



SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY NEWSLETTER

ASTANA OCTOBER 2015



President Jacob Zuma of South Africa addresses the general debate of the General Assembly's seventieth session.



28 September 2015 – In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, South African President Jacob Zuma stressed on reforming and restructuring of the UN Security Council in order to resolve conflicts surrounding Middle East and African nations.

He specified that although significant progress has been made by the UN since the adoption of the World Summit Outcome in 2005, no reform has been made to the restructuring of the Security Council since the founding days of the organization.

"It is unacceptable and unjustifiable that more than one billion people in the African continent are still excluded as permanent members of the key decision making structure of the United Nations, the Security Council. A continent with a smaller population than Africa is represented by three countries on the UN Security Council," said President Zuma addressing the 70th General Debate.

He also called on the UN to allow more representation of countries through permanent and non-permanent membership at the Council, thereby keeping with the changed times. "The UN cannot pretend that the world has not changed since 1945. We are no longer colonies. We are free, independent sovereign states," he said.

President Zuma criticized decisions taken by certain Security Council members that led to an escalation of conflicts in the Middle-East and Sahel region.

"The current situation in Libya and the Sahel region is a direct consequence of some members of the UN Security Council not heeding informed counsel from the African Union. The principle of the 'responsibility to protect' had been abused for narrow political interests that had nothing to do with the fundamental aspects of the prevention of mass atrocities," he added.

He also warned that unless an immediate solution to Israel-Palestine conflict is implemented, Middle East cannot hope for peace.

"There can be no peace, security and development in the Middle East without the resolution of the Palestinian question. A solution is urgent, otherwise if we delay, in the next decade, we may

no longer have a piece of land to justify the two-State solution," he said in his address.

President Zuma commended the recent signing of the Peace Agreement between the parties in South Sudan and urged the UN and other stakeholders to support the Sudanese people during these challenging times.

"We reiterate our support of the people of Western Sahara and urge the international community to support their struggle for self-determination, freedom, human rights and dignity."

He also stressed the need to work towards the elimination of nuclear weapons and applauded the recent agreement reached on the Iranian nuclear program.

"There can be no safe hands for nuclear weapons. The humanitarian consequences of a possible detonation of a nuclear weapon, whether intentionally or accidentally, will be catastrophic for humanity. We welcome the recent agreement reached on the Iranian nuclear program and the recognition of the right of Iran to peaceful use of nuclear energy."

President Zuma of South Africa is among the many leaders who address the general debate of 70th General Assembly which opened this year with the adoption of Agenda 2030 and 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Made up of all the 193 Member States of the United Nations, the Assembly provides a forum for multilateral discussion of international issues covered by the UN Charter.

Opening session in KAZGUU by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan



H.E. Mr. M. Bocharnikov, Ambassador of Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Erlan Idrissov, The Minister of Foreign Affairs of RK, Director of Research Institute of KAZGUU, Mr. Marat Kogamov and H.E. Mr. Shirish Soni, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa.

The KAZGUU Academic Diplomatic Club was established on 5 May 2014. The Academic Diplomatic Club is a free platform for discussion of topical issues of international relations in the sphere of politics, economy, culture and education. The mission of the Club is to create strong cooperation and friendly relations between people of different cultures. Once or twice a month the KAZGUU Academic Diplomatic Club hosts meetings in different formats: round tables, conferences, public lectures, business forums, business conversations, cultural events, etc.

On 21 October, 2014 the Minister of Foreign Affairs, HE Mr. Erlan Idrissov officially inaugurated the International Library at the KAZGUU University and delivered a lecture on Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy.

This year, in keeping with tradition, the opening session of the 2015/16 KAZGUU Academic Diplomatic Club was opened by the Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. Erlan Idrissov on 8 September 2015. The Minister presented a lecture on the "Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Kazakhstan's role in multilateral organizations". The event was attended by representatives of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of International Organizations, as well as media, academics and students.

BRICS Feedback Seminar at KAZGUU University



Deputy Minister Askar Mussinov with BRICS Ambassadors in Astana

This year the Russian Federation hosted the 7th BRICS Summit in Ufa, Russia from 8 to 9 July 2015, under the theme: "BRICS Partnership - a Powerful Factor of Global Development".

BRICS Embassies in Kazakhstan arranged a Seminar at the KAZGUU Academic Diplomatic Club on 23 September 2015. The Ambassadors representing the BRICS countries provided an overview of the key outcomes of the 7th BRICS Summit. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Askar Mussinov, presented a response on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

This year during the BRICS Outreach Session, BRICS Leaders met with 11 Leaders of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Eurasian Economic Union and the President of Turkmenistan.

BRICS bank will offer alternative for developing countries



Mr. Tito Mboweni, Non-executive director of the New Development Bank and a former governor of the South African Reserve Bank



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One of the major outcomes of the BRICS Summit was the formation of the New Development Bank (NDB).

On July 21 NDB was formally launched in Shanghai, China.

In July last year BRICS countries signed an agreement to establish this bank. A definitive part of the agreement states that the purpose of the NDB is to "mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, complementing the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development".

The NDB, which is headquartered in Shanghai, China, will have an Africa regional office in Sandton, Johannesburg and over time will establish additional regional offices in other member countries.

For more information on the article by Mr. Tito Mboweni see:

<http://www.rdm.co.za/business/2015/08/20/brics-bank-will-offer-alternative-for-developing-countries>

Asian and African Ambassadors Luncheon



The Embassies of the Republic of South Africa and Kingdom of Thailand jointly hosted a Lunch for the Asian, African and South American Diplomatic Club in Astana, Kazakhstan on 09 September 2015.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Askar Mussinov was the Guest of Honour. The occasion was also an opportunity to bid farewell to Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand, H.E. Mr. Charm Jullamon.

The Ambassador of the State of Qatar, H.E. Mr. Abdullah Ahmed Al-Mutawaa, was appointed as the new coordinator of the Asian, African and South American Diplomatic Club in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The Asian, African and South American Diplomatic Club in Astana, Kazakhstan is growing from strength to strength thanks to the invaluable contributions of Heads of Mission and the continuous support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Tourism Round Table in Almaty



The Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in cooperation with Kazakhstan Tourism Association hosted a Tourism Round table at Rixos Hotel in Almaty on 18 September 2015. The theme of the tourism round table was "Discover South Africa". There were more than 60 representatives from Almaty tour operators who showed interest in promoting South Africa as tourism destination. Conference calls were also arranged with the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan in Pretoria, H.E. Mr. Talgat Kaliyev, and two tour operators in South Africa, "Southern Africa 360" represented by Mr. Collin Thaver and "Okn Africa Tours" represented by Ms. Nadezhda Vaulina.

Agriculture trainings for the African Continent



AFRICANA Agriculture Training Program, Turan Profi & Kazakh National Agrarian University

The Kazakh National Agriculture University hosted an International Agriculture Seminar for specialists from the African continent from 7 to 18 September 2015.

University scientists trained 32 specialists from 15 African countries. This is the second seminar planned for 2015. In total 90 people from Africa will be trained in three seminars focusing on health, agriculture and oil and gas.

The event is conducted in cooperation with UN Development Program in the framework of the project "Support of Kazakhstan – to provide technical assistance through trainings for young specialists" to the counties of Africa.

Ambassador S.M. Soni attended the closing ceremony on 18 September 2015 together with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, UNDP and the Rector of the Kazakh National Agrarian University, Dr. Tlektov I. Yespolov.

World Robot Olympiad in Astana



Ambassador S.M. Soni, winners of Olympiad and the Deputy Chairperson of Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS), Mrs. Svetlana Ispusinova.

The II Republican Robotics Olympiad (RRO 2015) was held at Nazarbayev Intellectual School (NIS) on 18-19 September 2015. The winners will represent Kazakhstan at the World Robotics Olympiad which will be held in Qatar during November 2015. Two South African teachers employed at NIS, Mr. Pragasen Naidoo and Mrs. Indira Naidoo, are contributing towards strengthening the Kazakh Robotics Team. Ambassador SM Soni attended the closing ceremony and prize-giving event.

Kruger National Park: Meet the women hunting South Africa's poachers



A new anti-poaching unit comprised almost entirely of women is proving remarkably adept at stalking the stalkers

A full moon over The Balule Game Reserve, in the north-west tip of Kruger National Park, South Africa means two things – poachers are out on the hunt, and so are the Black Mambas. No, not the fastest and deadliest snakes in the world, but a specially trained team of rangers – nearly all of them young women – who police the park night and day to protect the animals from illegal hunting.

Photographer Julia Gunther spent a week documenting the Black Mambas as part of her project Proud Women of Africa. "When I heard that there was this group of ladies patrolling the reserves – unarmed and in camouflage – trying to save South Africa's natural heritage, I knew that my next subject had been handed to me on a silver platter."



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The Black Mamba Anti-Poaching Unit (APU) is made up of 24 women and two men from villages surrounding the park, in the north-east of the country. Craig Spencer, head warden of Balule, came up with the idea for a mostly female squad in 2013. "We experimented with a lot of different technologies [to combat poaching] – drones, thermal optics," he says. "The only thing that has shown any return on its investment is the Black Mambas."

The women, who are all in their twenties and early-thirties, spend long days tracking humans and animals, searching for snares and identifying fence tampering. "The women's ability to pick up on subtle differences is often much better than the men," says Spencer. "They are unarmed, and operate as a first line of detection. When an incursion is spotted, they call in the armed unit, and set up observation posts to assist that unit"

XIV World Forestry Congress in Durban



7-11 September 2015, Durban, South Africa

The XIV World Forestry Congress, hosted by the Republic of South Africa, brought together the global forestry community to review and analyse the key issues and to share ways of addressing them.

The Congress – the first to be held in Africa - is inclusive of people from all countries, regions and sectors, whether they belong to a government organization, NGO, private company, scientific or professional body, a forestry society, or simply had the personal interest in attending. The broad participation and inclusive discussion on forestry issues facilitated their mainstreaming in global agendas on sustainable development as well as building new partnerships.

The Congress programme was professionally and culturally rewarding, with a variety of sessions, events and dialogue, to ensure that all participants were engaged in defining a vision and strategies for the sustainable future of forests and forestry.

Brand South Africa hails discovery of Homo naledi



Johannesburg, Thursday 10 September 2015 – Brand South Africa applauded the team of scientists from the University of the Witwatersrand and other volunteers, on their discovery of a new species of human relative – Homo naledi – at the Cradle of Humankind.

Brand South Africa CEO Mr Kingsley Makhubela, reflecting upon the significance of this find, for the South African brand in particular said, "This find of approximately 1550 fossil elements emphasizes South Africa's position as a global leader in the field of paleo-anthropology. The discovery has been described as one which will force us to rethink the origins of humankind as whole. While we cannot claim to have created what lies in our soil, we can celebrate this as a part of our heritage and as part of South Africa's legacy to the world."

"We salute the team of scientists led by Professor Lee Berger, from the Evolutionary Studies Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand and a National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence. We celebrate you today for unearthing and bringing to light this magnificent discovery, and for its significance to humankind as a whole and South Africa in particular."

Follow the conversation on #NalediFossils and #AlmostHuman.}

Commonwealth Games in Durban - ready to inspire the people



Durban is the first African city to host Commonwealth Games

The Commonwealth Games will be held in Africa for the first time in their 85-year history, with Durban's bid expected to boost jobs and tourism.

Durban was officially named as host of the 2022 Commonwealth Games, making it the first African city to stage the sporting spectacular.

South Africa's third largest city was the only candidate for the 2022 hosting rights after Canada's Edmonton withdrew in February, citing cost concerns.

But the vote still sparked huge celebrations in Durban, where television pictures showed large crowds waving the South African flag.

"I'm excited, the city is excited!" Durban 2022 bid chairperson Mark Alexander said from Auckland in New Zealand, where the official announcement was made at the 71-nation Commonwealth Games Federation's (CGF) general assembly.

Newly elected CGF president Louise Martin, who led a commission that examined Durban's bid in fine detail and gave it strong support, expressed delight the Games would finally be held in Africa after 85 years.

"A historic decision for all of us and one that my commission completely endorses," she said.

Economic boost

Organisers, campaigning under the slogan "Ready to Inspire", said 90% of the facilities were already in place, with most of them within 2km of the city centre.

They have described the event as a "game-changer" that is expected to boost tourism and jobs in the Indian Ocean city of more than three million people.

Kazakhstan karatekas won 14 gold medals at the World Cup in South Africa



14 gold medals, one "silver" and one "bronze" were won by the Kazakh athletes from the World Shotokan Karate-do in South Africa, which was held in Johannesburg (South Africa) August 28-30.