



**EMBASSY OF SOUTH AFRICA
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WORD BY THE AMBASSADOR



DIPLOMATIC NEWS

EVENTS

Visit of Minister Nzimande and his delegation

Dear friends of the South African Embassy,

We are proud to share with you the latest issue of our Embassy newsletter. As the end of the last year and the beginning of the new one were equally full of interesting events, we have decided to combine the past three months into a combined, colourful and complex newsletter. You will find this issue loaded with news from within the grounds of our Embassy as well as from outside, such as the regional visits or the numerous interesting events we participated in, such as the annual Christmas Festival and many more!

I wish you all a prosperous and peaceful 2020. Enjoy your reading!

HE Ms Naomi Ribbon Mosholi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of South Africa to the Czech Republic

In November last year, the Minister of Higher Education, Science & Technology, Dr. Bonginkosi Emmanuel Nzimande paid an official visit to the Czech Republic. On the 19th November, the Minister and his delegation were received by the Czech Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Ms Dana Prudíková. Minister Nzimande expressed South Africa's appreciation to the people of the Czech Republic for the assistance provided by the Government and people of the former



Ambassador Mosholi and Dr. Nzimande



Mr. Oberholzer, Ms. Madiba and Mr. Mahlangu with Minister Nzimande's delegation

Czechoslovakia to South Africa during our struggle for liberation and democracy, adding that he was very pleased to be in

Prague. Minister Nzimande was also able to stop at the Liboc-Vokovice Cemetery for a short wreath laying ceremony to pay tribute to a deceased Anti-Apartheid activist and member of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Mr. Michael Alan Harmel, who died in Prague.

DSA Christmas Festival

Mr. and Mrs. Brett, Ms. Moikangoa, Ambassador Mosholi, Ms. Marciová, Ms. Crowther and Mr. and Mrs. Vaněk at the South African stand during the DSA Christmas Festival 2020



Each year on the first Sunday of December, our Embassy takes pleasure in participating in the annual Christmas Charity Festival in Prague. This year was no exception with our



Ms. Moikangoa, singer Ms. Victoria Velvet and Ambassador Mosholi at the South African Stand

involvement in the event held on 1st December 2019 at the Hilton Prague Hotel. Organized by the Diplomatic Spouses' Association since 2007, this prestigious and widely celebrated event serves each year a noble cause and aims to collect donations for several Czech charitable organizations.

The event is organized under the auspices of the wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Czech Republic, Mrs. Iva Petříčková and the wife of the Prime Minister Mrs. Monika Babišová, to whom Ambassador Mosholi handed out unique Protea flower bouquets. Along with more than 40 other Embassies based in Prague, the South African Embassy participated in the whole-day event to help those in need by selling typical traditional products and goods. Present were our long-time contributors and friends Ms. Heather Crowther from Tombalina Wines, Mr. Jan Brett and his wife Jana, owners of Original Afrika and Ms. Jana Vaňková with husband Jakub from Redespresso.



Ambassador Mosholi with Mrs. Petříčková at the DSA Christmas Festival 2020

Commonwealth Remembrance Day

On the Sunday of the 10th November 2019, Ambassador Mosholi participated in the annual

Ambassador Mosholi, Mr. Oberholzer and his son Marnus Oberholzer with H.E. Mrs Hesse, Ambassador of Ghana



Commonwealth Remembrance Day Wreath Laying Ceremony which took place at



Ambassador at the Central Cross on the Commonwealth Remembrance Day Ceremony

Olšany War Cemetery in Prague. The event, arranged by the British Embassy in the Czech Republic, was in honor of the fallen soldiers of both World Wars. At the Central Cross, Ambassador Mosholi paid tribute to the South African soldiers who gave their lives for peace and died on Czech soil.



Wreath laying at the Olšany Cemetery

REGIONAL VISITS

Visit to České Budějovice

On 17th December Ambassador Mosholi, accompanied by Mr. Oberholzer undertook a visit to the South Bohemian region of the Czech Republic. The purpose of the visit was to meet with Mr Jan & Mrs Jana Brett, owners of a Czech company called “Original Afrika”, which is situated near the Czech town of Český Krumlov. “Original Afrika” specializes in the selling of a variety of hand made products imported from South Africa, such as clothing, accessories, SA wines, Rooibos tea and “biltong.”

Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer with Mr. and Mrs. Brett



MEETINGS

Ambassador Mosholi also undertook several meetings during the past months. On 25th November, she met with Mrs. Nicol Adamcová, Director of the sub-Saharan



Ambassador and Mr. Oberholzer meeting with Mr. Růžička at the TitBit company

Africa Department of the MFA and two days later, she was a part of an Africa Group meeting held at the Egyptian Embassy and was attended by Head of Missions of all African countries based in Prague. On 16th January, Ambassador and Mr. Oberholzer have met with Mr. Vilém Růžička, President of the South African-Czech Chamber of Commerce and the representatives from the TitBit company in order to establish possible ties for potential future cooperation. During



Ambassador Mosholi paying a courtesy call on Deputy Minister Mr. Šír

the month of January, Ambassador Mosholi paid a courtesy call on Mr. Jiří Šír, Deputy Minister of Agriculture. Throughout the successful meeting, they outlined the cooperation between South Africa and Czech Republic and agreed on maintaining the friendly ties also in the future. A meeting and two courtesy calls took place at the South African Embassy. Ambassador met Mrs. Tereza Němečková, Deputy Head of the Department of International Business of the Metropolitan University in Prague on January 21st and welcomed the



H.E. Mrs. Kay Thi Soe paying a courtesy call on Ambassador Mosholi

Ambassadors of Myanmar and Algeria for courtesy calls. Her Excellency Mrs. Kay Thi Soe visited Madam Mosholi on 13th January and His Excellency Mr. Hamid Boukrif at the end of January, on 29th. Mr. Oberholzer attended the annual meeting of the Czech Extraction and Mining Technology Company on 27th November.

Meeting with the South African rugby coaches

On Friday, 10th February 2020 a meeting with three prominent South African rugby coaches, their agent and representatives from the Czech Rugby Union at our Embassy. Chaired by the Head of Mission Madam Mosholi, the purpose of the meeting was to welcome the coaches to the Czech



Ambassador, Mr. Oberholzer and Ms. Madiba meeting the South African rugby coaches



Republic who visited the country in order to conduct several rugby training clinics with young Czech rugby players while also promoting the game in the country. Mr. Ricardo Laubscher, Mr. Jonathan Mokuena and Mr. Ntando Manyosha visited the

Mission after the Embassy reached out to the visitors who were in Prague to conduct a rugby clinic for Czech children between the ages of 10 and 18 years of age. Both Mr Laubscher and Mr Mokuena are former Springbok rugby players and now prominent coaches, the former being the assistant coach of the Springboks in the 2015 Rugby World Cup. Mr Manyosha is the current head coach of the national team of Lithuania. They were accompanied by their agent, Mr Richard de Jager and Mr. Pavel Chaloupka of the Czech Rugby Union.



Ambassador attending the New Year's Diplomatic Luncheon with all-Women Ambassadors

SHORT NEWS

As the Czechs marked the 30th anniversary of the Velvet Revolution last November, Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer attended several memorial events, among which were the seminar "30 Years After Velvet Revolution: From Transition Economics on Global Topics" at the CERGE-EI Institute on 15th November 2019, the Liturgical Mass for Saint Anežka Česká served by the Prague Archbishop Mr. Dominik Duka on the following day and the Grand Opening of an exhibition project "Velvet Revolution" opening at the National Museum on the 17th November.

 Ambassador Mosholi accepted an invitation from H.E. Mrs. Victoria Li, Ambassador of Sweden for a photo session to support the international UNiTE campaign, which says NO to violence against women. The session, where all the Head of Missions wore orange was organized on 21st November. The



Ambassador Mosholi attending the photo session for NO violence against women

Embassy of Sweden was also organizing the traditional Santa Lucia Celebration at the beginning of December. The performance, marking the beginning of the Christmas season, was attended by Madam Mosholi on 5th December. The upcoming holidays were celebrated also at the Canadian Residence during the "Holiday Season and new Canadian Ambassador welcome" reception 2nd December. The Canadian Ambassador Mrs. Ayeshi Rekhi also organized a New Year's Diplomatic Luncheon with all-Women Ambassadors, attended by solely female Head of Missions on 15th January.

 The past month were marked by a series of cultural events, which were attended by Ambassador Mosholi. Accompanied by Ms. Madiba, the ladies attended a Karaoke Christmas Party at the Peruvian Residence on 10th December. Madam Mosholi took pleasure in attending the "Colors of Egypt" – photo exhibition opening at the Egyptian Embassy on 12th January and the Chinese New Year celebrations at the Prague

Congress Centre on 17th January. She accepted an invitation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Petříček for a launch of an exhibition honoring the memory of the victims of Holocaust on 28th January and for a photo exhibition opening – this time under the auspices of the Embassy of Azerbaijan on 20th January.

 Ambassador Mosholi and the diplomatic staff of our Embassy took special pleasure in



Ambassador Mosholi with soprano Ms. Pretty Yende

attending the concert of Ms. Pretty Yende, a renowned South African soprano, who performed at the Municipal House in Prague on 20th November. After the performance, Madam Mosholi had an opportunity to meet Ms. Yende in person.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **03.12.** During the day, Ambassador Mosholi attended both the National Day of Thailand at the Klementinum and an ASAEN lecture at the University of Economics. In the evening, a reception at the occasion of the National Day of the United Arab Emirates took place at the premises of the Hilton Hotel.
- **18.12.** Ambassador Mosholi signed a Book of Condolence at the Embassy of Chile, where they honored the victims of a tragic accident of an airplane crash on 9th December.

- **09.01.** A Book of Condolence was opened at the Embassy of Ukraine in view of the plane crash that took place on January 8th at Tehran's international airport. The Book was signed by Ambassador Mosholi.

- **10.01.** Ambassador Mosholi attended the annual and prestigious New Year's Grand Ball organized by H.E. Mr. Miloš Zeman, President of the Czech Republic and Mrs. Ivana Zemanová. The organization served a noble purpose as the whole profit of the Ball was donated to numerous charity organizations under the auspices of the First Lady.



Ambassador Mosholi attending the President's Grand Ball

- **18.01.** Ambassador attended the GO! Travel and Regiotour Fair organized in Brno.



Ambassador signing a Book of Condolence to honour the late Mr. Kubera

- **22.01.** Ambassador Mosholi signed a Book of Condolence to honor the suddenly deceased President of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic Mr. Jaroslav Kubera.
- **27.01.** Ambassador Mosholi attended the National Day of India at the venues of Prague Klementinum.



Ambassador Mosholi at the reception on the occasion of the National Day of India

EMBASSY NEWS

- ✚ The Embassy staff organized a farewell braai for Mr. Ncongwane and family. Mr. Ncongwane, after completing his tour of duty and staying in Prague for 4 years has returned to South Africa in the middle of December. Nevertheless



South African Embassy staff at the Farewell Braai for Mr. Ncongwane and family



Farewell Braai

the fact we were short of one person, our original numbers were quickly restored by the arrival of our new colleague Ms. Olga Ross, who joined us at the beginning of this year. Welcome to the team!

- ✚ On Saturday 18 January 2020 the youngest son of the Counsellor, Marnus Oberholzer, achieved a unique “hat trick” during an indoor cricket league match between the team of the Czech Academy, captained by Mr Chris Pearce, and the “Spartans Gallants”. His older brother Neil is also a member of the Academy Team.



Marnus Oberholzer celebrating a “hat trick” at a cricket league match

SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS

PRESIDENT OUTLINES PILLARS OF SA'S AU CHAIRSHIP



President Cyril Ramaphosa highlighted the priorities at the African Heads of Mission Conference

President Cyril Ramaphosa highlighted the priorities at the African Heads of Mission Conference, taking place at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation's offices in Pretoria, on Tuesday, 28 January 2020. On 8 and 9 February 2020, Heads of State and Government will convene in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for the 33rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly where South Africa will assume Chairship. South Africa previously held the AU Chairship in 2002, at the seminal session that officially launched the AU. "At the top of our agenda as Chair must be the deepening of economic integration. This is a historic moment that we must seize. "Together with our fellow African countries, we must implement the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement with purpose and determination," said the President.

Another pillar of South Africa's agenda as AU Chair is the empowerment of women, with a specific emphasis on promoting financial and economic inclusion and combating gender-based violence. "On

women's financial and economic inclusion, South Africa will work with the AU's Women, Gender and Development Directorate, which is responsible for leading, guiding, defending and coordinating the AU's efforts on gender equality and development," the President said.

As South Africa's Chairship coincides with the AU's aspiration of "Silencing of the Guns in 2020", South Africa will champion good governance on the continent. "Specific focus will need to be given to two intractable conflicts on the continent – in Libya and South Sudan – where South Africa is already actively involved in seeking solutions.

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF US-IRAN TENSION

President Cyril Ramaphosa has held discussions with President Hassan Rouhani of the Islamic Republic of Iran to express South Africa's interest in a peaceful and just resolution of the tension between Iran and the United States (US). President Ramaphosa placed a telephone call to his counterpart on Thursday, 9 January 2020, during his visit to Kimberley in the Northern Cape where the President was leading the 108th anniversary celebrations of the African National Congress. President Ramaphosa's engagement with President Rouhani was informed by South Africa's principled view that conflicts should be resolved through political dialogue rather than the use of force. The engagement was also framed by South Africa's role as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and Incoming Chair of the African Union. President Ramaphosa conveyed to President Rouhani South Africa's condolences at the assassination of the Iranian Military Commander, Major-General Qasem Soleimani, in a US military strike which targeted General Soleimani on Iraqi soil on Friday, 3 January 2020.

SPRINGBOKS NOMINATED FOR TOP LAUREUS AWARD

The news was confirmed recently as the lists of final nominations were revealed by Laureus.

The Springboks have been nominated in the Team of the Year Category at the 2020 Laureus World Sports Awards to be held in Berlin next month. The Boks, who won the 2019 Rugby World Cup in Japan, will be up against tough competition from Jürgen Klopp's Champions League-winning Liverpool side, the US women's football team who won the women's World Cup, six-time Formula One world champions Mercedes-AMG Petronas, the first Canadian team to win the NBA Championship, the Toronto Raptors, and two-time FIBA World Cup winners, Spain's men's basketball team. The Springboks won the category at the 2008 Laureus Awards having triumphed at the 2007 World Cup the year prior.



Springboks nominated for Laureus Award

CZECH NEWS

Number of foreign workers doubles in ten years

The Czech economy is increasingly dependent on foreign labour. According to figures released by the Czech Statistics Office, foreign workers made up 13 percent of the labour force last year. In 2010 it was just 6 percent. In the course of the past decade their number has more than doubled. The record-low unemployment in recent years has seen firms scrambling to attract foreign workers and putting pressure on the government to increase its quotas on foreign workers from countries outside of the European Union. As of November 2019 the government doubled the annual quota for workers from Ukraine to 40 thousand people. Traditionally the majority of foreign workers in the country are Ukrainians, Slovaks and Vietnamese nationals, but in recent years the country has attracted a growing number of workers from Russia, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania. At present there are 646,000 foreign workers officially registered in the country, of which 290,000 have permanent residency, 275,000 are here on a temporary basis and the rest are foreigners who have been granted or are seeking asylum in the country. In addition to those, there are estimated to be tens of thousands more who are part of the grey economy.

The best-paid foreign workers are Slovaks who make on average CZK 38,868 a month, at a time when the average gross monthly salary in the Czech Republic is CZK 33,697. This is because Slovaks usually come to study at Czech universities, decide to settle here and find well-paid jobs. Ukrainians, who are frequently employed in the construction industry make on average CZK 27,000 a month.

Although interest in getting skilled foreign workers remains high, some economists say that in the not too distant future, with the slowing of the economy, the interest in

foreign workers may temporarily wane. Many are employed on a seasonal or temporary basis and would be among the first to be hit in the event of lay-offs. For the present time, they would still be able to find employment elsewhere. In December labour offices posted 341,000 vacancies.

I'm happy I opened door for other European players, says new Hall of Fame inductee Václav Nedomanský

Retired forward Václav Nedomanský has become the second Czech to be inducted into ice hockey's Hall of Fame. A member of the Czechoslovak world championship winning team in 1972, was the first player from behind the Iron Curtain to defect and play in the NHL. Nedomanský joins goaltender Dominik Hašek, who is the only other Czech to receive this accolade. Václav Nedomanský, known as Big Ned, was inducted into the NHL Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Toronto on Monday night, exactly 42 years after he played his first game in the league for Detroit Red Wings. His induction plaque was presented by Frank Mahovlich, who was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame Class of 1981 and who befriended Nedomanský from the moment he arrived in Canada in 1974.



Mr. Václav Nedomanský, former NHL player

PICTURE GALLERY



Ambassador Mosholi, Mr. Johan Oberholzer and Mr. Marnus Oberholzer at Olšany Cemetery



Mr. Brett, Ms. Moikangoa, Ambassador Mosholi, Ms. Marciová and Ms. Kintlová with singer Ms. Victoria Velvet at the DSA Christmas Festival 2020



Ambassador Mosholi, Ms. Moikangoa, Mr. Oberholzer, Neil Oberholzer and Marnus Oberholzer with soprano Ms. Pretty Yende



Ms. Madiba and Mr. Mahlangu at the DSA Christmas Festival 2020