to ensure the full and effective implementation of the FSA. The implementation of the FSA will ensure future coherent foreign policy implementation. I am pleased to confirm that this is the first time that South Africa has legislation that governs its foreign service and that mandates the department to lead and coordinate the international relations of the Republic on all spheres of government on bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. This will ensure coherent foreign policy implementation. During 2024/25, the full implementation of the FSA is envisaged. DIRCO will undertake various roadshows in an effort to popularise the FSA and its importance for ensuring a well-coordinated and efficient foreign service.

During 2024/25, the department, guided by South Africa's foreign policy objectives and national interest, intends to continue taking a leading role in entrenching the rights of women, youth and people with disabilities as fundamental human rights, critical for the full realisation of inclusive and sustainable development. The department will endeavour to commit to specific targets, namely 50% women, 30% youth and 7% people with disabilities, respectively, across all programmes.

As announced by President Ramaphosa, South Africa's five-yearly national elections will take place on 29 May 2024. Following the elections, DIRCO and all other government departments will finalise the new MTSF for 2024 - 2029. This will be followed by the commencement of the drafting of a new Strategic Plan for the period 2025 - 2030.

As the Accounting Officer, I hereby undertake to ensure appropriate governance, systems and processes to implement the APP.



MR ZDANGOR

Director-General











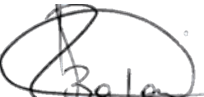

Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Date: 27 March 2024

C. Official Sign-Off

It is hereby certified that this Annual Performance Plan:

- was developed by the management of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) under the guidance of the Minister
- takes into account all the relevant policies, legislation and other mandates for which DIRCO is responsible
- accurately reflects the impact, outcomes and outputs, which DIRCO will endeavour to achieve over the period: 2024 – 2025.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL	SIGNATURE	DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL	SIGNATURE
Amb T Seokolo Acting Deputy Director-General: Africa		Mr TC Monyela Acting Deputy Director-General: Corporate Management	
Amb MV Dlomo Deputy Director-General: Americas and Europe		Amb MV Dlomo Acting Deputy Director-General: Diplomatic Training, Research and Development	
Amb NM Lallie Acting Deputy Director-General: Asia and Middle East		Mr TC Monyela Deputy Director-General: Public Diplomacy	
Amb X Mabhongo Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda		Amb NN Losi Chief of State Protocol and Consular Services	
Ms H Bhengu Chief Financial Officer Deputy Director-General: Financial and Asset Management		Mr Z Dangor Director-General	
Ms S Baloi-Mmola Head of Planning Acting Chief Operations Officer		Approved by: Dr GNM Pandor Executive Authority	



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PART A

Our Mandate



1. UPDATES TO THE RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY MANDATE

1.1 CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE

- 1.1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 is the supreme law of the Republic and all law or conduct inconsistent with it is invalid. The President is ultimately responsible for South Africa's foreign policy and it is the President's prerogative to appoint heads of South Africa's diplomatic missions, receive foreign heads of diplomatic missions, conduct inter-state relations and enter into international agreements.
- 1.1.2 The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (Minister), in accordance with her Cabinet portfolio responsibilities, is entrusted with the formulation, promotion and execution of South Africa's foreign policy. The Minister assumes overall responsibility for all aspects of South Africa's international relations in consultation with the President. In practice, the Minister consults the Cabinet and individual Cabinet ministers on aspects of importance, as well as on cross-cutting issues that have a bearing on the programmes of other ministries and departments.
- 1.1.3 Oversight and accountability in the formulation and conduct of South Africa's foreign policy are vested in the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation.

1.2 LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

- 1.2.1 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 the courts of the Republic and provides for matters connected therewith.
- 1.2.2 The Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act, 2001 (Act 37 of 2001): The Act provides for the immunities and privileges of diplomatic missions and consular posts and their members, of heads of states, special envoys and certain representatives of the United Nations and its specialised agencies and other international organisations and of certain other persons. Provision is also made for immunities and privileges pertaining to international conferences and meetings. It enacts into law certain conventions and provides for matters connected therewith.
- 1.2.3 The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act, 2001 (Act 51 of 2001): The Act establishes an African Renaissance and International

Cooperation Fund (ARF) to enhance cooperation between the Republic and other countries, in particular African countries, through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development.

- 1.2.4 International agreements (multilateral and bilateral): These include international agreements concluded by the Republic of South Africa in terms of sections 231(2) and 231(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
- 1.2.5 President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law the Foreign Service Act (FSA), 2019 (Act 26 of 2019), which was gazetted on 4 June 2020. The Act provides for the administration, accountability and functioning of a professional foreign service of the Republic of South Africa that will be managed by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). The legislation governs the operational requirements that are suitable and supportive of the operations of the Foreign Service in a global environment. The Foreign Service is tasked with promoting and advancing South Africa's international relations and cooperation by representing the Republic in an effective, coherent and comprehensive manner abroad. The regulations are currently being drafted to guide the implementation of the FSA, 2019.

1.3 POLICY MANDATES

- 1.3.1 The *Measures & Guidelines for Enhanced Coordination of South Africa's International Engagements* and its annexures, approved by Cabinet in 2009, establish more effective measures and mechanisms to coordinate the conduct of international relations and the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy.
- 1.3.2 *The National Information Security Policy*, approved by Cabinet in 1996, provides the minimum standards for security.
- 1.3.3 *The White Paper on Foreign Policy*, approved by Cabinet in 2011, assesses South Africa's foreign policy against the rising expectations of the critical role of foreign policy to meet domestic priorities.
- 1.3.4 The Foreign Service Dispensation (FSD) is implemented in terms of the provisions of Section 3(3) (c) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994), as amended, and is applicable to designated employees who serve in a foreign country at a South African mission abroad and fall within the scope of the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council. The FSD consists mainly of two measures, namely remunerative measures (South Africa) and compensatory

measures and other foreign-service benefits at the missions.

- 1.3.5 The *Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework*, approved by Cabinet in 2018, provides for comprehensive instruments for strengthening the mainstreaming of gender perspectives within the planning and budgeting processes.
- 1.3.6 The *Framework Document on South Africa's National Interest and its Advancement in a Global Environment* proposes a definition of South Africa's National Interest and its elements; the means for the pursuit of South Africa's National Interest; guidelines for the practical application of South Africa's National Interest in an international environment; it reflects on the current and potential future global environment; and provides for predictability in South Africa's international relations.

2. UPDATES TO INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

THE REVIVAL OF THE PROCESS ON THE PARTNERSHIP FUND FOR DEVELOPMENT BILL

The Partnership Fund for Development Bill, aimed at repealing the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act, 2000 (Act 51 of 2000) will be revived. DIRCO continues to support South Africa's outgoing development cooperation policy by providing funding and technical support for development initiatives.

3. UPDATES TO RELEVANT COURT RULINGS IN MATTERS OF THE SUPREME COURT:

The biggest cost drivers in respect of the contingent liabilities and assets remains the matter of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and two others v Simeka Group (Pty) Ltd and four others with the contingent asset of R112 943 000,00 and Elliot Mobility (Pty) Ltd and New Thando Elliot Mobility (Pty) Ltd Joint Venture (NTEM) v Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, to the amount of R53 258 418,90 as contingent liability. The current status of these two cases is as follow:

In the matter of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and two others v Simeka Group (Pty) Ltd and four others, the application was launched

by the Minister on 10 October 2018 to have the tender award for the appointment of a development partner in New York reviewed and set aside (including the Project Preparation Agreement). Judgement was given in April 2021 and decided against the Minister. The Minister's application for leave to appeal was heard on 10 May 2021 and judgement was given in favour of the Minister by the Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA).

The matter was heard in the SCA on 16 August 2022 and judgement was handed down on 13 June 2023 in favour of the department. A cost order was also awarded in favour of the department. The respondents have not appealed the decision and are now out of time to do so. The State Attorney (Pretoria), on behalf of the department, filed a supplementary affidavit in the Gauteng High Court in October 2023 to recover the monies that the department paid to Regiments Capital (Pty) Ltd, Lemascene (Pty) Ltd and Serendipity Investments SALLC.

The Director-General reported the matter to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI) for further investigation in compliance with the Prevention and Combatting of Corrupt Activities Act, 2004 (Act 12 of 2004). The State Attorney (Pretoria) has been instructed to attend to the recovery of the monies and a supplementary affidavit was filed in the Pretoria High Court.

In the matter of Elliot Mobility (Pty) Ltd and New Thando Elliot Mobility (Pty) Ltd Joint Venture (NTEM) v the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, the department brought an application in the High Court to have the arbitration award handed down in NTEM's favour set aside. Although settlement discussions took place prior to the hearing, NTEM rejected the department's initial offer of settlement and then withdrew from the discussions when it became clear that the parties to the joint venture had divergent views on what would constitute a fair outcome.

The hearing of the review application proceeded on 17 and 18 June 2021. Judgement was handed down on Tuesday, 4 October 2022, in which firstly, the review application lodged by the department was dismissed and the department was ordered to pay the costs of the respondent's two counsels. Secondly, the arbitration award was made an order of court and the department was further ordered to pay the costs of the respondent's two counsels in the application to make the arbitration award an order of court.

The department applied for leave to appeal, which was heard on Tuesday, 4 April 2023. On 17 April 2023, the department was granted leave to appeal to the SCA. The State Attorney (Pretoria) together with the State Attorney (Bloemfontein) filed the record of proceedings and the appeal papers in the SCA. The department is waiting on a hearing date from the SCA.

PART B

Our Strategic Focus



4. UPDATED SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

4.1 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

There are long-term and highly disruptive global situations developing, which will pose fundamental challenges to South Africa and its foreign policy.

Currently, active global situations that threaten the world include a renewed threat of a nuclear conflict; a potential financial crisis, including high inflation; recession; potential deindustrialisation; energy insecurity; the threat of violent unrests due to food shortages, unemployment and civil resentment against restrictions; rising inequality, poverty and hunger; the increasing severity of weather incidents and altered climate patterns due to climate change; and the possibility of future pandemics.

These various situations are on a global scale and will have long-term socio-economic and security implications. These include cost of living increases, rising unemployment, and deepening inequality and poverty, which will create tensions between organs of the state and civil society with anticipated rolling protest action globally. Indicators in this turbulent environment are that the net zero targets for climate change and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs) as well as the fulfilment of Agenda 2063, could be elusive.

The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have indicated that global economic growth is projected to either remain at the current level or slow further in 2024. The WB states that this is amid tight monetary policies, restrictive financial conditions and weak global trade and investment. Downside risks include an escalation of the recent conflict in the Middle East, financial stress, persistent inflation, trade fragmentation and climate-related disasters. Global cooperation is needed to provide debt relief, facilitate trade integration, tackle climate change and alleviate food insecurity. The prospects for 2025 are envisaged to show a slight improvement. The global inflation rate is dropping in most regions following the restrictive monetary policies adopted following the COVID-19 pandemic. This has, however, led to an increase in central bank rates and the withdrawal of fiscal support with persisting high global debt.

Major global elections that could impact the world in 2024 include the United States of America (US), European Union (EU), Russia, South Africa, Iran and Taiwan to name a few. Migration, nationalism, inequality, cost of living, poverty and climate change could be major issues driving the elections. There is an evolving shift in the balance of powers that will alter global relations. Indicators are that the world is shifting from a unipolar towards a multipolar world.

There is increasing importance of groupings such as the Group of Seven (G7), Group of 20 (G20) and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) to influence global decision making outside of the United Nations (UN). This strengthening of plurilateral organisations such as BRICS, G20 etc., may further weaken the role of the weakened UN architecture. South African companies will need to make the maximum use of opportunities offered by, among others, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), South Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, BRICS, G20 and promote fair global trading by strengthening the World Trade Organisation (WTO). BRICS is under the spotlight and has the influence to shift the balance of powers especially with the recent expansion to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE. South Africa's successful 2023 BRICS Presidency, the African Peace Initiative in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and South Africa's case of genocide against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have altered perceptions of its diplomatic influence.

There have been continuing rapid and widespread technological advances. The growth of advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) is in the process of transforming aspects of health, manufacturing, mining, agriculture, defence, arms industry and finance, to mention a few. This will create opportunities, challenges and threats presented by AI and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR)/Fifth IR. Scientific and technological research and development by countries individually and in cooperation presents advantages globally. There is, however, rising competition and rivalry, which are increasing sanctions, espionage and efforts to isolate access to information. This will have a negative effect on developing countries and could cause a technological differentiation globally.

AFRICA SOUTHERN AFRICA

South Africa's engagement with Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe are premised on the fraternal and historical relationship cemented during the fight against colonialism and apartheid, as well as the interwoven economic, social, cultural and geographic engagements. The southern African region is integral to South Africa's pursuit of repositioning South Africa as a respected global leader and is a key contributor to our domestic priorities. South Africa, in its foreign policy engagement with the world, will continue to advocate for the eradication of the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment, which affect southern Africa as a whole. The Chief Directorate will continue its engagement with relevant stakeholders in South Africa for economic diplomacy planning e.g., the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition

(the dtic); Industrial Development Corporation; Development Bank of Southern Africa; state-owned enterprises; and business through the Coordination Mechanism for Economic Diplomacy to encourage outward investments in the region.

The southern African region is unique and has a complex business environment. To gain access to the region successfully, a new or alternative business model should be adopted whereby companies under South Africa Inc. could infiltrate the market through consortiums as has been observed whereby some Western countries entering the region have made great progress using the consortium strategy.

The consortiums in various sectors will enable Government to pursue its economic diplomacy objectives through securing projects in different industries and countries across the region.

Through its missions, South Africa continues to explore trade and investment opportunities with countries in the region. Severe weather patterns related to climate change continue to be common factors in the region. In addition to the impacts of flooding, the region is also generally prone to severe droughts, which have an adverse impact on food security and agricultural value chains.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has aggravated the situation with grain and fertiliser shortages, accompanied by rising fuel and energy costs. Overall, the agriculture and mining sectors remain dominant in the region.

South Africa has strong ties with the countries of the southern African region (Angola, Botswana, DRC, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe). It is for this reason that South Africa undertook to consolidate structured bilateral mechanisms with countries in the region during the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) by, among others, implementing legal instruments such as Bi-National Commission (BNC) and Joint Bilateral Commission for Cooperation (JBCC) agreements.

These were held at appropriate levels with Tanzania, Namibia, Lesotho and the DRC in 2023; Zimbabwe in 2019, followed by a ministerial meeting in 2022; and mid-term reviews with Botswana and Mozambique in 2023. We also had an opportunity to elevate our structured bilateral relations with Lesotho through the signing of a BNC Agreement in October 2021, with South Africa hosting the inaugural session on 28 September 2023. In addition, South Africa held Ministerial Level Political Consultations with Zambia in October 2023; Angola in June 2023; and the DRC in April 2023. South Africa also participated in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Election Observer Missions (SEOMs) during the 2023 elections in Zimbabwe, the DRC and Eswatini.

Most countries in the region have made efforts to strengthen democracy and good governance. This year, four countries, including South Africa, will hold general elections: Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique.

The region also has peace and security challenges, in particular those being faced in the Cabo Delgado Province in northern Mozambique and the eastern part of the DRC. South Africa remains committed to contributing towards regional efforts aimed at the maintenance of peace and security in the region, as demonstrated by our troop contributions through the SADC missions in Mozambique and the DRC. In addition, President Cyril Ramaphosa recently appointed Mr Jeff Radebe as a Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region to advance South Africa's mediation and conflict-resolution efforts.

Given the shifting global economic dynamics, the market share with traditional economic partners such as the EU and the US has been receding. Therefore, the economic importance of the region remains central to South Africa's growth trajectory. Talks are ongoing on the establishment of the one-stop border post with Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique to ensure expedient and smooth facilitation of trade, goods, movement of people and services in the region. The southern African countries are among South Africa's top five trading partners on the continent, reaffirming the growing economic cooperation in the region.

The region remains a lucrative market for South African products as evidenced by the large presence of many South African companies in the region. Bilateral trade with southern African countries totalled R358,86 billion in 2019; R169,959 billion in 2020; R191 billion in 2021; and R370 billion in 2022 (Source: South African Revenue Service [SARS]). However, there is a growing trend of South African companies experiencing challenges with doing business in the region.

There are further trade opportunities in foodstuffs; construction, including consulting engineering; spare parts for the urban automotive sector and railways; and capital equipment. There are also investment opportunities in extractive industries; agriculture; the financial sector; independent power production; agro-processing; tourism, especially in hospitality service development (training); and public infrastructure projects such as ports and railway lines (North-South Corridor). With the coming into effect of the AfCFTA, the trade volume between South Africa and the southern African region is expected to further increase. Inbound tourism to South Africa is also expected to flourish following the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are several potential game changers in the region that will help boost economic activities. For example, the implementation of the Automated System for Customs Data will simplify and boost trade and investment. The one-stop border posts will ease congestion of people and trade. This concept is being implemented at the Beitbridge

between South Africa and Zimbabwe, Lebombo border post (Mozambique), Maseru Bridge and Ficksburg border posts (Lesotho), Kopfontein border post (Botswana), and Oshoek border post (Eswatini).

Phase II of the Lesotho High Water Project began in September 2015 and water delivery is projected to take place by the end of 2025. Similarly, resources have been discovered in countries in the region e.g., Mozambique (natural gas in Cabo Delgado), Namibia (oil in the Orange River Basin), Lesotho (potential in the energy sector) and Angola (economy currently doing well due to high prices of oil due to the Ukraine-Russia conflict).

Notwithstanding the potential for further growth in trade and investment relations, there are, however, some challenges that may impede companies from taking advantage of these opportunities. There is an energy crisis in the region, especially in South Africa and Zimbabwe, which causes long hours of loadshedding affecting economic activities in the region. However, several measures have been put in place to address the energy crisis. For example, 30 energy projects have been identified in terms of the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan of the Short-Term Action Plan but have not been implemented due to a lack of funding. Another challenge faced by South Africa is the ban imposed on the country's horticultural products by Botswana and Namibia. The matter is currently being addressed by DIRCO, the dtic, National Treasury and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development through the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU).

The region has a favourable youth demographic (young population), thus touted as a major advantage for economic growth prospects, albeit with a high unemployment rate, especially among women and youth. An increasing working-age population is a major opportunity for economic growth in the region. While the youth continue to present favourable advantages for the region, it continues to battle with underdevelopment, lack of jobs and poverty. These include civil unrest, unemployment, natural disasters and food insecurity.

The southern African region is characterised by high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality, and is deemed the most unequal region in Africa. More than 60% of the population in SADC lacks access to an adequate supply of safe water. A third of the SADC population lives in abject poverty. About 40% of the labour force is unemployed, mostly youth.

The region continues to face technological challenges; however, the region is in the process of developing the science and technology sector to sustain social and economic development, as well as to alleviate poverty and disease. It is worth noting that most of the challenges facing the region require technological solutions. The Chief Directorate will continue to actively support the African Union (AU) Strategy on Science, Technology

and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024), which is part of the long-term people-centred AU Agenda 2063. Technology in the region can be used to develop and strengthen national systems of innovation to drive sustained socio-economic development.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)

South Africa's foreign policy is underpinned by the vision of a region and an African continent that is peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, united and prosperous and which contributes to a world that is just and equitable. South Africa pursues this vision, informed by its National Interest and values enshrined in the Constitution. The strategic focus of the Chief Directorate is guided by the National Development Plan (NDP), State of the Nation Address, the MTSF, the departmental strategic priorities and the blueprints of SADC, namely SADC Vision 2050 and the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) (2020 – 2030), the Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap (2015 – 2063) and the Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan. Following the approval of the RISDP 2020 – 2030 by the SADC Summit in August 2021, the SADC Secretariat worked on the costing of the Implementation Plan, which was undertaken in phases. The SADC Council, held in March 2023, approved the list of prioritised RISDP 2020 – 2030 projects together with their cost estimates and directed the SADC Secretariat to, among others, continue working with member states to mobilise resources for the projects and conduct risk analyses on the implications of the disproportionate funding of the RISDP 2020 – 2030 between member states and international cooperating partners (ICPs).

The region is characterised by low levels of industrialisation; macro-economic instability, especially high inflation; poorly maintained infrastructure; the marginal role of the region's economy in the global economy; low levels of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita; food and nutritional insecurity; high infant mortality rates; and unfavourable business climates in some member states. Member states need to utilise their mineral reserves and demographic dividends (with the region's population estimated to reach 2.1 billion by 2050) to catapult their economies to achieve the highest level of industrialisation enough to alleviate poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment.

Despite slow progress in achieving visible and tangible results in industrialisation, member states continue to demonstrate political will, as exemplified by a decision taken by the SADC Summit that annual themes for SADC Chairpersonship should emphasise the element of industrialisation. Angola's theme for its Chairship (2023 to 2024) is *Human and Financial Capital: The Key Drivers for Sustainable Industrialisation in the SADC Region*. The industrialisation programme has also been bolstered by the development of value chains in mineral beneficiation, aquaculture value chains, agro-processing and the medical supply value chain.

South Africa creates value for its industries by participating in schemes that seek to enhance free trade in the region and the continent. Its industries/companies are benefitting from trade incentives offered by its membership of the SADC Free Trade Area. It continues to participate in negotiations to finalise the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)-East African Community (EAC)-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area. These are steppingstones to achieving the objectives of the AfCFTA. SACU too remains important to its member states, not only in terms of the revenue receipts from international trade, but also for other developmental benefits as it serves as a building block for regional integration. However, there are concerns about risks, mainly related to governance and the imposition of import restrictions on products of other member states that have the potential to threaten the achievement of the SACU 2002 Agreement and Strategic Plan 2022 – 2027. The SACU Ministerial Retreat, held in June 2023, considered five identified risks, which included the failure to leverage SACU's comparative advantage to harness AfCFTA opportunities towards industrialisation. In light of the above, the process of a re-imagined SACU was adopted by SACU heads of state and government to review issues related to the tariff setting and the common revenue pool, regional export strategy, opportunities arising from the AfCFTA, as well as refining the status quo of tariff setting to ensure deeper consultation by South Africa.

The SADC region is among the most vulnerable in the world due to the negative effects of climate change. Climate-induced disasters such as droughts, floods and tropical cyclones continue to undermine development; reduce the availability of natural resources; increase the risk of food insecurity; deepen the crisis of human displacements and irregular migration; and heighten competition over land and water resources. These impacts informed SADC's decision to establish and operationalise the SADC Humanitarian and Emergency Operations Centre (SHOC). South Africa is finalising the national consultative processes to sign the Memorandum of Agreement for the establishment of SHOC to partner with other member states to respond to these disasters.

The SADC region is renowned for its political cohesion due to shared anti-colonial/apartheid struggles and the existence of a pool of former heads of state/government who can be utilised in conflict-preventive diplomacy. Supposedly, due to its continued espousal of democratic ideals and good governance, the SADC region remains stable with pockets of political and security challenges in Lesotho, the DRC and Mozambique.

South Africa attaches great importance to and supports the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security as the premier tool for maintaining peace, security and political stability within the region. South Africa will continue to support stabilisation processes in the DRC and Mozambique, mediation efforts in Eswatini and Lesotho, and the

consolidation of democracy in the region through participation in SADC Electoral Observer Missions (SEOMs). South Africa will endeavour to support the region's interventions in managing cross-regional economic communities (RECs) affiliation by member states, which has an enormous impact on the seamless regional coordination of peace efforts and socio-economic development interventions.

SADC has adopted around 75 legal instruments, although only 55 have entered into force. Except for the SADC Treaty, which regulates the functioning and institutions of SADC, the rest of the instruments relate to sectoral issues such as education and training; finance and investment; energy; health; mining; gender and development; defence; transport; communications; and meteorology. It is worrying that there are still several legal instruments that have been developed but never signed nor ratified by member states. At every available opportunity, the SADC Secretariat continues to nudge member states to ratify these instruments. South Africa contributes the largest amount to the SADC budget with a ceiling of 20%. The membership fee payment is the shared responsibility of DIRCO and the departments of health, and defence and military veterans. Recently, most member states have shown their inability to honour their financial obligations towards SADC. If financial demands on them keep on increasing, the defaults in payments will impact negatively on SADC's plans and its operations.

South Africa's continued active participation in statutory SADC and SACU meetings (summits, organ troika summits, Council of Ministers, Ministerial Committee of the Organ Troika, SACU summits and its Council of Ministers as well as meetings of senior officials) is meant to influence the policy direction of these regional bodies to the benefit of its national interests while ensuring the political cohesion of the region.

In support of the regional integration agenda in the 2024/25 reporting year, the department will be involved in the following activities:

- Extraordinary Summit of the SADC Organ on the SADC Mission to the DRC in Zambia
- Ministerial Council of the SADC Organ in Zambia
- Ministerial Council of the SACU in Lesotho
- Ninth Summit of the SACU in Lesotho
- Meeting of SADC Ministers of Justice and Chief Justices in Angola
- 44th Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government in Zimbabwe
- Extraordinary Summit of the SADC Organ to review the security situation in the region, in Tanzania
- SADC Council of Ministers in Zimbabwe.

EAST AFRICA

East Africa, the Indian Ocean Islands and the Horn of Africa region comprise 14 states, namely: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda. The current population of East Africa is 491,5 million based on UN estimates (approximately 6.1% of the total world population). The region ranks number one in Africa among subregions ranked by population. Of the total population, 29.8% is urban (132,520,364 people in 2019) and the median age in East Africa is 18.7 years.

The region is of strategic importance to South Africa due to its geopolitical location. It includes the Great Lakes of Africa Region, south-west of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. East Africa, in particular the Horn, is an important and expeditious route of international trade and communication between Europe, the Middle East and the Far East, including being a route for oil from the Gulf to customers in North America, Europe and Asia. Djibouti lies on the strategically vital Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a mandatory passage for the Suez Canal (30% of all shipping in the world passes through this point).

Given its strategic location, the region has attracted international powers because of sea traffic going by, major ports in the area, weapons trading, crossing points for people and merchandise, piracy and military posts. This strategic importance has grown even more pronounced in view of the threats to navigation and international trade experienced since early January 2024 for maritime traffic passing through the Red Sea.

A characteristic of the region is that it vacillates between stability and instability. In the past year, some countries held successful elections while, at the same time, tension and conflicts have resulted within countries and between neighbours. Instability and conflict have adversely affected the socio-economic progress of some of the countries in the region. In 2024, Comoros, Mauritius, Rwanda and South Sudan are scheduled to hold national elections. Most other states held elections within the past three years.

Key regional and political dynamics include:

- The growing footprint of Rwanda within the region and beyond, including SADC.
- The region is characterised by relative peace and political stability, with the exception of Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia.
- The instability in the Eastern DRC has a spillover effect in the region and some of the states also contribute to the instability in the Eastern DRC.
- The Indian Ocean Islands region remains more French-influenced than SADC-orientated.

- The Horn of Africa region is more aligned with the East African Community (EAC) in terms of economic and regional political issues. Most Horn countries are Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) members (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya).

Until recently, East Africa was considered the fastest-growing region on the continent, which in turn provides opportunities for South Africa to increase its footprint in the traditional markets, e.g., Kenya, Uganda, Mauritius and Rwanda. South Africa is a leading provider of foreign investments in these markets and a major trading partner. However, in recent years, South African companies have been divesting in countries such as Kenya and Uganda due to several factors, such as unfavourable economic conditions and the impact of EAC tariff structures. The operationalisation of both the AfCFTA and the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) will ease some of the tax burden for these companies. In this regard, South Africa and Kenya have agreed to lobby countries in their respective regions that have not ratified the TFTA to do so.

Growth in East Africa is estimated to rise to 5.4% in 2024. While the economic production structure is relatively diversified, countries in the region are largely net importers of commodities and bear the brunt of high international prices in addition to recurrent climate shocks such as drought, particularly in the Horn of Africa. The top growth performers in 2022 were Seychelles (8.3%), Rwanda (6.9%) and Kenya (5.5%). South Sudan's economy, which can be characterised as structurally weak, is expected to grow by 4.6% in 2024. Rwanda is projected to lead growth in this region in 2023 and 2024 at rates above 7%, benefitting from raising infrastructure spending. Uganda and Ethiopia are also projected to grow strongly in 2024, exceeding 5%, due to developments in the oil sector for Uganda and continued infrastructure spending for Ethiopia.

South Africa is likely to continue to see a positive trade balance with the region. According to data from the dtic, in 2022, South Africa's exports to the East Africa region amounted to R29.2 billion and imports amounted to R8.5 billion, giving South Africa an overall trade surplus of R20.7 billion.

Security remains a challenge in the region. Persistent terrorism threats (al-Shabaab, Allied Democratic Forces and al-Qai'da East Africa) in the region have attracted key foreign states and global powers to get involved in the global anti-terrorism campaign, including the US, France and China. Sudan experienced a serious outbreak of violence between the Sudanese Armed Forces and Rapid Support Forces in April 2023, resulting in the evacuation of South African Embassy personnel and South African citizens from the country. Ethiopia's quest for access to the Red Sea by leasing land in breakaway Somaliland threatens to destabilise relations in the region and at a time when there are intense global tensions in the Red Sea. Most of the countries in the region have limited

capacity to effect accountable and good governance. Furthermore, relations between Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, which have historically been fraught, have held up well despite the pressures this situation could engender but it cannot be excluded; they have the potential to suffer another breakdown. During 2021 and 2022, Rwanda started to mend relations with the aforementioned countries.

The Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan) remains politically unstable. The political insecurity landscape is mainly fuelled by ethnic rivalries (e.g., Oromo versus Somali in Ethiopia); regionalised politics; water conflict: (Nile River emanating from the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam); religious conflicts (Islam versus Christianity); and Ethiopia's growing quest for access to the Red Sea. The region still experiences widespread contestations on democracy and its practical application, as witnessed by the continued repression of political opposition (e.g., Rwanda, Uganda, Madagascar and Comoros). The military still plays a central role in political power dynamics as experienced in Sudan in April 2023.

South Africa's strategic objectives in the region include the strengthening of bilateral relations, as well as elevating them with selected strategic countries and to support regional efforts to resolve existing conflicts, providing post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) in areas where conflict has been resolved and providing humanitarian assistance and supporting democratic initiatives in Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan, based on the availability of funding.

As part of South Africa's support to PCRD in the region, following a Working Visit by Deputy President Paul Mashatile to South Sudan in August 2023 in his capacity as the Presidential Special Envoy to South Sudan, DIRCO appointed a two-member dedicated facilitation support team for the Deputy President to help facilitate South Africa's support to South Sudan to implement the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the holding of credible national elections in December 2024. Following the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front in Pretoria on 2 November 2022, South Africa also continues to actively support the process through direct bilateral engagements with Ethiopia and also provides personnel for the AU Monitoring, Verification and Compliance Mission deployed in Tigray.

South Africa has diplomatic presence in 11 countries. Agreements and memoranda of understanding with countries of the region include general cooperation, political, economic, social, defence, etc. The geostrategic location of the region presents South Africa with both opportunities and challenges. South Africa is a major source of investments and remittances to the region. Thus, illegal migration, human trafficking and smuggling will continue to present challenges to the relations with the region.

South Africa also seeks to promote and increase trade and investment cooperation and mitigate against the following challenges:

- South African businesses face challenges in the region due to the lack of investment protection
- growing anti-South African sentiment and undermining of contracts and agreements
- competition from other players, particularly China, Turkey and the Gulf States for infrastructure projects
- lack of coordination by Team South Africa.

WEST AFRICA

Since January 2020, at least six successful coups and at least five attempted coups have taken place, with the majority happening in the West African region. The successful coups took place as follow:

- coup d'état in Mali on 19 August 2020
- coup d'état in Chad on 20 April 2021
- coup d'état in Guinea on 5 September 2021
- coup d'état in Sudan on 25 October 2021
- coup d'état in Burkina Faso on 23 January 2022 and 22 September 2022
- coup d'état in Niger on 26 July 2023.

The republics of Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Niger are under AU suspension and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sanctions following the unconstitutional changes of government in those countries.

These developments represent a reversal of the Agenda 2063 flagship initiative of "Silencing the Guns" as a core indicator of ensuring Africa is peaceful and stable and stood against everything the Lomé Declaration of July 2000 on unconstitutional changes of government sought to address. This trend in the region is against AU shared values, normative instruments and legal instruments, particularly the AU Constitutive Act and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

Although these conflicts start at a domestic level, the nature of insecurity in one country or region has the potential to spread and impact the peace and security of neighbouring countries and regions. For example, instability in Mali has an impact on the stability of its neighbours, such as Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger. It is a fact that conflicts do have spillover effects, thus the instability in the West Africa region has an impact on the stability of the Central Africa region.

In general, the resurgence of military coups threatens the realisation of all seven aspirations of Agenda 2063, including the aspiration of “A peaceful and secure Africa”. As pronounced by the African leadership in the Constitutive Act of the AU and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the AU (PSC Protocol), there can be no sustainable development and a prosperous Africa without peace and stability.

In West Africa, four countries of strategic importance to South Africa have been identified: Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal. Nigeria remains the most influential country in the region followed by Ghana. Within the Francophone countries, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire are the two most influential countries in the region.

In line with Aspiration 1 of Agenda 2063: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development, countries in the region have developed national development plans (NDPs), accompanied by public-private partnership projects, driving unprecedented rapid development in the region, and offering massive opportunities for South African banks, finance development institutions and public and private enterprises. The investment attractiveness of the region in terms of foreign direct investment (FDI) flows is positive. On the other hand, South African enterprises have faced challenges in the region such as, changing regulatory frameworks, an unfavourable tax regime, repatriation of funds and arbitrary fines that have led to massive disinvestment by South African enterprises.

Furthermore, more West African countries have announced oil and gas discoveries, mostly still to be explored and at various phases of exploration, mining formalisation with the establishment of legal frameworks and efforts to develop mining. The NDPs of most West African countries are identifying agriculture and agri-processing as key focus areas. All these areas present huge opportunities for South African companies and entities.

Arts and culture, like film, fashion and the music industry are areas that present further opportunities for collaborations between South Africa and the West African countries.

NORTH AND CENTRAL AFRICA

South Africa's priorities in this region of the continent remain to strengthen political and economic relations with all 14 countries in North and Central Africa, which include Algeria, Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tunisia.

Diplomatic relations between South Africa and the countries of the region are conducted through established structured bilateral mechanisms, namely: the BNC with Algeria; Joint Bilateral Commission (JBC) with Egypt; Joint Commission for Cooperation (JCC) with Chad; and JBCs with Tunisia, Morocco and Congo-Brazzaville.

South Africa also continues to deepen and strengthen bilateral relations and cooperation with the countries of the region through exchanges of high-level visits and engagements. Through these mechanisms and engagements, South African missions abroad are both able to source information from their counterparts on how to obtain a list of trade and investment opportunities to convey to South African companies. The meetings are also used as platforms to project the capabilities of South African companies and allow the sharing of experiences on various platforms, including women and youth development strategies.

Public diplomacy activities in the region by South African missions abroad include participation in international charity bazaars to showcase and promote South African products. Tourism agencies were also engaged in promoting South Africa as a tourist destination.

Countries in the Central African region have a high concentration of power in the governing parties with very weak opposition parties, poor human rights records, unreliability of institutions, weak rule of law and widespread corruption. The countries are members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The level of influence of wealthy citizens in the region, especially in cases such as Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, are examples of this. The activities of Boko Haram and instability in the CAR are causes of volatility throughout the region.

A potential source of instability in some countries of the region is the advanced age of the leaders with no clear succession plan. Most of the countries are former French colonies, except for Equatorial Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe, which are former Spanish and Portuguese colonies, respectively.

The political instability in the North African region puts a strain on our structured engagements with the countries in this region. The region still presents significant risks of instability with regard to Libya, the Morocco/Algeria diplomatic spat and the Tunisian domestic political turmoil.

The majority of agreements and memoranda of understanding with the countries of the North African region have lapsed and so the priority for South Africa is to resuscitate political relations to contribute to its domestic economic needs.

Diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Morocco remain unchanged, mainly due to South Africa's position on the issue of Western Sahara. The situation facing Western Sahara is complex, given Moroccan diplomatic initiatives and increasing support from AU member states opting to de-recognise the SADR.

Muslim Brotherhood (MB)-affiliated and Islamist-leaning parties have suffered major electoral and political setbacks across North Africa. State governments also increasingly dominate the welfare sector and authorities have cracked down on Islamist-leaning non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in recent years. Islamist-inspired violence over the past three decades, especially after the rise of the Islamic State, has eroded the attractiveness of Islamist factions. Moreover, North Africa, much like other parts of the world, is witnessing a resurgence of nationalism. This manifests as conservatism, in which Islam plays a role within a broader national identity, though not necessarily at its core.

The short-term outlook for MB parties is of continuing decline, with little likelihood of these players regaining relevance across North Africa. The attacks launched by Hamas against Israel on 7 October 2023 hold the potential to be a game-changer in the broader Middle East and North African region. The war has put the Palestinian issue back on the global agenda, disrupting Arab-Israeli normalisation, which excluded the Palestinians.

Consequently, this development could lead to a shift away from nationalism towards a resurgence of identity politics centred around religion and the framing of the Arab-Israeli conflict as more than a national struggle but as a broader one between religions.

Even without a more capable and unified leadership, Islamist and MB-affiliated political parties may benefit from a global environment where the struggle against the West is portrayed in religious terms, albeit to a lesser extent.

The economy of the region is underdeveloped, with a low industrial and manufacturing base capacity and is largely dependent on the importing of goods from Europe, Asia and the Americas. There are economic challenges, as well as a need to stimulate economic growth by attracting FDI, infrastructure development, skills development, education and innovation.

Even though the region is endowed with oil and gas, growth is currently being driven by four sectors, notably construction, mining, ICT and retail. The challenge of diversifying the economies of the region is due to the inadequate skills and capacity to drive the process. Agriculture has, therefore, emerged as a viable option for economic growth in the region.

Barriers to trade and investment between South Africa and the countries of North and Central Africa include the region's geographical proximity to Europe; and historical ties to both Europe and the US. There is also an indication that the US uses its aid programmes in the region to secure market access through the use of soft power.

Low-cost producers, in particular sectors from South America, China and occasionally India, also impose difficulties on South Africa entering the regional market. The region imports wheat from the EU, US and Russia. Dairy products are mainly supplied to the region by the EU, reflecting the impact of preferential trading agreements.

Therefore, South African companies mainly pursue the supply of manufactured goods, infrastructure projects, agro-processing, mining and the services sector (incoming medical tourism) as viable means of trade.

South Africa's political stances on some issues, such as the independence of Western Sahara, which Morocco views as an attack on its sovereignty, further impacts on South African companies' ability to venture into the regional market.

Investment from countries in North and Central Africa into South Africa is hampered by a lack of investors and the competing attractiveness of options for them to invest their money in a country that is not within the region.

While there are potential opportunities in the region for South African investment across most sectors, identifying these opportunities while performing due diligence on the Return on Investment (ROI) is not always possible. Missions are, therefore, focussing on specific sectors instead of canvassing across all sectors.

Chad is of interest following a military government takeover after the death of President Idriss Déby in April 2021, followed by a coup in Gabon in August 2023. These events show continued political instability in the region, with Gabon potentially being a precursor for further unconstitutional changes of government in areas with upcoming leadership contestations such as, in Cameroon and the Republic of Congo.

Border porosity, limited territorial control and weak state authority in remote zones beyond the capital have especially threatened border provinces as fragile and vulnerable areas in almost all Central African states. South Africa's disagreement with Morocco on the Western Sahara issue will continue.

Many AU member countries are increasingly vocal in their support for Morocco's position and countries opt to de-recognise the SADR.

The region is not homogenous and therefore has its own dynamics and nuances that play a significant role in the social, political and economic spheres. The following factors pose a challenge to South Africa's ability to operate optimally in the North and Central African regions:

- lack of understanding of regional dynamics and nuances
- language challenges
- distance and lack of connectivity
- business culture
- poor infrastructure.

In the North African region, the proximity of these countries to Europe and their close links with the Gulf region see them cooperating more closely with Europe and the Gulf States and less with Africa.

Although the region has tremendous potential for development, it is relatively underdeveloped in terms of technology compared to other regions in Africa, possibly with the exception of Morocco in certain areas. South African companies are yet to explore the region, given the country's expertise. The digital transformation of African goods, services, markets and supply chains will continue to accelerate in 2024. However, infrastructure investment, education and training will be crucial to fully leverage the 4IR.

France traditionally commands a significant influence in the policy directions and day-to-day activities of the countries in the region. Other players in the two regions are Turkey, Morocco, Israel, India, Nigeria, Italy, Saudi Arabia and Qatar. These influences pose a challenge to South Africa's engagement with the region.

Trade between countries in North and Central Africa and South Africa is problematic due to the lack of infrastructure. The security issues in the region further limit the quantity and value of the goods that are considered exportable. Innovative ways of boosting trade are being explored with the relevant stakeholders, including the missions and the dtic.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (US)

The US is the world's most influential economic and military power with a highly developed and technologically advanced services sector. The enormity of the US

economy means it dominates global trade, finance and international business. The GDP per capita in 2023 was US\$269 billion (Q2). The status of the US as the world's sole superpower is increasingly being challenged by China and Russia. The superpower contestation for political and economic influence, including in Africa, has been amplified by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. Despite this challenge, the US continues to maintain a strong and pervasive influence in multilateral political and economic fora: UN, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), G20, WTO, etc. It is also one of the leading sources of FDI, market for value-added exports and agri-products, technology transfer, development assistance, investment finance, skills development and tourism to South Africa. As such, the US is a key partner for South Africa in pursuing domestic priorities, including in the context of the NDP and in promoting the African Agenda (regional integration, AfCFTA, peace, security and development agenda).

South Africa and the US manage the bilateral relationship through three structured engagements. These are:

- the Strategic Dialogue (Ministerial level)
- Working Group on African and Global Issues (WGAGI) at Director-General level
- the Annual Bilateral Forum (ABF) at senior officials' level.

South Africa hosted a successful meeting of the Strategic Dialogue in August 2022, in Pretoria, during the visit by Secretary of State Antony Blinken. The WGAGI took place in Pretoria on 31 July 2023 and DIRCO also hosted the 13th ABF on 15 September 2023. The ABF reviewed sectoral cooperation across eight working groups and 16 departments covering areas such as health, education, science, technology and innovation, environment, youth, environment, safety and security, gender empowerment, including support for the fight against gender-based violence.

The US is currently South Africa's third largest trading partner (after the EU and China), absorbing a substantial amount of manufactured exports from South Africa. The US remains the largest single source of FDI in South Africa. In 2022, bilateral trade between the two countries increased to R178 billion (exports) and R134 billion (imports), with a trade balance of R44.1 billion in favour of South Africa (Source: SARS). Bilateral FDI between South Africa and the US stood at US\$11.2 billion in 2017, peaked at US\$12.2 billion in 2018 and slightly declined to US\$11.7 billion in 2021. For 2023, bilateral trade between the two countries has decreased for exports to R127 billion and increased for imports to R150 billion, with a trade balance of R23 billion in favour of the US. South Africa is the top supplier of goods from sub-Saharan Africa to the US (even including the oil exporting AGOA countries). At the fifth South Africa Investment Conference which took place in April 2023, the US-based company, Moove, pledged R284 million in e-logistics.

Both sides have long-standing market access challenges for plant and animal products that remain unresolved, although there is a commitment to continue discussions, at various levels, to resolve these. South Africa continues to be concerned by Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminium exports to the US and is advocating for a country exemption.

South Africa hosted a successful meeting of the 20th AGOA Forum in November 2023 under the theme: *Partnering to Build a Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive AGOA to Support Economic Development, Industrialisation and Quality Job Creation*. The forum discussed expanding trade and investment relations between the US and sub-Saharan Africa, including the need for the timely renewal of AGOA before it expires in 2025. South Africa has fully aligned itself with the African Common Position which calls for the renewal of AGOA for a 10-year period, from 2025 to 2035, with existing beneficiaries retained. There was broad consensus among US and African governments, private sector, civil society and labour, that AGOA has been successful and needs to be extended for at least another 10 years, with all existing countries retained in the programme. There was also agreement that AGOA should be more inclusive by including micro, small and medium Enterprises (MSMEs), women and youth. AGOA complements the implementation of AfCFTA, creating the largest single free trade area with 1.3 billion people and a GDP of US\$3.4 trillion.

The Biden Administration continues to emphasise the global leadership role of the US by embracing multilateralism and by playing a prominent role in key global institutions such as the UN, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Paris Climate Agreement and the Human Rights Council (UNHRC). The Biden Administration is placing great importance on the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, both in the US and internationally. Since assuming office, President Joe Biden has rejoined treaties and strengthened the alliance between the US and Europe after erratic policy decisions under former President Trump's America First foreign policy. Consequently, the US Government was re-elected to the UNHRC for the period 2022 to 2024 as part of the US commitment to a foreign policy centred on democracy, human rights and equality. US national security policy continues to be driven by geostrategic interests and the focus on containing China and Russia. Where China is concerned, emphasis is placed on competition and cooperation, and avoiding conflict, especially with regard to Taiwan. The competition with China in the technological domain is ramping up with increased funding towards boosting US production of microprocessors that are needed for the automotive industry and the green transition, while reducing reliance on China for critical minerals.

The progressive approach by the US to global challenges is, however, tempered by domestic constraints. This has resulted in a more pragmatic Biden foreign policy, which has seen the Biden administration champion global challenges such as climate action,

cybersecurity and anti-terrorism, as well as softening sanctions and restrictions on Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to help increase the flow of oil into the global crude market and ease high oil prices. Significant diplomatic efforts were also made to reset relations with Africa. In August 2022, Secretary of State Blinken announced the Biden Administration's new Africa Strategy at the University of Pretoria. The strategy outlined four strategic objectives, including climate adaptation and post-pandemic economic recovery efforts, transparent governance, democracy and security priorities. President Biden hosted the second US-Africa Leaders' Summit in Washington DC, in December 2023, during which the US Government renewed its commitment to expand partnerships with African countries, institutions and people. President Biden expressed support for the AU to become a member of the G20 and reiterated US support for UNSC reform to add a permanent member from the African continent.

Divergences in the US and South Africa's positions in relation to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and South Africa's proximity to China and Russia have strained bilateral relations. The tensions were compounded by the arrival of the US-sanctioned Russian cargo vessel, the *Lady R*, in Simonstown in December 2022 and the timing of the joint military exercises between South Africa, China and Russia which, coincided with the one-year anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. These developments created a ripple effect in Congress, which led to the introduction of House Resolution 145, which among others, called on the Biden Administration to conduct a thorough review of the US-South Africa relationship. In addition, a bipartisan group of senators wrote letters to President Biden and Secretary of State Blinken requesting that relations with South Africa be reviewed as they considered the country's non-aligned stance regarding the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as well as South Africa's voting patterns at the UN to be in conflict with US interests. They also denounced South Africa's case against Israel at the ICJ and called on President Biden to reconsider South Africa's continued inclusion as a beneficiary of AGOA.

President Ramaphosa subsequently appointed special envoys in an attempt to allay the fears and concerns of the US Government and Congress regarding South Africa's non-aligned stance. The outcomes of the Panel of Inquiry, which was tasked with investigating the circumstances surrounding the docking of the *Lady R* concluded that there was no evidence to substantiate the allegations made by the US that armaments were being supplied to Russia, leading to a warming of relations and re-commitment by both sides to continue work on strengthening the bilateral relationship. However, the eruption of the conflict between Hamas and Israel in October 2023 has accentuated another area of divergence between South Africa as it relates to the question of Palestine. South Africa has called for the immediate cessation of violence, restraint, the opening of a humanitarian corridor and peace between Israel and Palestine. Despite the divergences on geopolitical matters, South Africa and the US are committed to working jointly to strengthen the bilateral strategic partnership based on respect and mutual benefit.

The US is firm in its resolve that it will not push Ukraine to stop the war and if Russia were to agree on starting real negotiations, the US will support it, provided that the conditions are that Russia leaves Ukraine immediately as a sovereign country, return the invaded areas and guarantee future security for Ukraine. Only then would the US agree to end the sanctions against Russia.

South Africa came under enormous domestic and international pressure, especially from the US, to arrest President Vladimir Putin should he attend the BRICS Summit which was hosted by South Africa in August 2023. President Putin's attendance of the BRICS Summit was seen as a red line by certain members of the US Congress, who indicated that South Africa's actions and perceived closeness to Russia was a threat to US foreign policy and security interests.

Several countries, including the US, supported the AU's request to be admitted as a member of the G20. The support by the US is seen as an attempt to reinvigorate ties with the continent that has been neglected under the Trump Administration.

The US hosted the second US-Africa Leaders' Summit (USALS) from 13 to 15 December 2022 in Washington DC, where President Biden reaffirmed the US' commitment to deepen and expand US partnership with African countries. The first summit was hosted by former President Barack Obama in September 2014. The Biden Administration announced a US\$55 billion commitment to Africa over the next three years as part of the summit outcomes. Subsequently, President Biden appointed Ambassador Jonnie Carson as the new Special Presidential Representative for USALS Implementation. On the margins of the USALS, the US and the AU established a Joint Strategic Partnership on Food Security. The two sides agreed to create joint task forces to deliver on the commitments. In addition, a MoU was signed on Cooperation for Trade and Investment between the AfCFTA Secretariat and the US and President Biden announced the launch of a new Digital Transformation with Africa initiative to make sure that people across Africa can participate in the digital and global economy. On 13 December 2022, President Biden signed an Executive Order to establish the President's Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement in the US. The Advisory Council will advise the President, through the Secretary of State, on strategies to, among others, strengthen cultural, social, political and economic ties between African communities; the global African Diaspora and the US; and to address challenges and opportunities to advance inclusion, belonging and public awareness of the diversity, accomplishments, culture and history of the African Diaspora. In September 2023, President Biden announced the inaugural members of the President's Advisory Council.

The US indicated that it would continue to advocate for the inclusion of Africa's seat in the UNSC as well as a stronger African voice globally and better African representation in major multilateral institutions. The US undertook to continue with this advocacy through the state department and within the UN fora.

The 2024 US Presidential election is scheduled for 5 November 2024. President Biden is running for re-election, while his predecessor, former President Donald Trump, is running for re-election to a second non-consecutive term. Following convincing victories in the Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, US Virgin Islands and South Carolina primaries, Mr Trump is the presumptive Republican candidate to challenge President Biden in November's election. Former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, who is the only remaining Republican challenger, has vowed to stay in the race through the batch of primaries on 5 March 2024, known as Super Tuesday. The key domestic election issues centre on the economy, abortion rights, immigration, violent crime and issues of racial justice. On foreign policy, both parties view China as a growing threat to national security, while the Biden Administration seeks to keep the competition with China from escalating into conflict. There is strong support by both parties for Israel, while divisions in Congress over support to Ukraine are growing. The possible return of President Trump to the White House portends a new disruption of US foreign policy, with consequences for Africa, the world, multilateralism and the global economy.

CANADA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party's approval ratings continue to decline. As a result, a Conservative Party victory at the next election on a scale capable of producing a majority government looks increasingly possible. If successful at the next election in October 2025, the Conservatives could pursue major policy changes, including a repeal of carbon tax, restrictive gun laws and responding to concerns about "federal over-reach". Opinion surveys suggest that the Liberal Government is perceived as having done little to reduce the impact of inflation or tackle the ongoing housing affordability crisis, while concern about crime remains high. However, a Conservative Government would be unlikely to roll back progressive social achievements such as gay marriage, cannabis legalisation, etc. Foreign policy would be unlikely to change significantly, with Canada's support for Ukraine, Israel and other allies remaining constant. Relations with China would potentially become slightly colder, while improvements in relations with India may be pursued.

Gender equality and women empowerment based on Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) introduced in 2017 is an important domestic priority for Canada, and it is also an important part of its foreign policy. Canada has experienced significant

challenges in relations with indigenous people and fostering social cohesion of its diverse population. In 2015, Prime Minister Trudeau suggested a renewed direction in Canadian-indigenous relations and in January 2022, Canada announced that it had reached an agreement-in-principle to compensate indigenous children who were discriminated against and placed in the welfare system. The discovery of mass graves in 2022 of indigenous children who were forced into residential Catholic boarding schools under Canada's assimilation policy has tarnished the image of the country. There is also a growing trend towards right-wing extremism in Canada, with a strong focus on anti-immigration, populism, anti-environmentalism, etc.

Canada, in the main, aligns its foreign policy positions to the US and its NATO allies. Canada and the US are historical allies and share a deep economic partnership. NATO continues to be at the centre of Canada's foreign policy, even though Canada's defence budget falls below NATO's expectation of 2% of GDP. For Canada to meet the NATO target, it would need to spend an additional US\$14.5 billion on annual defence spending in 2024/25, which would drive up its budget deficit and increase debt interest costs.

Canada has been a prominent voice of support for Ukraine in the face of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis. The Canada-Ukraine bilateral relationship is reinforced by strong people-to-people, including family ties between the two countries, with almost 1.3 million Canadians of Ukrainian heritage. Since February 2022, Canada has committed over US\$1 billion in military assistance to Ukraine and imposed diplomatic and economic sanctions on Russia. Canada is a strong supporter of the Ukrainian Peace Formula and continues to hold the view that Russia will have to pay a heavy price for its transgressions and advocates for the continued arming of Ukraine and escalation in the form of the counter-offensive.

Canada has experienced increased tensions with China, which were initially centred on the arrest of the Huawei CFO in 2019 under the Canada-US extradition treaty and the subsequent arrest by China of two Canadian citizens, on charges of espionage. Relations between the two countries have become further strained despite resolving the matter with the release of the three detainees, owing to Canada's decision to ban Huawei's 5G network, the banning of Chinese investments in the critical minerals sector, and allegations of Chinese interference in Canadian elections, which was followed by the expulsion of Chinese and Canadian diplomats from Toronto and Shanghai, respectively.

Canada's relations with India also came under strain in September 2023 when Prime Minister Trudeau announced that there are credible reasons to believe that Indian government agents may have been behind the murder (in Canada) of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a naturalised Canadian and prominent advocate for an independent Sikh homeland. India has rejected these claims and accused Canadian leaders of being

sympathetic toward anti-India causes. Canada has appointed a judicial inquiry into foreign interference by China, Russia and other foreign states or non-state actors, including any potential effects on the 2019 and 2021 federal elections.

Canada is one of the wealthiest countries globally and is also ranked among the top ten trading nations in the world. Canada is a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the G7. The service sector dominates the Canadian economy, which employs about 75% of the nation's population. Canada is unique among developed nations due to the importance of its primary sector, with logging and oil being two of the country's most important industries. Canada also has a sizable manufacturing sector, which largely focusses on the automobile and aircraft industries. Canada has the eighth-largest commercial fishing and seafood industry in the world and a well-developed technology sector that includes a world-leading entertainment software industry. Canada was a world leader in e-Government service in the early 2000s, which the Government is now trying to regain by launching various strategies to accelerate digital government transformation.

Most of Canada's trading is conducted with the US through the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (formerly NAFTA). Canada has, however, begun to slowly expand outwards after realising that relying heavily on one country is not necessarily stable for their economy. Canada's new/developing Pacific strategy sees relations with Indo-Pacific countries as vital to national security as well as its economic and environmental goals. The new policy is widely seen as reducing Canada's economic and trade dependence on China.

Canada's development cooperation with South Africa continues to be strategically anchored in South Africa's national objectives, including building a capable and developmental state, as well as Canada's FIAP and is mainly being conducted through UN agencies and NGOs.

Key current and impactful bilateral cooperation programmes include:

- In 2023, bilateral trade between South Africa and Canada totalled R14.14 billion, consisting of R7.95 billion in exports to Canada and R6.19 billion in imports from Canada with a trade balance of R1.76 billion in favour of South Africa. (Source: SARS).
- There are 63 Canadian companies invested in South Africa and Canadian investments in South Africa with 50% of total investments in the mining sector and other investments are in diverse sectors, including transportation, food processing, ICT and instrumentation sectors. There are 22 South African companies investing in Canada in mining, engineering, telecommunications,

computer software, food chain, metal, and travel and recreation services. Canadian mining company, Ivanhoe Mines, made significant pledges at South African Investment Conferences (R4.5 billion in 2018 and R6 billion in 2023).

- A modernised Audio-Visual Co-production Agreement encompassing a broader range of audio-visual content in line with technological advancements in this area and allowing for the provision of financial support for co-productions has been finalised. The agreement has great potential to contribute to job creation and growth in the audio-visual sector.
- Canada has provided support to South Africa in the decommissioning of the Komati Power Station. Canada and the World Bank plan to provide funding of US\$4.5 million for energy transition projects as well as a US\$10 million research grant for research in this field. Canada committed to assist with South Africa's energy challenges.
- Within the framework of the MoU on Wildland Fire Management, Working on Fire (WoF) deployed more than 600 firefighters in June and July 2023 (the fifth deployment by South Africa in recent years) to assist in extinguishing wildfires in Western Canada. The deployments provided valuable experience and exposure to young South African firefighters.
- The Joint Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Exchange meets annually to share information on science based policy making as well as monitoring and expanding cooperation in building and strengthening bio-manufacturing capacities, research exchange (in April 2023, the SA-Canada Universities Network (SACUN) was established), science journalism, astronomy and space sciences (Canada is part of the Square Kilometre Array Observatory and Canadian technology are key components of the MeerKAT). New areas of cooperation include the ethical use of AI and collaboration in the hydrogen economy.
- In 2023, an MoU was finalised for cooperation on genomics surveillance; strengthening health systems; mental health; infectious diseases; and research. The MoU will also formalise regular bilateral Health Policy Dialogue to discuss bilateral, multilateral issues and to encourage private sector exchange (research and investment). Canada is the second biggest donor to the mRNA Vaccine Technology Hub in Cape Town, having contributed an initial US\$15 million and announcing an additional contribution of US\$4.5 million during the official launch of the mRNA Hub on 20 April 2023.

Canada is seeking to improve its relations with the African continent and is developing a new Africa engagement strategy. Trade with Africa is less than 2.0% of Canada's total trade. In 2022, Canada's top export destinations in Africa were Algeria, Morocco and Nigeria, with goods exported valued at approximately CA\$2.5 billion. On the import side, the main African countries importing to Canada in 2022 were South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt, totalling a combined import value of CA\$5.3 billion.

The new Engagement Strategy for Africa, which is still being developed, will focus on economic cooperation across Africa, including support for the AfCFTA, facilitation of increased infrastructure investment and expanding partnerships in research and innovation. Canada has undertaken extensive consultations with various African countries, including South Africa, in finalising its new Africa Strategy.

Canada and South Africa have worked well together on issues related to climate change, gender equality and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), as well as within the Commonwealth context. South Africa joined Canada's Elsie Initiative on Women in Peace Operations, which is designed to use collective resources to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations, with a focus on police and military roles.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Latin America is generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean. The region faces a triple social, fiscal and economic growth challenge that is limiting the development of the region and its population.

Latin America is going through a period of political change from having left-leaning governments (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru) in the recent past to right leaning governments taking office (Argentina, Ecuador, Peru and Paraguay) in 2023.

A common feature of almost all the new administrations in the region is their lack of parliamentary majority, which constrains their ability to implement their policies, thus forcing them to make policy compromises and trade-offs with coalition partners, which pulls them closer to the centre-right or centre-left. Notably, the new governments are taking over fiscally constrained, indebted economies in a low-growth cycle with depressed commodity prices.

Political choices of the electorate in the region are largely not driven by ideological convictions but by a lack of confidence in the political establishments and governance institutions and the inability of incumbent governments to address challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment, crime (especially drug trafficking), and corruption. The deep polarisation of societies in the region, particularly along social, economic, and geographic lines, further presents a challenge of governance for the new leaders, who end up swaying to the centre to try and accommodate all sectors of the society. New governments face the challenge of continued social unrest that manifests in the form of street protests because of sluggish economic performance and structural challenges of poverty, inequality, unemployment.

The region witnessed the rise of non-career politicians taking office with promises of radical changes to existing political establishments, as witnessed in Chile, Peru, Ecuador and most recently in Argentina. Javier Milei was inaugurated as President of Argentina in December 2023 with promises to eradicate inflation and rescue the troubled economy with a shock-therapy programme based on drastic cuts to public spending and shutting down the Central Bank. He also campaigned on Argentina not joining BRICS+ as was earlier indicated by his predecessor.

President Lula's return to office also ushered in the return of Brazil to the international scene after the Bolsonaro Administration. This is of significance as Brazil holds the G20 Presidency in 2024 and will host COP30 in 2025. Domestically, the Lula Administration is likely to struggle to balance diverging political and financial demands in the years ahead as it seeks to improve the social and business environments.

The politico-security and socio-economic situation in Haiti remains a major concern and it affects the whole region, especially neighbouring countries such as the Dominican Republic. Similarly, Cuba and Venezuela continue to suffer economically due to the US embargo against Cuba and targeted US sanctions against Venezuela.

Bilateral relations between South Africa and most Latin American countries remain sound and the various common ideals and objectives of the respective governments provide a potential basis for enhanced bilateral relations as well as for cooperation at the multilateral level. South Africa views a number of countries in the region as potential strategic partners at bilateral, as well as multilateral levels as they share some common positions on various global issues and also resemble similarities at many levels of development. Several countries from Latin America pledged their support to South Africa in taking Israel to the ICJ for allegedly perpetrating genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The region is further a key partner to promote the developmental agenda of the global south.

The Caribbean countries, though small in economic size, have strong historical and political cultural relations with South Africa. The region continues to support South Africa's candidatures and positions in multilateral organisations, especially on the development agenda of the South and global governance reforms.

South Africa and Cuba have a strategic partnership with around fifteen (15) active agreements of which the health (Nelson Mandela-Fidel Castro Programme), basic education, science and technology, and public works agreements are the most active. In the area of education, new areas of cooperation in Technical and Vocational Education, Early Childhood Development, and Information and Communications Technology are being established, as well as strengthening the existing partnership on Maths and Science. There are ongoing engagements to strengthen cooperation in the biopharmaceuticals sector through partnerships in joint applied research, product development, licencing and commercialisation of vaccines and pharmaceutical products.

Notably, the large African Diaspora in the Caribbean forms a strong link with the African continent and serves as a catalyst in strengthening regional cooperation between South Africa, Africa and the Caribbean region through the AU and CARICOM partnership.

Despite the challenges that LAC faces, it is a region with enormous potential. Several LAC countries are taking a keen interest to strengthen relations with Africa to benefit from major trade and investment opportunities that the Africa Continental Free Trade Area presents.

In 2024, general elections will be held in the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and presidential elections in Venezuela.

After a stronger-than-expected recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and continued resilience in early 2023, economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is softening as the effect of tighter policies to combat inflation is taking hold and the external environment is weakening. The early and swift monetary tightening across the region since 2021, together with the withdrawal of most of the pandemic fiscal stimulus and the reversal of external price pressures, have helped put headline inflation on a downward trajectory. Core inflation has also started to ease, as price pressures are becoming less generalised, although it remains elevated amid strong labour markets and positive output gaps in some countries. (*International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, October 2023*).

According to the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) 2023 report, poverty in Latin America returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2022. Some 181 million people (nearly one third of the region's population) live in poverty, slightly less than before COVID-19, while extreme poverty affects 11.2% of the population (70 million people), similar to 2019 levels.

ECLAC anticipates a cascade of crises, including rampant inflation and increasing climate change, impacting livelihoods. These challenges, including debt shocks, interest rate fluctuations, health crises and the prolonged impact of climate change, create an adverse socio-economic landscape in the region. Nonetheless, amid these projected challenges, opportunities arise in sectors like the biodiversity economy and digital service centers, generating employment in countries like Uruguay and Costa Rica.

Growth rates of 2.3% and 2.6% are expected for 2024 and 2025, respectively. These rates, similar to those of the 2010s, are not sufficient to achieve the much-needed advances in inclusion and poverty reduction. Countries must find ways to promote inclusion and growth, improve governance and generate social consensus.

Latin America is a major food exporter and the region's ability to export additional food is becoming increasingly important. According to the EU, the LAC already has 45% of global trade in agricultural products. Issues such as climate change which is playing havoc with crops globally and the heightened conflict, notably the Russia-Ukraine war pose a challenge to this.

Some markets within the region, such as Brazil and Argentina, are difficult to penetrate due to numerous tariff and non-tariff measures. The lack of direct and affordable air connectivity poses a challenge, although SAA and LATAM introduced direct flights at the end of 2023 to São Paulo with the expectation that it would impact positively on tourism and trade relations.

South Africa sees opportunities in many LAC countries with highly skilled human capital, excellent innovation, research, and development capabilities, as well as world-class facilities, no-till agriculture, livestock farming, biofuels, pharmaceuticals, nuclear energy, AgriTech, aviation, renewable energy, astronomy, Antarctica research, fisheries and aquaculture, automotive industry, lithium batteries, mining, logistics, port development and management, and training of seafarers. The LAC region is believed to possess more than half of the world's lithium reserves, around 40% of its copper and silver, and a quarter of its nickel.

Most countries in the LAC region are characterised by structural challenges of inequality, vulnerability and social exclusion, factors that are perpetuated by unemployment and informal employment, weak social protection systems and poorly integrated economic structures. Embedded in this challenge is the issue of inequality in the LAC region.

According to the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), despite progress made on several economic and social development indicators, inequality remains the same in Latin America. In fact, the decline of inequality has stagnated since 2014 and deteriorated even further due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, sectors of the population

mostly affected by poverty are children and adolescents, women between 20 and 59 years, and the indigenous and afro-descents populations.

Adding to the region's woes is that the opening of borders after the lifting of lockdown restrictions led to a significant increase in migration from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala (Northern Triangle), as well as from Venezuela, Haiti and Cuba, crossing into Mexico to gain access to the US. This is also impacting on nations such as Chile, Ecuador and Colombia as they absorb migrants. Affected countries have reacted by implementing restrictive immigration policies. The migration of Venezuelans into other countries has led to tensions and a review of immigration policies. Equally, illegal migration from Haiti to the Dominican Republic has contributed to political tensions and the souring of relations between the neighbours.

A significant factor to consider is that the region is characterised by high levels of organised crime, gang activity, violence, corruption, and drug trafficking.

Furthermore, border disputes exist between several countries in the region: Guyana and Venezuela; Peru and Bolivia; Chile and Bolivia. The Venezuela and Guyana dispute is mostly about access to the ocean or natural resources.

Climate change poses an enormous challenge to the LAC region. The region is characterised by relaxed environmental policies, industrial incentives, and annual "fires" to make way for mining, logging, and agriculture, especially in countries such as Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia and in several Central American countries. Given the importance of agriculture to LAC countries, climate change can be expected to significantly affect the long-term food supply in the region unless adequate and immediate action is taken. The impact of climate change is not merely a regional problem, as agriculture in LAC countries has played a key role in global food security. Thus, the challenge is a global issue with potential worldwide consequences for food security, especially for low-income countries.

LAC countries generally have high literacy rates and good access to health care and education.

Latin America grapples with a contracting global economy, the lingering impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, mounting inflation, rising food and energy prices due to geopolitical turmoil, and the severe socio-economic consequences of climate change. Latin American countries are striving to strengthen ties with key partners such as China, the United States, and Russia. China's growing role in the region underscores the evolving dynamics of international relations in Latin America.

At multilateral level, the region is moving towards independence as regional bodies, which exclude the US and Canada, are being revived. In 2023, the 7th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) reaffirmed their commitment to advance regional integration and unity.

Strategic competition between the US and China and a renewed global push for energy transition are key potential drivers of new business opportunities in Latin America. Firms from China, South Korea, Japan and Australia are increasingly positioning themselves in the region, investing in mining, hydrocarbons, automotive and telecommunications. Over a five-year outlook period, renewable energies and advanced manufacturing should gain prominence.

The region is returning to its non-aligned stance, which fits into a long Latin American tradition of non-interference in the affairs of other countries. There is also an economic imperative behind the Latin American leaders' stance. In common with other developing regions, Latin America has been hit hard by increases in global fuel and fertiliser prices since the Russia-Ukraine war began and wants to see the fighting end as soon as possible. The potential for the escalation of wars in Ukraine and the Middle East is bound to lead a growing number of investors to consider betting on Latin America to reduce their exposure to geopolitical conflict. Latin America will not remain unscathed by continued geopolitical tensions worldwide, but its geographic distance from the main hotspots is increasingly likely to provide it with a comparative advantage over other regions more directly exposed to conflicts.

Africa and the LAC regions of the global South have many similarities and developmental challenges and priorities; LAC is also host to a large community of the African Diaspora. Currently the AU is working towards reviving and strengthening relations with the Diaspora. South Africa is increasingly focussing on cultural diplomacy to not only strengthen state-to-state relations but also enhance people-to-people relations.

There are several regional organisations across the region whose membership is cross-cutting; the most relevant for advancing South Africa's foreign policy goals include CELAC and MERCOSUR, a common market of the South.

South Africa, through the SACU is party to a Preferential Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR (SACU-MERCOSUR PTA). The PTA provides opportunities to expand existing trade relations on a preferential basis, covering approximately 1500 products. Brazil has alluded to serious challenges within the MERCOSUR region, with consequent implications for the PTA that are not fully realised or implemented in practice. CELAC is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement that includes the 33 permanent member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is a regional forum that brings together all Latin America and the Caribbean countries. It was created

with a commitment to advance the gradual process of regional integration, unity and carefully balancing political, economic, social, and cultural diversity of the 650 million people Latin America and the Caribbean. Strengthening cooperation based on historical perspectives and converging priorities can bolster relations between continents and advance the idea of South-South cooperation.

The Guyanese-Venezuelan dispute over the border territory (Essequibo) has emerged as a significant geopolitical challenge in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Haiti

- The UNSC approved the deployment of a multinational armed force to Haiti to combat violent gangs, marking the first time in almost 20 years that a force would be deployed in Haiti. The resolution authorises the force to be deployed for one year, with a review after nine months.
- Haiti remains gripped by violent gangs who dominate daily life through their warfare, sieges, and extortion. The Haitian National Police is no longer able to provide adequate security. Around five million Haitians face acute hunger. Haiti struggles with cholera, high inflation and shortages of food, fuel, and other necessities, while misery and violence drive refugee outflows.

US embargo against Cuba

- The impact of the 61-year economic, commercial and financial US embargo against Cuba is reaching unprecedented proportions. Extra-territorial measures, particularly in the financial sector, prevent Cuba from accessing the international market with ease and must import many of the primary materials needed to maintain their outdated and crumbling industrial infrastructure.
- South Africa has consistently voted in favour of the annual resolution in the UN General Assembly on the “Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.”
- Furthermore, the exacerbating socio-economic difficulties in Cuba can also partly be blamed on the declaration of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism by the US.
- The US embargo on Cuba poses difficulties for trade between South Africa and Cuba.

WESTERN EUROPE

Western Europe remains South Africa's biggest trade and investment partner and an important source of skills and technology transfer and acquisition, as well as tourism. The significant number of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits from these countries in the 2023/24 financial year is a demonstration of the importance that they attach to their relations with South Africa.

Following its invasion of Ukraine, sanctions were imposed on Russia, which were supported by all the countries in Western Europe. The imposition of these sanctions already has and will continue to impact not only Russia but also Europe, South Africa and the world economy. Consequences will be asymmetric and unpredictable. Higher prices for essential goods, such as energy and food will raise living costs for consumers, particularly in developing economies where consumer savings have already been drawn down as a result of COVID-19 economic lockdowns.

In the view of leading analysts, the political landscapes in Western Europe reflect the contestation within EU ranks between pro-EU political forces and parties/leaders that have challenged the bloc's liberal, multicultural values in an environment of runaway inflation, immigration and asylum policy differences, and tensions over the war in Ukraine.

The consequences of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in Europe have been compounded by the surprise Al Aqsa flood attacks on Israel by Hamas on 7 October 2023 and the ensuing war declared by Israel against Hamas. The developments in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank have already caused a humanitarian disaster and have the potential for a regional spill-over of the conflict. Countries like Germany and Austria have expressed strong support for Israel's right to self-defence, while Ireland, Belgium and Spain, which have historically been more critical of Israel, have followed a more nuanced approach in public statements. Historically, the EU agreed on broader issues such as a two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians, but it struggles to find common ground on Israel's current operations in Gaza.

South Africa is the only African country, and one of ten countries globally that has a Strategic Partnership with the EU. The 15th South Africa-EU Joint Cooperation Council (JCC) took place in December 2022 followed by the 15th South Africa-EU Ministerial Political Dialogue (MPD) in January 2023. These meetings pave the way for the eighth South Africa-EU Summit, meant to have been hosted by South Africa in 2023.

European Council President Charles Michel and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen accepted the invitation from President Ramaphosa to visit South Africa for the Eighth South Africa-EU Summit. Final dates for the convening of the summit still needs to be agreed.

Europe continues to face political turbulence. The EU was severely shaken by the migration crisis and France and Belgium were the victims of terrorist attacks. The United Kingdom (UK) laboured under uncertainty occasioned by the referendum on EU membership, which culminated in Brexit. These events led to instability in European markets, intra-EU tension and the rise of some ultra-right political parties across the continent. The deteriorating NATO-Russia relationship continues to have a particularly negative impact on Western Europe and the EU.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine continues to be perceived as a major threat, but some fatigue has set in. Concern over armed conflict as a major threat peaked in Europe soon after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Over the last year, there has been a slow but sustained decline in those threat perceptions, even as the conflict rages on.

The conflict in Ukraine also had significant policy implications for EU countries. The German Government drastically transformed its foreign policy, from focussing on diplomacy and dialogue to solve conflicts, to increasing military spending, ramping up its defence forces and agreeing to send weapons to Ukraine, including anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles.

In The Netherlands, the far-right Party for Freedom (PVV) secured the largest share of seats (37 out of total 150) in the general election on 22 November 2023 and has started talks with other parties in an attempt to form a coalition. This will be difficult as most parties have reservations about joining a PVV-led government. Talks will be protracted and if they fail, an alternative coalition led by the centre-right is likely, with the PVV providing informal support from outside the coalition in exchange for tougher controls on immigration. Regardless of the composition of the next coalition, it will struggle to deal with the same tricky policy issues that faced the recently collapsed coalition, which include issues on the environment, farming and housing.

In Belgium, a seven-party coalition government took office in 2020 without the support of the country's biggest party, the New Flemish Alliance. The next general election will take place in June 2024. Current polls suggest that the incumbent coalition will retain a majority. It is expected that policymaking will be slow and major reforms hard to achieve, given the ideological differences and divergent policy preferences within the broad-based coalition.

Switzerland held federal parliamentary elections on 22 October 2023. The right-wing populist Swiss People's Party (SVP) won the election with 29%, while the two green parties, the Green Party and the Green Liberals, captured only 16% of the vote. The SVP capitalised on anti-immigration sentiment and the high cost of living, while the results of the country's two green parties showcase Switzerland's falling support for the green agenda. The result reflects wider trends across Europe, where green parties are losing

out to the populist right as immigration and purchasing power overshadow tackling climate change as defining voter issues.

Considering Western European countries' hard line on Russia's aggressions towards Ukraine and the implementation of stringent sanctions, the continuation of business relations with Russia can be viewed as contradictory. The EU is also facing increased criticism over its double standards on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and past remarks it has made in support of Ukraine. Ukraine's right to defend itself is praised by most international leaders, while Russia's invasion is condemned, but at the same time, the Palestinian right to defend itself against the Israeli occupying forces is termed as "terrorism".

President Emmanuel Macron is increasingly moving to position France away from its traditional foreign policy towards a more independent Western UNSC P5 representative that is also a partner to the global South. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and recent developments in the West Africa-Sahel region are expected to increase outreach from France to engage and form partnerships on regional and international issues with South Africa. Since his election in 2017, President Macron has been under pressure to effect reforms that his predecessors have failed to implement. The French government is under pressure to balance public spending, arrest the ever-increasing social security budget, and stabilise public coffers. The ongoing quest for reforms has political implications for President Macron who, by virtue of his second and last term in office, does not have to salvage his political career, however, he may wish to go down the history books as one of the presidents who managed to effect reforms in the French political system.

The UK has been undertaking a refocussing of its foreign policy since the appointment of Foreign Secretary James Cleverly in 2022. The UK went through a period of inward focus during 2022, but Secretary Cleverly has since made significant policy statements that have reinvigorated the UK's foreign policy engagements. The UK has moved from its policy of a global Britain creating a network of liberty in favour of building long partnerships with a modest number of countries, many of which may not share Britain's democratic values. To pursue this approach, the UK will move beyond long-established alliances to include engagements with diverse countries that are driven by different philosophies. The Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) will target countries that regard themselves as non-aligned. It is envisaged that this long-term approach will include increased engagements with the targeted countries, including South Africa.

In Spain, the centre's move away from anti-immigrant sentiment over the last year shows why it held against parties like the far-right Vox in the July 2023 snap elections, from which no party emerged with a clear path to forming a government. The ambiguous result

leaves current Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez in place as caretaker during Spain's stint as EU Council President and he will continue to follow his Socialist Party's agenda.

Political stability in Portugal has been the trademark of the current Government since 2015 when it took over under difficult circumstances after recovering from economic austerity. Following the general election on 30 January 2022, the ruling centre-left Socialist Party (PS) achieved a parliamentary majority, winning a third consecutive term and securing a strong new mandate for Prime Minister Antonio Costa. Hence, it has been easier for the governing party to secure parliamentary approval of the budget, legislation, and policy.

Like other members of the EU, the Government of Italy is strongly committed to supporting Ukraine. Migration is an ongoing concern for Italy and her neighbours. The country has been experiencing large numbers of illegal migrants' arrivals at a rate faster than any time before. The phenomenon has led to tensions between Italy and its neighbours, notably Germany and France.

Both Greece and Cyprus are concerned by the possible repercussions of the use of the term "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. Minister Lavrov, mentioning it as an example of an entity that, although recognised only by one state, Turkey, takes part in UN talks towards a political solution, making the parallel with the newly recognised "republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk by Russia. Cyprus is even more worried because, so far, Russia has been one of the most steadfast supporters of the Republic of Cyprus in its long dispute with Turkey, and its apparent adoption of Turkish arguments is a new and unwelcome development.

While scheduling difficulties for the Eighth South Africa-EU Summit have presented a challenge for South Africa to host the summit existing trade irritants such as Citrus Black Spot (CBS); False Coddling Moth (FCM); Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM); climate change (EU Green Deal); and divergent views on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Israel-Palestine conflict remain to be resolved.

Europe is worse affected by the Russia-Ukraine conflict than other regions in the world, both in terms of economic growth and inflation but also on the supply chain and the labour market. The sanctions on Russia already have an impact on the financial and economic markets. The growth forecast for Germany is expected to be 3.5% compared to 4.4% following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Germany's growth outlook is deteriorating as the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict exacerbates existing supply chain disruptions and pressure from an increasing inflation. Germany's export-orientated economy and dependence of exporters on international importers will lead to further disruptions. Before the invasion, it was expected that Germany would return to its pre-pandemic size, but economic growth will now depend on further escalation of the war and possible military involvement by the US.

The EU remains the most important foreign investor in South Africa. For this reason, much of the focus remains on the various aspects related to our economic relations and analysing possible new areas of cooperation, such as the move by the EU to digitalisation and the green economy. Furthermore, education, science and technology have been identified as primary areas of focus.

The EU is South Africa's largest trading partner as a bloc. Since the South Africa-European Union Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) came into force, total trade increased from R150 billion in 2000 to R963 billion in 2022. Exports to the EU increased steadily over the years, growing from R64 billion back in 2000 to R538 billion in 2022. During the same period, imports from the EU also increased from R86 billion in 2000 to R424 billion in 2022. A tendency should be noted in terms of the shift in the composition of the trade basket, which has seen a steady increase in manufactured value-added goods and trade in services, in addition to traditional raw materials and agricultural products. South Africa recorded a trade surplus in traded goods with the EU in 2021 and 2022 and the trade balance increased from R113 billion in 2021 to R114 billion in 2022. However, further analysis indicates that the EU has consistently enjoyed a trade surplus in manufactured products.

The EU has been a major contributor to South Africa's development agenda. Within the overall framework of the TDCA, development cooperation with South Africa is approached in the form of Multi-Annual Indicative Programmes (MIPs) that are implemented in seven-year cycles. Since 1994 to date, the commitment has been €2.7 billion. The EU's 2021-2027 MIP envelope for South Africa has a financial indicative amount of €129 million for the first phase from 2021 to 2024. A subsequent envelope will be available for 2024 to 2027, following a mid-term review of the MIP implementation. The MIP priorities going forward are sustainable, resilient, transformative, inclusive growth, reduces inequalities and partnerships.

Even with this said, major trade impediments between South Africa and the EU continue to hamper smooth economic relations and threaten the political relationship. Issues concerning citrus (CBS and FCM), as well as other sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade imposed by the EU on South African agriculture products, over several years, have resulted in a trade dispute at the WTO. At the Ministerial Political Dialogue held in January 2023, the sides could not agree on a way out of the dispute.

The EU's CBAM, introduced on 1 October 2023 with a three-year transition period, is expected to have far-reaching detrimental consequences for South Africa and other African and developing countries. It represents a threat to sustainable development, international trade and the multilateral response to climate change. The CBAM puts an import tariff on carbon-intensive products coming into the EU, such as iron and steel,

cement, aluminium, fertiliser, hydrogen and electricity. A total of US\$1.5 billion (approximately R27 billion) of South African exports (based on 2021 data) are at risk in the short term.

While a summit presents an opportunity to resolve the impasse, South Africa will have to remain cautiously optimistic about the possibilities thereof. Given the likelihood of the EU looking inward to preserve itself in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine, food and energy issues and worsening economic conditions, it may not be possible for South Africa to break the impasse meaningfully. The EU may utilise the remaining leverage it has in the form of development assistance it provides to bargain with South Africa on trade issues. The summit scheduling difficulties may give South Africa and the EU more time to resolve some of the trade irritants and other major issues which require engagement at a high level; otherwise they could have the potential to derail a successful summit. Additional time could also allow South Africa to craft a strategy on how it could successfully leverage the EU's interest in South Africa's raw materials and minerals to gain ground or concessions with respect to the trade irritants and the EU's proposed new carbon tax mechanism.

In The Netherlands, during 2024 and 2025, quarterly growth is forecast to pick up progressively as a further drop in inflation, coupled with still strong wage growth, is set to support real disposable incomes. With demand from the main trading partners stabilising, the contribution from net trade is projected to improve, moving from negative in 2023 to broadly neutral in 2024 and slightly positive in 2025. Growth is also expected to be supported by increased public consumption and investment. As a highly trade-orientated economy, global weakness in trade and industry in the coming year will be weighing on the Dutch economy. In Belgium, the economy is highly export-orientated and has a large chemical and pharmaceutical sector, which will face headwinds from weaker external demand. Weak productivity growth and a relatively low labour participation rate, especially among older age groups, will constrain real GDP growth in 2025-2028.

While Western sanctions against Russia avoided targeting its oil and gas sector, countries in Europe are in the process of rethinking their energy transition strategy, moving away from reliance on Russia's energy supply to the region. Reducing dependence on Russian fossil fuels through renewables and infrastructure is a priority consideration in Europe.

In addition, due to the global climate crisis, Europe will accelerate its transition to a green economy. This will include the phasing out of fossil fuels; CO₂-emitting cars will no longer be permitted in the EU as from 2035. At the same time, the share of renewable energy must increase to at least 40% as a requirement for meeting this steep target. The question is, where are the "critical" raw materials coming from for all the batteries, wind

turbines or solar plants that are needed for these targets to be achieved? In Europe itself, deposits are limited and there is resistance from communities, e.g., in Portugal and Serbia, to bring destructive industries into their local environment.

These multiple tensions are poised to fuel or trigger a “green scramble” for raw materials, such as lithium or cobalt, that has already begun, most notably in Africa, with a heightened risk of exploitation through a combination of export dependence, environmental destruction and human rights violations.

South Africa may, however, benefit from a shift in global markets away from Russia and from fossil fuels. For example, South Africa is, after Russia, the world's second-biggest producer of palladium, which is a critical input into automobiles and electronics and therefore could experience growing demand due to international sanctions on Russia.

The EU's ambitious roadmap, the European Green Deal, aims to make Europe the first carbon-neutral continent by 2050. The EU's CBAM was introduced on 1 October 2023, with a three-year transition period during which only emissions reporting obligations will apply, without any financial payments or adjustments. CBAM, as part of the EU's “Fit-for-55” climate mitigation policy under the EU's Green Deal, is expected to be formally phased in from 2026 to 2034.

South Africa is fully committed to the global effort to address climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) but is not convinced that CBAM will lead to a reduction of global emissions of greenhouse gasses (GHG) or is the most appropriate response to the EU's potential internal problem of “carbon leakage” when implementing the Green Deal.

Ecological and environmental factors are beginning to have a stranglehold on how countries trade with each other. France, an active member of the European Union, is at the forefront of introducing new legislation on environmental factors, waste removal, energy consumption, packaging and the carbon footprint of agricultural goods. The measures have already been flagged by fruit and vegetable manufacturers as having the capacity to impede incoming trade, especially from South Africa, Kenya, Peru and other parts of developing countries. It is expected that the introduction of new packaging measures, biodegradable stickers and other forms of plastic, the use of non-chemical pesticides and soil-friendly fertilisers, and the protection of forests and agricultural lands from overgrazing and overfarming will pose new threats as France, like other EU members, implements the Green Deal, the Common Agricultural Policy and its “Farm to Fork” strategy which will serve as a new barrier for market access. Ethical sourcing and green supply chain are beginning to become major impediments to trade and investments.

The Benelux and German-speaking countries are all technologically well advanced, with Switzerland retaining its top position in the Global Innovation Index 2023 for the 13th consecutive year. A robust innovation ecosystem is supported by well-established research institutions, a high level of research and development (R&D) spending, and a conducive regulatory environment. Other countries in this region's educational systems are also ranked highly with technology being the cornerstone of their manufacturing industries.

France is one of the key global players in the technological field and is at the forefront of R&D initiatives. France possesses high quality research and technology institutions that greatly benefit from considerable government subsidies. France's excellent transport technology makes it an accessible and attractive trading partner for the EU and the rest of the world.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) will likely be the technology of the day. It models cognitive human behaviour, can solve problems, mimics language, makes art and has a host of other unknown possibilities. The technology industry in its entirety is already heavily invested in AI. Companies such as X (formerly known as Twitter) and Google recently laid off staff members and are piloting the use of AI robots in place of human beings. AI threatens the existence of jobs and it is likely to revolutionise the internet, as it can compete with already existing search engines like Google that have developed over decades and has user rates higher than those of social media. Europe will likely be competing with the US and China in this area, given their already well-developed technology industries. US President Biden is already “shaking down” Chinese technology, such as TikTok and therefore we are likely to see tensions develop in the technological space. South Africa, although not a competitor in AI, will be impacted by these developments. South Africa can likely look to countries in Europe for assistance, technology transfer and sharing knowledge as they tend to be friendlier in this area than the US.

The Benelux and German-speaking countries have an understanding of South Africa's positions on key global issues in UNSC and the broader UN Global Agenda in focus areas such as human rights, gender equality, eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, skills development and combatting unemployment.

France is a major power with a global reach. It is a permanent member of the UNSC; a member of the G7; a leading member of the EU; a recognised nuclear power; the fifth biggest economy in the world; a leader in science and technology; and a major cultural influence in the world and in Africa. It is increasingly taking a leading role in addressing international and global issues such as reform of the instruments of international governance and fighting global warming. It considers South Africa to be its potential

partner in Africa with the capacity to act at the global level. It is its historical and ongoing engagement with the continent of Africa that gives certain unique characteristics to France's standing and role in the world and adds to its particular importance for South Africa. It also regards itself as a traditional champion of Africa and the developing world on issues such as debt relief, sustainable development and mitigating the negative effects of globalisation. France's authorities emphasise that the country's development policy is part of the new international Agenda 2030 framework, which combines the fight against poverty and the three aspects of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.

Despite some uncertainty within the UK about its global role and standing post-Brexit, the UK remains a major power that exerts international, economic, political, military, scientific and cultural influence globally. Since Brexit, the UK has especially focused on strengthening its relations with African and Commonwealth countries. According to NATO data, the UK, despite many budgetary challenges and cutbacks, still has the third largest defence expenditure as a share of GDP. Defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP has fallen from just over 3% in the early 1990s to just over the current 2%. The UK has illustrated with the recent Russia-Ukraine crisis that it is ready to intervene militarily in that region. The UK is a permanent member of the UNSC and a key member of major international organisations and groupings, including the G7, G20, WTO, World Bank, IMF, NATO etc. The UK is likely to continue spending more resources and focus on strengthening the Commonwealth post-Brexit and the need to revitalise and strengthen its relations with countries with which it has had close historical, political, social and trading relationships in the past.

Spain is a respected member of the EU, UN, NATO, OECD, WTO and many other international and multilateral organisations. Spain has ambitious goals for multilateral reform in 2024, reflecting its commitment to multilateralism and finding common solutions to global challenges. In its 2021-2024 Foreign Action Strategy, Spain expresses its aspiration to play a more significant pro-European global role, which is also the basis of its foreign policy.

Italy is scheduled to take over the rotating presidency of the G7 for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024. It is expected that Italy will continue to build on the issues that were discussed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in Japan in May 2023. During the May 2023 Summit, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni anticipated that the priorities of the upcoming G7 Summit in Italy will include, among others, respect for international rules (in the context of the Ukraine-Russia conflict); energy security; food security; sustainable development; and migration. According to Italy's plan during its presidency of G7, the global South will be a key focus and that Europe must become more present and involved in Africa.

Ireland follows a policy of military neutrality and is therefore not a member of NATO. The conflict in Ukraine brought about a political debate and some national soul-searching on this matter, but it would appear as though the policy will remain intact. Ireland supports the EU sanctions against Russia but has not taken any steps to support the military efforts of Ukraine. Ireland's stance of military neutrality has caused some concern within the EU but has strengthened the country's credibility in multilateral fora. Ireland has a proud history of involvement in UN peacekeeping, human rights, and disarmament initiatives. However, there is a feeling that the conflict in Ukraine could have exposed the country's inability to influence decisions within the EU regarding geopolitical matters and that this could have a long-term impact.

South Africa and Portugal are like-minded on most multilateral issues e.g., peace and security, especially in Africa, and on human rights. Both countries are deeply committed to multilateralism and share the belief that UN governance should be restructured and reformed, inclusive of the UNSC.

Under the UNFCCC, any measures to address climate change must be consistent with multilateral trade rules and must not impose arbitrary restrictions on international trade. The EU's CBAM is coming under increased scrutiny by developing country parties in the UNFCCC through agenda items such as Response Measures and the Global Stocktake and CBAM was a significant source of tension at the UNFCCC's COP28 in Dubai in December 2023.

On CBAM, consideration is also being given to coordinate and bring together other like-minded and developing countries and industry to register a complaint at the WTO against the EU.

Regarding citrus, the EU came up with new regulations for FCM in the middle of the South African export season in 2022. South Africa changed its systems, trying to avert the implementation of measures. South Africa then launched an official dispute at the WTO in September 2022 which started with consultations as a first step. However, common ground could not be found. South Africa then tried to engage more comprehensively, both bilaterally and on a ministerial level. More stringent measures were applied in January 2023, ending the EU's interim measures and forcing the South African industry to comply with the EU measures.

EASTERN EUROPE

Russia is facing severe isolation from the countries of the west and several others due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Russia has articulated a new international focus in its new foreign policy concept, released in March 2023. The document outlines Russia's global

priorities and focus for the future. The Russian Federation is seeking to strengthen its relationships with countries in the global South, as well as with China, India, Turkey and Iran.

The current conflict between Russia and Ukraine has resulted in a massive refugee and humanitarian crisis, which will also have wider consequences for the region. Ukraine has gained major international support from the US, UK and many Western allies, which have committed to providing arms support to the Ukrainian Government and have also implemented severe and punitive sanctions on Russia. In addition, numerous countries have expressed solidarity with Ukraine.

South Africa is Türkiye's largest trading partner in Sub-Saharan Africa and bilateral trade reached record highs in 2022 with a 50% increase compared to 2021 including an increase of 18% in South African exports to Türkiye during the above period. In 2023, however, the trajectory reflected in the statistics indicate a downward trend in bilateral trade compared to previous years.

It is expected that Türkiye's focus will remain its recovery after the devastating earthquakes of February 2023. On 14 May 2023 the country held Presidential and Parliamentary elections. A second round of the Presidential elections followed on 28 May 2023, where President Erdoğan received 52.1% of the vote and his main rival Mr Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, leader of the "National Alliance Kılıçdaroğlu 47.9%.

Türkiye is currently preparing for important municipal elections scheduled for 31 March 2024. It is estimated that around 64 million eligible voters will elect new mayors and other officeholders in the regional administration of 81 provinces and districts.

The Western Balkan region remains "complicated" and continued to be characterised by the unresolved Serbia-Kosovo dispute, which recently also included violent clashes along the border between Albanian authorities in Kosovo and the Serbian security forces.

The political landscape in Hungary and Croatia is characterised by right or far-right political parties' dominance. Both countries are part of the EU and NATO. However, unlike Hungary, Croatia has always associated itself with EU positions on most regional and global issues.

The trends observed with respect to both countries include migration, conflicts (Ukraine-Russia; Israel-Palestine), global economic slowdown, energy security, and US-China strategic competition.

The required unanimous vote was reached at the EU Summit in mid-December 2023, allowing Ukraine to start the accession process.

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán had opposed Ukraine's accession to the EU due to a perception that this would disrupt the power relations within Europe and alter the balance of influence militarily, economically and politically in the region.

At the EU Extraordinary Summit on 1 February 2024, Prime Minister Orbán accepted an EU plan to provide €50 billion in aid to Ukraine over four years. President Orbán dropped his insistence on an annual reconsideration of the aid package, which would have given him the power to veto continued aid each year. Instead, EU leaders will conduct annual debates on the financial aid based on reports by the Commission on how the aid is being used.

For Croatia, 2023 saw the fulfilment of strategic goals for Croatian politics. It was marked by long-awaited Eurozone accession and entry into the Schengen area on 1 January 2023. The year 2024 is set to be a busy year for Croatian politics with domestic parliamentary elections, presidential elections and European elections.

The aftershocks from the conflict between Russia and Ukraine continue to have a detrimental effect on global economic woes, not only for the region but globally, including Africa. Western sanctions against Russia are threatening deposit runs on Russian banks, plummeting the ruble, encouraging international investors to divest Russian assets and opening the door to more long-term damage to the Russian economy. Russia will continue to sever its dependence on a dollar-dominated financial system, but the sanctions imposed will stymie Moscow's mitigation efforts to de-link from such systems. Severing or severely limiting Russian financial linkages with US, European and other Western financial institutions will, at a minimum, slow and inhibit Russian receipt of payment for exports, which in turn will devastate the ability to import and invest.

Africa's relationship with the Ukraine-Russia crisis is complicated. Further developments in the crisis could impact economies and harm the most vulnerable people on the continent. Africa's foreign relations with both Ukraine and Russia will impact the continent in some form or another. There are many ways in which African countries' relationships with Russia and Ukraine will impact the continent. The main areas being the economy and vulnerable citizens. The economic impact of the war on Africa is largely linked to imports, but also national investments on both ends.

Turkish President Erdoğan's historic run-off re-election raised hopes for economic stability and appreciation of the Turkish lira against the US dollar. However, after the May presidential and parliamentary vote, the lira's value continued a slow decline, reaching a value of 23.3 to the dollar on 7 June 2023. The currency lost over 40% of its value in the past year to the US dollar. The IMF also urged the country to raise interest rates, but the Central Bank of Türkiye, however, instead continued to lower its main policy rate, which has fallen to 9% from 16% over the past 12 months. This could be a contributing factor to

the country's economic challenges while it had to deal with the devastating impact of the February 2023 earthquake and refugees, mostly from Syria and Afghanistan. The Russia-Ukraine conflict also has a severe impact Türkiye's economy, given its close ties to both countries.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has been particularly unsettling for Eastern Europe, which has relatively recent memories of Russian hostility and occupation, and this has resulted in significant support in the region for severe sanctions on Russia; financial, military, and humanitarian aid for Ukraine; reinforcement of NATO's eastern flank; and acceptance of millions of Ukrainian refugees. However, there are some countries in Eastern Europe that continue to sympathise with Russia, despite having faced Russian aggression in the past.

Türkiye's global influence is becoming increasingly prominent, best illustrated by its ongoing mediating role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict as well as its prominent role in NATO, the G20 and other multilateral organisations. The country's regional importance can also not be overstated, which is mainly attributed to its geographical location. Turkey's involvement in both Syria and Iraq can be traced back to security concerns that were the result of Turkey's proximity to the countries in conflict.

The country is also attempting to play a mediating role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Ukraine and Russia reached and signed an agreement on 22 July 2022 for the resumption of exports of grain which was brokered by Türkiye together with the UN and other agricultural products from selected Ukrainian Black Sea ports. On 17 July 2023, Russia announced it was unwilling to stay in the deal unless its demands were met to ship more of its own food and fertiliser.

MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East Chief Directorate has two directorates dealing respectively with the Levant and the Gulf States. The Directorate: Levant is divided into two subdirectorates: Levant I (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq) and Levant II (Middle East Peace Process, Israel and Palestine) while the Directorate: Gulf States is divided into two subdirectorates: Gulf States I (Saudi Arabia, Iran, Bahrain and Yemen) and Gulf States II (Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates).

South Africa's foreign policy is implemented within a highly dynamic, often unpredictable and complex international environment. The region reflects some of the most significant foreign policy challenges regarding peace and security, as well as energy security and its related implications for South Africa. The various subregions of the Middle East will be impacted differently by the trends and developments of 2024 as these issues continue to impact the region going into 2025.

High energy prices will benefit energy exporters, while high food prices will affect the whole region. However, states with ample financial resources should be able to manage and cushion those stresses, whereas resource-strapped and partially failed states, i.e. Yemen will leave its citizens increasingly food insecure. In addition, the lack of sufficient humanitarian donor support is compounding the suffering of vulnerable groups. The International Monetary Fund forecasts that growth will accelerate to 3.4% in 2024 but persistent structural hurdles will constrain growth over the forecast horizon. Importantly, growth is not forecast to be strong or inclusive enough to create the needed jobs for the 100 million Arab youth who will reach working age over the next ten years.

It is critical to set clear priorities to be pursued through South Africa's diplomacy in the Middle East (Gulf and Levant) region, which is set to lead the global economic recovery from the pandemic-related contraction. During the 2024/2025 performance cycle, the objectives that will be pursued through the Branch Annual Operational Plan (AOP) as well as the Business Unit AOP are rooted in making a tangible contribution towards the long-term strategic priorities outlined in the National Development Plan and the priorities identified for Government, as well as during the 2024 State of the Nation Address and related budget votes. The operational plan also seeks to respond to the immediate priority interventions identified in relevant policy frameworks notably the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan and the Just Energy Transition and its Investment Plan. This is reflected in the targets identified for the Branch's economic diplomacy efforts as well as targets for engagement with regional partners. Follow-up initiatives emanating from attendance by selected Gulf states to the South African Investment Conference 2024, should be prioritised.

Specific targets in the operational plan aim to address these challenges through building partnerships, developing a focused programme of engagement, leveraging the influence of our network of missions in the region and employing a "whole-of-government and society" approach in the pursuit of national priorities.

Levant

South Africa remains committed to a stable and peaceful Middle East and supports sustainable and just solutions to the various conflicts in the region. The threat of Israel's war on Palestine spilling over into the wider region is real and would have an adverse effect on the international economy leading to slower economic growth, higher inflation and further economic pressure on developing and less-developed countries. A wider war will impact South Africa negatively. The region is an important component of South Africa's global trade and is also a critical energy partner. The strong focus on investment will be continued in the objectives pursued in 2020 - 2025 through South Africa's diplomatic engagement with the region.

South Africa's good diplomatic and political relations with Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon will stand it in good stead to take advantage of economic opportunities. Both Syria and Lebanon are undergoing immense challenges politically, socially, economically and security-wise. How these challenges may be mitigated or aggravated over the next five to 10 years is dependent on a range of factors – global, regional and local – that seem to have become increasingly resistant to any semblance of accurate prediction in recent times.

Regional stability will enhance economic opportunities for South Africa with the region, potentially enabling exports to countries in conflict situations once mediation has succeeded. South Africa also has strong experience in the continent on post-conflict reconstruction and development and now the implementation of humanitarian assistance packages to Syria and Palestine will aid the region. In this regard, partnerships with other countries in the region that have also played mediation and conflict resolution as well as peace roles may be explored.

South Africa remains committed to supporting the two-state solution and the people of Palestine. Trends in the region include:

- In the context of the current hostilities between Hamas and Israel, the United States (US) and its staunch ally Israel will continue with their campaign aimed at improving relations with Arab states. Their main focus will be on Saudi Arabia, while ignoring the Palestinian issue.
- The Israeli-Palestinian stalemate in the conflict, outbreak of war/violence involving the Israel Defence Force, extremist Israeli settlers and some Palestinian resistance groups.
- Humanitarian crisis, devastating impact of the war between Hamas and Israel.

The Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), at the core of which are efforts to reach a just and durable negotiated resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and normalise Israel's relations with its Arab neighbours, as conceived in the Arab Peace Initiative, has remained stalled since the collapse of the Kerry-led initiative in April 2014.

The Palestine-Israel conflict is a major challenge to the MEPP. On 7 October 2023, the military wing of Hamas Al Qassam Brigade, launched a military operation on the Israeli city of Ashkelon and surroundings, killing about 1 400 Israelis, with another 2 700 more wounded and at least 212 others taken hostage to Gaza. Israel responded by declaring war on Hamas and mounted a total siege of the Palestinian enclave of Gaza, which has been under the control of Hamas since 2007.

According to the United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, there were 23 074 reported deaths in Gaza between 7 October 2023 and 7 January 2024, an average of 250.8 per day and 330 deaths so far in the West Bank. The death toll, destruction, and humanitarian crisis continue to heighten by the minute while Gaza remains under a total blockade, with no access to electricity, food, and water. Israel's military is killing Palestinians at an average rate of 250 people a day, which exceeds the daily death toll of any other major conflict of recent years, Oxfam indicated as the escalation of hostilities nears its 100th day.

This war resulted from the occupation, increased illegal settlements and its concomitant violence. Though the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, has condemned Israel's siege of Gaza, the US, a strong ally of Israel, has publicly declared its support for Israel. This initial intervention by the US raises significant questions about its view of this conflict and its leadership or lack thereof. Hence, irrespective of the underlying currents of the ongoing conflict, interventions of global superpowers such as the US have the potential to aggravate the human factor and humanitarian outcomes of this war. Thus, the critical components of the UN Conventions must be considered as prerequisites for global peace and security.

South Africa was among more than two-thirds of the member states of the UN that called for an immediate ceasefire at the General Assembly. South Africa has made a steadfast call for an immediate, comprehensive ceasefire, as well as the full opening of all humanitarian corridors to ensure much-needed aid and basic services reach those in need.

On 1 November 2023, the Cabinet of the Government of South Africa, influenced by the refusal of the Israeli government to respect international law and its continued undermining of the UN resolutions for the implementation of a ceasefire with impunity, took a decision to recall all transferred officials at the Embassy of South Africa in Tel Aviv for consultations.

Subsequently, on 21 November 2023, the National Assembly agreed to a motion calling for the closure of the Israeli Embassy in South Africa and the suspension of all diplomatic ties until a ceasefire is agreed to by Israel. South Africa cannot have normal relations with Israel for as long as Israel is committing war crimes and genocide against the Palestinians and is intent on removing Palestinians from their land, as well as being unwilling to negotiate a viable peace plan without preconditions.

On 9 November 2023, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) *démarched* the Ambassador of the State of Israel to South Africa, Eliav Belotsercovsky, to discuss his unfortunate conduct relating to the unfolding, tragic Israel-Palestine war.

On 17 November 2023, pursuant to Article 14 of the Rome Statute, South Africa, along with like-minded state parties to the Rome Statute, i.e. Bangladesh, Bolivia, Venezuela, Comoros and Djibouti submitted a joint referral of the situation in Palestine to ensure that the International Criminal Court (ICC) pays urgent attention to the grave situation in Palestine, thereby lending their support to the prosecutor's investigation of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

South Africa has expressed in several multilateral fora, including the ICC, that Israel's conduct against the Palestinian people may amount to genocide. On 27 December 2023, South Africa delivered a Note Verbale to the Embassy of Israel in Pretoria reiterating concerns that had previously been raised, including those expressed in the *démarche* on 9 November 2023, regarding the likelihood that Israel's conduct amounts to a violation of its obligations under the Genocide Convention. South Africa has further encouraged other states parties to the Rome Statute to join the referral, or to submit separate referrals independently.

The crime of genocide looms large in the current situation in Gaza. The international community recalls that in 1994, a genocide occurred on the African continent with much of the whole world watching as innocent people were massacred. On 8 December 2023, Cabinet took the decision that South Africa should institute legal proceedings at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Israel under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide ("Genocide Convention") with respect to the Israeli conduct in the present conflict in Gaza.

On 29 December 2023, South Africa filed its application to institute proceedings against Israel, as well as its request for provisional measures.

On 11 and 12 January 2024, presentations were made by both countries at the ICJ. Subsequently, on 26 January 2024, the ICJ ordered provisional measures against Israel regarding the application by South Africa. Securing the order was widely hailed as a major achievement. With this decision, the ICJ instructed Israel to prevent genocide, ensure Israeli forces do not commit genocide, and prevent and punish incitement to commit genocide. Israel was also urgently instructed to provide humanitarian aid, preserve evidence and submit a report on the extent of its compliance on or before 26 February 2024.

GULF

On the political front the region has entered a new phase as a year has passed since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran in a deal brokered by the People's Republic of China. The two

countries resumed diplomatic relations, reopened their embassies and the agreement includes their affirmation of the respect for the sovereignty of states and the non-interference in internal affairs of states. The three countries expressed their keenness to exert all efforts towards enhancing regional and international peace and security. This development cemented mediation initiatives by countries such as Oman and Iraq. However, the rapprochement should be noted within the context of Iran's renewed regional focus under the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi as well as Iran's growing influence in the larger region (Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen); Saudi Arabia's need for security guarantees in respect of the current situation and its efforts to broker a cease-fire and negotiations in Yemen; as well as China wish to increase its influence in the region.

The developments between Palestine and Israel since October 2023 could witness more entrenched geopolitical stances. The Gulf and other Arab countries are adopting similar positions in condemning Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip. With regard to the escalation of the Middle East conflict, notably in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, the Gulf countries are mainly staying neutral towards the situation with the exception of Bahrain.

Both regional powers, Iran and Saudi Arabia, are rethinking their foreign policy in relation to regional security issues and other issues of mutual interest, such as Palestine, the US and the growing influence of China. The frequent visits by US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken since the outbreak of hostilities also illustrated that, notwithstanding Washington's support for Israel, they recognise that the regional players have to be engaged and their concerns considered with regard to the tensions in Palestine and Israel. However, tensions between Iran and Israel have escalated during this period. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has also at this stage smothered speculation regarding political rapprochement with Israel, contingent on addressing the Palestinian quest for statehood.

Iran, and Saudi Arabia became full members of BRICS from 01 January 2024. This move is expected to yield increased cooperation on global governance issues and sectoral cooperation within the BRICS context. Other interested countries in BRICS membership in the region include Bahrain and Oman (observer status). This begs the question of whether the Persian Gulf region has entered the post-US era of dominant influence where alliances will become more multipolar. The agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia to resume diplomatic ties has wide-reaching effects across the Middle East and beyond which it reduces the chance of armed conflict between regional rivals. It will also enhance efforts aimed at creating peace and stability in the region and will create a conducive environment for development and be an important stimulus towards ending the conflict in Yemen. However, latest developments may impact in an adverse manner for the short to medium term once more.

S&P Global Market Intelligence forecasts real GDP growth in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to rise in 2024, following a decrease in 2023. The effects of climate change, in terms of higher temperatures, scarcer water resources, and more unstable rainfall patterns, will continue to impact vulnerable areas and populations across the Gulf Region. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has warned that 36% of Arabs face food insecurity and the region's debt has reached a staggering \$US1.5 trillion in 2022, with 16 million people refugees or internally displaced. Climate change is also rapidly outpacing resilience in the region, especially in less affluent states. The aftereffects of the pandemic and cost of living crises have given rise to vulnerabilities and socioeconomic inequalities. At the Conference of the Parties (COP) 28 hosted by the UAE in December 2023, the African common position on climate change was communicated appropriately. President Ramaphosa attended COP28. South Africa was instrumental in landing the overall COP28 outcomes and it played a bridge-building and facilitation role in support of the UAE COP Presidency, which was warmly acknowledged, while also playing a key role in defending and promoting the interests of African and developing countries. There are positive opportunities to leverage renewable energy cooperation ventures with the region to harness related technologies that are more appropriate for South Africa's climatic conditions. There is considerable scope for further collaboration in the energy sector with Gulf countries, including renewable energy.

Key trends identified for 2024/25 include:

- South Africa's interests in the Middle East Region continue to be framed within an “era of strategic realignment” vis-à-vis the region which is also importantly now complemented by a strategic intra-regional realignment. However, the impact of the Israel-Palestine conflict, as a pertinent shock, has halted the trajectory of fast-tracking normalisation of diplomatic relations with Israel in the sense that the attention of the region is focussed on this conflict.
- Among South Africa's key priorities in the Middle East region is the intractable Israel-Palestine conflict. South Africa will continue to expressly demonstrate its solidarity with the struggle for freedom and self-determination of the people of Palestine. It will continue in facilitating and fostering a climate of dialogue and support international efforts to find a peaceful political settlement of the Israel-Palestine and Syria conflicts, among other hotspots in the region. Mechanisms such as the Strategic Dialogue and Joint Commission of Cooperation will be put in place to set the agenda and priorities of our strategic and cohesive engagement on Palestine. The approach also has an international dimension in terms of raising an international campaign against Israel to formally declare it an

apartheid state. The department will focus further on the strategic partnership, including expanding the bilateral relationship and focussing on peace, security and development matters in the Middle East region, as well as issues of mutual interest and concern within global governance. The current Israel-Palestine conflict will impact most of the work for the year in the Levant region. Much like the rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran led to Syria being accepted back into the Arab League in 2023, the politics of the region will dictate the Directorate: Levant's approach in 2024.

- Conflicts, especially in the Gulf, may draw in more regional states due to strategic factors and the heightening of existing fault lines in and between states. Of significance here are the Iran-Iraq, Iran-Saudi, and Saudi-Yemen tensions. Iran is also playing a pertinent role in the region due to its military and other support to various groups.
- The evolution of the security and defence relationship with the US and allies (notably Israel following the Abraham Accords) is developing in the context of increased multipolarity where notably France, China, Russia and India are also trying to extend their regional influence.
- Hopes for a revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the lifting of US sanctions on Iran remain distant given disagreement over the terms of the JCPOA and a deterioration of relations between Iran, the US and the European Union (EU). This is linked to renewed criticism of Iran (and in the case of the EU, fresh sanctions) over arms sales to Russia, and human rights abuses linked to clampdowns on public protests. Iran will continue to deepen military and economic ties with China and Russia, in the hope of easing the impact of existing sanctions and building external relations beyond the reach of the West. It is also becoming an important arms supplier to Russia in terms of the latter's war on Ukraine. Its normalisation of diplomatic relations with the region and constructive collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency may provide renewed impetus for resuming the JCPOA talks. The Saudi position on its right to peaceful use of nuclear energy is also an interesting new dimension that may impact. The renewed conflict between Palestine and Israel will also impact positively on normalisation of relations with Iran, considering its positions in this regard.
- UAE and Saudi relations have become more competitive in the pursuit of respective strategic objectives both regionally, as well as further abroad, including Africa, but shocks could still impact to address security needs (notably defence, food, etc.). Competition between Saudi Arabia and the UAE to establish leading business hubs will intensify, but this will also create space for cooperation

and joint ventures given the scope for mutual benefit and the pragmatic nature of intra-GCC business investment. Saudi Arabia won the bid to host the International Bureau of Expositions World Expo 2030 and will host COP16 of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in December 2024. The outcomes of the Saudi-Africa Summit will also enhance cooperation.

- Arab Gulf states are intervening more assertively in sub-Saharan Africa to capitalise on economic opportunities and protect their security interests. The reset of the Saudi-Iran relationship and the war in Yemen will have important implications for interstate relations in the Gulf Region and the Horn of Africa. Oman and Iraq are assuming a constructive role in mediating in these matters, notably to establish a permanent cease-fire in Yemen. The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC+) alliance will solely prioritise set price levels, despite concerted diplomatic efforts by the US and European allies to persuade the cartel to increase production.
- The balance of risks to the region's outlook is heavily weighted to the downside, which reflects various global and regional shocks that could act to undermine economic growth and stability, social cohesion and security. Upside risks are limited to a low-probability scenario surrounding a quick resolution of the war in Europe leading to less volatility in commodity markets (food and fuel) and easing prices pressures, as well as the low risk of a stronger rebound of demand from China as COVID-19 disruption dissipates and the authorities guide the economy to much faster growth.
- The evolution of the security and defence relationship with the US and allies (notably Israel following the Abraham Accords) is developing in the context of increased multipolarity where notably Türkiye, France, China, Russia and India are also trying to extend their regional influence. China has now emerged as an influential regional actor following its brokerage of the resumption of Saudi-Iranian diplomatic relations and this will undoubtedly impact on BRICS expansion related issues.
- South African core interests will continue to focus on economic opportunities and leveraging existing financial commitments (i.e, UAE and Saudi Arabia have respectively pledged US\$10 billion for projects in South Africa) following state and official visits to the region in 2018 and 2022. Various new investment pledges from businesses in this region have also been made (SAIC 2023).
- The sovereign wealth funds of the Gulf region have long been a targeted source of investment for South Africa. However, the region has indicated its preference for Bilateral Protection of Investment Treaties (BIPPA's) rather than our country's

Investment Protection Act (IPA) to be in place before committing to any investing of state funds (including the sovereign wealth funds). The Branch will continue to engage the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the dtic) to address investment protection concerns.

- Increased cooperation in the defence-industrial sector also has considerable potential, i.e, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman.

THE BRANCH WILL EXPLORE THE FOLLOWING KEY AREAS:

Leverage political engagement and partnerships to achieve the objectives in the national development plan (NDP), medium-term strategic framework (MTSF) and foreign policy objectives.

Bilateral political and economic engagements provide an important basis for the strengthening of political and economic partnerships in Asia and the Middle East. Structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits are the pre-eminent delivery mechanisms through which South Africa pursues cooperation in support of identified national priorities. During 2024/25, it will be a priority to service long outstanding structured bilaterals and to motivate for political principals to visit countries that have not had high-level political engagement from South Africa in recent years.

The content or substance pursued with each one of our bilateral partners in the region will be linked to a country strategy outlining country-specific strategic objectives informed by research conducted to identify opportunities and areas for cooperation.

The following major priorities will be pursued:

MIDDLE EAST REGION:

- leverage a focussed programme of visits, including ministerial visits to advance existing cooperation with the region and raise South Africa's diplomatic profile in the region
- engage Department of Tourism for enhanced tourism promotion initiatives in the region
- secure export protocols for additional agriculture products, livestock and focus on halaal products
- facilitate investment
- promote growing defence exports to the region

- strengthen cooperation in the energy and mining sectors where South Africa enjoys competitive advantages.

South Africa remains committed to supporting the two-state solution and the people of Palestine. Trends in the region include:

- in the context of the current hostilities between Hamas and Israel, the US and its staunch ally Israel will continue with their campaign aimed at improving relations with Arab states; their main focus will be on Saudi Arabia while ignoring the Palestinian issue
- the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate in the conflict, outbreaks of war and violence involving the IDF, extremist Israeli settlers and some Palestinian resistance groups
- humanitarian crisis, devastating impact of the war between Hamas and Israel
- pursuing the ICJ process.

EAST ASIA AND OCEANIA

The East Asia and Oceania region is of significant geostrategic, political and economic importance, housing powerful economies with strategic maritime connections and diverse cultures. There is a variety of political systems in the region, ranging from democracies to one party systems and authoritarian states. South Africa maintains strong relations with the countries in the East Asia and Oceania region and its representation covers the People's Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand. South Africa is also accredited to Mongolia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and twelve Pacific Islands.

The region reflects significant foreign policy opportunities and some challenges for South Africa. This relates to navigating and balancing the regional territorial disputes and geostrategic rivalries where South Africa is often expected to pronounce on these foreign policy issues. Great Power Contestation is a feature of the East Asia and Oceania region. Territorial contestations and border disputes between China and India in the Himalaya region, remain. The island disputes between Japan and Korea; China and Russia persist and the South China Sea is also contested.

The One China Policy creates cross-strait tensions between Mainland China and Taiwan, which China regards as its renegade province, slated for reunification. The one country, two systems policy in Hong Kong has been affected by the enactment of the national security law of 2022.

Regarding the South China Sea, China's claims and policies, including the construction of artificial islands and its perceived threatening of free access to regional strategic maritime trade routes and freedom of navigation, impact on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, Japan, the US, India, Australia and South Korea.

Tensions between the Koreas (Democratic Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea [ROK]): Following the armistice agreement of 1953, the Korean War hostilities stopped, but technically, the war has never ended. It remains a potential flashpoint between the two heavily armed Koreas, with continuous missile launches and tests that undermine the denuclearisation efforts on the Korean Peninsula while affecting peace and stability in the region.

There are notable global partnerships involving key countries in the region that are aimed at enhancing connectivity, trade, development and regional stability. These formations could be viewed as part of the Indo-Pacific strategy driven by the key players in the region. These formations include:

- The **Quad initiative** is a military and consultative alliance between the US, India, Japan and Australia, aimed at enhancing regional security and foster cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- The **AUKUS** is a trilateral pact that aims to deepen diplomatic, security and defence cooperation between Australia, the UK and the US, focussed on the Indo-Pacific region. Recently, in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, Australia and New Zealand, who enjoy active security and bilateral political relations with the US, have sided with the latter in the Houthi conflict. This affirms the possible future foreign policy and security orientation of these two countries.
- The **Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP)**, involving Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the US and the UK was announced as another new Pacific initiative, with focus on climate change, logistics, infrastructure, maritime territorial security, health and education.
- The **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)** is known as a mechanism to build economic cooperation and integration in the Indo-Pacific, comprising 14 members including Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the ROK.
- The **Five Eyes** which is regarded as the intelligence sharing network involving Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK and the US.

South Africa needs to carefully balance its national interests with the two major powers and strategic partners involved in these formations and devise a responsive strategy especially for possible discussion and collaboration within the context of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). South Africa may need to reflect on its level of engagement with Australia given the country's strategic location in the Asia-Pacific and strong diplomatic network for trade, diplomatic and security interests.

South Africa and the countries in the region share common interests in numerous global affairs, enabling cooperation and strengthening the voice of developing countries. Mutual collaborations have seen positive expression and influence in multilateral fora, such as the UN, G20, IORA and BRICS, and other South-South cooperation initiatives. Major countries in the region are active role-players in the global multilateral system and are UN contributors for peacekeeping missions in Africa.

Based on the latest UN estimates of February 2024, the population of the region stands at 1.7 billion people, with a growing middle class. The region is economically vibrant and is home to four G20 member countries and OECD. The Asia Pacific region remains a key driver of global economic growth and is expected to grow by 4.2% in 2024 which is relatively lower than the 4.6% growth in 2023 due to China's projected relative economic slowdown. Their positions in the global economy are as follows: China (second largest); Japan (third largest); Republic of Korea (10th largest); and Australia (13th largest).

The region is a leader in high tech industries and overall, the business environment is stable. There are large economies in the region that are major investors in South Africa (i.e., China, Japan, South Korea and Australia). Increasingly, investments from the region are in critical sectors that serve to build South Africa's domestic industrial, manufacturing, scientific and education and training capacities, ultimately contributing towards economic growth, development and employment creation.

The total bilateral trade between South Africa and the countries in the region amounts to R946 billion. The region represents a major growing market for value-added South African exports, especially within the manufacturing and consumer goods sectors. Key current exports are mineral products, iron and steel, wood, pulp and paper, textiles, and chemicals. Further areas of envisaged expansion include financial services, mining equipment and technology, agro-processing, defence procurement, ICT, pharmaceutical production and technology transfer.

CHINA

China's domestic and foreign policies are characterised by the "Xi Jinping Thought". President Xi Jinping's vision for China's economy is based on emphasising internal stability and collective prosperity and accepts that the high growth of the past twenty years, which was driven by infrastructure and housing development, as well as external trade, needs to normalise.

New emphasis on internal market expansion, less on exports.

China will shift towards self-sufficiency and selfreliance while modernising the Chinese economy to rely more on sustainable growth, centred on the domestic economy's internal commerce, goods and services. His doctrine for the future of China has been set at the centre of China's domestic and foreign policies.

South Africa and China have close relations based on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, involving many areas of bilateral technical cooperation that are grounded in the Ten-Year Strategic Programme of Action (2020-29), and various proposed FOCAC projects. This presents an opportunity for South Africa to leverage on the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership level with China to advance foreign policy interests.

China has increasingly taken an approach that emphasises greater global assertiveness in foreign policy.

Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China as a global leader has moved away from an insular, inward-looking stance to a more assertive outward-looking stance, particularly concerning Asia, the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East, and Africa.

China's rise has resulted in increased tensions with the West, led by the US, which has traditionally been a hegemon over the regions of the Pacific, Indian Ocean, the Middle East, and globally, creating the grounds for possibly characterising the situation in the rubric of the Thucydides Trap.

China's newfound political, economic and military weight allows it to redefine its geostrategic relations internationally.

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is at the centre of China's modern foreign policy. It has the intention to re-connect Asian and European countries along the ancient Silk Route, as well as African countries through maritime and digital links, with China at the centre. Its aim is to promote mutually beneficial international cooperation; however, it is also a vehicle for the extension of China's regional and global ambitions and influence.

China proposed global initiatives (Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilisation Initiative and the International Organisation for Mediation) as alternatives to traditional international bodies, sometimes parallel with the UN and other existing multilateral organisations. China continues to place importance on its relations with the global developing South, including Africa, which it sees as vitally important in terms of political support in multilateral for a.

South Africa and China's foreign policy objectives do overlap when it comes to the goal of establishing a multipolar world that delivers greater equality in terms of development, mutual economic benefit and reform of the global governance architecture.

South Africa does have access to China's leadership and the opportunity to:

- influence China's multilateral positions in relation to global tensions, reform of the international governance architecture, and in particular the reform of the UN Security Council.
- Contribute to the NDP and MTSF through the effective and efficient delivery of diplomacy with China through bilateral political, economic, social, technical cooperation, as well as through multilateral cooperation.

Trade:

The South Africa-China total volume of bilateral trade has exhibited substantial growth, up from R544 billion in 2021 to R615 billion in 2022, however, with a growing trade deficit of R150 billion, to South Africa's disadvantage.

There is a need to diversify South Africa's export basket to China with more value-added export products. There is an opportunity to:

- influence the Chinese to address the structure of trade and achieve more mutually beneficial commercial ties
- deliver greater access to the vast Chinese market for South African exported goods
- improve the export basket with more diverse value-added products
- promote South Africa in China as a preferred long-haul tourism destination.

Investment:

Investments from China into South Africa have come through various Chinese companies, including Standard Bank (portfolio investment), Sinosteel, FAW, BAIC, Huawei, Hisense and others.

Currently, there are approximately 42 South African companies, including NASPERS, Anglo American and SABMiller invested in China in various sectors, with many big transactions based on shareholding arrangements.

China supports various infrastructure development projects in South Africa, offering both grants and soft loans, using Chinese companies and expertise, linking them with China's BRI and FOCAC.

There is an opportunity to:

- deliver more sustained and sustainable FDI from China, especially in the automotive and manufacturing sectors, given the focus of the dtic on electric vehicles and battery manufacturing.
- Call on Chinese companies to use South Africa as a manufacturing base and hub for the continent.

Technical cooperation:

- China delivers technical cooperation through FOCAC projects, which are bilaterally implemented, especially large infrastructure projects.
- Many of these projects require South Africa to consider co-funding, loan financing, or to accept smaller seed grants.
- Several major projects are long-outstanding in terms of implementation.

RECOMMENDED SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY vis-à-vis CHINA:

- South African foreign policy is to maintain comprehensive strategic relations with China.
- Bilateral relations to be focussed on:
 - maintenance and strengthening of political relations
 - enrich economic ties
 - enhance people-to-people cooperation
 - provide responsive civic, immigration and consular services

Political relations in the region with South Africa

In terms of South Africa-Japan relations, South Africa will continue to enjoy a central position regarding African affairs, particularly within FOCAC, TICAD, the Korea-Africa Forum, G20 and multilateral contexts, therefore giving South Africa an opportunity to mainstream the African Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) programmes. South Africa and Japan held their 13th Partnership Forum Meeting in October 2022 in Tokyo. Engagements have been strengthened across all sectors of cooperation.

In April 1997, South Africa and the ROK established a Policy Consultative Forum (PCF) at the level of Deputy Minister in structuring bilateral relations and institutionalising regular bilateral meetings. After seven meetings of the PCF between 2002 and 2013, the two countries decided during the eighth meeting of the PCF in 2014 to elevate it to a Joint Cooperation Commission (JCC) at Ministerial level. The Inaugural Ministerial Joint Cooperation Commission (JCC) was held on 11 October 2022, and was indeed another milestone in our relationship.

AUSTRALIA

South Africa and Australia enjoy cordial relations, which are managed through a biennial Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM). The last (i.e. eighth) SOM took place in South Africa in March 2023. During the SOM, specific focus was placed on matters of international concern such as discussions around Australia's regional role in the Pacific, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, the UN Human Rights Council, South Africa's Chairship of

BRICS in 2023, and the G20 in 2025. Since 1994, there have been very few significant high-level visits between the two countries. The most recent high-level visit took place in December 2022, when Australia's Assistant Foreign Minister, Tim Watts, visited South Africa and met with DIRCO's Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini, to discuss the status of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Bilateral economic and trade relations between South Africa and Australia continue to grow. According to 2023 statistics, Australia is South Africa's 23rd largest trading partner, while South Africa is a top 30 trading partner for Australia and its largest and most dynamic market in Africa. In 2023, total trade between the two countries stood at more than R34 billion, with trade being in favour of Australia. Major Australian exports include aluminium and coal, while a major export for South Africa is passenger motor vehicles.

The Australia-South Africa investment relationship is strong and broad, and focus areas are retail, energy, finance, ICT, tourism and property markets. Australian investment in South Africa is estimated at US\$30 billion, which is equivalent to the combined total of the country's investment in Korea, India and Thailand. Major Australian investors in South Africa include mining giants like BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Orion Minerals, South32, Theta Gold and MC Mining, which all have active operations and exploration projects in South Africa.

Australia is perceived as a middle power, but it is also a rising regional power in Oceania and within the rising Indo-Pacific construct. The Indo-Pacific is the cornerstone of Australia's foreign policy as outlined in its White Paper released in 2017. The region is a hub for economic growth, where the various Pacific Island countries rely on Australia's political, economic, humanitarian and security support, as well as where China's influence is growing. Australia perceives itself to be a geostrategic middle power in the Pacific and its defence and security alliance with the US remains an enduring priority, as does comprehensive engagement with countries in the region such as India, Indonesia and Japan.

NEW ZEALAND

Bilateral relations between South Africa and New Zealand are conducted through Senior Officials Meetings (SOMs) which takes place biennially. The next meeting of the SOM will be held in Wellington on a date yet to be determined. In 2023, on the margins of Netball World Cup, Minister Naledi Pandor held a bilateral meeting with her New Zealand counterpart, Honourable Nanaia Mahuta, in Cape Town. The meeting resulted in the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation on bilateral cooperation.

Notwithstanding its relative size, resources and influence on global political affairs, New Zealand is considered to be a middle power in Asia and engages in trade with countries such as China, Australia, the EU, the US and Japan. New Zealand's economy is developed but is comparatively small in the global marketplace. Its economy is linked to the regional economies of Asia and Australia. The strength of New Zealand's economy and trade lies in agriculture and services such as tourism, ICT, retail and wholesale sectors. New Zealand is a strong proponent of free trade areas and uses these instruments to negotiate favourable trade deals across the board.

The economic ties between South Africa and New Zealand have been steadily growing, with the total trade volume amounting to R3 billion. Of this, R1 billion comprises exports from South Africa to New Zealand, while imports from New Zealand stand at R2 billion. While South Africa ranks as New Zealand's 35th export market, it holds the 18th position in terms of tourism. South Africa is ranked as the fourth largest export partner and second largest import partner in Africa by end of 2022 by New Zealand. New Zealand is home to a sizeable South African diaspora.

New Zealand's national security strategy is predicated on its relationship with Australia, which is also rapidly upgrading its defence capabilities, as well as the US which it defines as a "crucial" defence partner in general and "critical for New Zealand's security" in the Indo-Pacific and Pacific regions.

SOUTH ASIA

South Asia comprises the eight countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, the Maldives, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. South Asia is one of the least developed geographic regions. India is the seventh-largest country by surface area; the most populous country as of June 2023, and from the time of its independence in 1947, the world's most populous democracy. According to the IMF, the Indian economy in 2022 was nominally worth US\$3.46 trillion; it was the fifth-largest economy by market exchange rates and is, around US\$11.6 trillion, the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). India's economic liberalisation, growth and rate of development have enabled the country to ensure positive economic performance, opening the Indian market toward globalisation. India's sustained growth trajectory presents an opportunity for South Africa in terms of enhancing the bilateral relationship. Pakistan has the next largest economy in the region. Bangladesh's rapid growth and developmental success make it a significant focus area for South Africa's economic diplomacy in the region. It is important that South Africa is well positioned in this market for future growth and to expand the export basket beyond the export of coal, citrus, apples and pears. Bangladesh is also an increasingly important partner in terms of South-South cooperation and the global development

agenda with joint membership of IORA and the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) creating many opportunities for collaboration.

In the rest of the sub-region, South Africa is playing a constructive role in supporting national reconciliation and nation building in Sri Lanka as the country deals with the legacy of a decades-long civil war. South Africa is also exploring the development of a cooperation agenda with Nepal following the conclusion of a Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in 2022. South Africa maintains significant trade surpluses with the countries of the sub-region due to the export of coals and economic diplomacy efforts are focussed on the expansion of the trade basket with the region.

For the South Asia region, opportunities exist for it to become a much more dynamic economic growth point, which would serve as a link between Asia and the Central Asian states in terms of the promotion of trade and investment between regions. For South Africa, the region would provide access to other regions in terms of trade and market access. However, forced and irregular migration (human smuggling and trafficking) is increasing from the region, in addition to economic migrants and asylum-seekers seeking better opportunities, which has impacted on the South African regulatory enforcement. For example, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States and Maldives have taken strident visa and other measures to deal with the growing problem, especially from Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. The OR Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) acts as an aviation transshipment hub into the SADC region for South Asian illegal migrants; also increased land border crossings into South Africa and its abuse of asylum and refugee processes in South Africa, especially from Bangladesh.

The South Asia region is also characterised by significant pockets of socio-economic and political instability and security threats. Apart from the proliferation of extremism in the region, there are also ongoing and unresolved border disputes, e.g., between China and India and the dispute over the territory of Jammu and Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

The region was and still is an arena of Great Power Contestation. While major powers have been and are probably complicit in the current state of affairs in Afghanistan, they are also closely aligned with either India or Pakistan, thus adding to regional tensions.

CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asia is a region with a mix of upper and low-income countries. It enjoys major strategic importance due to its geographic location i.e, the BRI as well as several important oil pipelines and natural resource endowments.

Most economies in the region are highly dependent on the export of natural resources (oil, gas, gold and copper) and a few other commodities, such as cotton and cashmere. Central Asian countries are realising the importance of diversifying their economies and appear to be making their countries more investor-friendly. It is therefore envisaged that this, together with the infrastructure development brought about by the BRI, may see Central Asia becoming a more important trade partner for countries looking for new export destinations. Russia and China also continue to have considerable influence on the Central Asian economies.

South Africa's presence in the Central Asia region is based on considerations taking the long-term geopolitical dynamics of Central Asia and Asia into account. It is envisaged that relations with the region as it further develops and interconnectivity improves, will be beneficial for South Africa, both in terms of achieving domestic priorities and also in terms of enjoying support for South Africa's multilateral endeavours.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Southeast Asia is an important region for South Africa, both economically and strategically. Economically, Southeast Asia offers a large and growing market for South African exports, such as minerals, agricultural products and manufactured goods. According to the World Bank, South Africa's trade with Southeast Asia increased from US\$7.6 billion in 2010 to US\$12.8 billion in 2019. South Africa also benefits from FDI and tourism from Southeast Asian countries, especially Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Strategically, Southeast Asia is a key partner for South Africa in advancing its interests and values in the global arena. South Africa supports the peaceful resolution of disputes and the stability of the region, especially in the South China Sea. South Africa has established diplomatic relations with all 11 Southeast Asian countries and participates in various regional forums, such as ASEAN and IORA. South Africa also cooperates with Southeast Asian countries in areas such as education, health, science and technology.

Bilateral political engagements provide important tools for the strengthening of global partnerships, among others through structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits, as essential platforms or delivery mechanisms. Servicing outstanding structured bilaterals will be given priority, especially with regard to countries with which South Africa has not had many high-level political engagements in recent years.

Trade and investment promotion to the region

South Africa has important and fast-growing trade partners located in the region and the

main focus remains on shifting the structure of the country's trade with the region to include a greater share of innovative, value-added, manufactured exports. There is potential for South Africa to expand cooperation in trade and investment, manufacturing, food production, especially halaal products, agriculture and forestry in Southeast Asia. The region is a growing consumer of South African fresh produce and considerable attention is given to expanding market access to the region for South African produce. DIRCO engages in the promotion of trade and investment in the absence of the dtic's foreign economic representatives. Additionally, the halaal sector is prioritised in Indonesia, with a population of 231 million Muslims, and Malaysia, a world leader in the certification of halaal products. The global halaal food industry is estimated to be worth US\$3.9 trillion in 2027 and South Africa has identified this sector as a major growth opportunity.

In collaboration with the dtic and Invest South Africa the following countries are targeted for investment promotion: India, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. The following sectors will be targeted for promotion:

- automotive
- agro-processing
- energy
- financial services
- software and IT services
- new technologies
- infrastructure
- defence

Many South African students have benefitted from scholarships and training opportunities provided by a number of countries in the region. The objective of the Branch with regard to cooperation in skills development is to ensure that the programmes on offer in the region are aligned to South Africa's skills development needs as identified by the Department of Higher Education (DHET) in the National Skills Development Strategy. Particular attention is paid to the support of postgraduate studies in the region, as one of the identified needs by DHET. South Africa has benefitted from training provided to government officials under the Singapore Cooperation Programme sponsored by the Singapore Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Many South African public servants have attended training courses in Singapore as part of this initiative. With regard to artisan training, India has established the Gandhi-Mandela Centre of Specialisation for Artisan Skills at the

Tshwane South Technical and Vocational Education Training Campus and has partnered with the DHET to develop a curricula of specialised courses to produce mechanical fitters, boilermakers, electricians and millwrights. The Branch will continue to support the operationalisation of this initiative.

COOPERATION WITH ASEAN

Established in 1967 with five member states, ASEAN today comprises all 10 states of Southeast Asia. According to the World Economic Forum, ASEAN has a combined population of about 680 million, 61% under 35 years old, and a combined GDP of US\$3.2 trillion, effectively making it the third largest economy in Asia and the fifth largest in the world. It is estimated that 50% of ASEAN's population will join the ranks of the middleclass by 2030. ASEAN remains determined to proceed with its blueprints to establish an integrated ASEAN community in the political, security, economic and socio-cultural spheres by 2025, working in collaboration with its external partners.

South Africa has for several years sought to expand and deepen its relations in the Southeast Asia region. Beyond individual bilateral relations, a concerted effort has been made to draw closer to and formalise relations with ASEAN as the preeminent group in the region, which was established to promote economic growth, social progress and cultural development, through multilateral cooperation. In 2020, South Africa signed on to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which is the first and symbolic step towards more concrete cooperation with ASEAN and an important affirmation of shared values between South Africa and ASEAN countries.

In July 2023, South Africa became the eighth country and the first from Africa to be granted the status of Sectoral Dialogue Partner (SDP) at the 56th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM), held from 11 to 12 July 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia (which also accepted in-principle the application of Morocco, which was later formalised in September 2023), having submitted its application for partnership in February 2023. The six existing SDPs are: Brazil, Norway, Pakistan, Switzerland, Türkiye and the UAE.

The inaugural ASEAN-South Africa Joint Sectoral Cooperation Committee Meeting (ASA-JSCC) was held at the ASEAN Secretariat headquarters in Jakarta, Indonesia on 30 November 2023, co-chaired by Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini and a Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN. This was an important milestone in developing the strategic content of South Africa's developing partnership with ASEAN. Cooperation with ASEAN will take place across four pillars of cooperation, namely:

- political and security cooperation
- economic cooperation
- socio-cultural cooperation
- cross-pillar cooperation.

While broad areas for engagement have been identified for South Africa's engagement with ASEAN under these pillars, the strategic content and tangible projects still need to be developed with the national departments. This will be consolidated as a five-year implementable plan, known as the "Practical Cooperation Areas 2024-2028". (PCA)

The focus of operations related to cooperation with ASEAN in 2024/25 will comprise:

- engagement with national departments on the development of cooperation projects with ASEAN
- engagement with national departments to develop the PCA document
- agree and adopt PCA with ASEAN
- feed into interdepartmental planning cycles to ensure project preparation and funding modalities are understood and incorporated in the planning and budgeting of national departments
- develop targets for regular stakeholder engagement
- South Africa to participate in the second ASA-JSCC in 2024.

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

As a formation of the global South, BRICS continues to grow in a dynamic and organic fashion and is highly influenced by geopolitical developments. In 2023, BRICS surpassed the G7 as the largest economic bloc by economic size. Strategic focus of the organisation is often influenced by the Chair of the specific year and in 2024, Russia will focus on further strengthening institutional capacity; delivering on 2023 Summit outcomes such as the partner membership model; and development of mechanisms to trade in its own currency. The bloc continues to grow with expansion from 1 January 2024 to nine permanent members. Institutional improvements with focus on youth and women will continue as the 2023 Summit approved a Youth Council as a significant step forward in terms of institutional development of the bloc. New BRICS members Egypt, Ethiopia, UAE and Iran that will add diversity to the group, which could challenge the policy development environment of BRICS.

IORA has made progress in terms of delivering on the Strategic Plan of the Association. The Association has also evolved through the years and held a High-Level Strategic Dialogue in June 2023. The outcomes of this Dialogue produced the IORA Vision 2030 document which will guide the work and process of IORA during the next few years. South Africa continues to play an important role in the strategic direction of the Association and in the shaping of IORA's Indo-Pacific position. IORA continues to enjoy the support of non-member state countries, which have joined as dialogue partners. The 23rd IORA Council of Ministers meeting held in October 2023 in Sri Lanka witnessed the EU joining as a new dialogue partner. The secretariat will continue to work under the leadership of the current Secretary-General, Ambassador Al Farisi and the new Chair which is Sri Lanka until the end of 2025.

India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA), under the Chairship of Brazil will continue to coordinate IBSA positions and drive similar progressive values in India, Brazil and South Africa. The series of meetings planned by Brazil in 2024 will be strategic in taking forward IBSA's political and strategic ideals. These meetings include, among other, an IBSA Ministerial meeting which took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in February 2024, an IBSA Trilateral Ministerial Commission meeting to take place on the sidelines of UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York and an IBSA Leaders' Summit planned for November 2024 on the sidelines of the G20 Leaders' Summit. Brazil as chair of IBSA has informed that developments on the geopolitical arena could drive IBSA to focus on an outreach programme involving like-minded countries.

IBSA intends to achieve positive outcomes on food security and nutrition by making efforts to strengthen the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and by providing some resources to the CFS Secretariat. IBSA ministers have made known their support for the proposed objectives of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, under consideration within the G20 task force. IBSA will this year raise awareness about the work of the IBSA Fund to leverage South-South cooperation to fight poverty, reduce inequalities and promote food security and nutrition.

During the latest IBSA Ministerial meeting, the ministers addressed issues related to peace; the fight against poverty and hunger; climate change; global governance reform; and sustainable development. It was agreed to expand and promote the IBSA Fund as a South-South cooperation initiative that is currently in 37 countries with 45 projects. IBSA has planned an outreach programme, which will take place during the 2024 IBSA Leaders' Summit. The outreach session will be with selected countries that share IBSA's vision for peace, global governance reform, sustainable development, and the fight against poverty and hunger, as such countries can serve as a bridge for South-South and South-North dialogue and cooperation.

Operation Phakisa's key motto is unlocking the Oceans Economy through localisation and value chain driven analysis, "Leaving no one behind". The purpose is to provide strategic maritime economic development solutions, promote and advance ocean economy activities and provide relevant and workable regional and local economic development solutions. The various Operation Phakisa delivery units are focussed on six priority areas; marine transport and manufacturing; offshore oil and gas; aquaculture; small harbours development; marine protection services and ocean governance; and coastal and marine tourism.

Operation Phakisa therefore gains significance in the backdrop of the current geopolitical strife and instability around the Red Sea. This places a need for new shipping routes, which will impact on South African sea ports. South Africa therefore needs to improve port call efficiencies and coastal security. Operation Phakisa therefore needs to address the port infrastructure deficit urgently.

SYSTEM OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Disarmament and non-proliferation

The current global environment is characterised by a rise in new technologies and increased technological asymmetry; rising terrorism and violent extremism; tensions over the threat of use of nuclear weapons and escalating reliance on nuclear deterrence; threats of the illegal use of force; transnational organised crime; the displacement of populations due to civil conflict, global irregular and illegal migration due to conflicts, poverty and inequality, perpetuated by pandemics and famine brought on by climate change; the rise in populism; tensions over the control of strategic resources; and geopolitical influence and trade wars.

The spectre of nuclear conflict is re-emerging as a distinct possibility following a decades-long hiatus in terms of the threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons (TPNW) is steadily strengthening the norm against nuclear weapons and given the catastrophic humanitarian impact of any use of nuclear weapons, South Africa is working towards promoting the universality of the treaty, which entered into force in January 2021. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), on the other hand, continues to come under strain. Nuclear weapon states and states under extended nuclear security guarantees (umbrella states) are reneging on nuclear disarmament commitments and are primarily focussing on non-proliferation and peaceful uses in a manner that places obligations on non-nuclear-weapon states, while attempting to restrict these states' access to nuclear technologies for peaceful use.

The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONe), with its headquarters in South Africa, is the Secretariat of the African Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) and provides assistance to African states in terms of peaceful uses of nuclear energy as well as the verification thereof, in conjunction with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). AFCONe assures adherence to nuclear security mainly through the verification of reports submitted by states parties to the Pelindaba Treaty on their nuclear activities.

South Africa continues to contribute to capacity-building on the African continent, especially in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In doing so, the country promotes the benefits that disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control hold for international peace and security, particularly for countries in Africa and the developing South.

In terms of biological and chemical weapons, the potential threat of use of these weapons is being further exacerbated by an unstable international environment and persistent conflicts where the threat of use of such weapons remains a reality.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also demonstrated both the devastating human and economic consequences of a global biological outbreak. The danger of the potential use of biological weapons cannot be ignored, making it imperative for countries to be better prepared to quickly react and respond to a biological incident, whether man-made or of natural origin.

South Africa continues to engage in relevant domestic and international control regimes to counter such threats to peace and security and to ensure the country's reputation as a responsible possessor and trader of nuclear, biological and chemical products and related advanced dual-use technologies. South Africa, as a state party to the Convention for the Prohibition of Use of Chemical Weapons (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the NPT and as a member state of the IAEA, remains committed to being a responsible international actor advocating for the peaceful use and transfer of nuclear, chemical and biological products for peaceful purposes and the controlled trade in dual-use items, which actively contribute billions of rands to the South African economy.

In the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, South Africa continues to be guided by the 1994 Cabinet policy, which covers all weapons of mass destruction and extends to concerns relating to conventional weapons. South Africa continues to ensure that unwarranted restrictions are not imposed on the right of developing countries to access material, equipment and technologies required for their development.

Efforts are continuing to promote the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which has the objective of setting the highest possible international standards for regulating the international trade in

conventional arms and seeks to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade and diversion of conventional arms.

In the area of conventional arms, it remains necessary to keep abreast of new developments and emerging technologies in the design and manufacture of such weapons, particularly in global trends in small arms and light weapons, and lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS). There is an urgent need to set international standards on these weapons by prohibiting the production of those that are unreliable and have indiscriminate effects, while ensuring human control during all key stages of deployment, before a large-scale global roll-out of LAWS takes place.

United Nations

With its near universal membership and vast agenda, the UN remains the most important multilateral institution and the centre of global governance. Therefore, engagement with the UN and active participation in its processes is of vital importance to South Africa and the advancement of our foreign policy priorities.

South Africa's engagement with the UN is informed by its belief that engagement at the UN is critical for strengthening multilateralism, but also in the realisation that the UN does not reflect current global political and economic realities. Hence, a key priority in South Africa's engagement with the UN is to advance the reform of the existing global governance architecture to improve its responsiveness to the needs of, and challenges faced by, developing states.

South Africa's participation in the UN is based on its commitment to promote an equitable rules-based multilateral system and is informed by the recognition that the UN does not reflect current global political and economic realities. A key challenge arising from the UN's lack of representatives, especially in the UNSC, is that it faces a crisis of legitimacy and credibility. A key priority in South Africa's engagement with the UN is, therefore, to advance the reform of the existing global governance architecture to improve the voice and representation of Africa and the developing world, as well as the responsiveness of the UN system to the needs of and challenges faced by Africa and developing states.

Crucial processes, which are member-state driven, take place at the General Assembly. The Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda Report*, which deals with cross-cutting issues of peace and security and development, will be debated and negotiated among member states in the General Assembly to arrive at consensus on the recommendations made in this report. The report will culminate in the Summit of the Future (SoTF) on 24 September 2024, with as outcome, the Pact for the Future.

South Africa participates in the Fifth Committee, which deals with administrative and budgetary questions associated with the functioning and funding of the organisation. Participation is critical for the protection of South Africa's national interests, as this committee also deals with financing for peacekeeping, most of which is on the African continent, while SADC hosts the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).

As one of the largest troop and police contributing countries, South Africa ardently defends funding for peacekeeping, which is annually under threat. Participation in all of the sessions of the Fifth Committee, i.e., the Budget Session from October to December, the first resumed session in March (possibly even the last week of February 2024) and the second resumed session, which deals predominantly with funding for peacekeeping, is therefore of continued importance.

South Africa participates in all high-level meetings of the NAM, which it views as a key international obligation. South Africa remains committed to the guiding principles of the NAM, supports consensus-building in developing the positions of this group and prioritises close South-South cooperation as a crucial element to countering the international marginalisation of the developing world. South Africa will continue to utilise its membership of the NAM to further the African Agenda; strengthen South-South cooperation; promote dialogue to achieve sustainable development, international peace and security; promote multilateralism and the Bandung principles; advocate for the strengthening of rules-based global governance systems; and the reform of the UN and its organs.

South Africa will also actively participate in the work of the Commonwealth and attend all high-level meetings, including the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting and the biannual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). South Africa supports the reform of the Commonwealth to focus on priority areas, which will add value as well as strengthen the organisation and raise the profile of the Commonwealth. In view of the current financial environment, South Africa supports the cost-cutting measures implemented at the Commonwealth Secretariat and will work towards more effective and efficient delivery of the objectives of the Commonwealth as set out in the new Strategic Plan, in line with the Commonwealth Charter; the mandates of CHOGM; and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). South Africa will utilise its position as a leading advocate within the Commonwealth to continue to promote the African Agenda; the interests of developing member states; and to monitor the implementation of the mandates given to the Commonwealth Secretariat at CHOGMs at the next CHOGM that will take place in Apia, Samoa in October 2024.

International coordination

As a non-member of the UNSC, South Africa is permitted to participate in open debates as well as Arria-formula meetings of the Security Council. South Africa will continue to follow the work of the council as a non-member. This will ensure that the country stays abreast of all developments on the UNSC's agenda and maintains the institutional capacity and knowledge base derived from the country having served on the council.

Following South Africa's second term (2023 to 2024) on the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) it will continue to remain closely engaged with the work of the PBC, seeking to make a contribution to peacebuilding and sustaining peace using the country's enduring experience in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

South Africa will also continue to participate in meetings of the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonisation Committee) of the General Assembly dealing with peacekeeping, peacebuilding, decolonisation and self-determination of Palestine and Western Sahara and other non-self-governing territories, as well as in the PBC, to advance a multilateral approach in addressing issues related to international peace and security.

Terrorism continues to pose a threat to international peace and security. In the wake of continued terror attacks in different parts of the world and the exploitation of instability and conflict by terrorist groups in pursuit of their agendas, countering international terrorism remains high on the agenda of the UN. South Africa's commitment to combatting international terrorism under the auspices of the UN and the AU is reflected in its participation in the counter-terrorism structures of these organisations, presenting it with an opportunity to promote national and continental positions on this complex and growing agenda.

Transnational organised crime

Transnational organised crime remains a global challenge and a threat to stability, peace, security and sustainable development. It manifests itself in several ways, leaving a window for new and emerging crimes, e.g., cybercrime, illicit trafficking in precious metals, wildlife crime, etc. Money laundering and illicit financial flows constitute fundamental aspects of transnational organised crime, be it corruption, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, terrorism, or other offenses. The international community must take advantage of the existing multilateral system, such as the UN and its organs, in particular the UN Office on Drugs and Crime to develop a coordinated, collaborative and cooperative approach to address this threat through efforts to strengthen the existing conventions and protocols and, if necessary, the development of a universal legal framework.

Combatting transnational organised crime is a shared and common responsibility of all UN member states. Despite its global reach in developing mechanisms, the UN has limitations in responding to the challenges posed by new and emerging threats in the area of transnational organised crime. In respect of the above, it is incumbent upon South Africa and all member states to seize opportunities to network, mobilise, cooperate and lobby towards the development of new mechanisms to deal with these issues. In this regard, South Africa is actively participating in the negotiations of the first-ever UN-based legally binding instrument (Convention) on countering cybercrime.

Equally, enhanced regional and bilateral cooperation of law-enforcement agencies is crucial to promote effective and proactive responses to counter transnational organised crime, including disrupting criminal networks such as in the case of illicit drug trafficking and trafficking in persons.

South Africa is a party to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime, the Convention against Corruption, as well as the three drug control conventions. Furthermore, South Africa is a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (2024 – 2028) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (2024 – 2026).

AFRICAN UNION

South Africa's engagement with the AU remains driven and based on the core mandate and objectives of the Union, which are, to achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa; to promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels, as well as the integration of African economies; and to promote peace, security and stability on the continent. South Africa will continue to host the organs of the AU, namely the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), in terms of the host agreements signed with the AU in this regard.

South Africa has elevated the implementation of Agenda 2063 as one of the foremost priorities in the advancement of the African Agenda. South Africa has utilised its participation in all AU statutory meetings to advocate for and encourage other member states of the AU to align their respective national development plans with Agenda 2063 to ensure coordination and domestication of Africa's aspirations and goals. Agenda 2063 and its implementation is one of South Africa's legacies and shows commitment to advancing the ideals and objectives of the AU. The Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of the AU's Agenda 2063 was officially launched at the 37th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, held in Addis Ababa from 17 to 18 February 2024.

A key flagship project in which South Africa is playing a leading role is the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). The AfCFTA aims to build a single integrated African market of over one billion people with a combined GDP of approximately US\$3.3 trillion. It also aims to boost intra-Africa trade, which currently stands at approximately 16% and to increase Africa's share of world trade, which is estimated to be at 3%. By February 2024, 54 AU member states had signed the AfCFTA, out of which 47 have ratified the treaty, including South Africa, with the exception of one country on the continent. On 11 February 2023, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), comprising South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Eswatini and Lesotho, submitted its Tariff Offer, paving the way for South Africa and its neighbours to reduce tariffs by up to 90% and begin trading with other custom unions on the continent.

For South Africa, as a long-standing member of SACU, the 36th Session was of particular significance because the heads of state and government welcomed the 90% Tariff Offer made by SACU, which is currently being verified. This is a huge milestone for the AfCFTA and for SACU. SACU will henceforth be able to benefit from the AfCFTA and other customs unions were encouraged to do the same. The launch of South Africa's first shipment and preferential trading under the AfCFTA took place on 31 January 2024 at the Port of Durban, marking the official start of South Africa's preferential trading under the AfCFTA. South Africa was the first among the four SACU countries to practically realise the AfCFTA Agreement.

The 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly took stock of the progress made in the implementation of the AfCFTA and adopted the AfCFTA Protocols on Women and Youth in Trade as well as Articles 19 and 21 of the AfCFTA Protocol on Investment. The central theme of the 37th Session of the Assembly was *Educate an Africa Fit for the 21st Century: Building Resilient Education Systems for Increased Access to Inclusive, Lifelong, Quality, and Relevant Learning in Africa*. The AU Heads of State and Government used the launch of the AU theme to underscore the importance of a resilient and quality education system in the realisation of the economic growth and development of the continent.

A key agenda item for the AU heads of state and government is taking place within the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on climate change (CAHOSCC), which is aimed at reaffirming Africa's position on Climate Change as advocated during the COP28 held in the United Arab Emirates.

With reference to the leading role played by South Africa in the AU, during the 37th Assembly, President Ramaphosa presented a report on the progress made in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic on the continent in his capacity as the Champion of the AU's COVID-19 response. As the pandemic is waning on the continent, South Africa work with

the AU Commission in terms of expanding the role of the President to include all other health pandemics that are affecting the continent. Furthermore, President Ramaphosa together with President Azali Assoumani of the Union of the Comoros, as the 2023 AU Chairperson, reported on the successful conclusion of the third AU Men's Conference on *Positive Masculinity in Leadership to End Violence Against Women and Girls* that was hosted in Pretoria on 27 and 28 November 2023.

The Assembly deliberated the status of peace and security on the continent and the consideration of the *Report of the AU Peace and Security Council (AUPSC)*. The discussion took place against the backdrop of great concern regarding the state of peace and security on the continent. The ongoing and concerning trend of the unconstitutional changes of government that have occurred in West Africa as well as the ongoing conflicts in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan, South Sudan and Mozambique featured prominently during the summit. Furthermore, the Summit will consider a report on the progress of the institutional reforms of the AU.

South Africa has noted with concern the new trend of unconstitutional changes of government on the African continent. By February 2024, six AU member states (Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger and Sudan) had been suspended in a period of less than two years for the same reason of unconstitutional change of government. The recent military takeover of governments has literally eroded the democratic gains that the African continent made in the last two to three decades. These setbacks may also affect other developmental aspects in the affected countries. Such negative effects may not be felt or seen immediately, but in the ensuing years. Of major concern has been the prolonged transitions by military leaders. To date, it is still unclear when the elections are going to take place in all six countries that have been suspended by the AU.

As a demonstration of its unwavering commitment to peace, stability, security, respect for human rights, democracy and good governance, South Africa assumed the two-year membership of the AUPSC from April 2022 to March 2024. The country's membership of the AUPSC is in line with DIRCO's vision of championing an African continent, which is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united, and which aspires to a world that is just and equitable. South Africa's membership is also informed by its foreign policy principles pertaining to the commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security as well as to internationally agreed mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts.

These developments have impacted the democratisation of Africa as per Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063 and are in violation of the AU normative frameworks, which condemn unconstitutional changes of government such as the AU Constitutive Act; the Protocol on the Establishment of AUPSC; the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and

Governance; and the Lomé Declaration on the Framework for an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) response to unconstitutional changes of government.

Further to the decision of the 34th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of AU heads of state and government, held on 7 February 2021, declaring the Decade for African Roots and Diaspora for the period 2021 – 2031, Togo was designated as the AU Champion for the Decade. In this regard, South Africa from 4 to 6 December 2023 hosted the Southern Africa Regional Preparatory Conference on the theme: *Pan-Africanism, Science, Knowledge and Technology* to deliberate on digital technology, science and innovation and the establishment of institutional links on the continent alongside collaboration with the Diaspora. This will be part of a series of regional preparatory conferences leading up to the ninth Pan-African Congress, to be convened under the theme: *Renewal of Pan-Africanism and Africa's Place in Global Governance: Mobilising Resources and Reinventing for Action*.

The AUDA-NEPAD serves as the implementation agent for NEPAD which is now transposed into Agenda 2063. It should be recalled that South Africa was one of the key founding members of NEPAD. The support of DIRCO for this continental initiative was created in line with South Africa's foreign policy framework and therefore South Africa continues to engage with this important Agency to ensure that national, regional and continental interests are fully catered to in its work programme.

DIRCO will continue to work closely with the AUDA-NEPAD Technical Working Group on Agenda 2063 with regard to the shaping of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan and tracking implementation during 2024-2025. Consideration would also have to be given to sharing of South African best practices on domestication of Agenda 2063; data collection and analysis; and tax revenue collection systems with other African countries that are lagging behind on implementation and accessing adequate domestic financing.

The AUDA-NEPAD also remains an important vehicle to implement infrastructure programmes on the continent. President Ramaphosa is the Chairperson of the Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (PICI) which aims to enhance infrastructural development in sectors such as transport, ICT, water and sanitation and energy in our country and throughout our region. The identified projects are transformative in nature, having a spill-over effect aimed at enhancing intra-African trade and supporting key value chains through the AfCFTA. DIRCO will continue to engage The Presidency (PICI Focal Point) and the AUDA-NEPAD Infrastructure Unit on regular report-back to the AU Member States on progress regarding infrastructural development in Africa during the 2024/25 period.

As the Second Vice Chair of the AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee for the next two-year period (2022 – 2024), South Africa will play a continental leadership role in shaping active implementation of Agenda 2063 across Africa, inclusive of addressing regional needs through the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and national needs through the NDP. This will also be undertaken through South African membership of the NEPAD Steering Committee during 2024/25.

The APRM is a specialised agency of the AU, established in 2003. It is considered a tool for sharing experiences, reinforcing best practices, identifying deficiencies and assessing capacity-building needs to foster policies, standards and practices that lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated subregional and continental economic integration.

South Africa was one of the first countries to join the APRM in 2003 and has undergone two successful reviews. The most recent review was conducted in 2022 during which South Africa was assessed on democratic and political governance, economic management, corporate governance, socio-economic development and state resilience. As an outcome of the review process, South Africa has been cited for African leadership on strong corporate governance, open budget processes and for the proliferation of corporate social responsibility initiatives. South Africa remains one of only five AU member states to have been successfully reviewed twice.

Furthermore, under the leadership of President Ramaphosa, South Africa assumed a two-year Chairship of the African Peer Review Forum from 2020 to 2022. The forum is the highest decision-making body of the APRM and aims to promote and protect human rights, consolidate democracy and advance good governance and the rule of law among African countries. During the South African Chairship, advancement of women's rights; strong refugee protection; an extensive social welfare net; and having the necessary good governance tools firmly in place to curb unconstitutional changes of government, were key priorities.

Moving forward, following the second peer review of South Africa, the APRM South African National Governing Council is tasked with unpacking and implementing APRM good governance recommendations within a National Plan of Action across all nine provinces of South Africa. The focus areas will address democracy and political governance; economic governance and management; corporate governance; socio-economic development and management; state resilience and preparedness. Cross-cutting issues will address combatting GBV, racism and xenophobia. The enhancement of good governance across all sectors of society, will directly impact upon the successful delivery of our NDP and ERRP. It is envisaged that active implementation of the

recommendations has to be undertaken during 2024/25 and DIRCO will monitor this process through membership of the National Governing Council.

Moving onto African multilateral partnerships, which are coordinated through the AU, these engagements remain a fundamental tool for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its related flagship projects to further strengthen regional and continental integration. During the past year, South Africa successfully participated in the Sixth AU-EU Summit, held in Belgium in February 2022; the Virtual Coordination Meeting for the Implementation of the Outcome of the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC); the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), both held in August 2022; the US-Africa Leaders' Summit in the US in December 2022; the Second Africa-Russia Summit in St Petersburg, Russia, in July 2023; and the Fifth Africa-Arab Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in November 2023.

The year 2024 marks a promising year for South Africa to actively drive the continental agenda with the aim of soliciting support from other development partners. In this regard, the envisaged summits planned for 2024/25; the Fourth Africa-India Summit; as well as possible upgrades of the FOCAC and South Korea-Africa Ministerial Meetings into full summit-level participation will seek to provide African citizens with peace and security, democracy, good governance, a high standard of living, a highly skilled work force, decent jobs and developed and modern economies. In the South African context, this will ensure that the various engagements translate into realistic, time-bound and deliverable projects that address the basic tenets of the NDP, inclusive of addressing domestic challenges related to energy security, youth unemployment and poverty eradication.

HUMAN RIGHTS

South Africa remains firmly committed to multilateralism and a rules-based international order and, to this end, participates and plays an active role in all fora of the UN system and its specialised agencies, funds and programmes, promoting the pillars of multilateral activity, namely: global security, sustainable development, human rights and international law.

Thanks to the enduring support provided by the UN, continental and regional groupings, individual member states and civil-society organisations, South Africa was able to assume its rightful place as a sovereign and responsible state in the family of nations, following its historic transition to freedom and democracy in 1994.

The Freedom Charter has laid a solid foundation for the massive process of rebuilding and reshaping South Africa's society after its transition to freedom and democracy since 1994 to overcome the legacy of apartheid and colonialism. It contains a statement of the core principles directing the struggle for freedom of the people of South Africa. Noteworthy demands in the document include a commitment to non-racialism, democracy and human rights, including that “all people shall have the right to live where they choose, be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security; no one shall go hungry”. And it unequivocally says that “South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation – not war; peace and friendship amongst all its people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all.”

The entrenched Bill of Rights, which is found in Chapter II of the Constitution and is the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa, enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. This applies to all law and binds the Legislature, the Executive, the Judiciary and all organs of state.

South Africa's engagement with the international community is based on the noble ideals of the respect for, and the promotion and protection of, human rights, the rule of law, democratic governance and accountable electoral processes. South Africa has also been involved in UN peacekeeping operations since its democratic transition and firmly supports preventive diplomacy, mediation and the peaceful settlement of all disputes for a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world. South Africa aspires for the world to also enjoy a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. South Africa therefore seeks to uphold its values globally and promote a broad and inclusive international human rights system that includes civil and political, socio-economic and cultural rights for all, everywhere and without discrimination.

South Africa's multilateral engagements are premised on the need to meaningfully and substantively advance foreign policy priorities, and the core constitutional principles and national interests, as reflected in the NDP. To influence the development of international human rights norms and standards, South Africa must be represented at multilateral fora to engage, negotiate and articulate its positions to ultimately have these positions reflected in the outcomes of relevant multilateral meetings and processes. In the context of human rights, in 2006, South Africa demonstrated its commitment to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms when it played an integral role in the transition from the erstwhile Commission on Human Rights to the Human Rights Council (HRC). South Africa was successfully elected to the HRC as a founding member for two consecutive terms from 2005 to 2010. The country was also elected to two additional consecutive terms from 2014 to 2019.

In advancing its mandate for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the branch operates in a highly political environment within the international system, including the human rights ecosystem, which is characterised, for the most part, by competing interests between the countries of the global South, on the one hand, and the global North, on the other. In this highly competitive international system, South Africa finds itself under extreme pressure to take leadership positions in the midst of these competing interests, values and norms, and seeks to operate as a bridge-builder to achieve consensus solutions, wherever this is possible. In the context of the HRC, there exist deep divisions between developing countries and developed countries, particularly on thematic issues and the appropriate approach to be taken with regard to various agenda items, especially country-specific resolutions. The politicisation and double standards inherent in the continuing efforts on the part of some states to misuse the agenda of the council for narrow geopolitical objectives, or securitise the agenda, are cause for concern.

The HRC is the UN's premier rights body, tasked with the responsibility to uphold and advance fundamental freedoms globally. It was created in 2006 and consists of 47 member states, elected via secret ballot by the majority of UN General Assembly members.

To ensure equitable geographical distribution, the HRC seats are distributed among regional groups of states as follows: From Africa (13); Asia-Pacific (13); Eastern European (six); Latin American and Caribbean (eight); and Western European and others (seven).

South Africa took up its current three-year term on the HRC in January 2023, after having received the highest number of votes (182) in elections in the UN General Assembly in October 2022. This was a strong expression by the international community of a vote of confidence and belief in South Africa's credentials in the human rights field.

In serving on the HRC, South Africa has consistently sought to play a key and active role in the development of international human rights and humanitarian law, focussing on the maximum protection of victims of human rights abuses and violations, including adequate remedies and the combatting of impunity.

To have a successful term on the HRC, South Africa needs to ensure well-coordinated and fully resourced participation in the work and meetings of the council. The council holds no fewer than three regular sessions a year, for a total of at least 10 weeks. They take place from February to March, June to July, and September to October. Typically, sessions can be three, four or five weeks long, depending on the programme of work. When South Africa was not a member of the council, the department could afford to be strategically selective when considering which of the resolutions to focus on in the

negotiations. Now, as a member of the HRC, with a vote, South Africa is required to participate fully in all the negotiations, with the objective of influencing the outcome and, most importantly, to take decisions on how to vote on the final text of the resolutions. On average, each council session considers approximately 30 to 40 resolutions, with various negotiation processes running concurrently. In this context, throughout the duration of each session, South Africa is consistently lobbied by penholders of resolutions, as does South Africa, in turn, lobby others on the resolutions that South Africa is championing, both at the HRC in Geneva and the Third Committee of the General Assembly in New York.

South Africa's overall approach to human rights is informed by the widely accepted principles of the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights, as adopted by consensus at the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, and as expressed in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA). South Africa will cooperate with partners to promote and protect human rights and ensure the progressive realisation and fulfilment of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights.

Priorities for South Africa in its participation in the work and meetings of the HRC include:

- To strengthen the mandate of the council and ensure that it keeps on its agenda issues of concern and interest to South Africa. It is important for South Africa that the council remains true to its mandate because some countries continue to use the various HRC agenda items to pursue narrow economic, political, military and strategic objectives on the pretext of “promoting and protecting human rights”.
- To ensure that the council gives equal attention to all human rights: civil, political, economic, social and cultural, respectively, given the approach by some states (particularly in the West) to continue to emphasise the “primacy” of civil and political rights over economic, social and cultural rights. This is important, as South Africa subscribes fully to the understanding that all human rights are indivisible, interrelated and interconnected (as confirmed by the VDPA). Moreover, in the case of South Africa, these rights are justiciable.
- To advance or promote and protect human rights (including the rights of women, children and persons with disabilities). In this context, to work towards the elimination of GBV and protect fundamental rights of migrants, refugees, children and other persons of concern.
- To ensure that the council remains faithful to multilateralism and a rules-based approach to human rights, as opposed to current attempts by some states to pursue unilateral action (for example, the imposition of unilateral coercive

measures (UCMs) under the rubric of the protection of human rights. South Africa is committed to advocating for an end to the imposition of UCMs by some Western states, on developing countries, to forcibly impose their agenda. From South Africa's perspective, the imposition of these measures has a detrimental impact on the enjoyment of human rights by citizens of affected countries.

- To focus on maintaining the commitment of the council to the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, with specific emphasis on the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA). This is important for South Africa, given the increased efforts by some states to “push back” on the fight against racism. Other DDPA-related areas of importance include supporting implementation and follow-up to the programme of activities of the Decade for People of African Descent (2015 – 2024) and support for the activities and programmes of the Forum on People of African Descent. In this context, South Africa seeks to play a key role in the negotiations on the Declaration on the Rights of People of African Descent.
- To ensure that the question of Palestine remains prominent on the agenda (Item Seven) of the council and thwart current efforts led by the US and its allies to try and remove the question of Palestine from the agenda. This is important for South Africa, because, as a beneficiary of international support during the liberation struggle for freedom and democracy, South Africa is committed to continue to support and call for the full realisation of the right to self-determination of the people of Palestine and Western Sahara.
- To continue to support the work of the open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group with a mandate to develop a regulatory oversight framework over the activities of private military and security companies.
- To continue to support efforts to develop an international legally binding instrument (treaty) on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.
- To continue to contribute to efforts to conclude the Draft Convention on the Right to Development, given the urgent need for a legal framework to realise development and put the world back on track to meet the SDGs.

HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

South Africa continues to operate in a context characterised by complex and protracted humanitarian crises across the world, a global multilateral system where humanitarian access is a challenge for humanitarian actors due to restrictions brought about by non-compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL), unilateral coercive measures, unsafe conditions on the ground and insufficient resources to cover humanitarian needs.

South Africa continues to be the largest recipient of migrants in the southern Africa region. South Africa's national interests therefore depends on the promotion of its values in the areas of humanitarian diplomacy, IHL, international law of protection (refugees), migration, internally displaced persons, food security and nutrition, disaster reduction and humanitarian assistance within the multilateral system of global governance through influencing norms and standards. Millions of people, especially in Africa, face famine-like conditions due to climate shocks and sudden onset of disasters, droughts and the El Nino phenomenon. The intersection between food and trade, health, economy and security, among others, places a demand on continued coordination in addressing the nexus of peace, development and humanitarian action and IHL.

In October 2023, South Africa was elected by acclamation to chair the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) for the period 2023 - 2025, representing the Africa region within the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This is a strategic position that will be constructive in advancing the committee's mandate of achieving food security, nutrition and promoting healthy lives for all in line with the aspirations outlined in the Agenda 2063 and UNSDG 2, with Africa experiencing the negative impact of food insecurity.

MULTILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS

The post-COVID-19 multilateral trade environment continues to be impacted by various challenges, including supply-chain constraints that undermine global industrial production resulting in a shortage of essential raw materials, giving rise to high fuel and food prices and causing turbulence in global financial and commodity markets that threaten global economic recovery. A combination of these global factors has negatively impacted South Africa and the rest of the developing countries' economic recovery strategies.

South Africa seeks to ameliorate the impact of these global challenges by engaging the following key international organisations: World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), International Renewable Energy Agency

(IRENA). The aim being to achieve a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system that contributes to growth, sustainable development and employment generation in all sectors, as well as guarding against the risk of global fragmentation and a collapse in global cooperation. This is done in close partnership with the following national departments: the dtic; Department of Science and Innovation (DSI); and the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE).

Amid the ongoing adverse impact of the world economic crisis on development, global cooperation is key to ensuring a coordinated approach to global economic recovery. South Africa further seeks to influence the global discourse and proceedings by engaging strategic international organisations such as the World Economic Forum, UN World Trade Organisation; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, World Customs Organisation, and the International Labour Organisation to ensure that the outcomes of their deliberations support strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth and reaffirming the need to work cooperatively to meet global development commitments and in particular the needs of South Africa and Africa.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

South Africa actively participates in multilateral fora dealing with processes and discourse in respect of economic development. South Africa is frequently seen as a champion for developing countries, particularly in the G20, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the UN bodies and agencies dealing with international economic and financial governance issues.

The multilateral environment remains under threat from unilateralist tendencies, protectionism, an anti-globalisation sentiment, the securitisation of the developmental agenda, a gradual erosion of multilateral programmes and agenda setting due to increased reliance on extra budgetary/earmarked funding. Consequently, South Africa seeks to influence this environment through active participation in the system of global governance, while also honouring all membership obligations.

South Africa, along with 18 other countries, as well as the AU and the EU, is a permanent member of the G20. The G20 was established in 1999 to bring strategic industrialised and developing economies together to discuss key issues in the global economy. The focus was on sustainable development and bringing stability to the global financial system, as well as promoting long-term sustainable growth and strengthening global economic governance. In this regard, the G20 has been identified as the "premier global forum for international economic and financial cooperation". South Africa's participation in the G20 is guided by the four strategic foreign policy pillars of our Republic which are:

- advancing national interests to attain domestic objectives
- enhancing the African agenda and promoting Africa's sustainable development
- South-South Cooperation
- influencing the global multilateral architecture by advancing the agenda of the South through North-South Dialogue.

South Africa's participation in the G20 would therefore seek to contribute towards the key outcomes of the MTSF 2019-2024 and the NDP as the basis for its strategic approach to the G20. South Africa's participation in the G20 further seeks to provide strategic direction in establishing an economic and financial international policy platform that will drive and negotiate the best possible outcomes for South Africa, Africa and the developing world.

The G20 remains an important catalyst for global economic and financial recovery from the pandemic and to lift the collective G20 GDP for inclusive growth. The G20's top priorities include access to vaccines, global economic recovery, job creation and the promotion of inclusive and reduce inequalities.

South Africa will assume the G20 Chair in November 2024 after the summit in Brazil, through to the summit in South Africa in late 2025. This will be the first time that an African country chairs the G20 and hosts a G20 Summit. South Africa will seek to leverage its presidency of the G20 to support the African Agenda and the implementation of the AU's 2063 Agenda and the UN's Agenda 2030.

United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF)

At a country level, South Africa engages with the United Nations through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2020-2025, which is an important planning, implementing and evaluating instrument to guide the five-year cycle of the collective UN development activities and operations in South Africa. Central to the development process of the Cooperation Framework, has been the guiding principles of national ownership, that it be anchored in national development priorities (incl. the MTSF 2019-2024, the NDP: Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals). With this framework, the UN Country Team seeks to realise the UN Secretary-General's reform at country level, through improving coordination, integration and efficiency for real transformative impact for all people in South Africa.

The Governance Framework of the UNSDCF makes provision for an annual review process led by the Minister of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

(DPME), supported by an Inter-Ministerial Committee (DIRCO, NT, COGTA) and other relevant ministers. The review process extends to three tiers of government, including a technical level. Although not a direct partner in implementation of the Framework, DIRCO as the custodian of the UN presence in South Africa, will form part of the annual review process. The Minister through an Inter-Ministerial Committee chaired by the Minister of DPME will also be called upon to review the annual report presented by the Resident Coordinator (RC) on implementation of the UNSDCF.

Financial action task force (FATF)

South Africa's participation at the FATF Plenary is guided by its foreign policy objectives. South Africa participates in the Joint FATF Plenary and Working Group Meetings as part of the South African delegation that includes senior officials from NT, the Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC), the Department of Justice, the National Prosecuting Authority, the State Security Agency (SSA), the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) and the South African Revenue Service (SARS).

South Africa underwent a mutual evaluation (Peer Review) of its Anti Money Laundering and Combatting Terrorism Financing (AML/CFT) system by the FATF in April 2019 and June 2021, with the final mutual evaluation report being finalised and published in October 2021. Since then, South Africa has been working resolutely to address deficiencies that were identified in the mutual evaluation report. Part of the remedial efforts included the amendment of six laws that are key to the effectiveness of South Africa's AML/CFT measures. South Africa was greylisted by FATF in February 2023. The multi-sectoral task team that has been appointed by the President continues to work on the deficiencies identified by FATF in the peer review report in an endeavour for South Africa to exit the FATF grey list in two years.

South-South cooperation (SSC)

South-South Cooperation is increasingly critical to bolstering the productive capacities of developing countries and has positive impacts on trade and financial flows, technological capabilities, and economic growth, and reinforces the importance of global partnerships.

More recently, SSC has gained greater attention in the international agenda in several key outcomes. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for instance, adopted in 2015, under Goal 17, highlights the importance of SSC as a complement to global efforts on development. Also, the UN Secretary-General report on the repositioning of the UN development system (A/72/684–E/2018/7), called for greater support to and leverage

SCC. Furthermore, the importance of SSC was also emphasised in some other key major frameworks such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

Kimberley Process (KP)

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was created in 2003 to bring about transparency and integrity in the global trade of rough diamonds through the elimination of trade in conflict diamonds. The KP brings together all rough diamond trade stakeholders, including governments; civil society, represented by the Civil Society Coalition; and the diamond industry, represented by the World Diamond Council. Governments are referred to as Participants, while civil society and the industry are Observers.

South Africa remains committed to upholding the integrity and credibility of the KPCS and ensuring that the KP remains relevant, given that South Africa was one of the southern African diamond-producing countries that initiated the process of consultation on how to deal with the problem of conflict diamonds prevailing at the time, which eventually gave rise to the KP. South Africa is the current Chair the Working Group on Monitoring which is mandated to monitor and assess implementation of the KP by all participants against the Certification Scheme's statutes and procedures.

DIRCO provides key political support to the KP Team of South Africa and actively participates in the UN processes and resolutions.

Climate change, environment, science and technology

In the context of climate change, environment, science and technology, South Africa seeks to defend and promote the right to development as well as the development space of African and other developing countries. In all its engagements, South Africa continues to defend and promote rules-based multilateralism, including respect for rules of procedure, mandate fidelity and keeping technical bodies depoliticised and focussed on their development mandates as possible. South Africa also advocates for the progressive development of international law, norms and standards on sustainable development that take into account the national circumstances and capacities of African and other developing countries; and in all its multilateral engagements, strives to keep development at the centre of global attention in this Decade of Action of the UN's 2030 Agenda.

Climate change

Climate change is a global sustainable development challenge that can only realistically be addressed collectively and through a rules-based multilateral regime centred on the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the UNFCCC that is based on science, equity and differentiation of action and support between countries with very different national circumstances. South Africa is currently confronted by poor economic growth, which is compounded by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, severe energy challenges and increasing strain on the natural resource-based industries. Despite not being responsible for causing climate change, Africa is particularly vulnerable to its impacts which exacerbates these socio-economic challenges while offering opportunities for the transition of the global economy towards a lower carbon future.

Climate change negotiations have become a platform where strategic and cross-cutting issues are raised which are of interest to developing countries, such as fossil fuel phase-down. Unilateral measures that further distort already profoundly unfair global trade have taken centre stage posing a threat to trade, sustainable development and just transitions of developing countries, including by reversing financial flows from the global South to the global North. DIRCO contributes to multilateral negotiations, foreign policy advice and supports the implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement. Addressing the triple challenge of poverty, unemployment and inequality informs the approach in dealing with climate change through building resilience that strengthens development. South Africa's foreign policy locates climate and environment action in the context of its just transitions and sustainable development, leaving no one and no place behind. Cabinet adopted a National Framework for Just Transition and South Africa is also working with international partners to secure support for the implementation of our Just Transition Investment Plan (JET-IP). South Africa's climate commitments will be implemented in a manner that both addresses our current energy crisis and strengthens our efforts to reduce poverty, inequality and unemployment. South Africa's JET-IP therefore focusses on expanding investment in transmission networks, investment in new energy vehicles and harnessing the potential of the green hydrogen economy. The country's active participation in the Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) group and its prominent role in the AU's Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), as well as the Group 77 and China, necessitates that South Africa plays a key role in advancing, nationally and through the UNFCCC, not only its own interests but also those of fellow African and other developing countries.

Marine and Antarctica

South Africa is firmly committed to finding multilateral solutions to issues of oceans governance, such as addressing the global challenges of protecting areas beyond national jurisdiction; marine litter; illegal wildlife trade; illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; as well as unlocking the benefits of deep seabed mining within the country's exclusive economic zone including within the expanded continental shelf. In this regard, South Africa continues strengthening multilateral cooperation in all these spheres and works with relevant multilateral institutions, such as the International Seabed Authority and the International Maritime Organisation.

South Africa supports the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 of the UN Agenda 2030, which seeks to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources for sustainable development, thereby ensuring the minimisation of the adverse impact of climate change, including ocean acidification, overfishing and marine pollution that are jeopardising recent gains made in protecting portions of the world's oceans. In protecting the objectives of SDG 14, South Africa utilises a multi-disciplinary approach of research, governance, healthy oceans and its marine resources to support government processes for unlocking the economic potential of the oceans and its resources, including recognising the prospects of economic gains that would assist the country to identify new and emerging sectors for skills development, job creation and ultimately the alleviation of inequality and poverty nationwide. To give momentum to the above national priorities, the South African Government initiated Operation Phakisa as a fast-tracking mechanism to implement programmes aimed at unlocking the oceans' sustainable economic development.

Sustainable development and environmental conservation

South Africa engages on matters of environmental conservation, safe and sound management of chemicals and terrestrial pollution in relevant fora under the auspices of the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The objective is to promote national interests and the interests of Africa and other developing countries to ensure improved implementation and multilateral governance in these areas. South Africa's National Interest in this field includes, but is not limited to:

- optimising the contribution of the environmental sector to social and economic development

- safeguarding and enhancing ecological/environmental integrity
- facilitating and supporting social transformation in these sectors
- progressively influencing the global agenda on sustainable development universally and specifically environmental management for development.

South Africa remains committed to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, in particular the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions as an overarching objective for achieving sustainable development and the commitment to leave no one and no place behind.

The crises confronting our natural world and indeed the future of humanity as we know it – climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution – threaten the environment on which we depend and weaken our economic and social systems.

In addressing global environmental challenges, South Africa is guided by the Rio Principles, in particular equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. This longstanding principle emanates from the 1992 Rio Conference and has been increasingly under attack from the global North since its adoption, as well as its affirmation in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is so well established in the UNFCCC and MEAs that it is regarded by many as a customary principle of international law and yet even there it is contested. The principle finds expression as Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR&RC) in light of national circumstances and is linked to the guiding principle of equity or fairness between nations.

While no country, rich or poor, is spared from the negative impacts of the current global crises, it is critical that there is due recognition of the uniquely devastating consequences for African and developing countries alike, with significant socio-economic fallout which is reflected in raised unemployment, income losses, decline in exports and a sharp decline in GDP growth rates, further exacerbating income inequalities.

The ability of developing countries to address global crises depend in large on adequate provision of predictable, appropriate and accessible means of implementation support. Domestic resources alone are entirely insufficient and for the African continent and developing countries, means of implementation, including capacity development, appropriate technology transfer and financial resources are critical to addressing the environmental challenges faced today and to achieve the 2030 SDGs and African Agenda 2063.

Science and Technology

South Africa is of the view that science and technology plays a fundamental role in driving sustainable development and is likely to be one of the most important factors in determining whether humanity will succeed in tackling some of its greatest challenges such as climate change; ensuring access to clean water for all; eliminating poverty; meeting global health needs while simultaneously protecting biodiversity; and developing alternative sources of renewable energy. Science and technology has the ability to unlock new opportunities for achieving environmental sustainability by changing production processes and product designs, changing consumption patterns, and improving resource efficiency; all of which are needed to achieve a sustainable future. In the context of science and technology, at a multilateral level, South Africa's key international engagements are within the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Universal Postal Union (UPU), the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) as well as the Internet Governance Forum. Engagements across these platforms bolster South Africa's influence in the field of science and technology to support the country's economic and social growth, increase employment, and contribute towards gender and youth empowerment. This is particularly relevant as South Africa engages across various fora to promote its interests and those of the African continent in terms of digitisation and the 4IR.

South Africa recognises that the 4IR is a strategically important issue that will affect the future of developing countries and their respective populations. Countries and communities that do not have the required skills, including ICT and digital capacity, will continue to lag behind their more affluent counterparts. Recent surveys have indicated that without the technical skills to keep pace with developments in 4IR, the African continent and the developing world at large will again find themselves straggling behind, as was the case with the first, second and third IRs. The result will be high levels of poverty and unemployment. To mitigate this, South Africa will continue to engage across multiple fora to craft a comprehensive response to the 4IR that addresses the needs and interests of the developing world.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Global Health

The relevance and prominence of the nexus between foreign policy and global health issues, and the need to promote synergies between them, are significant and growing. Foreign policy can sustain political momentum, advance cooperation and find solutions to health and other global challenges based on the principles of global solidarity and equity.

South Africa supports the sustainable development of particularly the countries of the South by building the requisite national, regional and continental institutions and capacities needed to combat global health challenges to meet the SDGs, including delivering universal health coverage (UHC) with primary healthcare at its core, and in strengthening pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPPR).

Given that the COVID-19 pandemic is no longer considered a global health emergency, it will be important to ensure that the global focus on building systems and capacities of developing countries to prevent, prepare and respond to future pandemics is not diverted to other pressing issues that are drawing the world's focus currently.

South Africa continues to see the WHO as the leading global institution to take forward issues of global health aimed at achieving the SDGs, including delivering UHC with primary healthcare at its core and in strengthening PPPR.

South Africa welcomes the opportunities presented by global processes, including, but not limited to, the negotiations for the global Pandemic Agreement and amended International Health Regulations by May 2024. To this end, South Africa supports and participates actively in the discussions as a member of the African region in the WHO's Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) and Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (WGIHR) whose meetings take place concurrently. South Africa sees the instrument as an opportunity to legally bind countries to collaborate, cooperate, account to each other as well as stand together in solidarity in promoting and ensuring equal and equitable access by all countries to health products (including vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics) and a benefit-sharing system for pathogens and data to prepare for and deal with future pandemics. These include basic health systems strengthening, building capacity, technology transfer and know-how for regional manufacturing and important issues of finance (both domestic and global) and governance which must consider regional perspectives.

South Africa will hand over the Chairship of the Foreign Policy and Global Health (FPGH) initiative to Thailand in 2024. As the former Chair of the FPGH, South Africa will continue to emphasise the importance of placing the achievement of UHC at the highest political level, and in advocating for cross-regional approaches to health issues, including pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. To this end, South Africa will continue to support the annual meetings of FPGH health ministers on the margins of the World Health Assembly in May 2024 and the foreign ministers on the margins of the UNGA79 in September 2024. Furthermore, South Africa will aim to support the progression of the annual UNGA Resolution on global health and foreign policy to be negotiated at Geneva and concluded in New York prior to adoption at the UN General Assembly.

South Africa continues to play a leading role on the continent as well as in the international arena on global initiatives to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic i.e., In addition to his role as the AU's COVID-19 Champion, President Ramaphosa's was appointed as permanent Co-Chair alongside the Prime Minister of Norway of the High-level Facilitation Council on the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) by the WHO. The future work of the ACT-A can assist the WHO in dealing with future PPPR.

South Africa also participates in the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility initiative to optimise vaccine development and use. South Africa is also home to the first WHO mRNA-COVID-19 Vaccine Manufacturing Hub on the continent, which will allow developing countries to produce COVID-19 vaccines.

The Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) or “Pandemic Fund” was formally launched in September 2022. The fund was developed with broad support from members of the G20 and beyond. The fund aims to provide a dedicated stream of additional, long-term financing to strengthen PPPR capabilities in low- and middle-income countries and to address critical gaps through investments and technical support at the national, regional and global levels. This fund is an important multilateral initiative to strengthen collective global health preparedness after the ACT-A mandate has ended and WHO member states are negotiating an international instrument for PPPR.

The COVID-19 pandemic also brought to the fore the importance of continuing to fight for the full implementation of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Public Health flexibilities, which centre on improving transparency of markets for medicines, vaccines and other health products. South Africa supported efforts to advance affordable and accessible COVID-19 vaccines and their intellectual property through the TRIPS Waiver proposal at the WTO. The proposal covers health products and technologies, including vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics, among others. At the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference on 17 June 2022 in Geneva, Switzerland, an agreement was reached on key issues such as pandemic response and the TRIPS Waiver related to COVID-19. The agreement allows governments to authorise local manufacturers to produce vaccines or their ingredients, substances or elements and utilise processes, which are covered by patents, without the permission of the patent holders during the pandemic. Although the WTO adopted a decision to remove Intellectual Property (IP) barriers around patents for COVID-19 vaccines, the lack of access to the equally critical diagnostics and therapeutics currently and in future still need to be addressed.

The goal of eradicating HIV/AIDS by 2030 remains one of the most important concerns for South Africa in global health and supports the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria.

SOCIAL AND POPULATION DEVELOPMENT AND UNESCO

The continued global concern regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the health of the population, economic activity and social systems/outcomes requires steadfast commitment to governance and policy thinking and planning around the SDGs. Given the widespread negative impact on many countries' pursuit of sustainable development, the conclusion and adoption of the UNSDCF 2020-2024 for South Africa, including the UNFPA's Fifth Country Programme (2020-2025), as envisaged in June 2020, provides an opportunity to gather all resources, including expertise on best practices, project management capacities, budgeting and pooled financing capacities to minimise the impact of any possible losses. It is important to ensure that the Cooperation Framework is sound and is inclusive of the priorities of the Government on all matters along the three pillars of sustainable development i.e., economic, social and environmental. As such, there is a need to acknowledge that the partnership between Government and the UN Country Team's (UNCT) 17 funds, programmes and agencies resident and operating in South Africa must gain prominence in response to the consequences of the pandemic at a domestic and regional level.

South Africa must strengthen coordination and national stakeholder engagement on social development matters to optimally promote and advocate for social development issues to remain on the international agenda in pursuit of South Africa's foreign policy objectives. South Africa must continue to embark on numerous efforts to tackle societal challenges by making provision through a dedicated national budget on the social wage, i.e., the combined public spending on health, education, housing, social protection, transport, employment and local amenities. The social wage will continue to take up the biggest share of the country's budget in support of poor households. Among the efforts to reduce inequality, South Africa will continue to implement higher social spending programmes and targeted government transfers through the various social grants, reaching eligible children, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Population dynamics are also important to any sustainable development strategy that a country seeks to implement. One of the challenges that has emerged since COVID-19 was classified as a global pandemic by the WHO on 11 March 2020 has been in terms of health services disruption, specifically the threat to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) outcomes. This may have an implication on fertility with a possible increase in unmet need for family planning during the pandemic. Further, it is also emerging that there has been an increase of unwanted teenage pregnancies in some countries due to the closure of SRHR service delivery points and the reduced visitation by potential users of SRHR services. The 30th anniversary on the International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) provides an opportunity for not only the country but also the greater international community to take stock of the progress made since as well

as the gaps that still need to be addressed.

Geopolitical tensions continue to impact the work undertaken with the various international bodies that deal with social, population, education, scientific and cultural matters. Over the last two years we have seen a steady erosion of the will to seek an outcome, especially within the Commission on Social Development (CSocD), Commission on Population Development (CPD) and the Social Development Agenda item within the 3rd Committee. Member states are increasingly entrenched in their position on key terms, including gender; right to development; multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; and family. This has resulted in discussions either being halted or a resolution adopted with weak language. Therefore, as we look forward to the 30th anniversary of the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action in February 2025, it is imperative that South Africa reassess its priorities within the Social Development Agenda item in order to positively impact the upcoming World Social Summit in 2025.

Similarly, within UNESCO, the US' readmission to the organisation has signified a further entrenchment of the division between Western countries and China, as both sides vie for greater influence within the organisation and development across the three sectors. As Africa continues to be occupied with the challenges to development within the space of education and science, it is important that South Africa continues to play a leading role in advocating for the organisation to be refrain from being occupied by geopolitical divisions but remains steadfast in ensuring that progress is made within the programmes of UNESCO, as an effective tool in achieving the SDGs.

4.2 INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Due to the shortfall on the Compensation of Employees (CoE) budget, only the most critical identified critical vacancies can be filled. The high vacancy rate impacts negatively on service delivery and the achievement of the department's mandate. To mitigate the associated risks on the shortfall of the CoE, the department will focus on upskilling, reskilling and where required, redeploying its human resources to critical vacancies, through the introduction of the Cadet Programme for Youth Graduates in line function with the aim to address the aging workforce of the department.

There is generally a rise in mental health conditions due to internal and external factors. The macro socio-economic issues require the department to consider a hybrid work model to ease the financial pressures and stress of employees.

The country's instable electricity supply (loadshedding) necessitates that the department urgently consider a Work-Life balance policy and practice, as well as a flexible working

approach. Fatigue and burnout of Employee Health and Wellness (EHW) practitioners, due to lack of adequate capacity and budgetary constraints impede service delivery such as mission interventions.

There is still some degree of non-compliance with the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) policy and procedure and poor quality of performance management documents submitted by employees at all levels. There is a need for all employees, including SMS members, to be sensitised and capacitated on PMDS and consequence management. Since 2019/20, the department has not been able to comply with the directive on youth development programmes regarding the employment of youth onto internship and learnership programmes due to financial constraints. The department is embarking on partnerships with external stakeholders to fund the implementation of youth development programmes.

The Annual Performance Plan is expected to be delivered in an environment that is still characterised by fiscal constraints, recurring qualified audit outcomes and an information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure that is in urgent need of an upgrade. As part of the Digital Strategy 2020 – 2025, the department has managed to upgrade all missions' tools of trade, which improves the day-to-day service offered by officials. This project has necessitated the department to fast-track the global wide area network project to ensure that bandwidth performance at a mission level is drastically improved. Since the project is in progress, ICT is anticipating that it will be implemented in the 2024/25 financial year. Furthermore, the department is in the process of developing identified systems to improve operations' efficiencies and effectiveness in automating business processes. There have been marginal improvements in the implementation of the Digital Strategy 2020 – 2025, where several ICT infrastructures projects have been implemented and the last remaining project being the Global Wide Area Network project. This project is in progress and will be finalised in the 2024/25 financial year.

A significant portion, 60%, of the department's operations are conducted internationally, necessitating continuous adaptation to foreign currency fluctuations. The department grapples with challenges stemming from the depreciation of the rand against major currencies, impacting budget adherence and financial stability. Internally, the department maintains an unqualified audit opinion with emphasis areas, reflecting ongoing efforts towards achieving a clean audit. However, budgetary constraints present substantial challenges, requiring strategic realignment of priorities and reductions in staff costs. The focus remains on filling critical vacancies while implementing robust upskilling and reskilling initiatives to address the CoE shortfall.

In procurement, there have been improvements in compliance, although efficiency enhancements are needed, particularly in bid committees and obtaining quotations.

Asset verification efforts are underway, with a pressing need for substantial refurbishment of poorly maintained state-owned properties, both internationally and domestically.

Furthermore, the department is actively engaged in property disposals, aiming to streamline the property portfolio for optimal efficiency and financial sustainability.

The Office of the Chief State Law Adviser (International Law) (OCSLA (IL)) continues to act as the primary legal counsel on all international law matters for the Government as a whole. One of South Africa's primary foreign policy objectives is to enhance a rules-based international order by contributing to the formulation of international law and enhancing respect for its provisions. International law today forms an integral part of modern diplomatic architecture.

Over the past decades, international law has moved away from its traditional premise of regulating relations between sovereign states towards a more extensive "constitutional" framework for international society, aimed at improving the human condition. Consequently, the fields of regulation and the number of international institutions, including judicial organs, and legal instruments have proliferated. These fields on which the office provides expert legal advice and negotiations skills, include the Law of Treaties; the Law of the Sea; Extradition; Diplomatic Law and Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges; International Environmental Law; Air and Space Law; the Use of Force, Peacekeeping, International Humanitarian Law; Human Rights; and International Criminal Law.

OCSLA (IL) provides legal advice and policy guidance in respect of all programmes of the department. In the area of Consolidation of the African Agenda, the continent's multilateral systems and institutions have been overhauled. Organisations like SADC and the AU are not only established in terms of legal instruments, but the new cooperation and integration regimes of these institutions are also based on international law principles. The focus now is on greater integration through the subregional and regional Africa Free Trade Area Agreement. This integration will have to be supported by a magnitude of legal instruments that would provide for the implementation thereof. The strengthening of South-South and North-South cooperation in the economic and political fields, as well as bilateral cooperation between states, is based on the negotiation and implementation of international legal instruments. Furthermore, the office participates in the formulation and codification of international law that takes place, among others, through the work of the International Law Commission, the Sixth (Legal) Committee of the UNGA and in the Asian African Legal Consultative Committee.

In addition, in the area of Administration, OCSLA (IL) provides legal advice and policy guidance to the department and its missions abroad on issues pertaining to domestic law

(e.g., labour law, contract law, law of delict, etc.) and manages all litigation in which the department acknowledges the importance of various legislation and policy priorities in contributing to the achievement and promotion of Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities (WYPD) rights and priorities. These include the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP on GBVF), the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA) and other relevant frameworks. Additionally, the Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework, approved by Cabinet in 2018, provides a comprehensive set of instruments to strengthen the integration of gender perspectives within the planning and budgeting processes. The department recognises the significance of these initiatives and is committed to working in alignment with them to advance the rights and well-being of women, youth and persons with disabilities.

The department is involved, both in South African courts and in foreign jurisdictions. The increase in litigation against the department and Government is of concern as it has serious cost implications for the budget of the department.

With regard to the field of International Relations, the office scrutinises and approves all international agreements for their consistency with international law before a President's Minute is issued, authorising a member of the national executive to sign an agreement and also participates in negotiations to ensure that agreements are aligned with international law and south Africa's international obligations. OCSLA (IL) also manages and participates in legal proceedings before international courts and commissions such as the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the Africa Commission on Human and People's Rights.

The Foreign Service Act, 2019 (Act 26 of 2019) provides that DIRCO must act as the custodian of international agreements to which the Republic is a party, as well as of national reports submitted in terms of international obligations as the official Treaty Custodian of South Africa. The maintenance and administration of a complete and up-to-date record of the Treaty collection of the Republic remains a priority and the department's Treaty Division will continue to render a professional information service.

Challenges faced by OCSLA (IL) are, among others, staff shortages and ensuring that sufficient expertise in specialised fields of international law is and remains available in order to fulfil its mandate, and to enhance information-sharing between departments and officials responsible for various specialised technical areas and / or organisational bodies.

OCSLA (IL) will continue to inform government departments on the prescribed constitutional procedures for conclusion and entry into force of international agreements and to build expertise in this respect in government. It will implement measures to

enhance and maintain the completeness of the South African Treaty Register, as well as public access to it. It will furthermore continue to provide support to South African multilateral missions, especially Addis Ababa, New York, Geneva, The Hague, Vienna and Brussels, and to advise on the legal status and operation of the offices of international organisations based in South Africa.

The Branch: Diplomatic Training, Research and Development (DTRD), through its Chief Directorate: Diplomatic Academy and International School, is accredited (accreditation number P21/0708/GP017) by the Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) as a training provider and is therefore part of the broad quality assurance system within the education and training environment.

Due to the ever-increasing fast changes of the world of international relations, it is imperative that South African diplomats are equipped with relevant skills and knowledge. It is also critical that training content, modes and techniques are changed to equip diplomats with skills and knowledge to understand and operate in a global environment of Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity (VUCA). The training and capacity-building programmes are essentially aligned and cognitive to a VUCA world.

The academy is also certified by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) according to ISO 9001: 2015 standard. In line with this international standard, there is a documented Quality Management System, which details policies, procedures, process maps and templates that guide and inform the work of the Chief Directorate: Diplomatic Academy and International School.

The Branch: DTRD is mandated to provide quality training and skills enhancing programmes to:

- officials of the department through PSETA accredited residential training programmes: Diplomatic Training, Mission Administration Course, and the Foreign Affairs Attaché Course.
- officials of the department, other members of the Foreign Service, officials from other government departments, state and non-state entities through a wide range of skills and competencies, including Foreign Policy, Protocol and Etiquette and foreign language training
- heads of mission designate
- all DIRCO officials who have been appointed to serve abroad
- spouses life partners of all posted officials
- capacity-building programmes also include participants from SADC and the

continent at large.

These programmes contribute to the strengthening of human resource capacity of DIRCO and other government departments and institutions, in line with government's goals of developing a capable state, with skilled employees that are committed to the excellent execution of South Africa's foreign policy.

The branch's Mediation Support Unit contributes to building capacity of future mediators in South Africa, the SADC and other African countries, which is delivered in partnership with the Diplomatic Academy's International School. These training programmes strongly contribute to enhancing the credibility and influence of South Africa as a serious contributor to the developmental goals of the African Agenda. The branch also includes the Policy Research and Analysis Unit, which assists the department with regular trend analyses, monitors and reports on developments of global importance with implications for South Africa's National Interest and appraises and advises principals accordingly in support of departmental objectives. In addition, the branch provides language services to The Presidency and DIRCO.

The Foreign Service Act, 2019 places the academy at the centre of all training needs pertaining to members of the South African Foreign Service, thereby extending the scope of the academy and enabling it to influence beyond its immediate target audience. Budgetary constraints continue to demand adjustments to training programmes despite initiatives taken to partner and collaborate with external academies, other government departments and non-government entities.

The department acknowledges the importance of various legislation and policy priorities in contributing to the achievement and promotion of Women, Youth, Persons with Disabilities (WYPD) rights and priorities. These include the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (NSP on GBVF), the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA), and other relevant frameworks. Additionally, the Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework, approved by Cabinet in 2018, provides a comprehensive set of instruments to strengthen the integration of gender perspectives within the planning and budgeting processes. The department recognises the significance of these initiatives and is committed to working in alignment with them to advance the rights and well-being of women, youth and persons with disabilities

The NDP states that "It is important to develop a more sophisticated Public Diplomacy Strategy that encompasses more than a communications function. Public Diplomacy should use new media platforms, forums, and social networks, as well as people-to-people initiatives".

The Public Diplomacy (PD) Strategy is responsive to the ever-changing digital and communications landscape and climate, emphasising the use of technologies for implementation of our activities and work. The aim of the strategy is to implement a comprehensive, coherent, and consistent communication strategy, showcasing South Africa as a country and its foreign policy objectives, positions and achievements during any changes in the environment.

The PD Strategy has a three-pronged approach detailing methods and ways to set the agenda, create and strengthen own platforms and promote the South African Brand (and DIRCO) to stakeholders.

The range of platforms, in line with the PD Strategy, continues to evolve and includes several innovations and new initiatives. One of those initiatives includes the Charlotte Maxeke Awards, which were named after our historical icon, Charlotte Manny Maxeke. The awards celebrate women leaders across the continent. They recognise and honour exceptional African female leaders whose achievements, mentorship, influence and contributions have advanced Africa's development in various sectors of society. The awards show our commitment towards the African Agenda and its centrality to our foreign policy while also recognising the exceptional contribution to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

In addition, the PD Strategy continues to utilise traditional media platforms such as publicised opinion pieces, which are utilised by the principals to express South Africa's position on international developments. DIRCO is also accessible to the public through media engagements such as media briefings and statements and public participation programmes.

The current digital revolution and technological advances have changed and influenced the way information is shared and made readily available among state and non-state actors. The PD Strategy is responsive to this ever-changing climate through investment in new technologies.

New media platforms are used in the execution of our mandate. These include Facebook, X and YouTube, which have been added to complement Ubuntu Radio, which remains a key medium of communication in the execution of the PD Strategy and stimulation of dialogue on issues that affect South Africa, the continent, the people of the global South and partners across the globe.

Various engagements and activities undertaken by our missions abroad are documented consistently in various Ubuntu publications and digitally. These publications continue to communicate with and educate various stakeholders on South Africa's international relations policy positions, achievements, objectives and goals. Furthermore, it keeps

record and documents important events in South Africa's international engagements. These publications are used as reference points by foreign policy researchers, analysts, aspiring diplomats and the public in general.

Similarly, South Africa's diplomatic missions are a critical component of our foreign policy implementation and play a pivotal role in branding and marketing the country. Heads of mission are therefore at the coalface of South Africa's international relations. The PD Strategy enjoins us to work closely with like-minded institutions such as Brand SA, South African Tourism, etc. to chart a uniquely South African image that aims to bring much-needed investment and tourism opportunities to our shores.

The Chief Directorate: State and Official Visits supports the work of the principals through a professionalised Protocol Service for all incoming state, official, working and private visits of heads of state and government, deputy presidents, ministers of international relations and cooperation/foreign affairs and special envoys.

In addition, the Chief Directorate is also responsible to provide a professional Protocol Service to the South African President, Deputy President, Minister and Deputy Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation as well as providing an advisory service to all spheres of government on matters related to State Protocol. This includes the facilitation of the arrivals and departures of specified dignitaries travelling in and out of the country and the courtesies that are afforded in line with the relevant policies.

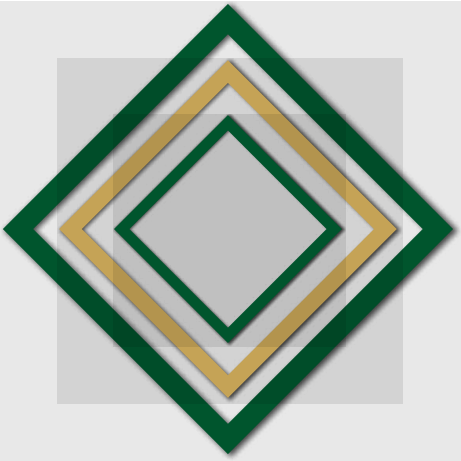
The work of the Chief Directorate: State Events and Diplomatic Accreditation is regulated, among others, in terms of the Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges Act (DIPA), 2001 (Act 37 of 2001), which incorporates the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963. There is also the Foreign States Immunities Act 87 of 1981 and various International Conventions and Treaties. Flowing out of this is the Policy on the Management of Diplomatic Immunities and Privileges, which is the administrative implementation of the DIPA, 2001.

In addition, the chief directorate is responsible for providing Protocol Services during state and official events hosted by the President, Deputy President, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, the two Deputy Ministers of International Relations and Cooperation as well as the Director-General of International Relations and Cooperation. The chief directorate also provides advisory services on protocol ceremonial matters to other government departments, provinces and municipalities and is involved in the planning management and coordination of state and official events as well as international conferences.

Furthermore, the chief directorate is also responsible for regularising the Diplomatic Corps accredited to South Africa. This includes the conferral of diplomatic immunities and

privileges to over 15 000 diplomats, including their dependents. Over the past few years, fraudulent practices and misuse of diplomatic privileges have resulted in billions of rands lost to the fiscus annually. Control measures were implemented in conjunction with SARS through a revision of the Customs and Excise Act and VAT Act, whereby quotas were established to stop the abuse of duty-free purchases of alcohol and tobacco. These abuses as well as those involving duty free vehicles are being investigated. A further area of particular concern is the levels of crime against members of the Diplomatic Corps.

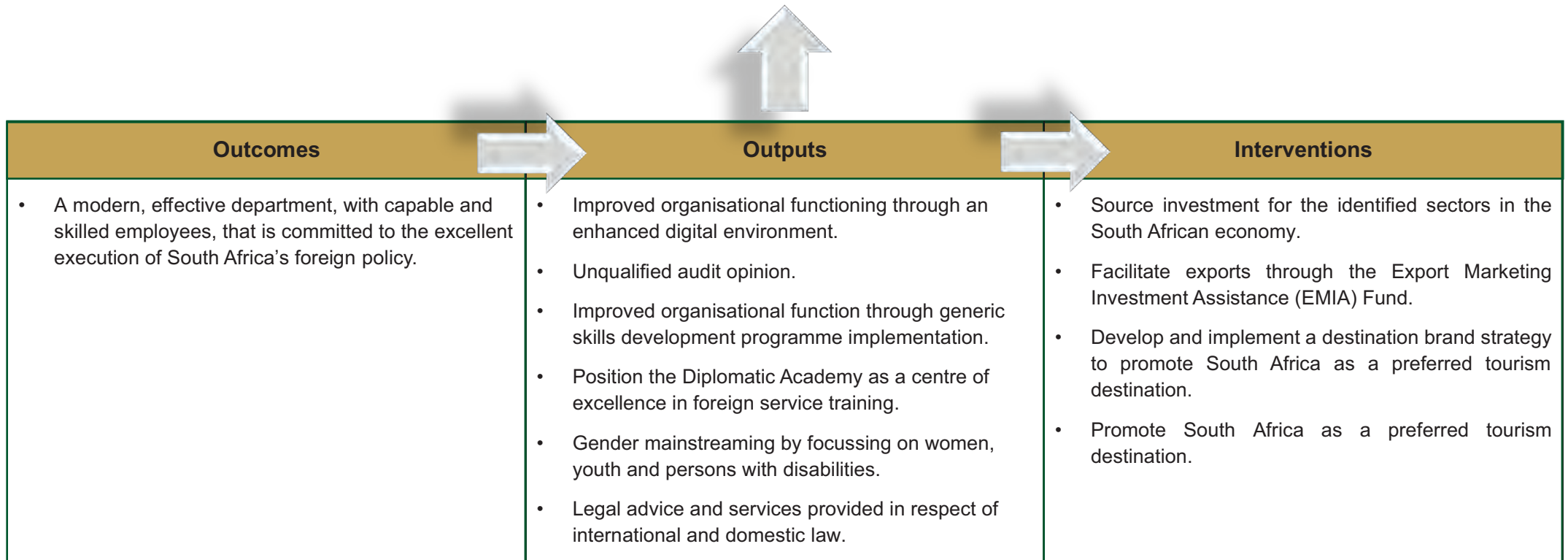
The Directorate: Consular Services implements and provides ongoing assistance to South African nationals in distress abroad in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963. The department has implemented the DIRCO Travel App for South African nationals travelling abroad, which will enable registration by individuals of the consular assistance required when in distress, to South African missions abroad and Consular Services. The Directorate: Consular Policy and Legalisation is responsible for the legalisation and authentication of all South African documents for use abroad as well as authenticating foreign documents being used in South Africa, in accordance with the Apostille Convention of 1961.



4.3 THEORY OF CHANGE

IMPACT STATEMENT

A department committed to the excellent execution of South Africa's foreign policy, placing South Africa as an influential actor and partner on the international stage while effectively contributing to the delivery of the country's domestic priorities and advancement of the African Agenda.



Outcomes	Outputs	Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraged bilateral, political, economic and social relations to achieve the objectives of the NDP and the MTSF priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen bilateral relations towards contributing to the achievement of the NDP, alleviating triple challenges, achieving the MTSF priorities, promoting National Interest, promoting regional and continental priorities, garnering support on multilateral issues of mutual interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the detailed Implementation Plans for prioritised project of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). Growth of -intra Africa trade through the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and other trade agreements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased foreign direct investment and contributed to economic growth in South Africa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributed to economic growth in South Africa through export and investment by exploring new areas for trade and investment, ranging from primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, nurturing and expanding existing trade and investment, establishing business-to-business relations. Contributed to growth in the tourism sector by networking and showcasing South Africa's diverse tourism industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to the implementation of identified Agenda 2063 Flagship Projects. South Africa's obligations towards UN, SADC and the AU including the institutions hosted in South Africa (PAP, NEPAD, APRM, AFCONE, PAUSSI) and TFCA's (payments) honoured. Dedicate resources to support increased continental and global responsibilities. Domestic outstanding socio economic standards ratified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased regional integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution towards implementation of regional integration and the implementation of the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advance South Africa's National Interest and safeguard South Africa's national positions within all international engagements and promote an equitable rules-based multilateral system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proponent of strengthening multilateral institutions through consistently upholding South Africa's principled positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Africa's interests and the African Agenda promoted and reflected in the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations dealing with peace and security, human rights, economic and social development. Compliance with South Africa's international reporting obligations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote regional, global integration and improve peace, security and stability on the continent. Ensure compliance to international protocol and commitments.

Outcomes	Outputs	Interventions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa’s leadership and policy advanced on the regional, continental and global stage. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United and politically adhesive continent that works towards shared prosperity and sustainable development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa partnerships recalibrated for the effective implementation of the African Union’s Agenda 2063. • South Africa contributes to continental efforts aimed at resolving conflicts. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South-South relations strengthened and consolidated in advancement of national and continental priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South-South cooperation utilised to pursue South Africa’s National Interest and advance the development agenda 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relations with the north leveraged in advancement of national and continental priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North-South cooperation utilised to pursue South Africa’s National Interest and advance the development agenda. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic and foreign audiences informed on South Africa’s foreign policy objectives and priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid and timeous support to missions on domestic and global developments. • Platforms utilised to inform and promote South Africa’s foreign policy to domestic and international audiences. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved compliance with the diplomatic regulatory framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits. • Consular services rendered. • Legalised services rendered. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen multilateralism through membership fees and contributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa fulfilling its continental and global responsibilities. 	



PART C

Measuring Our Performance



5. INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

PROGRAMME 1: ADMINISTRATION

PURPOSE: PROVIDE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE DEPARTMENT

DESCRIPTION: PROVIDE THE LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORT FUNCTIONS THAT ENABLE THE DEPARTMENT TO EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY ENGAGE IN ITS INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The key focus of the programme:

- maintains good financial management practices in order to sustain unqualified/clean audit outcomes
- addresses the skills and developmental needs of its officials, and supports the international relations competencies of partner departments
- provides legal and policy advice related to domestic and international law
- acts as primary counsel on international law matters for the Government as a whole
- acts as official custodian and depositary of the South African Treaty Collection
- supports the effective administration of the department, specifically through the provision of legal advice, legal services and assistance relating to all aspects of a legislative, operational and departmental nature at Headquarters and to missions operating in foreign jurisdictions, and by managing the litigation cases against and by the department in South Africa and abroad
- advances gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming by integrating gender perspectives into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and programmes
- creates an enabling environment for effective implementation of policies focussed on youth empowerment and advancements of rights of people with disabilities
- independently examines and evaluates the ongoing internal governance processes and provides counsel and recommendations for improvement, whenever there are gaps identified during risk management.

Subprogramme	Purpose
Ministry	Provide political leadership
Departmental Management	Provide strategic and administrative support to the department
Audit Services	Monitor the development and implementation of effective and efficient internal control systems
Financial Management	Provide financial management services
Corporate Services	Provide effective, efficient and economical support services to the department
Diplomatic Training, Research and Development (DTRD)	Provide diplomatic training, facilitate the provision of functional training in the department and conduct research
Foreign Fixed Assets Management	Provide and manage the State's fixed assets foreign portfolio
Office Accommodation	Manage the local property portfolio

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
A modern, effective department, with capable and skilled employees, which is committed to the excellent execution of South Africa's foreign policy	Improved organisational functioning through an enhanced digital environment	Number of progress reports on the implementation of the digital strategy	Digital strategy adopted	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy submitted	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy submitted	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Digital Strategy
	Unqualified audit opinion	Number of progress reports on the implementation of Audit Action Plan towards unqualified audit opinion	Qualified audit opinion	Four progress reports on the Audit Action Plan submitted Unqualified audit opinion with findings achieved	Four progress reports on the Audit Action Plan submitted	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan
	Improved organisational function through Workplace Skills Plan implementation	Number of reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	New indicator		Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with Generic Skills Development Programme compiled	Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with Generic Skills Development Programme	Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Position the Diplomatic Academy as a centre of excellence in foreign service training	Number of reports on aspects implemented towards positioning the Diplomatic Academy as a centre of excellence in foreign service training	ISO-certified quality management system maintained	ISO-certified quality management system maintained	ISO-certified quality management system maintained	Maintain ISO-certified quality management system	One report on maintaining the ISO-certified quality management system	One report on maintaining the ISO-certified quality management system	One report on maintaining the ISO-certified quality management system
Gap analysis conducted and implementation plan on building institutional capacity to deliver the AU/UN languages developed			Two training reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages submitted	Two progress reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages submitted	Two progress reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages	Two progress reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages	Two progress reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages	Two progress reports on the delivery of AU/UN languages	
Framework for building partnerships and networks developed			Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy submitted	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy submitted	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes of the academy	

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Gender main-streaming by focussing on women, youth and persons with disabilities	Number of gender main-streaming initiatives focusing on women, youth and persons with disabilities	Six outreach initiatives to change behaviour in relation to gender	Eight outreach initiatives to support gender mainstreaming were undertaken	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender main-streaming were undertaken	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender main-streaming	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender main-streaming	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender main-streaming	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment through gender main-streaming
Four mentoring and job-shadowing outreach initiatives targeting youth			Three mentoring and job-shadowing outreach initiatives targeting the youth were undertaken	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment were undertaken	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment	
Two strategic interventions to strengthen the capacity of DIRCO to effectively and equitably implement the <i>White Paper</i>			Two strategic interventions to strengthen the capacity of DIRCO to implement the <i>White Paper on the Rights of Persons with</i>	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities were implemented	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities	

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets							
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period			
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
			<i>on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i>	<i>Disabilities effectively and equitably were implemented</i>						
	Legal advice and services provided in respect of international and domestic law	Percentage of legal advice and services rendered	100% (389) legal advice and services rendered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% (131) response for advice and assistance on International Law • 100% (258) response for advice and assistance on Domestic Law 	100% (540) legal advice and services rendered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% (206) response for advice and assistance on International Law • 100% (334) response for advice and assistance on Domestic Law 	100% (582) legal advice and services rendered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% (268) response for advice and assistance on International Law • 100% (314) response for advice and assistance on Domestic Law 	100% legal services, advice and assistance provided	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of progress reports on the implementation of the digital strategy	Four progress reports on the implementation of the digital strategy	One progress report on the implementation of the digital strategy	One progress report on the implementation of the digital strategy	One progress report on the implementation of the digital strategy	One progress report on the implementation of the digital strategy
Number of progress reports on the implementation of Audit Action Plan towards un-qualified audit opinion	Four progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	One progress report on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	One progress report on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	One progress report on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan	One progress report on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan
Number of reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	Four reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	One report on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	One report on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	One report on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan	One report on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan
Number of reports on aspects implemented towards positioning the Diplomatic Academy as a centre of excellence in foreign service training	One report on maintaining the ISO-certified quality management system			One report on maintaining the ISO-certified quality management system	
	Two progress reports on the delivery of A/U/UN languages		One progress report on the delivery of AU/UN languages		One progress report on the delivery of AU/UN languages
	Two progress reports on the collaboration with partners to enrich training programmes		One progress report on the collaboration with partners to enrich training		One progress report on the collaboration with partners to enrich training

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	of the academy		programmes of the academy		programmes of the academy
Number of gender mainstreaming initiatives focussing on women, youth and persons with disabilities	Six initiatives to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming	One initiative to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming	Two initiatives to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming	Two initiatives to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming	One initiative to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through gender mainstreaming
	Two initiatives to advance youth development and empowerment	One initiative to advance youth development and empowerment		One initiative to advance youth development and empowerment	
	Two initiatives to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities		One initiative to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities		One initiative to mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities
Percentage of legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered	100% legal advice and services rendered

EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING PERIOD

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) remains conscious of the constrained economic climate the organisation is operating under, resulting in the undisputable need to do more with less. The current realities call for organisational renewal, innovation as well as the department's transition towards a digitisation system to assist the organisation to achieve more and to deliver on its mandate and the five-year strategic objectives. It also requires DIRCO to streamline its processes with a specific emphasis on improving its digital environment through its Digital Strategy. The department intends to improve organisational functioning, particularly through a process of digital revolution by automating some processes to improve effectiveness. An effective ICT as a core part of digital transformation will contribute effectively towards the department's efforts to positively respond to the fiscal constraints through innovative technological advances, which intend permitting improvising in order to continue to be effective towards its core mandate, without compromising the quality of the outputs.

Thus, the department remains committed to place ICT as an enabler in the process to improve organisational functioning, working towards the automation and modern digitisation of business processes, to reduce turnaround time and improve service delivery. This has become more urgent in the light of the new normal the world is operating in. There is an increasing demand for secure online platforms, which was necessitated by the dramatic increase in virtual engagements.

Due to the reduced budget for the compensation of employees, it has been difficult for the department to fill current vacant posts. These vacancies have been aggravated by an aging workforce resulting in natural attrition. This has led to a process to review the structure of the department to find ways to optimise the current staff establishment to maximise delivery on its ever-increasing mandate.

The department will, through the Diplomatic Academy, provide and facilitate quality and responsive training that aims to develop and shape extraordinary diplomats to advance South Africa's interests in a dynamic world. Furthermore, the Diplomatic Academy offers quality training programmes in line with ISO quality management standards, ensuring that it maintains its commitment to become a centre of excellence. Current trends in diplomacy, particularly the digitisation of diplomacy, has a direct bearing on the training and the modality of training the Diplomatic Academy offers.

In addition, the Diplomatic Academy continues to support the linguistic development of our Foreign Service officials, through the implementation of the "One Official One

Language Approach", delivering several AU/UN languages programme. The Diplomatic Academy will increase its utilisation of partnerships to enrich training programmes.

International law provides for the rules regulating diplomatic interaction and relations between states and the operation of international organisations. In this regard, the department, through the Office of the Chief State Law Adviser (IL), will continue to support Government to achieve its foreign policy objectives by providing legal advice on international law. The office also provides legal services and assistance relating to all aspects of a legislative, operational and departmental nature at Headquarters and to missions operating in foreign jurisdictions and by managing litigation cases against and by the department in South Africa and abroad. It will also continue to act as official custodian and depositary of the Official South African Treaty Collection. It will also continue to monitor South Africa's compliance with its international obligations to submit national reports in terms of international agreements and customary international law and report to Cabinet twice a year.

The department, during its planning of setting the objectives to be achieved over the mid-term, committed to develop plans to improve the organisational function and enhance its financial management, in order to move to an unqualified audit outcome.

Gender mainstreaming is regarded as an essential part of good governance and is, therefore, a critical tool for the department in ensuring that policies and programmes respond to the needs and interests of all employees. The department will be using it as a strategy that integrates gender considerations as an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality.

To ensure mainstreaming and the distribution of benefits equitably between the workforce, irrespective of gender and disability, the department will continue with programmes that mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities. Despite the existence of various policies, legislation and programmes that address disability as a human rights and development issue, the mainstreaming of the rights of persons with disabilities has gained traction with the adoption of the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016). The advancement of disability mainstreaming in the department will include addressing barriers that exclude persons with disabilities from participating equally and meaningfully in the work of DIRCO, including provision of reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities.

In South Africa, the youth represent more than a third of the population, with those within the age group 15 to 34 constituting 34.7% of the population (Source: 2020 Statistics South Africa Mid-term Population Survey). Bearing this in mind, young people continue to face serious challenges, and key among them is the problem of structural unemployment, poverty and inequality. In order to address these challenges, the department will mainstream youth development in its work guided by the National Youth Policy for 2020 – 2030 (NYP 2030). This cross-sectoral policy is aimed at effecting

positive youth development outcomes among young people at local, provincial and national levels in South Africa. DIRCO emphasises the importance of systematic attention to gender equality in departmental policies, planning and programmes. This is ensured through the use of the Gender Strategic Framework, which supports the vision of the Constitution of equal representation of and participation by women in all workplace activities. The framework further supports equal opportunities for skills development, upward mobility and the advancement of women in the department at all levels.

PROGRAMME 1: RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

The table below reflects the budget allocation for Programme 1: Administration for the 2024 MTEF. The allocated budget for Administration amounts to 24% of the total departmental budget for the 2024/25 financial year. For this programme, the main cost drivers are office leases in South Africa, ICT related services and construction, refurbishment and renovations of state-owned properties.

Subprogrammes	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Ministry		6 357	6 401	6 753	7 056	7 088	7 159	7 486
Departmental Management		17 552	13 766	9 826	10 066	10 608	10 717	11 208
Audit Services		17 144	16 328	16 771	22 508	19 393	19 789	20 696
Financial Management		174 485	175 092	192 369	205 216	204 871	202 346	210 432
Corporate Services		587 103	664 687	893 680	803 867	669 177	622 385	648 856
Diplomatic Training, Research and Development		43 533	44 497	50 052	54 442	53 413	59 864	62 606
Foreign Fixed Assets Management		7 913	18 086	63 017	125 005	171 874	193 920	225 230
Office Accommodation		412 018	409 744	431 927	458 998	428 280	430 595	549 820
African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Secretariat		-	-	-	12 185	12 732	13 302	13 911
Total		1 266 105	1 348 601	1 664 395	1 577 436	1 577 436	1 560 077	1 750 245

Economic classification	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates		
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Compensation of employees	485 093	488 745	486 789	518 410	530 197	538 305	562 991
Goods and services	606 879	661 363	770 137	825 290	696 251	658 323	766 236
Interest on rent and land	116 982	125 006	140 773	151 101	150 133	188 572	208 171
Transfers and subsidies	3 438	2 045	3 381	4 234	1 916	2 002	2 093
Payments for capital assets	39 317	69 679	261 455	200 218	198 939	172 875	210 754
Payments for financial assets	14 396	1 763	1 860	-	-	-	-
Total	1 266 105	1 348 601	1 664 395	1 699 253	1 577 436	1 560 077	1 750 245

Salary band	Number of posts on approved establishment as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts filled as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts additional to the establishment
Lower skilled (Levels 1-2)	3	2	-
Skilled (Levels 3-5)	133	106	1
Highly skilled production (Levels 6-8)	335	251	8
Highly skilled supervision (Levels 9-12)	345	244	8
Senior management (Levels 13-16)	69	47	2
Special advisers	2	1	-
Political office bearers	3	3	-
Total	890	654	19

PROGRAMME 2: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PURPOSE: PROMOTE RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES

The conduct of diplomacy between two states remains the pre eminent basis for advancing national priorities, as well as for effective engagement in multilateral fora. Structured bilateral mechanisms regularise and govern bilateral engagements and are someof the most important and valuable foreign policy instruments to coordinate South Africa's positions and activities towards a particular country. Structured bilateral mechanisms refer to numerous regularised and formalised meetings that South Africa has with other countries.

These meetings usually take place in an agreed format and time frame pursuant to bilateral communiqués, agreements and/or other high-level decisions. It is an important platform for the entire spectrum of government-to-government relations and draws on the expertise of various departments, depending on the area of cooperation being pursued.

Subprogramme	Purpose
Africa	Promote relations with countries in Africa
Asia and the Middle East	Promote relations with countries in Asia and the Middle East
Americas and Caribbean	Promote relations with countries in America and the Caribbean
Europe	Promote relations with countries in Europe

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Leveraged bilateral, political, economic and social relations to achieve the objectives of the NDP and the MTSF priorities	Strengthen bilateral relations towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributing to achievement of the NDP alleviating triple challenges (inequality, poverty and unemployment) achieving the MTSF priorities promoting National Interest promoting regional and continental priorities garnering support on multilateral issues of mutual interest 	Number of regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional reports on outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits are aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF as identified in the country strategies	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF submitted	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF
Increased foreign direct investment (FDI)	Contributed to economic growth in South Africa	Number of quarterly progress reports on the	12 regional investment strategy and	12 progress reports on the	12 quarterly progress reports on the	12 quarterly progress reports on the	12 quarterly progress reports on the regional	12 quarterly progress reports on the	12 quarterly progress reports on the

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
and contributed to economic growth in South Africa	through export and investment promotion by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exploring new areas for trade and investment ranging from primary, secondary and tertiary sectors nurturing and expanding existing trade and investment establishing business-to-business relations 	regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	quarterly progress reports	regional investment strategies were submitted	regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach were submitted	regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach
	Contributed to growth in the tourism sector by networking and showcasing South Africa's diverse tourism industry	Number of regional reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination,	12 regional tourism reports on the tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred	12 regional tourism reports on the tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred	12 regional tourism reports on the tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa	12 regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination,	12 regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination,	12 regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination,	12 regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	tourist destination, the opportunities and barriers	tourist destination were submitted	as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourist approach were submitted	thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets					
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period	
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Increased regional integration	Contribution towards the implementation of regional integration and the implementation of the Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)	Number of assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace, stability • good governance and democracy, • the implementation of the RISDP • socio-economic development. 	Two assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP were submitted 	Two assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP were submitted 	Two assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	Four assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	Four assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	Four assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP
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INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	12 regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	Three regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	Three regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	Three regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF	Three regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF
Number of quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	12 quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	Three quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	Three quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	Three quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach	Three quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach
Number of regional reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	12 regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	Three regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	Three regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	Three regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach	Three regional tourism reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
REGIONAL INTEGRATION					
Number of assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	Four assessment reports of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	One assessment report of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	One assessment report of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	One assessment report of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP 	One assessment report of South Africa's contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy the implementation of the RISDP

EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING PERIOD

The execution of South Africa's foreign policy is predicated on the achievement and pursuit of national priorities. However, this is still within the framework of the greater good of the region, the continent and the world. In this regard, the department continues to support the seven strategic priorities of the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) and will forge closer working relations with all government departments to become more focussed on the execution of South Africa's foreign policy. The department recognises that it is operating within a strained fiscal environment and cannot execute all objectives simultaneously. It is therefore important to be strategically focussed in terms of South Africa's bilateral engagements and the department will therefore use specific country strategies to guide all bilateral engagements. It is further recognised that although South Africa may identify what to get out of a bilateral relationship, the achievement thereof is not solely within its control. Bilateral engagements remain the pre-eminent basis for advancing national priorities, as well as for effective engagement in multilateral for a. Therefore, the department will continue to strengthen its bilateral political, economic and

social relations. This will be pursued through structured bilateral mechanisms as well as high-level visits.

Economic diplomacy is one of the key mechanisms in the achievement of national interests through diplomatic means and complements traditional political diplomacy.

The department, through its missions abroad, advance the economic diplomacy agenda in order to contribute in a more direct and concrete manner to achieve poverty eradication, job creation and socio-economic development and growth. In this process, DIRCO will become a catalyst and operate as a networking agent for "South Africa Incorporated". The missions, in particular, have a key frontline role to play in the pursuit of economic diplomacy and its component pillars such as FDI pledges as well as its contribution to tourism promotion for South Africa. It is also recognised and acknowledged that DIRCO will source the opportunities and will hand it over to the relevant domestic stakeholders for further processing. In this regard, it is therefore

difficult for DIRCO to set the targets that are the result of the conclusion of a process that is not within its realm of responsibility. The target-setting therefore recognises that DIRCO will source the opportunities and will, through its diplomacy, monitor and follow up to collectively deliver on investment and trade promotion.

DIRCO has a dynamic role to play in the improvement of the lives of South Africans by utilising its bilateral relations and global footprint in identifying strategic opportunities for skills and knowledge development, targeted investments and growing markets for South Africa's products and services, in an integrated and inclusive manner (domestic imperatives linked to international relations work). The focus of these activities will contribute to the interventions and targets as outlined in the MTSF, in Priority Seven and the sectors identified in priorities one to six. With specific focus on the increased and improved access of South African products and services to foreign markets, this will contribute to the aim of increasing manufacturing and thereby contribute to an export-orientated economy.

The department is committed to work for the betterment of the nation, the continent and the world and will continue in the execution of its foreign policy by looking at hard and soft issues. There is a further acknowledgement and awareness that the world is changing rapidly, and we are required to be on the mark and absolutely attuned with the ability to analyse, have effective responses and be relevant. This is especially true after the COVID-10 pandemic and other wild cards, and there is a recognition that South Africa's foreign policy should be agile to respond to remain relevant in the rapidly changing world. The department should prepare for emerging and complex challenges (Brexit, the next phase of BRICS, tension on the Asian subcontinent, climate change and its impact on the continent, migration, increased poverty, landlessness, water scarcity and unplanned international migration) and its possible impact on the delivery of our foreign policy objectives. This will be done with a continued commitment to regional integration and the implementation of the RISDP, with a clear focus on contributing to peace, stability, socio-economic development, good governance and democracy.

PROGRAMME 2: RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

The table below reflects the budget allocation for Programme 2: International Relations for the 2024 MTEF. The allocated budget for International Relations amounts to 50% of the total departmental budget for the 2024/25 financial year. The budget allocation includes allocations for 116 missions in the Africa, Americas, Europe, Asia and Middle East regions. The main cost drivers are foreign allowance, salaries, related benefits for Locally Recruited Personnel, leases of offices and residential accommodation abroad as well as education allowances.

Subprogrammes	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Africa		1 011 594	1 016 156	1 113 813	1 123 907	1 064 224	1 171 991	1 155 853
Asia and Middle East		969 241	981 616	973 837	940 732	931 050	988 467	987 312
Americas		516 373	519 977	462 517	482 393	427 281	545 788	529 819
Europe		866 652	872 343	825 177	839 742	872 634	860 344	942 187
Total		3 363 860	3 390 092	3 375 344	3 386 774	3 295 189	3 566 590	3 615 171

Economic classification	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates		
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Compensation of employees	2 082 477	2 079 514	2 024 714	2 021 775	2 088 599	2 125 821	2 223 214
Goods and services	1 228 485	1 238 295	1 297 792	1 326 786	1 183 764	1 409 246	1 357 267
Interest on rent and land	-	-	-				
Transfers and subsidies	6 304	12 368	12 973	20 542	19 974	27 563	28 826
Payments for capital assets	2 346	3 870	24 747	17 671	2 852	3 960	5 864
Payments for financial assets	44 248	56 045	15 118				
Total	3 363 860	3 390 092	3 375 344	3 386 774	3 295 189	3 566 590	3 615 171

Salary band	Number of posts on approved establishment as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts filled as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts additional to the establishment
Lower skilled (Levels 1-2)	0	0	-
Skilled (Levels 3-5)	13	8	-
Highly skilled production (Levels 6-8)	215	189	-
Highly skilled supervision (Levels 9-12)	492	429	-
Senior management (Levels 13-16)	164	135	-
Total	884	761	-

PROGRAMME 3: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

PURPOSE: PARTICIPATE IN INITIATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS IN LINE WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S NATIONAL VALUES AND FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

Subprogramme	Purpose
3.1 Global System of Governance	Participate in global system of governance
3.2 Continental Cooperation	Strengthen socio-economic and political development of the African continent
3.3 South-South Cooperation	Strengthen South-South relations
3.4 North-South Cooperation	Strengthen relations with the strategic formations of the North

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27

3.1 GLOBAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE

<p>Proponent of strengthening multilateral institutions through consistently upholding South Africa’s principled positions</p>	<p>South Africa’s interests and the African Agenda promoted and reflected in the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations dealing with peace and security, human rights, economic and social development</p>	<p>Number of reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on peace and security, human rights and economic and social development</p>	<p>New indicator</p>	<p>12 assessment reports reflecting South Africa’s contribution towards peace and security, human rights and economic and social development</p>	<p>12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda were submitted</p>	<p>12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and security • human rights • economic and social development 	<p>12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and security • human rights • economic and social development 	<p>12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and security • human rights • economic and social development 	<p>12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa’s participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and security • human rights • economic and social development
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OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Hosting of 2025 G20 Summit	Number of reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit	New indicator.				Four reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit	Four reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit	
	Compliance with South Africa's international reporting obligations	Number of reports on South Africa's international reporting obligations	New indicator	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations were submitted	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations were submitted	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations
	South Africa's leadership and policy advanced on the regional, continental and global stage	Number of positions on identified influential multilateral bodies where South Africa is represented	Not reported	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained	54 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained as at 31 December 2022	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27

3.2 CONTINENTAL COOPERATION

United and politically cohesive continent that works towards shared prosperity and sustainable development	Africa partnerships recalibrated for the effective implementation of the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063	Number of assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU Partnership and • implementation of Agenda 2063 	One assessment report on continental partnerships	Two assessment reports reflecting how the outcomes of Africa partnerships are aligned to the AU Agenda 2063	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and the outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU partnership and • Implementation of Agenda 2063 was submitted 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and the outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU partnership and • implementation of Agenda 2063 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU Partnership and • implementation of Agenda 2063 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU Partnership and • implementation of Agenda 2063 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU Partnership and implementation of Agenda 2063
	South Africa contributes to continental efforts aimed at resolving conflicts	Number of reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards	New indicator		Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and	Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and	Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and	Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and	Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
		peace and stability on the continent			stability on the continent were submitted	stability on the continent	stability on the continent	stability on the continent	stability on the continent

3.3 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

South-South relations strengthened and consolidated in advancement of national and continental priorities	South-South cooperation utilised to pursue South Africa's national interest and advance the development agenda	Number of reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	New indicator	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda
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3.4 NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Relations with the North leveraged in advancement of national and	North-South cooperation utilised to pursue South Africa's national interest	Number of reports on the outcomes of North-South en-	New indicator	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements	Two reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements
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OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
continental priorities	and advance the development agenda	gagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda		reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda were submitted	reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3.1 GLOBAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE					
Number of reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights 	12 reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights 	Three reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights 	Three reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights 	Three reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights 	Three reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> peace and security human rights

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic and social development
Number of reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit	Four reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit	One report on the implementation of the approved plan of action	One report on the implementation of the approved plan of action	One report on the implementation of the approved plan of action	One report on the implementation of the approved plan of action
Number of reports on South Africa's international reporting obligations	Two reports on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations	One report on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations		One report on the implementation of South Africa's international reporting obligations	
Number of positions on identified influential multilateral bodies where South Africa is represented	60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies maintained	Maintain 60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies		Maintain 60 positions on identified influential multilateral bodies	
3.2 CONTINENTAL COOPERATION					
Number of assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AU structures and processes AU Partnership implementation of Agenda 2063 	Two assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AU structures and processes AU Partnership implementation of Agenda 2063 		One assessment report reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AU structures and processes AU Partnership implementation of Agenda 2063 		One assessment report reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AU structures and processes AU Partnership implementation of Agenda 2063

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and stability on the continent	Two reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and stability on the continent	One report on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and stability on the continent		One report on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and stability on the continent	
3.3 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION					
Number of reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Four reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	One report on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	One report on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	One report on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	One report on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda
3.4 NORTH-SOUTH COOPERATION					
Number of reports on the reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda	Two reports on the reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda		One report on the reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda		One report on the reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda

EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING PERIOD

The department consistently focusses on actions to advance the development of the African continent, advance human rights, promote respectful cooperation between nations, actively participate in achieving peaceful resolution of conflicts and support measures to achieve increased robust and inclusive economic development. These are tough aspirations in a world that seems determined to be fractured and tense. Multilateral cooperation is thus identified as the main vehicle for advancing key foreign policy interests. As the global landscape of power and economy is changing, the conditions for multilateralism are changing with it. South Africa's multilateral interests at regional level are focussed on its membership of SADC, at continental level, the AU and at global level, the UN.

Other interests, which intersect with those mentioned above, include South Africa's membership of, among others, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the G77, the G20, the Commonwealth and partnership arrangements. South Africa's national position is informed by its domestic policy imperative and its constitutional values and reflect the African Agenda on peace and security; human rights; and economic and social development. Maintaining this extensive international presence becomes particularly challenging in the current fiscally constrained environment. To enable strategic prioritisation of South Africa's membership of multilateral and multistate organisations, South Africa embarked on developing a long-term strategy for its membership of multilateral and multistate organisations, focussing on retaining and developing capacity in support of continued effective membership in international organisations.

Regarding peace and security, South Africa will, among others, continue to focus on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and will continue to remain closely engaged with the work of the PBC, seeking to make a contribution to peacebuilding and sustaining peace using the country's enduring experience in conflict prevention, management and resolution. On sustainable development, South Africa will continue to advance the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

South Africa's foreign policy is predicated on the principles of human rights and its engagements are premised on the need to influence norms and standards in the international human rights system and related fields, as well as strengthening governance within the system. This is with a view to realise human rights for all, bearing in mind that they are universal, indivisible, interdependent and inter-related. South Africa took up its current three-year term on the Human Rights Council (HRC) in January 2023

and has consistently sought to play a key and active role in the development of international human rights and humanitarian law, focussing on the maximum protection of victims of human rights abuses and violations, including adequate remedies and the combatting of impunity. In order to have a successful term on the council, South Africa needs to ensure well-coordinated and fully-resourced participation in the work and meetings of the HRC.

South Africa's will continue to pursue its national interests and promote its values in the areas of humanitarian diplomacy, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), international law of protection (refugees), migration, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), food security and nutrition, disaster reduction and humanitarian assistance within the multilateral system of global governance through influencing norms and standards. One of the flagship projects through which the country demonstrates its commitment to IHL, is the Annual Regional Seminar on IHL for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Island States which is co-hosted with the International Committee of the Red Cross .

The global environment is increasingly shaped by rising nationalism and unilateralism and a retreat from the traditional rules-based multilateral system of global governance will present steep challenges to navigate in repositioning the continent as a regional economic force to be reckoned with. South Africa remains strongly committed to and invested in support of building unity, inclusive economic development and shared prosperity for the African continent and its peoples. Efforts will be made to build strong, sustainable and resilient regional and continental mechanisms able to support our national efforts to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic opportunities for South Africans, in particular women and youth, as a buffer against unrest, instability, terrorism and violent extremism on our continent. Democracy and good governance are critical to laying the foundations for sustainable development to take place in Africa. As such, South Africa has consistently called for full compliance with the norms and instruments of the AU in support of democracy and good governance on the continent as articulated in the African Charter on democracy, elections and governance and others towards ensuring the achievement of sustainable and lasting peace in conflict and post-conflict settings in Africa.

The advancement of international law and a multilateral response to pressing global matters such as climate change, sustainable development, human rights law, terrorism, international criminal law, disarmament and non-proliferation, economic relations and the peaceful settlement of disputes will also continue. Respect for international law will

carry on and form the basis for political and economic relations. The official South African Treaty Register will remain a source of information to assist South Africa in recording the agreements that have to be implemented and that can deliver prosperity to its citizens. South Africa's compliance with its international obligations to submit national reports in terms of international agreements and customary international law will continue to be monitored. The department plans to continue to ensure compliance with all South Africa's international reporting obligations as well as to enhance all continental cooperation towards South-South and North-South cooperation, while advancing the development agenda.

For South Africa to promote its National Interest in the multilateral system, it must actively

participate in negotiations and influence the outcomes of multilateral processes and meetings as stipulated in the NDP. South Africa will also continue to advocate for a reformed rules-based global system, which is equitable as well as responsive to South Africa's needs, and the needs of Africa and other developing countries in general. Furthermore, the adoption of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 190, which seeks to eliminate gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) in the world of work and the adoption of Recommendation 206, are part of sustained actions to stop GBVH and create safer workplaces. This move complements existing legislation and policy documents such as the National Strategy on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide as well as the National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS).

PROGRAMME 3: RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

The table below reflects the budget allocation for Programme 3: International Cooperation for the 2024 MTEF, consisting of five missions' allocations abroad. The allocated budget amounts to 9% of the total departmental budget for the 2024/25 financial year. The main cost drivers are foreign allowances, salaries and related benefits for Locally Recruited Personnel (LRP), leases of offices and residential accommodation abroad as well as education allowances.

Sub-programmes	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Global System of Governance		378 536	343 830	393 538	399 048	397 814	391 995	397 421
Continental Cooperation		70 987	58 202	85 920	97 525	84 608	81 125	84 843
South-South Cooperation		4 375	4 462	5 650	7 536	5 713	5 794	6 060
North-South Dialogue		78 713	65 689	73 031	88 876	93 971	95 460	99 833
Total		532 611	472 183	558 139	592 985	582 106	574 374	588 157

Economic classification	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates		
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Compensation of employees	376 575	340 873	367 726	384 750	396 009	386 187	403 881
Goods and services	137 544	133 447	176 842	195 758	182 239	184 156	180 060
Interest on rent and land	-	-	-				
Transfers and subsidies	2 264	1 899	1 972	3 202	3 483	3 639	3 806
Payments for capital assets	721	1 833	7 777	9 275	375	392	410
Payments for financial assets	15 507	5 869	3 822				
Total	532 611	472 183	558 139	592 985	582 106	574 374	588 157

Salary band	Number of posts on approved establishment as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts filled as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts additional to the establishment
Lower skilled (Levels 1-2)	0	0	-
Skilled (Levels 3-5)	6	5	-
Highly skilled production (Levels 6-8)	58	39	1
Highly skilled supervision (Levels 9-12)	147	119	-
Senior management (Levels 13-16)	34	26	-
Total	245	189	1

Programme 4: Public Diplomacy and Protocol Services

Purpose: Communicate South Africa's role and position in international relations in the domestic and international arenas and provide state protocol services

Subprogramme	Purpose
4.1 Public Diplomacy	Promote a positive projection of South Africa's image
4.2 Protocol Services	Provide protocol and ceremonial services

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Domestic and foreign audiences informed of South Africa's foreign policy objectives and priorities	Rapid and timeous support to missions on domestic and global developments	Number of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	25 key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	64 key messages were distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	63 key messages were distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Nine key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Nine key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Nine key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Nine key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments
	Platforms utilised to inform and promote South Africa's foreign policy to domestic and international audiences	Number of platforms utilised to inform and promote South Africa's foreign policy to domestic and international audiences	12 PPPs held by political principals where audiences were engaged via webinars on domestic and international developments	12 PPPs held where audiences were engaged via webinars on domestic and international developments	12 PPPs held where audiences were engaged on domestic and international developments	12 PPPs	12 PPPs	12 PPPs	12 PPPs
			16 opinion pieces published	12 opinion pieces published	12 opinion pieces published	Nine opinion pieces published	Nine opinion pieces published	Nine opinion pieces published	Nine opinion pieces published

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

OUTPUT INDICATORS	ANNUAL TARGET	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Nine key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Three sets of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Three sets of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	Two sets of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments	One set of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments
Number of platforms utilised to inform and promote South Africa's foreign policy to domestic and international audiences	12 PPPs	Three PPPs	Three PPPs	Three PPPs	Three PPPs
	Nine opinion pieces published	One opinion piece published	Three opinion pieces published	Three opinion pieces published	Two opinion pieces published

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Improved compliance with the diplomatic regulatory framework	Professional protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	Percentage of requests for protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% (18) of protocol services rendered to all in and outgoing State, Official and Working Visits	100% (42) of protocol services rendered to all in and outgoing State, Official and Working Visits	100% (57) of protocol services rendered to all in and outgoing State, Official and Working Visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming outgoing visits
	Consular services rendered	Percentage of requests for consular assistance rendered	100% (30 779) cases reported to DIRCO were responded to as per Service-Delivery Charter:	100% (740) cases reported to DIRCO were responded to as per the Service Delivery Charter	100% (822) cases reported to DIRCO were responded to as per the Service Delivery Charter	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered
	Legalised services rendered	Percentage of documents legalised	100% (37 551) of documents legalised	100% (54 816) of documents legalised	100% (55 005) of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Percentage of requests for protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits	100% of protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits
Percentage of requests for consular assistance rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered	100% of consular services rendered
Percentage of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised	100% of documents legalised

EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING PERIOD

The department, in line with the changing diplomatic environment, will continue to commit to the use all social media platforms for diplomatic purposes, thus enhancing transparency whilst bridging the communication gap between state and individual. The Branch: Public Diplomacy (PD) will continue to focus its budget allocation on expanding the reach of its platforms, with a specific focus on taking “foreign policy to the people”. The range of platforms includes, but is not limited to, Ubuntu Magazine, Ubuntu NewsFlash, Ubuntu Radio, Ubuntu TV, etc. These platforms inform, highlight and celebrate the achievements of government and non-state actors in projecting South Africa positively abroad and the role played by South Africa on the international stage. Other key platforms are the public participation programmes (PPPs) and annual events, including the Diplomatic Fun Fair, Africa Day celebrations, etc. These also include public lectures, symposia, outreach programmes and engagements with government departments and other stakeholders.

The current digital revolution and technological advances remain a key interest and the

branch's key challenge is to invest in new technologies to broaden its current reach. As it has been effective and beneficial in the execution of its mandate, the branch aims to increase its reach on social media by expanding and strengthening its use of key social media platforms. These platforms also complement Ubuntu Radio, which remains a key medium of communication in the execution of the PD Strategy and stimulation of dialogue on issues that affect South Africa, the continent and partners across the globe.

The Centre for Early Warning offers 24-hour communications, information, logistical and stand-by support service relating to issues relevant to DIRCO and other government departments, South African missions abroad and the public at large, and often serves as a call centre to disseminate information during a crisis.

State Protocol will continue to provide services in line with the Vienna Convention and provision of the privileges as agreed upon by countries. These services are delivered in line with the Service Delivery Charter. As host to one of the largest concentration of diplomats globally, the department will continue to provide support to the Foreign

Diplomatic and Consular Officials accredited to the Republic of South Africa. The provision of state protocol plays a pivotal role in the coordination of incoming and outgoing visits.

Consular Services provide effective and efficient consular and notarial services to South African nationals travelling, working, studying and/or living abroad. Emergency consular services can be described as services rendered to South African nationals who are

distressed, destitute or seriously injured, and assistance rendered to the next of kin in case of death or being involved in natural or man-made disasters.

Consular notarial services are another form of consular assistance rendered to South African citizens and foreign nationals requiring South African public documents to be legalised for use abroad. These services are rendered to provide legal validity to South African public documents to enable a person to use the documents outside South Africa.

PROGRAMME 4. RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

The table below reflects the budget allocation for Programme 4: Public Diplomacy and Protocol Services for the 2024 MTEF, consisting of two subprogrammes, namely: Public Diplomacy and Protocol Services. The allocated budget amounts to 4% of the total departmental budget for the 2024/25 financial year. The main cost drivers are travel and subsistence expenses for state and official visits and municipal rates and taxes for qualifying properties owned by foreign diplomatic missions and international organisations resident in the Republic of South Africa.

Sub-programmes	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Public Diplomacy		47 227	58 905	83 571	64 763	66 825	68 306	71 436
Protocol Services		188 103	203 642	252 237	217 192	188 316	177 061	206 088
Total		235 330	262 547	335 808	281 955	255 141	245 367	277 524

Economic classification	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates		
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Compensation of employees	179 730	174 583	178 236	158 924	160 179	157 218	164 421
Goods and services	53 921	86 793	156 641	121 203	93 052	86 153	111 016
Interest on rent and land	-	-	-				
Transfers and subsidies	1 572	1 153	859	1 790	1 870	1 954	2 043
Payments for capital assets	107	8	72	38	40	42	44
Payments for financial assets	-	10	-				
Total	235 330	262 547	335 808	281 955	255 141	245 367	277 524

Salary band	Number of posts on approved establishment as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts filled as at 31 January 2024	Number of posts additional to the establishment
Lower skilled (Levels 1-2)	0	0	-
Skilled (Levels 3-5)	22	14	-
Highly skilled production (Levels 6-8)	169	130	-
Highly skilled supervision (Levels 9-12)	135	83	-
Senior management (Levels 13-16)	24	18	-
Total	350	245	-

Programme 5: International Transfers

Purpose: Fund membership fees and transfer to international organisations

Subprogramme	Purpose
Departmental agencies	Facilitate transfer of funds to the public entity
Membership contributions	Facilitate transfers to international organisations

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets							
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period			
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
Strengthen multilateralism through membership fees and contributions	South Africa fulfilling its continental and global responsibilities	Number of reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	New indicator	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations amounting to	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations amounting to	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations

OUTCOMES, OUTPUTS, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Outcome	Outputs	Output indicators	Annual targets						
			Audited/actual performance			Estimated performance	MTEF period		
			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
				R 742 171 million	R 773.9 million				

INDICATORS, ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY TARGETS

Output indicators	Annual target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Number of reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	Four quarterly reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	One quarterly report on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	One quarterly report on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	One quarterly report on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations	One quarterly report on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations

EXPLANATION OF PLANNED PERFORMANCE OVER THE MEDIUM-TERM PLANNING PERIOD

The department is committed to continue to honour all commitments undertaken by South Africa at international, regional and subregional multilateral level by ensuring that all payment obligations are adhered to. The payments, which are made by the department, generally take the form of:

- membership dues to organisations such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Commonwealth
- contributions to peacekeeping operations of the UN
- meetings of states parties (parties to international treaties) of which South Africa is a member, and in which South Africa has participated
- voluntary pledges that South Africa has made to international organisations for the purpose of humanitarian assistance, technical assistance, etc.

The department is required to contribute to a better South Africa and better region and to secure the advancement of South Africa's National Interest. To enhance this governance commitment and obligation, South Africa will ensure the realisation of all payments and contributions to international organisations in full and on time towards the UN, SADC and the AU, including the institutions hosted in South Africa (i.e., Pan-African Parliament, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Peer Review Mechanism, African Commission on Nuclear Energy and Pan-African University on Space Science and Trans-Frontier Conservation Areas. This requires the settlement of all assessed contributions as required by the respective international organisations.

PROGRAMME 5: RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

The table below reflects the budget allocation for Programme 5: International Transfers for the 2024 MTEF, which consists of the departmental agencies' allocation to the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund as well as international membership contributions to organisations such as, among others, the AU, SADC, UN, India-Brazil-South Africa Trust Fund, Commonwealth of Nations, etc. The allocated budget amounts to 13% of the total departmental budget for the 2024/25 financial year.

Sub-programmes	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Departmental agencies		47 840	48 546	49 699	37 705	52 131	54 466	56 961
Membership contribution		773 966	629 287	724 172	831 964	804 228	834 431	872 660
Total		821 806	677 833	773 871	869 669	856 359	888 897	929 621

Economic classification	Audited outcome			Adjusted appropriation	Medium-term estimates			
	Rand thousand	2020/21	2021/22		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Transfers and subsidies		821 806	677 833	773 871	869 669	856 359	888 897	929 621
Total		821 806	677 833	773 871	869 669	856 359	888 897	929 621

6. Updated Key Risks

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigations
A modern, effective department with capable and skilled employees that is committed to the excellent execution of South Africa's foreign policy	Outdated ICT infrastructure.	Continuous monitoring of ICT Digital Strategy.
	Ineffective and inefficient systems.	Up-skilling and reskilling of personnel. Blended learning methodologies.
	Adaptation to digital change.	Structured change management processes.
	Inadequate head office-mission interface.	Improve support to missions.
	Impact of foreign exchange fluctuations.	To be agile to the foreign currency fluctuation.
Leveraged bilateral, political, economic and social relations to achieve the objectives of the NDP and the MTSF priorities	Unexpected and unforeseen international changes.	To be agile and responsive to international changes.
	Inadequate interface between some key stakeholders both at missions and head office.	Engage in scenario planning and forecasting and to also consider reprioritisation in response to international changes.
	Lack of synergy between partner departments.	Whole-of-government approach to develop country strategies for engagements.
Increased foreign direct investment and contributed to economic growth in South Africa	Unexpected and unforeseen international changes negatively impacting the economic growth.	To be agile and consider reprioritisation in response to international changes.

6. Updated Key Risks (continued)

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigations
	Sectors working in isolation. Lack of synergy between partner departments.	Enhance interdepartmental coordination mechanisms.
Increased regional integration	Influence from outside the region on the implementation of the SADC programme as encapsulated in the SADC blueprints.	Engage SADC member states bilaterally on the implementation of SADC decisions.
	Lack of political will and resources within the member states to implement programmes and projects.	Engage SADC member states bilaterally on their respective responsibilities to work towards the implementation of SADC decisions.
	Potential for destabilising developments in the region.	Placing South Africa as a credible interlocutor on the international stage.
Proponent of strengthening multilateral institutions through consistently upholding South Africa's principled positions	Undermining of collective initiatives aimed at strengthening multilateralism.	Strengthened multilateral alliances to mitigate the negative effects of unilateral actions.
United and politically cohesive continent that works towards shared prosperity and sustainable development	Negative external actor involvement. Potential for destabilising developments on the continent.	Increased AU coordination and regional economic community cohesion.
South-South relations strengthened and consolidated in advancement of national and continental priorities	Divisions within the South.	Coordinated approach to issues of common concern.

6. Updated Key Risks (continued)

Outcome	Key Risk	Risk Mitigations
Relations with the North leveraged in advancement of national and continental priorities	Unexpected and unforeseen international changes.	To be agile and consider reprioritisation in response to international changes.
	Lack of synergy between partner departments.	Enhance interdepartmental coordination mechanisms. Whole of government approach to develop strategies for engagements.
Domestic and foreign audiences informed of South Africa's foreign policy objectives and priorities	Outdated technology.	Digital transformation, modernisation of ICT.
	Divergent view emanating from South African foreign policy.	Stronger interdepartmental coordination on international relations activities.
Improved compliance with the regulatory framework	Dependencies on key stakeholders.	Improved communication. Strengthen partnerships with approved memoranda of understanding.
	Lack of cooperation with stakeholders.	Enforcement in terms of the diplomatic legal framework.

7. Public Entities

Name of Public Entity	Mandate	Outcomes	Current Annual Budget
African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF)	To enhance cooperation between the Republic and other countries, in particular African countries, through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, social-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development	<p>Disbursement of development aid to enhance cooperation between the Republic and other countries to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote democracy and good governance • contribute to prevention and resolution of conflict • support socio-economic development and integration • provide humanitarian assistance (impact of the judgement on the implementation of objectives of this fund) • Non-performance of the fund objective implementation of the objectives of RAF due to red tape 	R 52 131 000

8. Infrastructure Projects

No.	Project Name	Project Description	Outputs	Project Start Date	Project Completion Date	Total Estimated Project Cost	Current Year Expenditure
1	Disposal of unused properties at various missions	Disposal of properties	Properties disposed	2021/2022	2025/2026	7 000 000	3 847 558,90
2	New Delhi: Feasibility and planning for construction of new Chancery	Planning and construction of Chancery	New Chancery and Official Residence construction	2022/2023	2025/2026	90 000 000	0.00
3	Luanda: Feasibility and planning for the redevelopment of the Official Residence	Planning and redevelopment of the Official Residence	New Official Residence	2023/2024	2025/2026	40 000 000	0.00
4	Nairobi: Acquisition of new Chancery.	Acquisition of new properties	New Chancery	2023/2024	2024/2025	55 000 000	0.00
5	Copenhagen: Renovation of the Chancery and Official Residence	Renovation of the Chancery and Official Residence	Properties Renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	60 000 000	0.00
6	New York: Renovation Refurbishment of the Official Residence	Renovation of the Official Residence	Properties Renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	9 200 000	0.00
7	Vienna: Renovation of the Official Residence	Renovation of the Official Residence	Properties Renovated	2021/2022	2024/2025	20 000 000	0.00
8	London: Replacement of the boiler system in the Chancery	Replacement of the boiler system in the Chancery	Properties renovated	2023/2024	2024/2025	13 000 000	0.00

8. Infrastructure Projects (Continue)

No.	Project Name	Project Description	Outputs	Project Start Date	Project Completion Date	Total Estimated Project Cost	Current Year Expenditure
9	London: Renovation of the residential accommodation, 21 Cavendish Close	Renovation of the residential accommodation, 21 Cavendish Close	Properties renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	12 000 000	0.00
10	Rome: Renovation of the Official Residence	Upgrading of the basement at the Official Residence	Properties renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	45 000 000	6 901 106.69
11	Brasilia: Renovation of the Official Residence	Renovation of the Official Residence	Properties renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	9 000 000	0.00
12	Mbabane: Renovation of the Official Residence	Renovation of the Official Residence	Properties renovated	2023/2024	2025/2026	12 000 000	0.00
13	Maseru: Renovation of the Official Residence	Renovation of the Official Residence	Properties renovated	2022/2023	2025/2026	13 000 000	0.00
14	Condition assessment: Various state-owned properties abroad	Condition assessments of properties	Condition assessments reports provided	2023/2024	2024/2025	8 000 000	2 936 833.00
15	Maintenance: Various state-owned properties abroad	Maintenance of identified works	Property maintenance	2023/2024	2024/2025	25 000 000	6 600 843.27

9. Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

PPP	Purpose	Outputs	Current Value of Agreement	End Date of Agreement
Head office accommodation for the Department of International Relations and Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing, design, construction, operation and maintenance of Head Office and guesthouse facilities Financing, design, renovation and structural maintenance of state-owned guesthouse facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New head office and guesthouse constructed Head office and guesthouse maintained and operated by on-site facilities management company Furniture, fittings and equipment installed, maintained and replaced at agreed intervals State-owned guesthouses renovated and structurally maintained 	2023/24 unitary fee: R312 715 482.00 million per annum (including VAT)	September 2034



PART D

Technical Indicator Description (TID)



PROGRAMME 1

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of progress reports on the implementation of the digital strategy
DEFINITION	To enhance the digital environment, DIRCO has a detailed roadmap and a detailed implementation plan of the approved strategy. To ensure the appropriateness, the strategy needs to be monitored and assessed to determine the relevance of the strategic direction on concluded and ongoing identified projects. The strategy contains eight digital strategic objectives-related projects
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: ICT
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed report
ASSUMPTIONS	Buy-in from key stakeholders
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	The beneficiaries of the strategic objectives in allocation of compatibility of tools of trade will be allocated to persons with disabilities Program software's specifications for the targeted reasonable accommodation for the disclosed disabilities
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Accelerated implementation of the Digital Strategy
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Office of the Chief Information Officer

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of progress reports on the implementation of the Audit Action Plan
DEFINITION	It is important that the department implements the Audit Action Plan to improve the audit outcome. The department will monitor the action plan on a quarterly basis to make sure that there is progress in the prevention and correction of audit findings.
SOURCE OF DATA	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed report
ASSUMPTIONS	Audit Action Plan implemented and monitored, leading to improvement in audit outcome
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Unqualified audit opinion
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Office of the Chief Financial Officer

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on training programmes conducted in line with the Workplace Skills Plan
DEFINITION	Training on skills development programmes implemented and monitored, leading to improvement in productivity and service delivery. It is imperative that DIRCO functions optimally and proficiency is vital. Relevant skills will assist with the requirement to have excellent workmanship. These will also explore DIRCO's contribution to promoting gender equality, in particular the programmes for women, girls, youth and persons with disabilities during international engagements.
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Human Resource Management and Development
METHOD OF CALCULATION / ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed report
ASSUMPTIONS	Training requests received
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Training done as per Performance Development Plan
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy-Director General: Corporate Management

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on aspects implemented towards positioning the Diplomatic Academy as a centre of excellence in foreign service training
DEFINITION	The academy is expected to deliver quality programmes that adhere to international standards and the standard for the management thereof will be linked to having a certified Quality Management System. Furthermore, it is imperative that for the Diplomatic Corps to function optimally, foreign language proficiency is vital, and the academy will strive to enhance its capability to offer such. The importance of establishing partnerships and networks with strategic institutions both at the national and international level will be prioritised in pursuit of the objective of striving to be a centre of excellence.
SOURCE OF DATA	Diplomatic Academy
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Valid ISO certificate (SABS Audit Report), signed reports on AU languages and establishing partnerships.
ASSUMPTIONS	Well-equipped officials to respond to the demand for training. Training requests received.
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	In line with vulnerable groups, equity and ranking
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Centre of excellence in foreign service training
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Diplomatic Academy

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of gender mainstreaming initiatives focussing on women, youth and persons with disabilities
DEFINITION	Initiatives undertaken towards creating an enabling environment for the promotion of women empowerment, youth development and persons with disabilities. These will include the establishment of monitoring mechanisms to assess the implementation and reporting of information towards institutionalising mainstreaming by the department. The department will track initiatives on promoting women empowerment, youth development and people with disabilities.
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Transformation Programme and Organisational Development
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports/attendance registers/policy and assessment reports in either draft or final templates
ASSUMPTIONS	Active participation in initiatives Officials declare their disabilities
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Target for women: Six Targets for youth: Two Target for people with disabilities: Two
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Institutionalisation of women empowerment, youth development and people with disabilities.
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Chief Directorate: Transformation Programmes and Organisational Development

INDICATOR TITLE	Percentage of legal advice and services rendered
DEFINITION	Office of the Chief State Law Adviser (OCSLA) International Law (IL) provides legal advice, legal services and policy advice to all aspects of domestic and international law.
SOURCE OF DATA	Statistics from legal services
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	The following formula is used to calculate: Percentage of SA commitments and efforts ... = $\frac{\text{Numerator (Commitmen and efforts honoured)}}{\text{Denominator (Commitment and Efforts)}} * 100$ (quantitative)
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	There are written requests for legal advice
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Non-cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	On target - 100% of legal advice and services rendered
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	OCSLA (IL)

PROGRAMME 2

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of regional political reports, including the outcomes of structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits aligned to achievement of the NDP and MTSF
DEFINITION	<p>South Africa strengthens and consolidates its political, economic and social relations through different engagements. The conduct of diplomacy between two states remains the pre-eminent basis for advancing national priorities, as well as for effective engagement in multilateral fora.</p> <p>Structured bilateral mechanisms regularise and govern bilateral engagements and are some of the most important and valuable foreign policy instruments to coordinate South Africa's positions and activities towards a particular country. Structured bilateral mechanisms refer to numerous regularised and formalised meetings that South Africa has with other countries and is governed by a signed agreement. These meetings usually take place in an agreed format and a time frame pursuant to bilateral communiqués, agreements and/or other high-level decisions.</p> <p>High-level meetings, for the purposes of our report, denote meetings at the level of President, Deputy President, DIRCO Minister, Deputy Ministers, Director-General, and Deputy Director-General.</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Bilateral branches
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	South Africa's objectives can be pursued with the identified bilateral partner
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Higher performance is desired – alignment between country strategies against domestic priorities
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Directors-General: Bilateral branches

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of quarterly progress reports on the regional trade and investment initiatives undertaken in support of the one government investment approach
DEFINITION	<p>When drafting the country strategies to guide South Africa's bilateral relations with identified countries and the continent, an assessment will guide in terms of trade and investment opportunities. The MTSF has identified the sourcing of new markets for South African products and increasing FDI. Through its missions, the department contributes towards economic growth in South Africa through export and investment promotion by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring new areas for trade and investment, ranging from primary, secondary and tertiary sectors • nurturing and expanding existing trade and investment • establishing business-to-business relations. <p>A quarterly progress report will reflect work done on trade promotion and sourcing of investment</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Bilateral branches
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Investment opportunities exist that can be pursued
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Reports will include beneficiaries of engagements disaggregated by gender, age and disability
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More investment and trade opportunities
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Directors-General: Bilateral branches

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of regional reports on tourism-promotion events to promote South Africa as a preferred tourist destination, thereby contributing to growth in the tourism sector in support of the one government tourism approach
DEFINITION	Engagements in tourism events with sector role players (travel agencies and tour operators) in host governments in a concerted effort to promote South Africa as a favourable tourism destination for business and leisure (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events [MICE]) and as a safe and value-for-money destination of choice. The aim of tourism promotion is to contribute to growth in the tourism sector. It is also part of the missions' activities to promote South Africa at events such as national days. It is also important for missions to identify opportunities for increased international tourist arrivals to South Africa, as well as the barriers.
SOURCE OF DATA	Bilateral branches
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Tourism-promotion events take place within the limitations of any developments in the global environment
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Increase in tourist arrivals to contribute towards the achievement of South Africa's domestic priorities
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Directors-General: Bilateral branches

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of assessment reports of South Africa’s contribution towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and stability • socio-economic development • good governance and democracy • the implementation of the RISDP
DEFINITION	South Africa participates in continental meetings and structures in order to advance the national agenda and the needs to regularly assess its participation against the regional integration agenda. SADC has developed a RISDP for member states with specific projects to advance regional integration.
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Southern African Development Community
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Partner departments submit the required information, indicating if there is progress in South Africa against the prioritised projects in the RISDP
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Effective contribution towards peace, stability, socio-economic development, good governance, democracy, and regional integration; and the implementation of the revised RISDP towards the achievement of South Africa's domestic priorities
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Africa

PROGRAMME 3

<p>INDICATOR TITLE</p>	<p>Number of reports on the outcomes of multilateral and multistate organisations reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peace and security • human rights • economic and social development
<p>DEFINITION</p>	<p>South Africa's multilateral engagements are premised on the need to advance the priorities for South Africa as reflected in the NDP, as well as to advance the objectives of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. A limitation on the indicator performance is that South Africa is not in control of the outcomes of multilateral meetings and structures. Whether or not South Africa's national interests are reflected in these outcomes, depends on negotiated agreements and consensus reached. In many cases, the outcome represents the lowest common denominator.</p>
<p>SOURCE OF DATA</p>	<p>Branch: Global Governance and Continental Agenda</p>
<p>METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT</p>	<p>Qualitative</p>
<p>MEANS OF VERIFICATION</p>	<p>Signed reports</p>
<p>ASSUMPTIONS</p>	<p>Interdepartmental meetings taking place to agree on South Africa's position, having the country's position approved prior to South Africa's participation at international fora</p>
<p>DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>CALCULATION TYPE</p>	<p>Cumulative</p>
<p>REPORTING CYCLE</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>
<p>DESIRED PERFORMANCE</p>	<p>South Africa's foreign policy objective pursued in areas of peace and security, human rights, and economic and social development</p>
<p>INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY</p>	<p>Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda</p>

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on the implementation of the approved plan of action for the hosting of the 2025 G20 Summit
DEFINITION	The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international economic cooperation. It plays an important role in shaping and strengthening global architecture and governance on all major international economic issues. South Africa is a member of the G20, and its participation seeks to provide a strategic foresight in establishing an economic and international policy platform that will drive and negotiate the best possible outcomes for the country, Africa and the developing world.
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Economic and Social Development
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Interdepartmental meetings taking place to agree on South Africa's position, having the country's position approved prior to South Africa's participation in meetings related to the G20.
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	South Africa's foreign policy objectives pursued in international economic fora.
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on South Africa's international reporting obligations
DEFINITION	South Africa has an international obligation to submit national reports in terms of international agreements it is a party to. Line-function departments submit national reports, while DIRCO monitors the submission of the reports and provides feedback to Cabinet.
SOURCE OF DATA	Office of the Chief State Law Adviser (OCSLA) International Law (IL)
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Partner departments provide the required reports as per the reporting obligations
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Bi-annual
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	South Africa is 100% compliance with submitting national reports
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	OCSLA (IL)

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of positions on identified influential multilateral bodies where South Africa is represented
DEFINITION	South Africa has to identify and take up positions at influential multilateral bodies where it is represented. Most of these positions are available on a rotational basis and, once available, South Africa needs to field a suitable candidate and lobby for support to get the candidate elected. South Africa is represented at identified multilateral bodies to promote its national interests and influence resolutions, decisions and outcomes. Representation can be both at country and at expert level.
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Global Governance and Continental Agenda
METHOD OF CALCULATION	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports
ASSUMPTIONS	Positions in the multilateral bodies in which South Africans citizens has skills and may be appointed
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIAR-IES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Bi-annual
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More South Africa experts' representation appointed in the multilateral bodies
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda

INDICATOR TITLE	<p>Number of assessment reports reflecting South Africa's participation and outcomes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU structures and processes • AU Partnership • implementation of Agenda 2063
DEFINITION	<p>South Africa participates in the AU and its organs to advance the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 and its identified flagship projects. The engagement is informed by South Africa's vision of an African continent, which is prosperous, peaceful, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and united, and which contributes to a world that is just and equitable. South Africa therefore endeavours to contribute to the operationalisation of identified Agenda 2063 flagship projects.</p> <p>South Africa's multilateral engagements are premised on the need to advance the priorities for South Africa itself as reflected in the NDP, as well as to advance the objectives of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. South Africa is not in control of the outcomes of multilateral meetings and structures. Whether or not South Africa's national interests are reflected in these outcomes, depends on negotiated agreements and consensus reached. In many cases, the outcome represents the lowest common denominator.</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Global Governance and Continental Agenda
METHOD OF CALCULATION	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Outcomes reports or submissions on AU structures and processes, AU partnerships and implementation of Agenda 2063
ASSUMPTIONS	The relevant partner departments that lead the flagship projects within their mandate submit the information to DIRCO
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Bi-annually
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More flagship projects implemented or operationalised
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on South Africa's commitments and efforts towards peace and stability on the continent
DEFINITION	South Africa participates in AU structures and processes charged with the promotion of peace and security on the continent, which include the AU Peace and Security Council and AU Post-Reconstruction and Development Committee on Sudan, among others. These fora are engaged with a view to strengthen the African Peace and Security Architecture by supporting the operationalisation of the African Standby Force and the Continental Early Warning System.
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Global Governance and Continental Agenda
METHOD OF CALCULATION	The following formula is used to calculate: Percentage of SA commitments and efforts ... = $\frac{\text{Numerator (Commitmen and efforts honoured)}}{\text{Denominator (Commitment and Efforts)}} * 100$ (quantitative)
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Approved programmes of action, outcome reports, South Africa's submissions to AU processes and communiqués, decisions and declarations issued by the AU and its various organs (not signed)
ASSUMPTIONS	Commitments and the resultant efforts for South Africa to resolve continental conflicts as derived from outcomes from AU processes and meetings
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIAR-IES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Non-cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Bi-annually
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Fulfil all commitments to resolve continental conflicts
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on the outcomes of South-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda
DEFINITION	Participation in meetings and organisations of developing countries, commonly referred to as countries of the South, allows for the development of common positions that reflect the needs of the developing countries and aim to exert greater influence in pursuing these positions within multilateral fora. This also relates to minilateal/plurilateral arrangements (e.g., BRICS). There are objectives for South Africa's engagements and its participation aims to achieve those objectives
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Asia and Middle East Branch: Global Governance and Continental Agenda
METHOD OF CALCULATION	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed reports. In instances where there is more than one report provided, confirmation that the reports provided constitute one report for all South-South engagements will be added.
ASSUMPTIONS	The negotiated outcomes are in line with the identified objectives
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIAR-IES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More outcomes on identified objectives
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Asia and Middle East Deputy Director-General: Global Governance and Continental Agenda

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on the outcomes of North-South engagements reflecting South Africa's participation and interests, including that of the African Agenda
DEFINITION	Strategic formations of the developed countries, usually referred to as countries of the North, are engaged to garner support for the African Agenda and the Agenda of the South. These are countries usually considered to have influence in the global arena and also with resources that can be channelled to the developing world. South Africa has identified what it wants to achieve through each of these engagements and needs to regularly assess whether it is achieving those objectives.
SOURCE OF DATA	Regional organisations
METHOD OF CALCULATION	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed submission/report
ASSUMPTIONS	The negotiated outcomes are in line with the identified objectives
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Bi-annually
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More negotiated outcomes in line with South African objectives
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Branch: Americas and Europe (Regional Organisations)

PROGRAMME 4

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of key messages distributed to missions on domestic and global developments
DEFINITION	To have a better understanding and awareness of South Africa's foreign policy and communicate it through professional public diplomacy services, the department will, in conjunction with the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), facilitate key messages to be distributed to missions on political, economic and global developments. This will assist the missions to disseminate one message on key developments.
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Public Diplomacy
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Key messages issued by Public Diplomacy as received from GCIS on political, economic and global developments
ASSUMPTIONS	Key messages are available to be distributed
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More key messages issued
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Public Diplomacy

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of platforms utilised to inform and promote South Africa's foreign policy to domestic and international audiences
DEFINITION	<p>Different platforms are utilised by the principals, i.e., Minister and Deputy Ministers, to engage on domestic and international developments such as PPPs and opinion pieces.</p> <p>A PPP is an outreach programme, conducted by the political principal, during which domestic audiences are engaged on foreign policy. Political principals may be represented by the DG, DDG or any nominated official.</p> <p>An opinion piece is a written expression of thoughts on a particular political issue.</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: Public Diplomacy
METHOD OF CALCULATION	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	PPPs: Signed reports Opinion pieces: Published opinion pieces
ASSUMPTIONS	Existing domestic and international audiences
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	More PPPs and opinion pieces published
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Public Diplomacy

INDICATOR TITLE	Percentage of requests for protocol services rendered to incoming and outgoing visits
DEFINITION	<p>Incoming and outgoing visits for the President, Deputy President and their counterparts in compliance with relevant legislation.</p> <p>Categories of dignitaries: Hheads of State or Government, spouses of Heads of State or Government, internationally recognised Kings/Queens at the level of a Head of State, Deputy Heads of State/Government, former Heads of State/Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations, Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs/International Relations, Heads and Deputy Heads of Multilateral and Regional Organisations, as determined by the policy on incoming international visits and eminent persons, as may be determined by the Director-General of DIRCO.</p> <p>Categories of visits: State visits, official visits, working visits, special visits, bi-national and joint commissions, conferences and summits, special envoys and private visits. Transit visits are excluded.</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Branch: State Protocol and Consular Services
METHOD OF CALCULATION	<p>The following formula is used to calculate:</p> $\text{Percentage of SA commitments and efforts ...} = \frac{\text{Numerator (Commitmen and efforts honoured)}}{\text{Denominator (Commitment and Efforts)}} * 100 \text{ (quantitative)}$
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed quarterly schedules for confirmed facilitated international visits of principals, including initiation and signed/approved exit reports and/or submissions
ASSUMPTIONS	<p>Written requests.</p> <p>Delayed notifications, which might allow very little lead time and/or notifications might only be received during or post a visit.</p> <p>Sufficient resources</p>
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Non-cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	All requests received responded to

INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: State Protocol and Consular Services
INDICATOR TITLE	Percentage of requests for consular assistance rendered
DEFINITION	To render consular services and protect the interests of all South Africans abroad as contemplated in the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, 1963. To monitor assistance provided by DIRCO to South Africa citizens abroad as per the Vienna Convention governing consular relations.
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Consular Services
METHOD OF CALCULATION	The following formula is used to calculate: Percentage of SA commitments and efforts ... = $\frac{\text{Numerator (Commitmen and efforts honoured)}}{\text{Denominator (Commitment and Efforts)}} * 100$ (quantitative)
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed statistics/report
ASSUMPTIONS	Confirmation that requests are received from South African citizens and all relevant stakeholders have been communicated to
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Non-cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	All requests responded to
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: State Protocol and Consular Services

INDICATOR TITLE	Percentage of documents legalised
DEFINITION	Documents for use abroad are legalised and authenticated by the department Documents accepted for legalisation are processed in accordance with the guidelines set in the Service Delivery Charter Legalisation is guided by Chapter 20 of the Consular Handbook
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Consular Services
METHOD OF CALCULATION	The following formula is used to calculate: Percentage of SA commitments and efforts ... = $\frac{\text{Numerator (Commitmen and efforts honoured)}}{\text{Denominator (Commitment and Efforts)}} * 100$ (quantitative)
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Signed statistics/reports/registers
ASSUMPTIONS	The authorised signatures for partner departments are available
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Non-cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Respond to all requests received
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: State Protocol and Consular Services

PROGRAMME 5

INDICATOR TITLE	Number of reports on payment of South Africa's contributions to international organisations
DEFINITION	<p>The department is required to transfer payments, which arise from obligations undertaken by South Africa at international, regional, and subregional multilateral levels. The payments, which are made by the department, generally take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • membership due to organisations such as the UN, AU, SADC and the Commonwealth • contributions to peacekeeping operations of the UN • meetings of state parties (parties to international treaties) of which South Africa is a member, and in which South Africa has participated • voluntary pledges that South Africa makes to international organisations for the purpose of humanitarian assistance, technical assistance, etc. <p>It should be noted that the payment depends on the assessment letters received from the international organisations.</p>
SOURCE OF DATA	Chief Directorate: Financial Management
METHOD OF CALCULATION/ASSESSMENT	Quantitative
MEANS OF VERIFICATION	Proof of payment
ASSUMPTIONS	Sufficient funds available
DISAGGREGATION OF BENEFICIARIES (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION (WHERE APPLICABLE)	Not applicable
CALCULATION TYPE	Cumulative
REPORTING CYCLE	Quarterly
DESIRED PERFORMANCE	Higher performance is desirable and all payments made within the period due
INDICATOR RESPONSIBILITY	Deputy Director-General: Financial and Asset Management

GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY

African Agenda

South Africa's future is inextricably linked to that of Africa. The continent is therefore the cornerstone of South Africa's foreign policy. The concept and term, African Agenda, has been developed to describe the principal motive underpinning South Africa's foreign policy for the last more than 20 years. This African Agenda rests on five key pillars: contribute to regional and continental peace, security, stability and sustainable development through the African Union (AU); advance Africa's socio-economic development through the New Partnership for Africa's Development; strengthen effective governance through mechanisms such as the African Peer Review Mechanism; seek cooperation through international partnerships in support of Africa's development; and develop regional economic communities as the building blocs for continental economic development and integration.

African values of Ubuntu/Diplomacy of Ubuntu

South Africa is a multifaceted, multicultural and multiracial country that embraces the concept of Ubuntu as a way of defining who we are and how we relate to others. The philosophy of Ubuntu means "humanity" and is reflected in the idea that we affirm our humanity when we affirm the humanity of others. It has played a major role in the forging of a South African national consciousness and in the process of its democratic transformation and nation-building.

South Africa's unique approach to global issues has found expression in the concept of Ubuntu. These concepts inform our particular approach to diplomacy and shape our vision of a better world for all. This philosophy translates into an approach to international relations that respects all nations, peoples and cultures. It recognises that it is in our national interest to promote and support the positive development of others.

South Africa therefore accords central importance to its immediate African neighbourhood and continent; working with countries of the South to address shared challenges of underdevelopment; promoting global equity and social justice; working with countries of the North to develop a true and effective partnership for a better world; and doing our part to strengthen the multilateral system, including its transformation, to reflect the diversity of our nations and ensure its centrality in global governance.

Agenda 2063

Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. It is the continent's strategic framework that aims to deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and is a concrete manifestation of the Pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance. The genesis of Agenda 2063 was the realisation by African leaders that there was a need to refocus and reprioritise Africa's agenda from the struggle against apartheid and the attainment of political independence for the continent, which had been the focus of the Organisation of African Unity, the precursor of the AU; and instead to prioritise inclusive social and economic development, continental and regional integration, democratic governance and peace and security, among other issues, aimed at repositioning Africa to becoming a dominant player in the global arena.

AUPCRD Committee on Sudan

The AU Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Ministerial Committee on Sudan was established in July 2003 to facilitate post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts in that country.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

China's BRI aims to connect Asia, Europe and Africa along five routes. The infrastructure projects, which are part of the BRI, mostly run through some of China's poorest and least

developed regions and could provide a stimulus to help cushion the effects of the deepening slowdown of the Chinese economy. China is also hoping that, by improving connectivity between its underdeveloped southern and western provinces, its richer eastern coast, and the countries along its periphery, the BRI will improve China's internal economic integration and competitiveness and spur more regionally balanced growth. Moreover, the construction is intended to help make use of China's enormous industrial overcapacity and ease the entry of Chinese goods into regional markets.

Bilateral relations

Bilateral relations are mainly conducted through formally accredited missions that spearhead on a daily basis the promotion of the national interests of the sending country. These relations cover a wide spectrum such as political, economic, science and technology, defence, consular and development cooperation, and tourism, among others. South Africa conducts its diplomatic relations through 115 missions under the control of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

Bi-National and Joint Commissions

Bi-national and joint commissions are regularised, and formalised meetings undertaken by mutual agreement between South Africa and the participating country. These meetings take place in an agreed format and time frame pursuant to bilateral communiqués, agreements and/or other high-level decisions.

Bretton Woods Institutions

The International Monetary Fund and International Bank of Reconstruction and Development were created by the Bretton Woods Agreement at the United Nations (UN) Monetary and Financial Conference in 1944 to manage global economic and financial relations.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

A system of multilateral agreements, conventions and controls in which all states can equally participate, and which is aimed at ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction and limiting the spread and control the use of conventional weapons, including small-arms and light weapons.

Early Warning

A concept utilised in conflict prevention referring to diplomatic analysis and reporting by states and regional bodies with the aim of preventing the outbreak of large-scale conflict through appropriate preventative diplomacy.

Economic diplomacy

Economic diplomacy is the overall diplomatic contribution by DIRCO towards the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy priorities and national priorities, which are underpinned in the Economic Diplomacy Strategic Framework (EDSF). This framework is for South African missions abroad, supported by head office, to successfully drive the country's national interests, thus contributing towards the country's growth and development plan in the fields of tourism, trade and investment.

First 10-year Implementation Plan

The FTYIP of Agenda 2063 (2013 – 2023) is the first in a series of five 10-year plans over the 50-year horizon of Agenda 2063's time frame.

The aims of developing the 10-year plans are to:

- identify priority areas, set specific targets and define strategies and policy measures required to implement the FTYIP of Agenda 2063
- bring to fruition the fast-track programmes and initiatives outlined in the Malabo Decisions of the AU to provide the big push and breakthroughs for Africa's economic and social transformation
- provide information to all key stakeholders at national, regional and continental levels on the expected results/outcomes for the first 10 years of the plan and assign responsibilities to all stakeholders in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- outline the strategies required to ensure availability of resources and capacities together with citizens' engagement in the implementation of the FTYIP.

The goals and priority areas of the FTYIP were influenced by four key factors:

- the flagship projects/programmes of Agenda 2063
- near term national and regional economic communities (RECs) development priorities
- continental frameworks
- Agenda 2063 Results Framework.

Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

The 4IR refers to a series of social, political, cultural and economic upheavals that will unfold over the 21st century. Building on the widespread availability of digital technologies that were the result of the Third Industrial, or Digital Revolution, the 4IR will be driven largely by the convergence of digital, biological and physical innovations, such as the fifth-generation wireless technology for digital cellular networks, the Internet of Things, machine learning, artificial intelligence, genome editing, augmented reality, robotics and 3D printing.

These technologies are rapidly changing the way humans create, exchange and distribute value. The result of all this is societal transformation at a global scale. By affecting the

incentives, rules and norms of economic life, it transforms how we communicate, learn, entertain ourselves and relate to one another and how we understand ourselves as human beings. Furthermore, the sense that new technologies are being developed and implemented at an increasingly rapid pace has an impact on human identities, communities and political structures.

Global balance of forces

The global system is still characterised by primary unipolarity and secondary multipolar features. This is reflected, among others, in the emergence of China as a world power and the rise of Asia, and the quasi-autonomy of regional alliances such as the European Union (EU), Latin American states, BRICS and other such cross-regional partnerships.

It also refers to how a country or grouping protects itself against another nation or group of nations by matching its power against the power of the other side.

Global multilateral system of governance

This refers to a rules-based international system in which priorities in the economic, social welfare, human rights and security areas, aimed at improving the quality of life of all South African citizens, peoples of Africa and the rest of the developing world, are advanced.

Bearing in mind the centrality of the UN Charter and the principles of international law, South Africa promotes these global development, social, security and human rights issues through participation in the international debate, notably the UN system, its specialised agencies and other international fora, in order to promote a responsive and accountable global governance system to better answer the needs of vulnerable and developing countries.

High-Level Meeting

The term, High-Level Meeting, is often employed to denote meetings of ministers and above. The content of these meetings could be the same for state and official visits.

India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA Fund)

The IBSA Fund for the Alleviation of Poverty and Hunger has undertaken various projects in 21 partner countries. Since its inception in 2006, the fund has disbursed US\$36 million in financial contributions with the aim of facilitating the implementation of 27 projects. The fund has been providing a unique opportunity for strengthening trilateral cooperation with developing countries through a steady flow of resources and continues to play an important role in sharing their respective developmental experiences.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

The JCPOA, more commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal or Iran deal, is an agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States [US], plus Germany) together with the EU. On 8 May 2018, former President Donald Trump announced the US' withdrawal from the JCPOA.

Major international conferences

South Africa places great emphasis on multilateralism and the reform of global governance. To contribute to a better world and the reform of global governance, South Africa has hosted some major international conferences, the outcomes of which contribute to the advancements of humanity. DIRCO has a special responsibility to follow up on the outcomes and decisions of all major international conferences hosted since 1990.

Medium Term Strategic Framework

The MTSF is a high-level strategic document to guide the five-year implementation and monitoring of the National Development Plan 2030. In line with the electoral mandate, it identifies the priorities to be undertaken during 2019 to 2024 to put the country on a positive trajectory towards the achievement of the 2030 vision. It sets targets for the implementation of the priorities and interventions for the five-year period and states the outcomes and indicators to be monitored.

The seven priorities derived from the 2019 electoral mandate and State of the Nation Address are:

- **Priority 1:** Economic Transformation and Job Creation
- **Priority 2:** Education, Skills and Health
- **Priority 3:** Consolidating the Social Wage through Reliable and Quality Basic Services
- **Priority 4:** Spatial Integration, Human Settlements and Local Government
- **Priority 5:** Social Cohesion and Safe Communities
- **Priority 6:** A Capable, Ethical and Developmental State
- **Priority 7:** A Better Africa and World.

Multilateralism

A global system of interaction between states, which is particularly important to small and medium-sized states as it gives all participating states an equal voice and stake in programmes, projects and actions to address issues that affect their interests, those of their region and issues of global concern. This multilateral rules-based system is the main counterbalance to unilateral and collective actions undertaken by big and powerful states that exclude small and medium states.

Multilateral Rules-based System

This system comprises all the UN bodies, agencies, funds, programmes and related organisations in association with the UN, as well as conventions and agreements that provide for inclusive and equal participation by all states.

Official Visit

An Official Visit is the second-highest level of diplomatic contact between two countries and is undertaken at the invitation of the host to the relevant foreign counterpart. It takes place more frequently than a State Visit and can involve a Head of State or Government, Deputy Head of State/Government, Minister/Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs/International Relations. Ceremonial and protocol honours accorded are scaled down depending on the rank of the visiting counterpart. The duration of an Official Visit will not exceed three days (two nights). An extension of an Official Visit beyond the set period will be at the discretion of the host. An extension of an Official Visit beyond the set period without the approval of the host will be categorised as a Private Visit.

Pluralistic

A pluralistic society is a diverse one, where the people in it believe all kinds of different things and tolerate each other's beliefs even when they don't match their own. Pluralism is a social philosophy that seeks to allow many different viewpoints to coexist within a larger structure. A pluralist society, system of government or organisation contains many groups that keep their identities while also participating in the larger group.

Plurilateral

A plurilateral agreement is a multinational legal or trade agreement between countries. In economic jargon, it is an agreement between more than two countries, but not a great many, which would be a multilateral agreement.

Private Visit

A Private Visit is an unofficial visit undertaken by a foreign dignitary as outlined by the policy on incoming international visits and includes, but not restricted to, private business, medical treatment or holiday purposes.

Promotion of the multilateral system

Promoting the use and strengthening of the multilateral system of collective decision-making between states and countering the damaging effects of unilateral and collective actions undertaken by big and powerful states that exclude small and medium states such as South Africa.

Regional economic integration

South Africa's foreign policy is anchored in domestic priorities with the main aim of consolidating regional integration with particular emphasis on improving the political and economic integration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). SADC and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) are primary vehicles for regional economic integration. They are important building blocs to achieve the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)-East African Community (EAC)-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

SADC's integration agenda is anchored in two tracks, namely political and security integration and economic integration. Critical to the objectives of regional economic integration is the realisation of the TFTA, as well as the AfCFTA, both aimed at boosting industrial and infrastructure development and enhancing intra-regional trade.

Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)

The RISDP is a comprehensive development and implementation framework guiding the regional integration agenda of the SADC over a period of 15 years (2005 – 2020). It is designed to provide clear strategic direction with respect to SADC programmes, projects and activities in line with the SADC Common Agenda and strategic priorities, as enshrined in the SADC Treaty of 1992. The original plan was approved by the SADC Summit in 2003. Through concrete priorities, programmes and targets, the RISDP allows all parties involved to keep track of progress made, and to obtain guidance for prioritisation.

The ultimate objective of the plan is to deepen integration in the region with a view to accelerate poverty eradication and the attainment of other economic and non-economic development goals.

Priority areas of the RISDP:

- Trade and Economic Liberalisation
- Regional Infrastructure and Services Development for Regional Integration
- Sustainable Food Security
- Social and Human Development
- Cross-cutting Issues, including Gender and Development, HIV and AIDS, Science and Technology, Environment and Sustainable Development, Private Sector, and Statistics.

Senior Officials' Meeting

The most common meetings are between senior officials, i.e., below Cabinet level. Meetings of this nature often convene to prepare for high-level meetings, exchange information and ideas, discuss technical issues, negotiate, and draft agreements and communiqués/declarations, assess the implementation of previous agreements and/or decisions, as well as to clarify positions and develop common positions on issues of mutual interest.

Special Visit

A Special Visit is undertaken by a foreign dignitary at the invitation of the Republic of South Africa, to represent their country or organisation (e.g., the inauguration of a Head of State, ad-hoc meetings etc.) or attend a specific occasion (e.g., State funeral, etc.).

State Visit

A State Visit is the highest level of diplomatic contact between two countries and involves a formal visit by one Head of State to another. It takes place at the invitation of the President of the Republic of South Africa and the recommendation of the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. During a State Visit, full ceremonial honours are accorded to a foreign Head of State. The duration of a State Visit is three days (two nights). An extension of a State Visit beyond the set period will be at the discretion of the President of the Republic of South Africa. Extension of a State Visit beyond the set period without the approval of the President will be categorised as a Private Visit.

Strategic Partnership

A Strategic Partnership, such as that of the Africa-European Union (EU)-, provides an overarching long-term framework for intercontinental relations aimed at promoting economic cooperation, sustainable development, peace, security, democracy, prosperity, solidarity and human dignity for the benefit of its members.

Strengthen relations

This terminology generally refers to diplomatic actions aimed at expanding and deepening the political, trade, social, financial, economic and security relationship and interactions between South Africa and another state. These actions can take many forms but usually pertain to state visits, official visits, working visits, structured bilateral mechanisms and the daily activities of diplomatic missions.

Structured bilateral mechanism

A structured bilateral mechanism is a terminology reflecting the numerous regularised and formalised meetings that South Africa has with other countries. These meetings usually take place in an agreed format and time frame pursuant to bilateral communiqués, agreements and/or other high-level decisions. They usually comprise subcommittees or technical committees dealing with issues such as global governance, Africa, strengthening trade and investment relations, tourism promotion, science and technology cooperation, etc. Ministers and senior officials of departments concerned usually co-chair these subcommittees. Structured bilateral mechanisms are co-chaired from the President downwards to the level of senior officials. These meetings usually meet under various designations such as a bi-national commission, joint commission, partnership forum, policy dialogue forum, policy forum, etc. The meetings usually alternate between the countries concerned and can take place every six months, annually and in certain cases every two years, depending on the importance of the issues on the agenda and the availability of the relevant ministers and senior officials. The structured bilateral mechanism is one of the most important and valuable foreign policy instruments for DIRCO to coordinate South African positions and activities towards a particular country and to advance South Africa's key priorities.

Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA)

The TFTA is an initiative between three RECs, namely: COMESA, the EAC and SADC and will be achieved by amalgamating the economies of the three regions with a combined market of 26 countries, which constitute half of the member states of the AU, a population of 625 million people and a combined GDP of US\$833 billion. The TFTA is anchored on three pillars; market integration, infrastructure development, and industrial development and is a precursor to the vision of realising an economically integrated continent.

United Nations (UN) Development Repositioning of the UN Development System (UNDS)

In May 2018, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a landmark consensus resolution on the repositioning of the UNDS, with the aim of better supporting member states towards the realisation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development). South Africa actively participated in the negotiations at the UN in New York to ensure that the UN Development Agenda continues to remain compatible with the development agenda of South Africa and the South, as well as AU aspirations.

United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)

The North American Free Trade Agreement was renegotiated and replaced by the USMCA. The latter is expected to reshape North American economic relations and is in line with former President Trump's aim to give American manufacturers an advantage over their competitors and gain increased market access for US farmers into the Canadian dairy market. On 20 June 2019, the Senate of Mexico ratified the agreement. Mexico's ratification procedure will be completed when the President announces the ratification in the Federal Register. The processes to ratify the agreement by the US and Canada are not completed yet.

Visit by Eminent Persons

The Director-General (DG) of DIRCO determines the guests who would be accorded a status of Eminent Persons for a particular visit. The Planning Committee of the specific visit, in consultation with the DG, decides on the courtesies to be accorded.

Visit by Special Envoy

A Special Envoy is a Representative appointed by a Head of State/Government or Head of Multilateral and Regional Organisation in order to convey an official message to the President or Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa. This visit is taken at the initiative of the visiting country. Courtesies to be accorded are informed by the level of the Special Envoy.

Working Visit

A Working Visit is undertaken at the initiative of the foreign counterpart/dignitary without a formal invitation from a South African counterpart. It requires prior approval from a South African counterpart. A visiting foreign counterpart/dignitary is not accorded full ceremonial honours. The duration of a Working Visit will not exceed two days (one night). An extension of a Working Visit beyond the set period without the approval of the host will be categorised as a Private Visit.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AFCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Agreement
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
AUC	African Union Commission
AU	African Union
AUPSC	AU Peace and Security Council

B

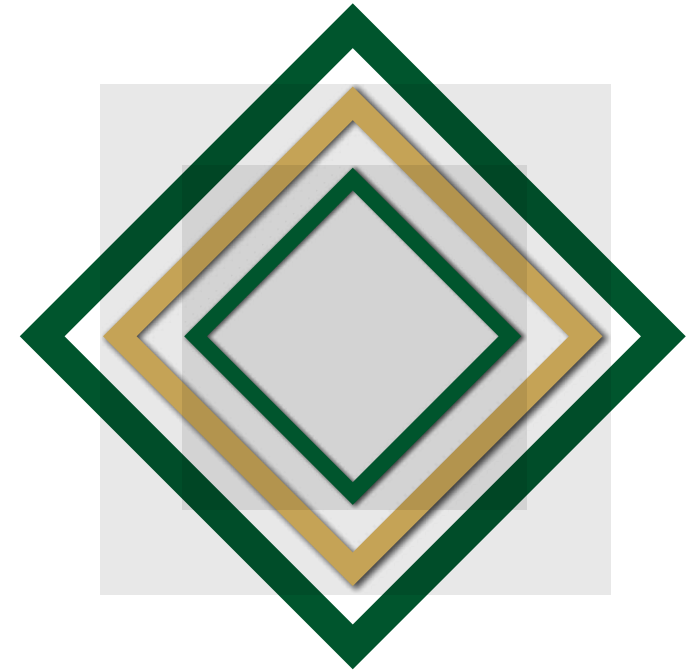
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
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C

CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CAHOSCC	Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change

D

DDG	Deputy Director-General
DG	Director-General
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
DTRD	Diplomatic Training, Research and Development



E

EAC	East Africa Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EU	European Union

F

FSA	Foreign Service Act
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G

G7	Group of Seven
G77	Group of 77 (plus China)

I

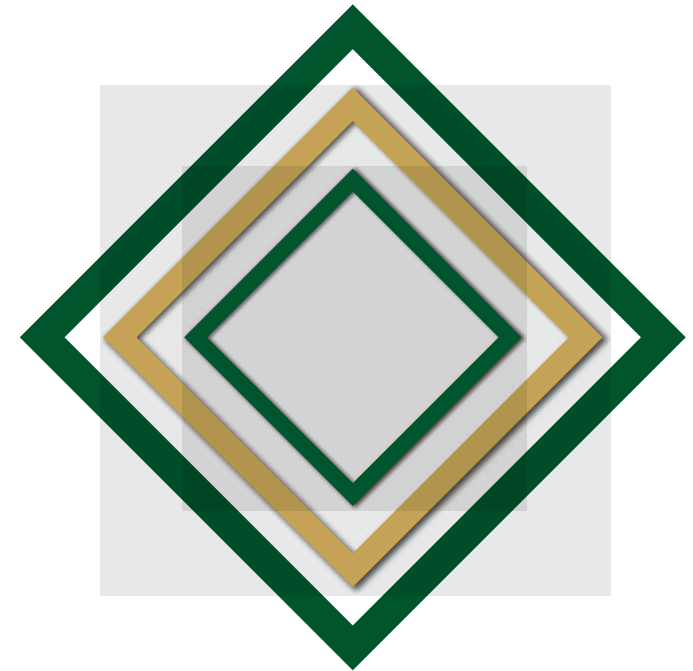
IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association

M

MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
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N

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDP	National Development Plan
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy



O

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

P

PTA Preferential Trade Agreement

R

RISDP Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan

S

SACU Southern African Customs Union

SADC Southern African Development Community

SDGs Sustainable Development Goals

STI Science, Technology and Innovation

T

TFTA Tripartite Free Trade Area

TIDCA Trade, Investment and Development Cooperation Agreement

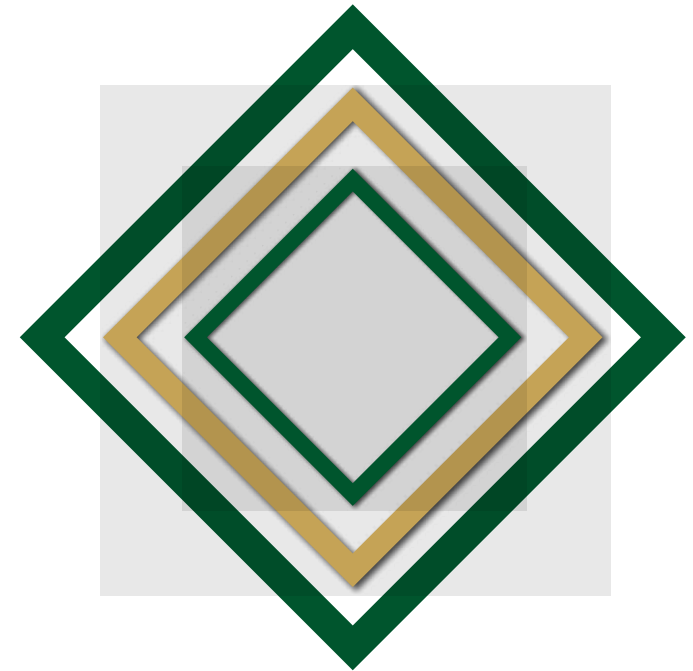
TNPW Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

U

UN United Nations

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNSC United Nations Security Council



W

- WEF** World Economic Forum
- WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organisation
- WSP** Workplace Skills Plan
- WTO** World Trade Organisation

