



**EMBASSY OF SOUTH AFRICA
RUSKA 65, 100 00 PRAGUE 10
NEWSLETTER – October-November-December 2020 (No. 04)**

WORD BY THE AMBASSADOR



**Dear Friends of the South African
Embassy,**

This year has been an unusual one for all of us. The world has changed and we all had to adapt to the new circumstances posed on us by the virus which spreads worldwide. Nevertheless, we at the South African Embassy decided to fight COVID-19 in our own way. We decided not to allow the virus to take the lead. We decided to continue our work and to proceed with our mission as much as possible under the



circumstances. You will find proof of our unstoppable efforts on the following pages, which are loaded with events, meetings and initiatives we participated in. I encourage you not to succumb to the virus and remain safe as you enjoy the holiday season – after all, this is the most peaceful time of the year.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year – may the year of 2021 be a better one.

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

DIPLOMATIC NEWS

EVENTS

Commonwealth Remembrance Day

On Sunday 8 November 2020, the Head of Mission, Ambassador NR Mosholi, participated in the annual Commonwealth



**Ambassador Mosholi on
Commonwealth Remembrance Day**



Remembrance Day Wreath Laying Ceremony which took place at 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

**South African wreath at
the Central Cross, Olšany
War Cemetery**

World Wars. Diplomatic Missions of South Africa, Great Britain, Canada, Ghana, Nigeria Malaysia, Poland and Pakistan participated in the wreath laying ceremony. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic measures posted by the Czech Government in order to fight the spreading virus, special rules had to be followed. Ambassador Mosholi paid tribute to the nineteen South African soldiers who gave their lives for peace and died on Czech soil during World War II.

Orange the world



Violence against women and girls has become a devastating scourge the world over. Everyday there is news about women and girls being abused – even killed by their partners. To express solidarity and advocacy, Ambassador Mosholi participated in the #OrangeTheWorld, an UNESCO campaign along with several Lady Ambassadors based in Prague. They expressed their desire to stand behind women that are affected by the violence regardless of their age, background, or level of education, starting 25th November 2020, a period known as the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world.

South Africa's National Mourning

South Africa observed five days of remembrance from 25–29 November 2020 for victims of COVID-19, gender-based violence and femicide. During this period, the national flag was flown at half-mast throughout the country and all South Africans were encouraged to wear a black armband or any other sign to show respect for those who have departed. The Embassy staff took part in this initiative and stood up for the victims and against gender-based violence by taking a group photo at the premises of the Official Residence.



The Embassy staff during South Africa's National mourning

Calendar of Meetings

- ✚ **13.11.** Ambassador Mosholi signed a Book of Condolence at the Palestinian Embassy in order to honor the deceased Dr. Saeb Erakat, former Secretary General of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.
- ✚ **20.11.** A Book of Condolence was also opened by the Embassy of Ghana to honor the passing away of



Ambassador Mosholi signing a Book of Condolence at the Palestinian Embassy

H.E. Mr. Jerry John Rawlings, former President of the Republic of Ghana. The Book of Condolence was signed by Ambassador Mosholi.

- ✚ **19.11.** Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer had a meeting with Ms. Paris Peska. Ms. Peska, a high school student, visited the Ambassador in order to talk and discuss the topic of “Sexual Health Awareness” for a school project.



Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer meeting with Ms. Paris Peska

- ✚ **19.11.** Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer held talks with Mr. Vilém Růžička, President of the South African-Czech Chamber of commerce. Mr. Růžička briefed Ambassador about the latest happenings in the business sector and



Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer meeting with Mr. Růžička

together they discussed the impact of the COVID-19 virus on the bilateral trade between the two countries.

✚ **20.11.** Virtual talks were also held with Ms. Nicol Adamcová, Director of the Sub-Saharan Africa division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to follow-up on the current situation caused by the spread of the virus.

✚ **01.12.** At the beginning of the month, Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer met with the representatives of Qatar Airways - Mr. Petr Gol and Mr. Martin Zdarek at the Official Residence. The parties discussed the new strategies of



Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer with the representatives of Qatar Airways at the Official Residence

promoting tourism between South Africa and Czech Republic under the threat posed on us by COVID-19.



Ambassador Mosholi, Mr. Oberholzer and Mr. Sliva at the Official Residence

✚ **02.12.** Ambassador Mosholi and Mr. Oberholzer welcomed Mr. Jan Sliva at the Official Residence. Mr. Sliva, Director of the Czech Development Agency, met with the Diplomats to hold talks regarding possibilities of cooperation in the future.

EMBASSY NEWS

Ambassador's birthday – 23.10.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, no large gatherings are allowed; however, the staff of the Embassy greeted Ambassador Mosholi on her birthday. Bearing in mind the social distancing and further restrictions, the colleagues virtually shared wishes with our Head of Mission. Dear Ambassador, Happy Birthday and all the best!!



Farewell and Welcome Tea&Coffee

Over the past months of the year, our Embassy team went through a couple of changes. It was our pleasure to welcome Mr. Henry Wagner and his family, who came to join as for the next 4 years. Mr. Wagner is fulfilling the post of the Corporate Service Manager. Welcome to the Czech Republic! On the other hand, the staff of the Embassy said goodbye to Ms. Dipuo Madiba and Mr. Sello Mahlangu, who are leaving for South



The Embassy staff at the Farewell and Welcome gathering at the Official Residence

Africa after ending their tour of duty. Ms. Madiba, we all thank you for your devoted service and excellent work-attitude – you will be greatly missed. Good luck with your



Ambassador Mosholi with Ms. Madiba and Mr. Mahlangu



Mr. Wagner, Ambassador Mosholi, Ms. Madiba and Mr. Oberholzer

future endeavours! To honor the newly arrived Diplomat & family and to say farewell to the departing ones, our Embassy staff organized a Welcome/Farewell gathering at the Official Residence on the 10th of December.



Ms. Madiba and Ms. Ross at the Official Residence

Ms. Pospíšilová and Ms. Karpíšková with Ms. Madiba



SOUTH AFRICAN NEWS

TABLE MOUNTAIN VOTED AFRICA'S LEADING TOURIST ATTRACTION

This incredible award recognises the enigmatic beauty that has made Table Mountain one of the best tourist attractions in the world – having seen more than 29 million visitors reach the top of its summit by the aerial cableway over the decades.

“At this point in time where tourism and travel has suffered greatly as a result of COVID-19, we are extremely pleased to bring this accolade home to South Africa and Cape Town in particular,” says Wahida Parker, Managing Director of the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company (TMACC).

“We are excited about the recognition, honour and responsibility that this place on us, and inspired at the prospect that we could claim the distinction of leading attraction of the world!” Parker salutes and thanks TMACC’s fellow contenders, which included iconic African giants; Mountain Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania, the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt and two of the fellow Cape Town Big Six attractions – Robben Island and the V&A Waterfront. In addition to Table Mountain’s win this year, Cape Town also walked away with the recognition of being Africa’s Leading Festival and Event Destination in the awards. This isn’t the first time that the mountain has been achieved this prized accolade. In 2019 and 2013, Table Mountain held the top spot – having contended with Mountain Kilimanjaro and the Pyramids of Giza as previous winners of the title. “Of course, Table Mountain has won – as the only voted and official New7Wonders of

Nature of the whole of Africa – it is one of the leading attractions in the whole world,” says Jean-Paul da la Fuente, Director of the New7Wonders Foundation. “And let us not forget that Table Mountain is also a symbol of continental unity, reaching all the way up to the only surviving Ancient 7 Wonder, the Pyramids of Giza.”

Table Mountain is still up for the running to be voted as the world’s leading tourist attraction. The announcement of the world winners is set to take place in late November.



Table Mountain in Cape Town

SIYA KOLISI NAMED “AFRICAN TRAILBLAZER OF THE YEAR” AT THE 2020 E! PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARDS

The African Trailblazer of the Year Category has been established and recognises local charity work in Africa. Springbok rugby captain Siya Kolisi will be honoured with the African Trailblazer of the Year Award at the 2020 E! People’s Choice Awards. According to reports, for the first time in the history of the ceremony, E! will be recognising local charity work in Africa with a brand new award: African Trailblazer of the Year.

Kolisi, who led the Springboks to victory at the Rugby World Cup in 2019, is being recognised for his extraordinary work off the



Siya
Kolisi

sporting field with the launch of Kolisi Foundation earlier this year.

CZECH NEWS

Advent

The period of Advent coincides with the commemorative days of a number of saints, which also include a number of other popular customs and superstitions. These customs in all likelihood have their connections to certain Christian beliefs, but many of them still harken back to the beliefs of pagan mythology. Not all of these customs were observed everywhere, of course, and each of them had a number of regional variations.

The first Advent holiday falls on the 30th of November, Saint Andrew's Day. This day - dedicated to one of the twelve apostles - used to be a day for fortune-telling, though today this has become more of a Christmas Eve activity.

One example of this fortune telling was the practice where girls in Silesia would melt lead to read their futures. They would melt it in spoons over a candle, and then quickly pour it into cold water through a key whose teeth formed the shape of a cross. From the form into which the lead hardened they would make predictions on what their next husband would look like: slim, fat, handsome, ugly, hunch-backed, etc. In the shape the lead took, the girls would also look for signs of the various crafts in order to

predict the profession of their future bridegroom. Elsewhere, girls would look for the appearance of their future husband in a hole cut in the ice, where shadows revealed his character to them. In still other places, girls would tap on the door of the henhouse, and if a rooster crowed, the girl would be married in the next year. If a hen answered, she would have another year to wait.

The next Advent holiday celebrated was the 4th of December, Saint Barbara's Day. St. Barbara was a martyr from the ancient period of the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. Barbara was the first of the "parading figures" of the season.

To this day, people cut off cherry twigs on St. Barbara's Day and put them in vases, where they bloom around Christmas Eve, thus signifying luck and hope in the search for a partner for life.

The most popular of the Advent holidays was - and still is - the day of Saint Nicholas (Mikuláš), the 6th of December, though it is actually celebrated the evening before. St. Nicholas is actually the only one of the "parading figures" remaining today. Mikulas is primarily a children's holiday, because he delivers presents and also reminds people that the coming of the awaited Baby Jesus is near.

The final Advent holiday is the 13th of December - the day of Saint Lucille, after which began the preparations for the Christmas holidays. Today this day no longer has any meaning, but in the past it was very important. St. Lucille protected against witchcraft and sorcery.

