



Message from the Ambassador

Welcome to the third issue of our Newsletter. My ambition is to spend every single day, doing my very best, strengthening the people-to-people relations between Sweden and South Africa. The future is brighter, when we are working together for the better good on principles of common understanding and shared values.

Fika; coffee and a cinnamon roll is a social institution in Sweden. So ingrained in Swedish culture, that most companies add a clause to contracts, stating that employees are entitled to full paid "Fika-breaks". Sweden ranks as one of the most competitive countries in the world, with top grades for innovation, sustainability, equality, happiness, and wellbeing. So don't underestimate the importance of a "Fika-break", a pleasant moment for social interaction and creativity. With our newsletter we want to share with you, some highlights among our many activities, hoping that you will find something interesting.

Hakan Juhelt

A QUICK READ DURING FIKA

FRIDAY WITH MZANSI BALLET



On the 28th of July 2023, the Embassy in collaboration with Mzansi Ballet and South African International Ballet competition hosted a successful panel discussion on the theme: "Exploring the relevance of Ballet in South Africa." Panelists included the famous Swedish ballet choreographer Mats Ek and Ana Laguna, who is a Spanish-Swedish ballet dancer, court dancer and professor. The participants also had a wonderful performance by Mzansi Ballet

THE THINKER: REINVIGORATING SOUTH AFRICA-SWEDEN RELATIONS



The relation between the people of Sweden and the people of South Africa has been uniquely strong. Built on values of democracy and human rights. The University of Johannesburg highlight this relation in a double special issue of their magazine "The Thinker", followed by seminars. To keep the relation strong, we must mutually invest in the relation and stand up for our common values.

YEARLY PERSONAL ASSISTANT LUNCH



The Embassy hosted the 8th Annual Ambassador's Personal Assistants lunch. 35 Embassies in Pretoria participated. Considered as the "spiders in the net" at their embassies, the group discussed synergies, ways to working better together, how to tackling joint challenges in a professional and correct protocol manner.



YOUTH IN POLITICS

In August, the Embassy hosted a "Fireside chat" on the topic: "Youth in politics" at the Ambassador's Residence. Youth representatives from four political parties shared their thoughts and ideas. Panelists included the President of Rise Mzansi, President of Move-SA, Spokesperson of the DA Youth League as well as a representative of the ANC Youth League. The informal "chat" was well attended and appreciated by participants. The perspectives represented by youth must be taken in consideration in all decision making. Empowering youth is a priority for our Embassy.



JOHANNESBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Ambassador had an inspiring discussion with the CEO of Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ms. Bernadette Zeiler, focusing on digitalisation, sustainability, energy storage, efficient public transport and other areas suitable for collaboration.



LONDON RECRUIT

The Embassy was invited to a Johannesburg private Screening for family, friends, cast and crew of the film "London Recruits". The film is the story of young men and women in Britain, recruited to be freedom fighters during Apartheid in South Africa in the 1960s. Some of them were sent to South Africa to detonate bombs filled with pro-ANC propaganda.

Ambassador together with Tembi Tambo, daughter of Oliver Tambo and Reverend Frank Chikane



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S DAY 2023

For Women's Day 2023 the Embassy together with Basadi Ba Moshito Foundation hosted a charity fundraising event in support of the Foundation's Women Unleashed Skills Development Programme. "Women Unleashed" is a fundraising project in support of training and education for women that are victims of domestic violence. Survivors and social workers engaged in dialogue with business, churches, Embassies and different NGO:s.

LINK: <https://basadibamoshitofoundation.org/>



ZIMBABWEAN ARTIST ZENZO

The Ambassador and his wife, Åsa Juholt hosted an evening together with the young Zimbabwean artist and friend, Zenzo Siamenda. Zenzo introduced his colorful and inspiring art work, while speaking about the interesting life as an artist. The residence was filled with color and joy.



GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SYMPOSIUM

The Embassy hosted a two day workshop on Preventing Gender-based Violence (GBV) in Southern Africa, with participation from SA, Lesotho and Botswana. GBV is deeply ingrained in homes, workplaces, cultures and tradition in the region. In dialogue with civil society, ministries, NGO:s, SADC, businesses and the armed forces, the focus was on strategies for prevention. The rate at which women are killed by intimate partners in SA is five times higher than the global average.



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BRIEFING BY AFROBAROMETER AND INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

The Embassies of Sweden and Finland hosted a briefing on the most recent Afrobarometer surveys, focusing on trends in the region and South Africa in view of the upcoming elections. A joint delegation from Afrobarometer and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) presented the latest Afrobarometer survey analysis on experiences and evaluations of democracy, governance and youth in Africa and South Africa in particular.

What is clear is that satisfaction with democracy is declining across Africa, eroding citizens' confidence in democratic governance. Why this is the case is important to understand. Democratic countries must be governed by the inherent needs of the people. Who better to gauge the performance of the institutions in place to govern than those who put them there? The presentation highlighted what ordinary Africans think of their public institutions and the quality of their democracy and what regional and continental trends we see regarding attitudes to governance, trust in institutions and relations to other parts of the world.

Presenters:

Dr Joseph Asunka, Afrobarometer CEO

Jan Hofmeyr, Head of research and policy, IJR

Shannon van Wyk-Khosa, Afrobarometer digital portfolio manager



FIRESIDE LUNCH

The Ambassador hosted a working lunch with two of South Africa's leading opposition politicians, Mr. Mmusi Maimane, President of Build One South Africa and Mr. Herman Mashaba President of ActionSA.

Talks on their strategy to get into power, values, democracy, foreign policy and domestic issues as unemployment, energy transition, coalitions, investments and trade. Interesting ahead of election in South Africa next year.



WE ARE GROWING

The Embassy is growing and will soon be a total of 34 staff members!

Newly appointed diplomatic staff:

Martin Jörnruud will be working as our trade and economic affairs officer in the Political and Economic Section. Martin has for the last ten years been working with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, including with the Maghreb region and at our Embassies in Sudan and South Sudan. Before arriving to South Africa Martin was working as political officer at the Swedish Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe. Martin holds an LLM in International Human Rights Law and before joining the Ministry he used to work for the Swedish Courts and also with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.



Markus Larsson, will be working as a Regional Adviser in Sweden's team on sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa. Markus has for the last 15 years been working on health related issues in a range of different African countries, including Somalia, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Uganda with various international organisations. Before joining the embassy in South Africa, he did two years at the Embassy in South Sudan, focusing on the Swedish support to the health sector. Markus also holds a PhD in public health from Lund University in Sweden. His expertise revolves around access to quality health care and information for marginalised and vulnerable populations.



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