

## Final

### **Public Lecture by Minister Maite Nkoana Mashabane at the Department of Political Science, University of Pretoria, on: “A vision for South Africa’s Foreign Policy – Now and Beyond”, 11 September 2012**

Programme Director

Members of the Department of Political Science

Members of the University Management and Staff;  
Senior Government Officials;

Members of Diplomatic Corps;  
Community Leaders here with us today;  
Members of the Media;

Distinguished Guests;  
Students;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

“We will have a South Africa which will live in peace with its neighbours and with the rest of the world. It will base its foreign relations on mutually advantageous assistance among the peoples of the world”. This is what OR Tambo said several years ago before our independence. These words are our guide and an inspiration in the conduct of our foreign policy. I urge you to keep them in mind in the course of this lecture.

Programme Director, our topic for today on “A vision for South Africa’s Foreign Policy – Now and Beyond”, is a window through which we can share with you our thoughts on the present and future of our foreign policy. I am thankful to the Department of Political Science of this

University for inviting me. Particularly, I wish to recognise Prof Maxi Schoeman who is the architect behind this event.

Writing in January 2011 in a paper entitled "*Conceptualising Multilateralism: Can We All Just Get Along?*", international relations specialists, Caroline Bouchard and John Peterson, argued that "In IR ... theory tends to follow practice". I am not sure how accurate is this generalization. Its value, however, is in encouraging constant dialogue between international relations experts and practitioners. It is when the two are in conversation that the field of international relations can grow and flourish. Experts need practitioners in the same way that practitioners need experts. Today's event is just one example of how the two can exchange views and perspectives on continuous basis.

South Africa's foreign policy is based on, and our conduct in international relations is informed by, the fundamental values and principles enshrined in our Constitution, notably human dignity, the achievement of equity, the advancement of human rights and freedoms, non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy and a respect for the rule of law.

In June 1994 the newly elected President of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, made a statement at the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) meeting of Heads of State and Government in Tunis in which he recalled the decision by the Romans to destroy the city of Carthage in ancient times and likened the destruction of Carthage to the eventual destruction of our continent as its children were carted away as slaves, its lands became the property of other nations, its resources a source of enrichment for other peoples, and its kings and queens mere servants of foreign powers. Africa continued to be marginalised and underdeveloped.

Fortunately this was not the end of the story. Africa began to shake off its shackles. Leaders emerged all over the continent who rekindled the hope for peace, growth and rejuvenation. In the words of former President Mandela:

*“When the history of our struggle is written, it will tell a glorious tale of African solidarity, of Africa’s adherence to principle. It will tell a moving story of the sacrifices that the peoples of our continent made, to ensure that intolerable insult to human dignity, the apartheid crime against humanity, became a thing of the past.”*

As envisaged by Madiba in 1994 Africa is in the process of being reborn.

Our destiny as a nation is linked intrinsically to the destiny of the continent and our foreign policy actions are informed by the interests of our continent.

On 13 October 2011, President Jacob Zuma had an opportunity to visit this very University to give a Lecture on Aspects on South Africa’s Foreign Policy. Approximately a year later, here I am, humbled by your presence in a gathering aimed at articulating our Foreign Policy, once more. This must serve as a clear indication to all of us – individually and collectively – that we as government continue to attach great importance not only to the fundamental principles defining our Foreign Policy, but also to dialogue with our experts.

Programme Director

Foreign policy matters! Current global conditions are such that the foreign policies of many countries are focused on resilience. It is common cause that the global financial crisis - perhaps a crisis of capitalism - has eroded the economic independence of many nations, and that the global giants themselves are negatively affected. This leaves the middle-income countries, including those who depend on the G8 for its trade and economic relations, in dire straits. South Africa potentially faces as much threat as any other. Under such volatile and potentially destabilizing conditions, it is tempting for nations to become conservative in outlook, and put energy into foreign policy projects that shows little risk. This is something that ought to be avoided if the international community is to confront problems facing the world.

The big issues are difficult and unpredictable ones. Unfortunately, in the period ahead some of these issues will impact the conduct of foreign policy of many nations. Some of these issues are the November Presidential elections in the United States of America, and the foreign policy posture that the newly elected President will take. President Obama released in June his Africa policy which resonates with some of our priorities.

The unfolding of the Eurozone crisis and its impact on global trade and the flow of Development Assistance and Foreign Development Investment is another factor that will impact not only the role of the European Union as an actor in the global space; but also individual EU countries and countries that are vulnerable to changes in the global economy.

The critical conflict area of the Middle East with a particular focus on Iran, the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and the Syrian situation, is set to continue to dominate global news and the focus of multilateral entities such as the United Nations Security Council.

In the medium to long term, the world order that is emerging will be a product of how the global powers of the South will assert their new found role and how this will balance with traditional powers. Energy and food security will continue to influence the substance and direction of the foreign policy of many countries. Sustainable development will feature prominently in the approach of countries to how they can meet their present development needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Humanity will be more and more concerned about the threat of climate change and the damage to planet earth's biodiversity. Globalisation will intensify, driven by technology, shrinking the world into one single geographic space; impacting the behavior of nations in international affairs as well as the system and institutions of global governance.

In the midst of all this is our continent, Africa, with our country at its southern tip. Indeed, Africa is a continent of mixed fortunes. On the one hand, it is the second fastest growing region in the world economically; rich in mineral resources; with a population that is continuing to grow.

I cannot agree more with the Zambian economist, Ms Dambisa Moyo as quoted by Jocelyn Newmarch in her article in the City Press of 2 September 2012, appropriately entitled: “*Global Slowdown ‘Africa’s Chance To Stand Up and Shine’*”, that, and I quote:

*“The current state of the global economy is bad for the rest of the world, but good for Africa - 64% of Africa’s population is under age of 24. The continent’s population is expected to hit 2 billion in the next 40 years. 60% of economic growth is accounted for and some African states have higher productivity than developed nations. Sub-Saharan Africa’s economy is expected to grow by 5.4% this year and by 5.3% next year.”*

On the other hand, however, Africa is politically and economically marginalized in the world. With three years remaining to the deadline of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), all predictions suggest that Africa will not meet the set targets.

As for South Africa: The Center for European Strategy published an article in its January 2012 Bulletin authored by one Adam Balcer with the title “*The Golden Age of Middle Powers?*”. The author put South Africa in a category of Middle Powers he termed “Soft Power Players” which he characterized as, and I quote:

*“Free market economies, which despite some shortcomings, are associated with the West, but provide independent foreign policy based first of all on soft power. Their political and economic stability is on a comparatively high-level. They have been democratised over the last couple of decades but with ups and downs” (close quote).*

The author described our country as follows, that:

*The Republic of South Africa has the biggest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa, high national income for African standards, and considerable deposits of raw materials.*

Indeed, our country's total mineral wealth is among the world's most valuable, with an estimated value of R20.3-trillion (or \$2.5-trillion). According to some estimates, we have the world's fifth-largest mining sector in terms of GDP value.

At the same time, the legacy of apartheid is still with us, visible as it is in the ownership patterns of the wealth of our country; and the triple challenge of inequality, unemployment, and poverty, among others.

This is the context within which our foreign policy is framed – we are part of Africa with its mixed fortunes; and a country that not long ago was subjected to the apartheid system and treated as an outcast by the international community.

Programme Director

Since 1994, South Africa has had to find itself and assert and defend its interests in the changing global context and shifting international balance of forces. The current Administration continued on this path when it assumed office in 2009. Three years on, we can look back and appreciate the dexterity with which we maneuvered through challenges to reach the point where we are today. Four areas are worth mentioning.

First, is how Africa continues to serve as a center and light of our foreign policy, beginning with our SADC neighbourhood. Particularly, our focus on Africa has been on mediation, peace building and post-conflict reconstruction and development; active participation in finding solutions to developmental challenges facing our continent; and supporting the drive towards the consolidation of democracy in Africa.

Our efforts in the peace and security area were undertaken in the context of our membership of the United Nations Security Council, the African Union Peace and Security Council, and the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security.

The election of Dr Nkosaza Dlamini Zuma to the Chairpersonship of the African Union Commission is one example of our readiness and commitment to playing our part in strengthening our continental, regional organizations. We will give her all the necessary support knowing very well that she is now an international civil servant in the employ of 54 nations that are members of the African Union.

The importance we attach to the development of our continent was demonstrated when President Jacob Zuma, with the support of his colleagues, took the initiative to escalate our collective focus on infrastructure to the level of Heads of State and Government. The North-South Corridor that we champion through this initiative will connect the three regions of SADC, East Africa, and Central Africa. Other Heads of State and Government who are members of the committee that President Zuma chairs are championing infrastructure projects of comparable impact.

Programme Director

The second area that I wish to highlight is the diplomatic energy we invested in strengthening our bilateral relations, especially with countries that play a critical role in the international system. While our relations with our traditional partners of the North have continued to grow even to a strategic level, those with countries of the South have expanded both horizontally and vertically, and an example of the latter being our admission into the BRICS. These relations are of equal partnership, and shall remain so towards the future.

As you are aware, President Zuma will host, for the first time on African soil, the last Summit of the first cycle of BRICS Summits (2009-2013) in the first part of 2013 in South Africa. The

BRICS Leaders will consider the groupings' achievements thus far as well as the future path and work programme for this formation over its next cycle of Summits (2014 – 2018).

The critical golden thread in terms of the BRICS grouping's deliberations is its fundamental respect for upholding the almost universally endorsed principle of multilateralism.

Ladies and gentlemen

Thirdly, is the multilateral system where we continue to play our part as a responsible member of the international community. In January, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon outlined his five-year vision for the world body in the areas of sustainable development; preventing and mitigating conflicts, human rights abuses and the impacts of natural disasters; building a safer and more secure world; supporting countries in transition; and working to engage the talents of women and young people. South Africa is active in each of these areas.

Finally, is the balance we have managed – and continue to do so – between our domestic priorities and our foreign policy objectives; taking our people along in what we do beyond our borders. We act in a manner that defines our national interests multi-dimensionally and inclusively. Our national interests are about our domestic priorities and security concerns; our values and principles at the heart of which is *Ubuntu*; our Pan African obligations and responsibilities that have roots in the long history of struggle against colonialism; and what is expected of us as a global citizen.

Programme Director

The past is easier to handle because it is done and behind us; while the future stands as a mountain in front of us waiting for men and women of steel to climb it.



This future will emerge from this global system which is undergoing reconfiguration towards multi-plurality. In this emerging world, the South will no longer be an opposition force in the international system organized in the fold of the G77 and the Non Aligned Movement, for example. In this emerging world, the South will be a determining actor and a geopolitical mover. But not all countries of the South will have the same power and influence.

The question is where Africa will be and how it will be affected in this emerging global balance of forces. Currently, Africa is perceived as a huge market for manufactured goods, and this perception will not change in the near future. Africa sits on massive oil and mineral resource deposits that are so critical to the development and survival of countries.

In their “Africa’s Natural Resources in a Global Context”, Raf Custers and Ken Matthysen observed that:

*“While, on the one hand, it is widely acknowledged that Africa has great natural resource potential, on the other hand, one cannot but regret that the complex interplay between political and economic factors at the national and international level appears to make it impossible to use a more substantial part of the revenues from the exploitation and trade of these resources for the promotion of the well-being of people at the grassroots level”.*

This is the phenomenon of the so-called “resource curse”.

The eminent economist, Joseph Stiglitz, tried to diagnose this phenomenon in his article aptly entitled “From Resource Curse to Blessing”.

The reality behind the resource curse is the fact that the interests around Africa's natural resources are externally determined; the exploitation of these resources is export-oriented, without any beneficiation in their country of origin; and that these resources are not a factor in promoting local economic development.

One good starting point for Africa's economic take off in this century is to turn the resource curse into a resource blessing.

The Africa Union has an important role to play in determining and shaping Africa's future. The AU emerged out of decades of regional integration dating back to the Lagos Plan of Action of 1980, through the Abuja Treaty of 1991, to the Sirte Declaration of 1999. In the ten years of its existence out of the Organisation of African Unity, the AU has positioned itself as a continental and global player. It is present in mediation and other peace and security efforts on the continent in pursuit of African solution to African problems. With NEPAD and the APRM, the AU has demonstrated its determination to confront Africa's development and democratisation challenges. Its policy of rejecting unconstitutional change of government is a step away from the practice of non-interference of yester years.

However, moving into the future, a mountain of challenges is still before us. The AU was formed on an integration model based on the principle of self-reliance, popular participation, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as building blocks. We are still a distance away from our objective of self-reliance. Our dependency is undesirable. For example, the AU and RECs like SADC rely on the so-called "cooperating partners" for their programmes. This is unsustainable if we want a truly independent Africa.

Programme Director

An important element and tool contributing to Africa's achievement of its integrated development goals is the various African Multilateral Partnerships. Currently, Africa has active strategic partnerships with 10 partners, including the Arab World, the European Union, South America,

Asia (NAASP), India, China (FOCAC), South Korea, Japan (TICAD), Turkey and the USA (AGOA).

South Africa is currently Co-Chair of FOCAC, and will host its next ministerial meeting in 2015.

To ensure that these partnerships contribute effectively to Africa's development, it is important, among others, that the relationship should be that of true and equal partnerships of mutual trust and benefit; not that of donor and recipient. Africa must face partners as a united continent. The approach to partnership should be one of co-development that is human centred.

Ladies and gentlemen

The ultimate goal of African development and the prosperity of its people are premised on a stable political environment. Therefore, the challenge relating to peace and security on the continent remains of paramount concern.

The African Union has put in place its Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) in an attempt to address this vital challenge that has crippled the continent since its independence.

However, the APSA has yet to be completely operationalised. Among the shortfalls is the lack of an adequate early warning capacity to identify emerging threats. Although the African Union has established mechanisms that constitute an early warning system, the challenge of the necessary analytical capacity within this unit remains of concern.

Equally important is the AU's capacity in Security Sector Reform in both the pre- and post conflict contexts as well as the need for effective Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of armed combatants.

In order to resolve situations of conflict, Africa has to gain the support of the broader international community in the context of the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. The views of the two bodies are not always on the same wave length on a conflict situation. South Africa, through its participation in both the UNSC and the AU PSC, has made every effort to bring these two organisations into a mutually beneficial and reinforcing relationship based on the importance of comparative advantage and cooperation. It is our hope that UNSC Resolution 2033 that we championed during our presidency of the UNSC in January will go a long way towards enhancing the relationship between the two security organs.

Programme Director

Two other challenges we have to deal with at the level of the AU if we are to build on the achievements of the last ten years, is to enhance the organizational capability of our continental body, especially the AU Commission, and operationalise in full the Governance and Development Architecture of our Union at the center of which is APRM and NEPAD, respectively.

The organizational problems facing the AU affect its effectiveness in other areas. The AU Commission is not a toothless transmission belt of decisions of the Policy Organs of the Union; it is the engine room. Without an organizationally competent Commission, our Summits will fall apart; decisions will remain unimplemented; there will be no AU response to conflict situations; NEPAD and the APRM will die a slow death. Fortunately, this is not the case. We must therefore address weaknesses of the Commission and other organs of the AU, taking as our point of departure the recommendations of the High Level Panel on the Audit of the AU which was commissioned by our Heads of State and Government in 2007.

Our Governance Architecture, informed by the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, has come a long way; and today a significant number of African countries voluntarily subject themselves to the process of peer review within the auspices of the APRM. However, the number of countries acceding to the APRM needs to continue to grow; and the Charter should be domesticated by all of us.

The Development Architecture will be meaningless if does not realize our collective dream in the areas of infrastructure and industrial development.

The two AU Summits we had in January and July may have been overshadowed by the election of the Chairperson of the Commission, but they did not fail us in taking our Union a step further in addressing the challenges of our continent. Items that dominated the discussions and decisions at these two Summit focused on promoting intra-Africa trade, infrastructure development, self-reliance, finding African solutions to African problems, and the need to redefine Africa's relations with foreign powers. These issues will without doubt define Africa and the AU of the next decade.

Ladies and gentlemen

Are the RECs succeeding as building blocks towards continental unity and deep integration? The answer to this question is a big YES! SADC is one example.

However, the success of SADC into the future will be shaped by how we finalise the vision and define milestones of our regional body; how we succeed in implementing our regional development package, around which is the SADC Infrastructure Masterplan; and how far we are prepared to go in taking SADC to every citizen of our region.

Following the recent 32<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in Maputo, Mozambique, several pertinent issues were discussed and challenges identified, most of which around the SADC integration vision and milestone. At the core of this is the Mid-term review of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP); debates around the SADC Vision: 2050; the work of the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Integration; and the COMESA, EAC and SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area.

The Mid-Term review of the RISDP process is due to commence soon and will include a consultant engaging with Member States on their application of RISDP objectives with national development plans. This review presents the ideal opportunity for us as Member States to thoroughly examine and re-define our regional priorities and create positive impact in re-crafting our common vision for the future of SADC.

The SADC Vision: 2050 concept emanated following informal discussions amongst the Presidents of Angola, Mozambique and South Africa on the broad direction of SADC. During the recent SADC Summit there was broad agreement on the need for a concept like Vision 2050, but Member States stressed the need to harmonise existing work in the Review of the RISDP and the work of the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Integration. This would provide an opportunity to create a broader vision, which would include participation at all levels and from all sectors of society. In consolidating Vision 2050, SADC needs to have a clear and focussed industrial development programme, infrastructure development, and address the outstanding issues in the consolidation of the regional economic integration.

Ladies and gentlemen

A critical challenge facing our multilateral system, and the UN in particular, is its non-responsiveness to the reconfiguration in the global system.

The UNSC is the only organ of the United Nations with a Charter mandate to maintain international peace and security. It is the only organ of the UN with powers to authorize the use of force against any countries in executing its charter mandate. However, the current configuration of the UNSC does not reflect the geo-political realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It still reflects the geo-politics of 1945 after the end of Second World War, in which the Allied powers emerged a dominant force. When the UN was formed it only had 52 Members and Africa and the majority of the countries from the South were under colonialism. The Membership of the UN has quadrupled in the past sixty five years of its existence to 192. More than sixty percent of the

UN Membership is made of countries from global South and Africa constitutes about thirty percent of the whole UN Membership.

The UNSC has only once undergone a partial reform in 1963 to increase the number of non-Permanent Members to Ten leaving the Permanent Category intact. The anachronistic configuration of the Security Council is not sustainable in today's world, where sixty to seventy percent of its agenda is on African issues. The UNSC is facing serious credibility and legitimacy questions due to its composition in particular in the Permanent category. The composition of the Permanent category of the UNSC was based on 1945 winner takes all approach and perceived superpowers of the time. The UN is supposed to be a beacon of democracy and transparency where all its members are treated as equals. The current composition of the UNSC is undemocratic, unrepresentative and not transparent.

It is for this reason that we call for the urgent reform of the UN Security Council in both the Permanent and non permanent categories to reflect the contemporary global political realities.

The past ten years since the formation of the African Union with its own Peace and Security Architecture has proven how significant it is that we should continue to be unwavering in our call for the urgent reform of the Security Council. The consequences of Security Council decisions are felt in Africa more than anywhere else. It is therefore, important that Africans form part of making those decisions. The Security Council risks becoming irrelevant and its credibility eroded if it does not undergo an urgent reform.

Failure to reform the UN and Bretton Woods institutions will erode the faith that people have in the multilateral system. Some of the skeptics use the stalling talks at the WTO, the emergence of mini-lateralist bodies such as the G20, or the continuing threat of nuclear proliferation in spite of the existence of the NP Treaty, as proof of the ineffectiveness of multilateralism to tackling global problems.

As South Africa, we hold a different view. The success of COP17/CMP7 in delivering the historic Durban Platform for Enhanced Action is one example of how nations of the world can pull their heads together through the multilateral system against common challenges.

The G20 is not an alternative to the UN, but a reinforcement of our collective, multilateral effort to fast-track the reform of the global system, including the Bretton Woods institutions.

Friends

Today, it is eleven years since that horrific terrorist attack on the people of United States of America, on 11 September 2001. That attack was a shaping moment in the history of our world since the end of the Cold War. Since then events in some parts of our continent, including piracy attacks in the Indian Ocean, are a constant reminder to us of the menace that terrorism poses to human civilisation and international peace and security. They remind us of the urgency required in eliminating this threat from the face of our planet.

Programme Director

As you know, the National Planning Commission has just released a revised version of the National Development Plan with a whole chapter dedicated to our foreign policy. We are engaging with the NPC with the view to strengthening that chapter.

South Africa must come out of the current transition to a new global order better than we are today. The vision in the NDP report is helpful in this regard. We will pursue our diversified foreign policy, standing on our location in Africa, the South, and the world; with bilateral relations



we have built over the years, dating back to the struggle years; with a strategy based on the dialectic of cooperation and collaboration in the spirit of the Freedom Charter that “There Shall be Peace and Friendship”.

Our faith in multilateralism is unshaken. We do not share the view that multilateralism has failed; nor is multilateralism a “weapon of the weak” who cannot impose their will on others.

The future is that of a better South Africa in a better Africa and the world.

I thank you