South African Cultural Observatory

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DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

SOUTH AFRICA: CULTURE AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST

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"*That cultural diplomacy* [is] *an instrument used by countries to advance their interests* [is] *beyond dispute. Every day, somewhere in Delhi, or London, or Paris, or Wellington, diplomats* [use] *their national cultural resources as part of their work*" – Simon Mark (cultural diplomacy expert, University of New Zealand)

"*Humankind had been doing diplomacy and cultural diplomacy as an alternative to war and violence from the very outset of civilization*" – Richard Arndt (former US diplomat)

"*Soft power is cultural power*" – Joseph Nye (US political scientist)

'*Culture is a weapon of struggle*' – anti-apartheid slogan, 1982

"*Learn from you enemy also. The enemy is not necessarily doing everything wrongly…You may take his right tactics and use them to your advantage*" – OR Tambo (Southern Angola, 1977)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The mission of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) is to shape and sustain South African foreign policy and promote the growth and development of Africa.[1] On the whole, the department's record in advancing South Africa's strategic interests during the post-apartheid era has been commendable. But, as one study recently concluded, DIRCO can do far better, suggesting *inter alia* that the diplomatic corps is not doing enough to promote South Africa's most powerful and persuasive "global brand" – namely, its democratic credentials and values.[2]

This document contends that DIRCO is missing an essential building block in the construction of the South African brand, namely culture. Currently, the department does not recognise 'culture diplomacy' as a core diplomatic tool, instead relying on traditional tools of foreign policy – politics, economics and defence – to conduct its business. This poses a potential problem. Culture is important to diplomacy, first of all, because cultural differences often escalate into conflict, as Samuel Huntington famously noted in his 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs*.[3] Thus, without an understanding of another society's culture, it is difficult to settle differences with that society – or, if necessary, to influence it. Culture, conversely, provides an easily accessible base to promote a country's image. This point is succinctly underlined by Janis van der Westhuizen in a detailed study of national branding, entitled "Beyond Mandelamania", when he states, "Culture attracts because it sets apart".[4]

Yet, despite the seemingly obvious connection between culture and the national interest, a casual perusal of DIRCO's key policy documents, such as *2011 White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy* and the *Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020*, suggests a clear lack of reference to the concept of cultural diplomacy. This is unsurprising, given that its requirements sit rather uneasily with traditional diplomatic practices. That is, diplomats have tended to insist that culture "is not the real work of foreign ministries,"[5] and therefore have not cared to include culture, for example, in the academic training of future diplomats. In South Africa case, culture is also said to be neglected by DIRCO, because the department (and government in

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1 Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020', Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), *Republic of South Africa*, 2015.

2 Wilmot James and Greg Mills, 'Resetting South Africa's Foreign Policy', *The Journal of the Helen Suzman Foundation*, Issue 79, December 2016.

3 Samuel Huntington, 'The clash of civilizations', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 3, 1993.

4 Janis van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania? Imaging, Branding and Marketing South Africa*, University of Stellenbosch and Small World: Global Trend and Policy Analysis, accessed 14 December 2016, <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/docs/pcsa/irps/jvdwest.pdf>

5 Simon Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy of Canada, New Zealand and India*, thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Studies, The University of Auckland, 2008.

general) is "burdened by other pressing priorities of state, bread and butter issues".[6] But this kind of thinking, according to former South African diplomat Costa Georghiou, has restricted the effectiveness of South African foreign policy. In his view, South African diplomats should diversify their tools and include cultural diplomacy as a strategy to create "favourable conditions" for achieving the country's foreign policy goals.[7]

While Georghiou's point is certainly valid, it may fall on deaf ears. This is because the international relations department "has remained non-committal" on the matter, at least according to Graham[8] who goes on to explain that, "despite several pronouncements [of inter-departmental cooperation], the DAC and DIRCO [have] not come together at executive level to coordinate and cooperate on South Africa's cultural diplomacy".[9] This effectively implies that DAC, at this stage, is the leading implementing *and* coordinating department for cultural diplomacy in South Africa. Again, this is problematic, seeing as the culture department is not mandated to carry out foreign policy. This duty rests primarily with DIRCO (and, in practical terms, also the South African Presidency).

But what is the fuss over cultural diplomacy? And does it deserve serious attention by South African policymakers? As a point of departure, DAC defines the term as "the use of culture to further international policy objectives".[10] Likewise, foreign relations expert Simon Mark proposes that cultural diplomacy is the "deployment of a state's culture in support of its foreign policy goals or diplomacy".[11] The German-based *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy* (ICD) adopts a broader definition of the term, identifying cultural diplomacy as the "exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural co-operation or promote national interest".[12]

While these definitions are closely related, the truth is that the field of study around cultural diplomacy is not easy to understand. For a start, there is no standard definition of the term or what it precisely constitutes. No doubt, this is because culture means different things to different people (and also because the term's significance has been diluted by the popular usage of phrases such 'business culture', 'drug culture', 'internet culture' and so forth[13]). Furthermore, a variety of local and international studies on cultural diplomacy propose different characteristics, use

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6 Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), 'Cultural Diplomacy: a pillar of our International Relations', *Republic of South Africa*, accessed on 23 November 2016, <http://www.dac.gov.za/content/cultural-diplomacy-pillar-our-international-relations>

7 Costa Andre Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy: should South Africa give it a try?', *South African Journal of* International *Affairs*, 30 January 2016.

8 Louise Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa: building blocks and best practices*, thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree Masters in Diplomatic Studies (MDIPS) at the University of Pretoria, December 2015.

9 *Ibid*.

10 DAC, 'Cultural Diplomacy': a pillar of our International Relations'.

11 Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy.*

12 See: <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_culturaldiplomacy>

13 Richard Arnt, *Cultural Diplomacy and International Understanding*, 2011 Mestenhauser Lecture on Internationalizing Higher Education at the University of University of Minnesota, 2011.

interchanging terms, and often attempt to distinguish it from overlapping concepts, including public diplomacy, foreign cultural policy and international cultural relations (the extent of this confusion is discussed further in section 2 in the context of setting out cultural diplomacy's key characteristics).

Fortunately, history provides us with plenty examples of cultural diplomacy, and why the practice of culture penetration is important for states and international relations. For example, from the mid-1800s, Japan is attributed for employing "semi-forceful" measures to integrate itself into the modern international system, particularly through the use of international exhibitions in Europe; these exhibitions "not only provided Japan with modern technology and stimulate its economy, but also improved its international status and served as an important tool in shaping Western images of Japan".[14] During the Cold War, American cultural-diplomatic initiatives "almost replaced normal diplomatic relations" with the Soviet bloc,[15] to the point that the fall of the Berlin wall is often attributed to the undermining power of American jeans, rather than jets. Nowadays, European states and their ascendant counterparts in Asia and South America are extremely active in marketing their culture and language worldwide through formal cultural institutions and networks, such as the Institute Français and the Japan Foundation. While the direct impact of this infrastructure is rather difficult to measure, its purpose is to build relationships based on common values, not only for the creative sector,[16] but also for the "steady flow of global commerce and politics".[17]

While some countries take cultural diplomacy seriously, others less so. South Africa has a government public relations office housed in DIRCO, which informs the public on South African foreign policy. This unit, while doing important work, is not designed to engage and build vital relationships with government and societies abroad, which is crucial for supporting the South African national interest.

1.2 Purpose of the report

As a discussion document, the primary aim is to deepen the debate on the question of a South African cultural diplomacy capability. The discussion will show that cultural diplomacy – particularly in the context of today's internet-based world – is increasingly being utilised by both powerful and ascending states as an instrument of "soft power" in achieving national and foreign objectives. The discussion therefore seeks to challenge those that may hold the view that culture has no place in diplomacy. It also tentatively proposes a way forward in addressing recent policy

14 Alexander Bukh, 'Revisiting Japan's Cultural Diplomacy: A Critique of the Agent-Level Approach to Japan's Soft Power', *Asian Perspectives*, 38, 2014.

15 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.

16 The term 'creative sector, often used interchangeably with the phrase 'cultural and creative industries', or in the shorthand CCI, encompasses everything from the performing arts and museums to film production and video games. A series of *Cultural Diplomacy Country Briefs* commissioned by the DAC collectively indicate that the cultural industries are becoming important components of today's national economies, propelling innovation and development, particularly in China and France.

17 András Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy*, Brunswick Review, Issue 4, Summer 2011.

calls for the interdependency between South African culture, national interests and foreign policy.

The document, however, is not intended to formulate South African foreign policy, and neither is it a comprehensive study on the complexities and different dimensions of cultural diplomacy, and South African diplomacy as a whole. As a working document, the paper provides a synthesis of certain components, objectives and priorities of cultural diplomacy which warrant the attention of South African policy makers, particularly within the diplomatic and executive environment.

2. What is cultural diplomacy?

Today, the study of cultural diplomacy has successfully established itself as a stand-alone theory and practice. But, for reasons explained above, the concept is somewhat difficult to define. It is not the intention of this report to propose a fixed definition of cultural diplomacy, seeing as there is no agreed definition of the term, neither among International Relation (IR) scholars nor policymakers alike.[18] Instead, the discussion will briefly navigate through some of the more salient conceptual issues around cultural diplomacy, and will then seek to highlight specific objectives and activities linked to the term.

2.1 Conceptual riddles

All forms of diplomacy share the common goal of promoting the national interest abroad. Put simply, cultural diplomacy is about using "arts and culture as a tool of statecraft, specifically deploying cultural exchanges, artists, and art institutions to advance a nation's political agenda on the world stage".[19] Thus, and in certain cases, culture is the continuation of politics by other means.

The advancement of the national interest through arts and culture is a fundamental element of cultural diplomacy, and what distinguishes it from similar concepts, such as public diplomacy and international cultural relations. The latter is more *laissez-faire*, more artist-driven, and not specifically undertaken to pursue narrow national interests.[20] Cultural diplomacy, on the other hand, "involves formal diplomats in service of national government who employ [cultural] exchanges in support of the national interest".[21] In practice, this means relying on in-house cultural attachés or institutions closely associated with the diplomatic service, such the UK's British Council or France's Alliance Française, to do a state's bidding.[22] The process of

18 It is worth noting that the US Government first 'officially' defined cultural diplomacy in a report drafted by the US Department of State in 1959. The report, entitled 'Cultural Diplomacy', defined the term as "the direct and enduring contact between peoples of different nations" designed to "help create a better climate of international trust and understanding in which official relations can operate". The document is cited in: Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, Berghan Books: New York, 2010.

19 Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy.*

20 Frank Ninkovich, *US Information and Cultural Diplomacy*, Foreign Policy Association: New York, 1996.

21 Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*.

22 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.

promoting culture, unlike international cultural relations, is therefore more deliberate in nature and involves government intervention.

Historically, cultural diplomacy has been viewed as a subset of public diplomacy, a program of exchange that includes art, education, and ideas but also incorporates health care and economic development, activities beyond the cultural realm.[23] There is, however, some conceptual overlap between the two concepts. One reason for this lies in America's historical application of cultural diplomacy. During the Cold War, US government cultural-diplomacy agencies, such as the now-abolished US Information Agency (USIA), which were tasked to counter Soviet propaganda, worked closely with or were entirely set-up by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).[24] For this reason, some US policymakers have used "information diplomacy" as a synonym for public diplomacy,"[25] an association which some cultural diplomacy scholars may find uncomfortable. Despite the apparent similarities, Mexican researcher Ésar Villanueva Rivas contends that cultural diplomacy is "uncritically subsumed" under public diplomacy, even though the two concepts – while mutually reinforcing – require "different competences, fulfil different objectives and have different time frames".[26] Thus, Rivas goes on explain that cultural diplomacy is about developing long-term relationships through art, culture and science through programmes such cultural agreements and educational exchanges, while public diplomacy, on the other hand, operates "as an information agency where official communications, public relations and the [national image] can be disseminated" over the short-term.[27]

Conceptual semantics aside, the study of cultural diplomacy is today rooted in the notion of "soft power", a term coined in the late 1980s by the eminent American political scientist Joseph Nye.[28] Now widely invoked in foreign policy debates, soft power is broadly defined by Nye as the ability of a country to persuade the position of others through indirect means, that is, without force or coercion. Nye submits that the ability to shape long-term attitudes and preferences, and thus attract partners and friends, requires governments to project a nation's culture, ideals, and values.[29] Soft power, in other words, is the power of attraction.

As can be seen, Nye's exposition of soft power draws strong similarities with the broad aims of cultural diplomacy, and so the concept has come to be seen as falling under the general heading of soft power. In an effort to provide further clarification

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23 Heather F. Hurlburt and Bill Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest: In Search of a 21st-Century Perspective,* Curb Centre for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt, 2008.

24 Somewhat ironically, the term 'public diplomacy' was formulated in the US partly to distance overseas governmental information activities from the term 'propaganda', which had acquired pejorative connotations.

25 Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy*.

26 César Villanueva Rivas, R*epresenting Cultural Diplomacy: Soft Power, Cosmopolitan Constructivism and Nation Branding in Sweden and Mexico*, Växjö University Press, 2007

27 Rivas, R*epresenting Cultural Diplomacy.*

28 Nye coined the term soft power in the late 1980s, but it first came into widespread usage following an article he wrote entitled 'Soft Power', which appeared in the 80th edition of the influential US journal *Foreign Policy* in 1990.

29 Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Policy: New York, 2004.

on the concept, it is useful to briefly look at how cultural diplomacy is managed and funded, as well as review its main key goals and activities.

2.2 Administration, goals and activities

A key aspect relating to the practice of cultural diplomacy is the manner in which it is managed and funded. Countries differ widely in their administration of cultural diplomacy,[30] although the available literature suggests that cultural diplomacy is sometimes run by a single government department (such as the Institute Français, which falls under the French foreign ministry), jointly run by two or more government departments (in Brazil's case, its foreign affairs and culture ministries), or managed by non-profit entities with varying degrees of administration and funding links to government, including the British Council, Japan Foundation, German Goethe Institut, Alliance Française, and the Confucius Institutes. Some of these institutions, furthermore, are funded and managed by a single ministry, such as the Confucius programmes which are affiliated with China's education ministry, while others like Alliance Française are predominantly self-funded and are supported by volunteers.

Cultural diplomacy is undertaken for a range of purposes and involves a wide variety of activities. Mark provides a useful synthesis of other literature on these matters, suggesting, first of all, that governments tend to pursue cultural diplomacy for both 'idealistic' and 'self-serving' purposes. The former "frequently includes the idea of exchange, of a two-way relationship", while the latter is more about "advancing a state's national agenda on the world stage" by:

- advancing trade, political, diplomatic, and economic interests;
- developing bilateral relationships (including economic, trade, political, cultural and diplomatic elements), and helping to maintain these relationships in times of tension;
- showing commitment to bilateral and multilateral institutions on issues of common interest;
- connecting to and/or advancing the interests of specific groups abroad that are important to the state (such as diasporas);
- raising a state's profile by asserting its greatness (or strengths) and promoting its values; and
- protecting the integrity or "sovereignty" of a nation's culture from threats from other countries, as well as from the impact of globalisation and new technologies.[31]

Mark also catalogues a variety of activities linked the practice of cultural diplomacy. In this regard, he notes that "the range is wide, and is no longer limited to 'high culture', but now more often includes cultural activity targeted at the wider

30 Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*; Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy*.

31 *Ibid*.

population".[32] These activities, when undertaken to support governmental foreign policy objectives or diplomacy, include:

- educational scholarships;
- the production and screening abroad of a documentary series;
- cultural exchange programmes, to include visits of scholars, intellectuals, academics and artists both 'at home' and abroad;
- cultural group performances, artist performances and exhibitions;
- seminars and conferences;
- the operation of libraries, cultural and language centres abroad;
- the publication and dissemination of journals and digital media;
- the broadcasting of television and radio programmes internationally;
- support for festivals and concerts abroad;
- support for cultural activities of other countries held 'at home'; and
- establishing and maintaining professorships and chairs in universities abroad.[33]

Scholars are quick to point out that the outcomes of the abovementioned cultural activities are generally hard to quantify,[34] with the net result being that some diplomats "still remain to be convinced of the benefits of such commitment of human and capital resources".[35] While such concerns are reasonable, total withdrawal from culture as a way of building bridges is not. Indeed, those very diplomats who put culture to the side seem to forget, for example, that successful states have for decades perceived international students as a net contribution to their national economy. In America's case, education exchange programmes, like the Fulbright Programme,[36] have provided grants to thousands of foreign students to undertake tertiary studies and more advanced research. Many of these students have eventually occupied high-profile positions in their own countries, which, in turn, has been important for the US to *inter alia* access influential political and social networks, establish and maintain allies, promote trade and business, and above all ensure its position as a global leader.[37] This sort of influence is made possible because, as former British diplomat Sir Anthony Parsons states: "If you are thoroughly familiar with someone else's language and literature, if you know and love his country, its cities, its arts and its people, you will be instinctively disposed, all other things being equal, to buy goods from him rather than from a less well known source, to support him actively when you consider him right and to avoid punishing him too fiercely when you regard him as being wrong".[38] It is for these precise reasons that former

32 *Ibid*.
33 *Ibid*.
34 Hurlburt and Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest*.
35 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.
36 The Fulbright Programme is US international programme of educational and cultural exchanges, established in 1946 by J. William Fulbright, a US senator for the state of Arkansas.
37 Robert Kagan and Ivo Daalder, 'The US can't afford to end its global leadership role', The Brookings Institution, 25 April 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/04/25/the-u-s-cant-afford-to-end-its-global-leadership-role>
38 Anthony Parsons as quoted in: Sofia Kitsou, 'The Power of Culture in Diplomacy: The Case of U.S. Cultural Diplomacy in France and Germany', *The Journal of Public Diplomacy*, Vol. 2, 2013.

US diplomat and scholar, Richard Arndt, in his seminal study on cultural diplomacy, entitled *The First Resort of Kings*, believes that cultural diplomacy should be "probably 60 or 70 percent education".[39]

Another activity of cultural diplomacy, although one that is likely to raise some eyebrows, relates to national security. The argument put forward, mostly by US scholars and policymakers (at least openly), is that participants in cultural diplomacy often have insights into foreign conditions and attitudes that 'traditional' diplomats and other embassy staff members do not. As Georghiou points out, this does not imply that cultural officials are, or should be, intelligence gatherers;[40] rather, their unique skills-set could be used to assist intelligence officials to develop a deeper appreciation into a foreign country's intentions and capabilities or perhaps 'talent-spot' a potential source. While this can easily be epitomised as a deplorable idea, the truth, of course, is that some countries *do* rely on their cultural practitioners to collect sensitive information, even if latter are not directly linked to government.

Then again, the idea of art being subservient to government is not universally adored either. As American sociologist and cultural commentator Tiffany Jenkins states, "Culture should never be diplomatic".[41] In her view, the cultural sector has been "astonishingly uncritical" for artists being paid by diplomats "to act as propagandists", and notes that, "far from rejecting these [political] advances, many cultural leaders – eager for affirmation and purpose – have embraced them, arguing that it is about time the positive impact of the arts on foreign relations was recognised".[42] Of course, a second truism is that artists have collaborated with governments for centuries (either for money or some altruistic reason) and the degree of collaboration – or submission in the case of authoritarian states – has varied throughout history and from country to country.[43] A case in point is the extent to which US artists and other cultural practitioners collaborated with the US government to counter Soviet propaganda during the Cold War.

3. The rise and 'death' of cultural diplomacy: the Cold War and after

To rephrase a popular folk adage, cultural diplomacy has long been the Cinderella of foreign ministries; while the other two sisters – political and economic diplomacy – may have gone to the international relations ball, cultural diplomacy gets left behind every time. To a large extent, this observation characterised the experience of many foreign ministries in the years following the Cold War. Diplomats were happy to acknowledge the existence of culture, but their experience had been largely limited

39 Richard Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, Potomac Books: Washington, DC, 2005.
40 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.
41 Tiffany Jenkins, 'Artists, resist this propagandist agenda', *Spiked*, 17 October 2009, < http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/7629#.WDjdVdV97IU>
42 *Ibid.*
43 John H Brown, 'What We Talk About When We Talk About Cultural Diplomacy: A Complex Non-Desultory Non-Philippic', *American Diplomacy*, March 2016, < http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat//item/2016/0106/ca/brown_whatwe.html>

to applying the traditional tools of diplomacy, including economic and military. Things were very different during the Cold War, however. In America's case, cultural diplomacy in fact "could be said to have almost replaced normal diplomatic relations with many states in the Soviet bloc, [44] as both the US and the Soviet Union (USSR) attempted to undermine one another by convincing people of the "right" ideology.[45] Unsurprisingly, some US scholars refer to this period as the so-called 'golden age' of American cultural diplomacy.

A qualification should be stated at the outset. The discussion does not engage with Soviet cultural diplomacy. The omission is not deliberate, but merely based on the reason that much of the writing about cultural diplomacy practices during the Cold War has been concerned with US cultural diplomacy. America's efforts, as well as the scholarly debate that they have stimulated, nonetheless help to illuminate some of the key dynamics shaping international relations during the Cold War, and thus constitute a useful frame for this discussion. In particular, they suggest that, for a period of time, cultural diplomacy was much more than a technical instrument or 'optional-extra' of US foreign policy. Rather, it became part of the very fabric of international relations at the time.

Culture penetration gained a formal place in American diplomacy even before the start of the Cold War with the creation in the 1930s of the US Department of State's Division of Cultural Relations, primarily set-up to counter Nazi propaganda. This strategy become even more formalised during the early years of the Cold War with the creation of the Congress of Cultural Freedom (CCF) in 1950 and the aforementioned USIA in 1953.[46] At the time, Soviet Communism was perceived to pose not only a military and diplomatic threat to the West, but also a fundamental challenge to the American way of life. Thus, to counter Soviet propaganda in Europe, the USIA and CFF deployed writers, artists, academics and politicians to market American culture among Soviet citizens and others inside the Soviet bloc. The main categories of US cultural diplomacy programming included cultural exchange programmes, libraries and centres, radio broadcasting, and visitor student, professional and citizen exchanges.[47] During the late 1950s, more than a hundred US events were organised in 89 countries over 4-years. One of the more well-known,

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44 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.

45 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried (eds.), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*, Berghan Books: New York and Oxford, 2010.

46 The CFF (rebranded the International Association of American Freedom in 1967) and USIA were shut-down by the US government in 1990 and 1999 respectively. In April 1966, *The New York Times* ran a series of news articles that suggested that US intelligence was responsible for funding and operating the CCF. This is unsurprising considering that, from the 1940s through the 1960s, cultural diplomacy's "shadowy second home" was the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which made use of American culture in its own propaganda struggle against the Soviets. See for example: Frances Saunders, 'Modern art was CIA 'weapon', *The Independent*, 22 October 1995, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/modern-art-was-cia-weapon-1578808.html>

47 For a more detailed discussed of these and other US cultural diplomacy programmes during the Cold War see: Heather F. Hurlburt and Bill Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest: In Search of a 21st-Century Perspective*, Curb Centre for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt, 2008.

if not controversial,[48] of these was the deployment of the "Goodwill Jazz Ambassadors", led by American jazz legend Louis Armstrong. The musical group performed several well-attended concerts in Soviet-occupied cities, such as East Berlin and Budapest, "in support of US interests abroad".[49] The principle idea behind the initiative was that US artists would bring Western concepts of liberty and equality to life.[50]

Such initiatives, however, were not met with universal approval within the US government. On the contrary, as former US diplomat (and ex-USIA member) John Brown explains, many officials within the US State Department believed that America should "never be in the art business", and that artistic initiatives in Europe and the Soviet Union were "at odds with American values".[51] Irrespective of these differences, it is difficult to underplay the achievements of US cultural diplomacy during the Cold War. In the broadest sense, exposure to American culture, especially among elites in Moscow and East Berlin, served to illuminate the inadequacies of the Soviet system, which, as some have suggested, indirectly served to hasten the decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet system.[52] This conclusion is supported by András Szántó, a Hungarian-born cultural expert and self-confessed convert of US and Western culture during the Cold War, who suggests that "one of cultural diplomacy's greatest achievements" was the "loosening-up of countries in Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War".[53] Szántó notes that Western arts and culture "made it possible to showcase the values of freedom, openness and political progressivism as an alternative to the oppressive totalitarian arrangements in the Soviet bloc".[54] In his view, this strategy worked because "when that region began to open up economically and politically it gravitated quite naturally towards the West".[55] Which of course is exactly what happened when, by the early 1990s, many countries that had emerged from Soviet dictatorship joined the European Union (EU) to ensure they did not fall back into the Russian sphere of influence.

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48 Armstrong's tours involved some controversy, as the US was viewed as hypocritical for 'deploying' an African-American performer abroad as representatives of the very rights he were denied at home. While this is certainly the case, his colleagues suggested that his is popularity among soldiers and civilians on both sides of the Berlin wall was "legendary" and that "no boundary was closed to Louis".

49 Josh Jones, 'Louis Armstrong Plays Historic Cold War Concerts in East Berlin & Budapest (1965)', *Open Culture*, accessed on 25 November 2016, <http://www.openculture.com/2014/03/louis-armstrong-plays-historic-cold-war-concerts-in-east-berlin-budapest-1965.html>

50 Jenkins, 'Artists, resist this propagandist agenda'.

51 Regarding those US officials that supported the idea of exporting American culture to Central and Eastern Europe, and to the Soviet Union itself, Brown states the following: "a small minority of [US] officials, together with their allies in the private sector, were of the strong opinion that high American art could play an important role in foreign policy, and particularly in winning the hearts and minds of the intelligentsia in Cold War Europe. Among these true believers…were cultivated elitist agents in the Central Intelligence Agency, who for some fifteen years from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s covertly used agency funds to promote American high culture abroad supposedly without the [US] Congress knowing about it".

52 These include: Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

53 András Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy*, Brunswick Review, Issue 4, Summer 2011.

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid*.

Szántó's views may seem inflated (or perhaps even biased), but they can be partially substantiated with data provided by an in-depth study of US cultural diplomacy during the Cold War. In this regard, the study presents several outcomes of US Cold War cultural programmes, which are summarised below:

- overall, more than 100,000 foreigners visited the US under the International Visitors program; half of these were Soviets students, scientists and engineers, writers and journalists, government and party officials, musicians, dancers, and athletes that visited the US under various exchange programmes;
- more Americans visited the Soviet Union than Soviets visited America, with the former bringing in icons of American style and popular culture behind the Iron Curtain – such as blue jeans, sneakers, Harlem music and Hollywood film – which came to symbolise American freedom, openness, and informality;
- 1,500 foreign visitors to the US became cabinet-level ministers in their home countries, and 177 of these became heads of state or government, including: Margaret Thatcher (the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom), Muhammad Anwar el-Sadat (the third President of Egypt), Indira Gandhi (the first female Prime Minister of India); Julius Nyerere (the first democratic president of Tanzania), and Oscar Arias (the Nobel Peace Prize–winning president of Costa Rica); and
- the Fulbright Program[56] for educational exchange sponsored around 255,000 foreigners and Americans – among them future Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winners and artists, as well as future government and business leaders.[57]

With particular reference to South Africa, a study on US cultural activities in the country suggests that the USIA in the mid-1980s "identified South Africa's likely future leaders" and through several scholarships "spirited out perhaps 2000 to 3000 individuals" which served to "broadening their horizons and preparing them for the leadership roles they would eventually inherit".[58] A similar study by the Centre for the Higher Education Trust (CHET) indicates that the group of leaders in the new South Africa who were part of Fulbright programme from 1953 to 1996 is "rather astounding," and these include: seven university vice-chancellors; two presidents of science councils; one ambassador; one provincial premier;[59] and also over thirty members that have or had the title of Director or Chief Director in the post-1994 government.[60]

As a whole, the above-mentioned achievements of US cultural diplomacy during the Cold War have continued to serve its interests well after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

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56 The Fulbright programme is the flagship scholarship programme of the US government. See: <https://eca.state.gov/fulbright>

57 Daniel Whitman, 'Introduction', in Daniel Whitman (Ed.), *Outsmarting Apartheid: an oral history of South Africa's cultural and educational exchange with the United States*, 1960 – 1999, State University of New York Press: Albany, 2014.

58 *Ibid*.

59 These are Manelisi Genge and Dr Mathole Serofo Motshekga respectively.

60 Riana Coetsee, *CHET Report on South African Fulbright Scholars (1953 – 1996)*, Centre for Higher Education Trust, 2014.

American culture, together with the English language, have enjoyed tremendous global popularity right into the 21st century. The 'Americanisation' of the world has ensured that brand names like Coke, McDonalds and MTV are among the most recognized terms in the world, regardless of language. And a key benefactor of 'brand America' has definitely been the US economy. For years, US companies have been able to launch their products on numerous markets almost simultaneously, and these products have been globally consumed at the same time.[61] This partly explains why the US has enjoyed a relatively uninterrupted period of economic prosperity since the late 1980s.[62]

American triumphalism, however, came at a price. The 'end of history', to use Francis Fukuyama's famous phrase for the idea that winning 'hearts and minds" was no longer necessary after the Cold War,[63] had a ripple-effect on inter-cultural agreements all over the world. According to Mark, from the early 1990s, "the allure of the cultural agreement declined,"[64] because national treasuries around the world found it increasingly difficult to justify spending money on something as vague as culture, particularly in a time of peace.[65] In the US, policymakers "felt that there was no longer an ideological competition that [America] had to win",[66] which resulted in a reduction of US cultural-diplomatic activities,[67] and the general and systematic watering-down of US soft power. Thus, by the mid-1990s, the US reduced its contributions to multilateral cultural organisations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), abolished exchange programmes, such as Arts America,[68] and stripped-out or cultural-diplomatic institutions such as the USAI to be replaced by weaker bodies, or simply shut them down, as was the case with the CCF.[69] Perhaps most problematic of all, it abandoned countries of geo-strategic importance, including Afghanistan and Somalia.

4. The 'rebirth' of cultural diplomacy in the 21st Century

Cultural diplomacy, from being one of the most influential tools in America's foreign policy armoury, was downplayed during the post-Cold War period in favour of US military might. This situation changed almost overnight with the fall of the Twin Towers in New York in 2001. As the so-called 'global war on terror' unfolded, US officials began to realise that America's failure to remain engaged with certain parts of the world through 'soft' means was a major policy blunder. Before long,

61 Zdravko Milnar and Franc Trcek, "Territorial Cultures and Global Impacts", in: Roland Axtmann (ed.), *Globalization and Europe: Theoretical and Imperial Investigations*, Pinter: London, 1998.
62 Hurlburt and Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest*.
63 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History*,
64 Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy*.
65 For example, studies show that from 1980 to the mid-2000, America scholarships for foreign students to the US, declined from 20,000 to around 900; between 1993 and 2001, funding for US educational and cultural exchange fell more than one-third from $349 million to $232 million; and from 1995 to 2001, US academic and cultural exchanges declined from 45,000 29,000. See: Hurlburt and Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest*.
66 Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy*.
67 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.
68 Arts America was an international exchange programme of US arts exhibitions run by the USIA from 1978 to 1997. The programme was originally managed by the US Smithsonian Institute.
69 Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy*.

policymakers and scholars alike were calling for America to defeat its enemies by "winning the war on ideas', suggesting that public diplomacy – and hence cultural diplomacy – should be elevated back to "the highest national security importance".[70] Thus, for better or for worse, the challenge of global terrorism was characterised as a 'cultural' problem. [71]

Heading these calls, former US president George W. Bush initiated a "flurry of initiatives to rebrand the US from a 'global bully' to a 'compassionate hegemon'".[72] While the support for soft power was fundamentally rhetorical in nature, the US moved aggressively into the international arena fighting anti-Americanism, attempting to 'rebrand' America with weapons and words. But the expansion of Pax Americana,[73] particularly in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific, inevitably threatened the rising stature of ambitious regional and international powers. Countries like China, Russia, Brazil, Turkey and Indonesia sought to leverage their own regional presence by developing more nuanced ways to enhance their roles in world politics and economics. This included long-term strategies aimed at projecting the national brand, with an eye on gaining international influence, as well as increasing trade, foreign direct investment and tourism.[74] Thus, by around 2005, foreign ministries from all countries, ranging from Canada to New Zealand and from Argentina to China, began refining or developing their own public diplomacy policies to support or counterbalance US expansionism.[75] While this is not to say that 9/11 somehow triggered a massive interest in public diplomacy in the 21st Century, one study does note that, throughout history, most public diplomacy initiatives are "born out of necessity [and] not the product of forward-looking foreign services".[76]

Mark explains that the ascendancy of public diplomacy, in turn, has created renewed awareness of the use of arts and culture as a tool of statecraft. Increasingly, foreign ministries have begun to "focus on cultural exchanges" and reviving the "negotiation and promulgation of cultural agreements" for the purposes of "generating positive attraction and advancing national interests".[77] Furthermore, countries that have paid serious attention to, and invested significant resources into, cultural diplomacy have also enjoyed fast-growing creative economies. Mark explains that the creative sector

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70 See for example: Hady Amr and P.W. Singer, 'To win the 'war on terror', we first must win the war on ideas: here's how', *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 618, July 2008.

71 A case in point is the revised *2006 US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, which described counterterrorism not only in terms of military and law enforcement activity, but also in diplomatic, financial, and intelligence terms. Likewise, the infamous *9/11 Report* itself asserted the importance of culture as part of its recommendations for a global strategy against terrorism, as discussed in Chapter 12 ("What to Do? A Global Strategy").

72 Peter van Ham, 'Power, Public Diplomacy, and the Pax Americana', in: Jan Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, 2005.

73 The term 'Pax Americana' (Latin for 'American Peace') is a term applied to the concept of relative peace in the world as a result of the preponderance of power enjoyed by the US beginning around the middle of the 20th century and continuing to this day.

74 Wally Olins, Making a National Brand, in: Jan Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy*.

75 Van Ham, 'Power, Public Diplo macy, and the Pax Americana'.

76 Jan Melissen, 'The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice', in: Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy.*

77 Mark, *A Comparative Study of the Cultural Diplomacy*.

worldwide has "gradually become important to national economies in terms of their contribution to GDP, their growth potential (compared to more traditional industries), their annual earnings and employment," and also "their ability to generate innovation and creativity".[78]

Mark's assessment is partly evidenced by recent economic data on Europe's creative sector. A survey conducted by Paris-based consulting firm TERA Consultants indicates that, over the last decade, the EU's creative sector has been a leading sector for economic growth and job creation in the region. For example, the value add of the creative sector to the EU's total GDP increased from 2.6% in 2003 to 6.9% in 2008 (the latter representing 6.5% of the total EU workforce, or approximately 14 million workers).[79] Critically, the top-scoring countries in the TERA survey were France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK) – countries with well-established cultural diplomacy institutions. Another quintessential example of the link between cultural diplomacy and the creative sector is China.

4.2 The Chinese experience

Although much has already been written about China's remarkable ascendency to the world stage in recent years, in particular it application of soft power, it is worthwhile to review a few important facts regarding its cultural sector. Firstly, according to Ken Miller, an American scholar that advises the US government on Chinese matters, "the Chinese Communist Party has figured out that selling Chinese culture to the world is an important way to solidify the country's global position" and the party is "backing indigenous creativity, as well as its export, with real resources".[80] In fact, since around 2011, China's cultural policy has undergone major reforms. There are two key reasons for this. The first is economic: a vibrant cultural sector is viewed by the Chinese government as an alternative source of economic growth and employment. The second is political: China also aims to use the cultural sector as a tool of soft power through which to increase its own global influence. In this regard, key strategic policies, such as China's central Five-Year Plans,[81] call for the building of the 'China brand' through a variety of cultural initiatives. These include promoting cultural exchange, increasing the export of cultural goods and services, as well as increasing the number of Chinese museums,[82] libraries, media centres and information services across the globe.[83] Linked to this, China plans to increase the

78 *Ibid*.

79 Data provided by a study conducted by TERA Consultants, a Paris-based consultancy, entitled, *Building a Digital Economy: The Importance of Saving Jobs in the EU's Creative Industries*, which was published in March 2010. A subsequent EU study on the topic, however, revealed that the total economic contribution of the CCIs to Europe's economy remained stable from 2008 to 2011, owing largely due the 2008 global financial crisis.

80 Ken Miller, 'China's Next Big Export: Creativity and Culture', *The Daily Beast*, 22 November 2012, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/11/22/china-s-next-big-export-creativity-and culture.html>

81 China's Five-Year Plans are a blueprint that detail the government's main policy goals and development initiatives for a period of five years.

82 China is currently building a hundred museums a year. It recently opened the world's largest museum, the redeveloped National Museum of China, located on the infamous Tiananmen Square.

83 In ideological terms, it is worth mentioning that these proposals have also aimed at reversing the image of China as a manufacturing country, one that imports and copies ideas from the West,

number of its premier cultural diplomacy institutes, namely the Confucius Institutes (which teach Chinese language and culture to foreigners) and Chinese Cultural Centres (which showcase Chinese culture), and the numbers are staggering: from 2015 to 2020, China plans to establish an additional 500 language institutes (from the current 500) and 30 cultural centres (from the current 20) around the world.[84]

The latest economic data suggests that China's cultural reforms are having their intended effect. A 2016 UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) report indicates that China is currently the leading global exporter of culture products, and its share is roughly double the size of its nearest competitor, the US. [85] Secondly, China's cultural industry over the last decade has enjoyed significant growth. From 2003 to 2013, the value add of the creative industry grew from ¥30 billion to ¥2.1 trillion, the latter figure representing around 4% of China's GDP.[86]

Thirdly, since 2010, over 27 million Americans and Chinese have participated in cultural exchange programmes, including student exchanges, cultural performances and exhibitions, think-tank dialogues, and sports activities".[87] This effort is part of China's current drive to develop its bilateral relations through 'people-to-people exchange, together with strategic engagement and economic dialogue.[88] Lastly, in relation to China's cultural diplomacy agencies, there are currently around 500 Confucius institutes operating in more than 130 counties around the world, the first one opening in South Korea in 2004.[89] *The Economist* reports that China's spending on the institutes has increased considerably, from around $45 million to $278 million in 2013, and the number of Chinese language learners across the world has roughly increased from 30 million in 2005 to 100 million 2015.[90]

China's growing influence and cultural penetration, particularly its aggressive push behind the Confucius programmes and cultural centres, has been met with growing resistance, including from US, Canada, Sweden and Russia. Critics point out that China is (subtly) using the language institutes to (aggressively) advance national interests, thereby going beyond their original purpose of language promotion and teaching. For example, in 2014, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) stated that the Confucius Institutes "function as an arm of the Chinese state"

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into a producer of innovation and lifestyle, thereby changing the mind-set crystallised in the slogan "made in China" to the mind-set "created in China".

84 Anthony Warren, 'Institutes take Chinese language to a global audience', *China Daily USA*, 11 November 2016, <http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2016-11/11/content_27347275.htm>

85 Lydia Deloumeaux, *The Globalisation of Cultural Trade: A shift in consumption: International flows of cultural goods and services 2004-2013*, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Montreal (Canada), March 2016.

86 As reported by China's National Bureau of Statistics (NSB) in a report entitled, *Statistics of Chinese Cultural Industry 2012*. All reports of the NSB (translated into English) can be accessed at: <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/>

87 Nick Khaza, 'Playing the Long Game': Cultural Diplomacy and U.S.-China Relations', *Asia Society Policy Institute*, 21 June 2016 <http://asiasociety.org/policy-institute/'playing-long-game'-cultural-diplomacy-and-us-china-relations>

88 *Ibid*.

89 Warren, 'Institutes take Chinese language to a global audience'.

90 The Economist, *Confucius says*, 13 September 2014.

and "advance a state agenda in the recruitment and control of academic staff".[91] In a similar tone, the *South China Morning Post* reported in 2015 that several universities in North America and Europe ended their partnership with the institutes, "citing concerns that they restrict academic freedom, conduct surveillance of Chinese students abroad and promote the political aims of [China]."[92] While the Confucius programmes are undoubtedly government-run, and thus not impervious to strict censorship and propaganda, the outcry levelled against them is more strategic in nature. It is in fact a response to the rise of Chinese internationalism.

China's growing importance in the world, for instance, has convinced millions around the world to start learning Mandarin Chinese, and increasingly more countries are incorporating Mandarin Chinese as a second language into their national education systems, including in the UK, South Korea, Peru, and South Africa. This poses a direct economic threat to the US, because as the Council on Foreign Relations explains, the "global economy is shifting away from the English-speaking world", which, in turn, is likely to impact on America's future ability to influence foreign markets and sell US goods and services to foreign consumers.[93]

Even more broadly, US frustration with China emanates from the fact that America is starting to lag behind other great powers in projecting its culture and values in certain parts of the world. One reason for this is that US cultural diplomacy, as it stands, is in crisis mode. The extent of America's soft power problems are revealed in a 2015 report by the Curb Centre for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy, a US-based national policy institute, which reveals that US government capabilities, currently housed in the US State Department, are at this stage "uncoordinated, lack proper funding, and absent of expertise".[94] The report goes in more detail and outlines that "despite an acknowledgement at the highest levels of government that America is engaged in a 'cultural struggle' against religious extremists, the reality is that America, since 9/11, has been unable to mount a coherent, large-scale cultural diplomacy effort tailored to contemporary challenges."[95] This is because, the report concludes, "culture has remained a low public-policy priority" and has "relied too heavily on the private sector and public-private partnerships on key aspects of national cultural policy".[96]

4.3 Not all cultural diplomacy is the same

As powerful players in the international system, countries like the US, Russia and China typically rely on both hard power and soft power capabilities to project

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91 John Sudworth, 'Confucius institute: The hard side of China's soft power', *BBC News*, 22 December 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-30567743>

92 Nectar Gan, 'China to expand soft power push through overseas cultural centres', *South China Morning Post*, 13 February 2015, <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1711418/china-expand-soft-power-push-through-overseas-cultural-centres>

93 Terrence G. Wiley, Sarah Catherine Moore, Margaret S. Fee, A "Languages for Jobs" Initiative, Council for Foreign Relations, 26 June 2012, < http://www.cfr.org/united-states/languages-jobs-initiative/p28396>

94 Hurlburt and Ivey, *Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest*.

95 *Ibid*

96 *Ibid*.

themselves globally. Furthermore, their soft power capabilities are more attuned to enhancing or maintaining their global influence, and thus tend to be concerned with 'selling' culture through specific culture-diplomatic programmes. Smaller nations, on the other hand, tend to take a somewhat different approach. Lacking military superiority, they place more emphasis on soft power to project themselves in their immediate region, and less on brute force. This includes, for example, supporting regional conflict resolution and strengthening multilateral bodies. But like any other country, so-called 'middle-powers' (and those, like South Africa, with a similar status) are also driven by the national interest, and rely on culture exchange to promote foreign investment and national economic development. However, compared to more powerful states, they tend to be "more actively involved in creating relationships between experts and institutions" in order to promote the natural flow of exchange,[97] rather than try manipulate this exchange through government intervention.

The distinction between great and middle powers is relevant for the discussion, given that the application of cultural diplomacy to pursue a broad range of national interests is not universal.[98] As Graham points out, "states do not necessarily focus on all aspects of cultural diplomacy, but may decide to concentrate resources on specific areas aligned to their foreign policy objectives".[99] For South African policymakers, this means that more applicable lessons relating to the practice of cultural diplomacy can be drawn from countries with comparable economic and social profiles as well as national interests to South Africa. One country that fits this profile is Brazil.

In many respects, South Africa – once hailed the "Brazil of Africa" – has followed a similar developmental path to Brazil, the dominant economy in South America.[100] Both countries are multi-racial, industrialised democracies with comparable social challenges (mostly inequality), economic priorities (such as regional trade and infrastructure development), overshadowed by post-colonial 'hangovers' (specifically the reluctance to be regional leaders[101]). Recently, both countries have hosted mega sporting events, which have enhanced their international profile and promoted big business. Although far smaller in terms of economic power and population, South Africa is probably closer to Brazil than other countries of the BRICS block, namely Russia, India and China. Above all, development and south-south cooperation have been quintessential pillars of both South Africa's and Brazil's foreign policy, both in rhetoric and practice.

5. The development of Brazilian cultural diplomacy

The aim of this section is to present Brazil's experience with cultural diplomacy. Although academic research on Brazil's cultural diplomacy is still relatively rare, the

97 Szántó, *Cultural Diplomacy.*
98 Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.
99 *Ibid*.
100 African Research Institute, *South Africa: the Brazil of Africa*, Briefing Note 0704, December 2007.
101 The BRICS post, *Brazil uses BRICS Presidency for* key foreign policy goals, 24 March 2015, <http://thebricspost.com/brazil-triumphs-in-its-brics-presidency/#.WD2wTNV97IU>

topic is featured regularly in articles of daily newspapers and business press. Historic information, on the hand, is scarce. And yet the few available historical studies on Brazil's cultural diplomacy suggest that already in the 1920s the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs[102] considered "cultural promotion" a necessary practice to "strengthen [Brazil's] place in the international [arena] and affirm its economic positions".[103] Over the years, the ministry's position on culture in foreign policy has remained essentially unchanged, although the mission has expanded to include stimulating "political and economic dialogue [to] foster mutual understanding [and] respect between nations", as well as cultural cooperation and the teaching of the Portuguese language."[104] Before entering into a discussion about Brazil's current cultural diplomacy practices, a brief historical grasp of the topic is required.

5.1 Cold War developments

A historical overview of Brazil's cultural diplomacy, roughly covering the period of the Cold War, is provided in a paper by French researchers Juliette Dumont and Anaïs Fléchet, which possibly given the only available synthesis on the subject.[105] Some of the key points of the study are summarised below:

- In April 1946, Brazil's foreign ministry established the Imataraty[106] Cultural Division (DCI),[107] responsible for the diffusion of Brazilian arts, literature, language, and music throughout the world. This event marked the first time that a South American country established a "cultural diplomatic machine" based in the foreign affairs ministry. One of the division's more popular cultural programmes, which ran from 1957 to 1975, was sponsoring radio programs in France that presented various aspects of Brazilian culture through popular music;
- In July 1961, DCI merged into the foreign ministry's Cultural Information Department (DCInf). The agency consisted of three divisions which dealt with 'intellectual cooperation', 'cultural diffusion', and 'information'. Overall, the DCInf was responsible for assisting the foreign ministry in the planning and implementation of cultural exchanges, publicising information abroad relating to Brazilian culture, and maintaining Brazilian cultural agencies abroad;
- In 1978, the functions of the Department of Cultural, Scientific, and Technological Cooperation (DCT), the DCInf's successor, were annexed to the newly established Publicity Division (DDI), which was given broader powers to promote Brazil's culture abroad, with particular emphasis on cinema and television;

102 In Portuguese, the *Ministério das Relações Exteriores*.
103 Juliette Dumont and Anaïs Fléchet, 'Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century', *Revista Brasileira de História*, Vol.34, No.67, June 2014.
104 Ministry of Foreign Relations (Brazil), *Cultural Diplomacy*, accessed 15 December 2016, < http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/en/cultural-diplomacy>
105 Dumont and Anaïs, 'Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century'.
106 The Brazilian foreign ministry is also known as "Itamaraty", after the palace which houses the ministry.
107 The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is commonly referred to in Brazilian media and diplomatic jargon as "Itamaraty", after the palace which houses the ministry.

- Overall, the promotion of Brazilian culture abroad was not restricted to the foreign ministry. The latter usually cooperated with other departments and institutions, particularly the culture and education ministries, to formulate and promote Brazil's cultural policy abroad;
- Critically, the foreign ministry's cultural activities did not seek to disseminate unknown aspects of Brazilian culture, but rather promote those aspects that were already popular, especially in the domains of cinema and music. This gave rise to the introduction of specific policies in the 1960s and 1970s that aimed to promote Brazil's national interest. Thus, the ministry took advantage of the international popularity of the *Samba*,[108] *Bossa Nova*[109] and *Cinema Novo*[110] in Europe and North America to, amongst other things, boost Brazil's international tourism sector;
- Brazil's cultural diplomacy was not limited to European and American audiences. From the 1960s, the foreign ministry opened-up to Africa, establishing bilateral relations with newly independents states in west and southern Africa, and taking care to underline the ethnic, historic and cultural affinities which linked the two continents. In this regard, some of the activities sponsored by the ministry included: research and development on Afro-Brazilian culture; the creation of the Afro-Brazilian museum in Salvador; and education exchange programmes for both African students and professors.

While Dumont and Fléchet do not necessarily address the impact of Brazil's cultural-diplomatic initiatives during the Cold War, they do highlight several achievements, which occurred mainly in the audiovisual and popular music sectors, including: the creation of the Rio de Janeiro International Song Festival (1966); the colour broadcasting and satellite transmission of the Rio de Janeiro Carnival Festival (1970s); the Brazilian Cinema Week of Buenos Aires (1978); and the appointment of Brazilian officials in strategic positions at UNESCO and the Organization of American States (OAS).[111]

5.2 Brazilian post-Cold War blues

Further information on Brazil's cultural diplomacy following the end of the Cold War is limited up until the beginning of the 21st century, that is, roughly during the same period that saw the decline of cultural-diplomatic activities throughout the word, as mentioned earlier in the discussion. Nevertheless, what stands out from the available literature is that, by the mid-2000s, Brazil's cultural sector faced three inter-related problems. First of all, despite its cultural exuberance and diversity, as well as being

108 The *Samba* is a lively, rhythmical dance of Afro-Brazilian origin.

109 The *Bossa Nova* is a genre of Brazilian music developed and popularized in the 1950s and 1960s, and is today one of the best-known Brazilian music genres abroad.

110 The *Cinema Novo* ('New Cinema') is a genre and movement of film noted for its emphasis on social equality and intellectualism that rose to prominence in Brazil during the 1960s and 1970s. It is recognised as one of the first forms of cinema that brought awareness of the social and political realities of a country through cinema.

111 The Organization of American States, or OAS, is the world's oldest regional organisation. The organisation, established in 1948, consists of 35 independent states of the Americas and constitutes the main political, juridical, and social governmental forum in the hemisphere.

the wealthiest nation in Latin America, Brazil was not among the world's top-20 cultural exporters, and neither was it in the world's top-10 exporters among emerging economies.[112] Brazil also had a minimal presence in the world market in terms of music exports, despite being internationally known for its music and an important music producer.[113]

Secondly, and related to the previous point, figures from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, or UNCTAD, indicate that Brazil's cultural imports were performing better than its cultural exports. From 2003 to 2008, the average growth rate of Brazil's exports of cultural goods[114] was 4.9% (compared to the world average of 17.1%), while the average growth rate of Brazil's imports of cultural goods was 33% (which was significantly higher than the world average of 13%).[115] More recent data from UNESCO paints a similar, albeit even bleaker picture suggesting that from 2006 to 2013 Brazil was importing more cultural goods and services than it was exporting, with the trade deficit increasing year after year.[116] This situation, no doubt, would have concerned the Brazilian government, given that surpluses, driven by exports, tend to inject income and jobs into national economies.[117]

Thirdly, successive attempts by the Brazilian government to make culture a strategic foreign policy tool to attract foreign investment and promote the Portuguese language abroad were not achieving the desired results,[118] partly because Brazil faced a serious image-management problem. This is evidenced, for example, by the fact that, at least up until 2011, Brazil represented an insignificant number of the global tourists industry – on average, it received approximately 5 million foreign visitors annually, compared with approximately 80 million in France, 70 million in Spain, and 50 million each in the US and Italy.[119]

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112 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2010*.

113 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2008: The Challenge of Assessing the Creative Economy: toward more informed policy making*, United Nations, 2008.

114 The term 'cultural goods' broadly implies various sectors that form part of the wider creative and cultural industry, namely: design, arts and crafts, visual arts, publishing, performing arts, new media and audio-visuals.

115 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2010*.

116 The term 'cultural services' broadly implies services in the following sectors: architectural, engineering and other technical services; research and development services; cultural and recreational services; and audio-visual and related services

117 With regards to cultural services, data from UNCTAD indicates that, between 2003 and 2008, Brazil recorded a marginal trade surplus in cultural services, which include: architectural, engineering and other technical services; research and development services; cultural and recreational services; and audio-visual and related services.

118 On the other hand, Brazil's cultural polices during this period seem to have had a positive impact on generating employment and tackling inequality in the country. For example, a 2008 study about the value chain of the creative industries in Brazil revealed that the country's creative industries, plus related industries and supporting activities, accounted for 21% (representing 7.6 million people) of the total formal workers in the country, contributing to 16% of national GDP. See: UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Report 2010.*

119 Fabiana Gondim Mariutti, Janaina de Moura Engracia Giraldi, and Edson Crescitelli, 'The Image of Brazil as a Tourism Destination: An Exploratory Study of the American Market', *International Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2013.

5.3 Rebranding Brazil

Brazil's preparations for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games spurred the government to reassess its international branding and image. As one report states, the "positioning of 'brand Brazil' became very high on the governmental agenda", and in the years leading to both sporting events "a great number of countries were asking for more information about Brazil [and] many people outside of Brazil were also starting to consume its cultural products".[120] Critically, one approach identified by Brazil to improve the country's international image in recent years has been to reinforce and re-organise its cultural diplomacy capabilities. This process has involved several steps.

Firstly, in 2010 the Brazilian government adopted a National Cultural Plan (*Plano Nacional de Cultura*: PNC), which, *inter alia*, called for the "internationalisation of culture".[121] The PNC also embraced the idea of using cultural-diplomatic initiatives to promote Brazil's creative economy "as one way to restructure society at home and reposition Brazil on the global stage."[122] A year later, Brazil's cultural ministry established a Secretariat of the Creative Economy (SCE) "charged with developing policies to realise the strategic potential of [Brazil's] creative sector".[123] According to one study, the SCE in many ways is a reflection of how Brazil is gradually shifting culture "from the margins of the economy to the centre of economic and political thought [in the country]," thus emphasizing the creative economy as an engine for "economic growth and social inclusion".[124]

Second, from 2011 Brazil's foreign ministry, in cooperation with other government departments, launched a salvo of cultural diplomacy programmes aimed at expanding the international diffusion of Brazilian arts, culture and heritage. These programmes, including *New Voices of Brazil* (2011), *Project of Arts Residencies Abroad* (2011), and *New Brazilian Dramaturgy* (2013), placed considerable emphasis on nurturing and promoting the international careers of upcoming artists, exposing Brazilian theatre, and supporting the exchange of artists in renowned international institutions, including museums, cultural centres and schools of art.[125]

Third, in 2013, Brazil's culture ministry began drafting a new strategy for external culture relations in collaboration with three other ministries, namely foreign affairs, trade and industry, science and technology, and tourism. Although the status of the ratification process of the proposed strategy is currently unknown, the new strategy

120 Yolanda Smits, *Brazil Country Report 2013-2014*, Preparatory Action 'Culture in the EU's External Relations, 2014 < http://cultureinexternalrelations.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/country-report-Brazil-26.03.2014.pdf>

121 Smits, *Brazil Country Report 2013-2014*.

122 Leslie L. Marsh, 'Branding Brazil through Cultural Policy: Rio de Janeiro as a Creative, Audiovisual City', *International Journal of Communication*, Vol. 10, 2016.

123 *Ibid*.

124 Leonardo De Marchi, 'Analysis of the Secretariat of the Creative Economy Plan and the transformations in the relation of State and culture in Brazil', *Intercom: Revista Brasileira de Ciências da Comunicação*, Vol. 37, No.1, January/June 2014.

125 Ministry of Foreign Relations (Brazil), *Cultural Diplomacy*, accessed on 29 November 2016, <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/cultural-diplomacy?lang=en>

calls for the "improvement of the country's cultural diplomacy networks, using culture as soft power, and enhancing the international projection of the Brazilian cultural and creative sector".[126]

At the same time, the Brazilian government has placed increasing demands on implementing departments to "complement each other".[127] While the precise institutional arrangements are not yet clear, the Itamaraty Culture Department (*Departomento Cultural*: ICD) from the foreign affairs ministry[128] and the Directorate of International Relations (*Diretoria de Relações Internacionais*: DRI) from the culture ministry[129] are the central players in coordinating and implementing Brazils cultural diplomacy, though the ICD appears to be the main contact point for cultural institutions outside Brazil, including the country's embassies, general consulates, and cultural networks and centres.

5.4 Impact

Although results are inconclusive, several findings support the idea that recent attempts to re-organise and improve Brazil's cultural diplomacy are having some impact. There are positive signs, for example, that the global demand for Brazilian arts, culture and heritage is increasing. The latest available figures from UNCTAD show that Brazil's trade deficit, while still high, is partly being offset by the "fast growth of [Brazil's] cultural services" in recent years.[130] These services include design (interior, jewellery and fashion),[131] new media (music, film, and online media), and advertising and architecture.[132] As a whole, Brazil's creative industry has also seen "significant growth", with the latest available figures indicating that the total value of the industry increased from $7 billion in 2011 to $11 billion in 2012.[133] The creative industry has also seen some gains in terms of employment and value add to Brazil's economy. A recent piece in *Forbes Magazine* reports that 5.5% of Brazilians are employed in related creative fields (equating to around 11 million jobs in a total labour force of around 200 million), and that the creative sector currently accounts for around 2.6% of the country's national GDP, "exhibiting a nearly 70% increase in the last decade".[134]

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126 Smits, *Brazil Country Report 2013-2014*.
127 Yolanda Smits, *Brazil Country Report 2013-2014*.
128 Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Brazil*), Cultural diplomacy*, accessed on 30 November 2016, < http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/cultural-diplomacy?lang=en>
129 Ministry of Culture and Education, *Competencies,* accessed on 30 November 2016, <http://www.cultura.gov.br/competencias>
130 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles: Trends in international trade in creative industries*, United Nations, 2015.
131 No doubt, the "crown jewel" of Brazil's growing creative economy is the fashion industry. While some Brazilian brands are already household names, such as Nine West and Havaianas, less well-known designers are purportedly gaining international recognition.
132 Between 2012 and 2013, advertising and architecture were the fastest growing sectors in Brazil's creative economy.
133 UNCTAD, *Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles.*
134 Daniel Runde, 'After the crisis: How Brazil can create growth', *Forbes*, 4 April 2016, < http://www.forbes.com/sites/danielrunde/2016/04/04/brazilian-creative-sector-drive-post crisis-growth/#13402b395b58?>

Meanwhile, figures released by Brazil's tourism ministry show that Brazil enjoyed a record-breaking six million foreign visits during 2014, representing a 10% increase over 2013. The ministry is quick to point out the 2014 FIFA World Cup "was a big deal" for international tourism in the country, but at the same time underlines that growth in the tourism sector can also be attributed to Brazil's major international culture events,[135] including Rock in Rio and the Rio de Janeiro Carnival. With regards to the latter event, between 2009 and 2013 the Rio Carnival saw significant increases in the numbers of foreign tourist visits.[136] The Rio de Janeiro Tourism office indicates, for instance, that the Carnival received 131% more international tourists than anticipated for the 2011. Critically, the increase of foreign tourists is believed to be the result of "increased media coverage and high-profile international events".[137] That said, since 2014 the number of international visits to Rio has marginally dropped, but this is attributed to recent economic downturns in Brazil and other parts of the world, particularly Europe.

Indeed, any improvements in Brazil's cultural sector are possibly being offset by Brazil's current recession, regarded as the worst in decades, with the Brazilian government placing increased emphasis on agricultural and mining exports to improve the country's economy outlook.[138] Although the recession is likely to have a negative impact on the creative sector, due to lower consumer spending and increased unemployment,[139] it does not necessarily mean that culture will return to the backbench of the Brazilian economy. On the contrary, as *Forbes Magazine* suggests, "the most important facets of the Brazilian economy are changing" and Brazil's future increasingly relies on the development of less traditional sectors, in particular "its growing creative sector".[140] If this is the case, then Brazil's stated cultural diplomacy intensions become all the more relevant.

6. The genesis of South African cultural diplomacy

While the term 'cultural diplomacy' may be new in South African policy, the concept is not. At the height of apartheid, diplomats of the ruling National Party (NP) government had been busy crafting and subtly re-packaging cultural activities to

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135 Chesney Hearst, 'Brazil Saw Record Number of International Tourists in 2014', *The Rio Times*, 23 November 2015, <http://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/rio-travel/world-cup-brought-record-number-of-tourists-to-brazil>

136 Anon, 'International tourists visiting Rio do Janeiro increased 8% to 1.49 million in 2010', *MercoPress*, 12 May 2011, < http://en.mercopress.com/2011/05/12/international-tourists-visiting-rio-do-janeiro-increased-8-to-1.49-million-in-2010>; Mark Johanson , 'Rio Carnival 2013 By The Numbers', *International Business Times*, 2 August 2013, <http://www.ibtimes.com/rio-carnival-2013-numbers-1071850>

137 See: <http://www.riocarnival.net/press>

138 According to *The Economist*, Brazil's economy has shown some signs of a recovery in 2016. These include: an increase of imports of capital goods; growth in industrial production; a decrease in stocks of unsold goods; slower corporate dismissal rates; marginally higher consumer-confidence index rates; and positive projection rates for the national GDP in 2017 by international financial institutions. See: The Economist, *Brazil's economy: The only way is up*, 20 August 2016.

139 Paul Kiernan and Rogerio Jelmayer, 'Brazil's Recession Deepens, GDP shrinks for fifth consecutive quarter', *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 June 2016, < http://www.wsj.com/articles/brazils-recession-deepens-1464786002>

140 Runde, 'After the crisis', *Forbes*.

appeal to foreign audiences for years. Frank Sinatra's 1981 week engagement at the Sun City hotel is but one of many examples testifying to the NP governments' invocation of popular culture to market apartheid to the world. Hailed as a "stunning propaganda coup" for Pretoria, Sinatra's appearance at the resort made South Africa look like "just another country", and therefore a place that other international artists should visit.[141] At the same time, the African National Congress (ANC) also used popular culture as an oppositional tool against Pretoria to support the cultural boycott and generate international solidarity for its cause,[142] particularly through worldwide performances of cultural ensembles showcasing traditional South African arts and culture.

On the surface, these two opposing efforts can easily be dismissed as mere propaganda. But if one considers the conceptual differences between propaganda and cultural diplomacy, a more nuanced view can be presented. The first key difference is *method*. While the ends of propaganda and cultural diplomacy are both political, the latter tends to rely on non-political activities – a flower exhibition or musical performance – to reach its intended audience.[143] The second is *communication*. Propaganda is a 'one-way messaging' process, whereas cultural diplomacy is often shaped by the opinions of its intended audience. The third is *time*. Propaganda is seen as being "dominated by the issues of the day", while cultural diplomacy is generally more "in tune with the medium- to long-term interests of the state".[144]

It is a premise of this discussion that, by taking these conceptual differences into account, several historical examples of cultural diplomacy can be identified amid the broader propaganda war between the NP and ANC. However, an immediate problem arises. Many activities of the ANC in exile remain virtually undocumented. This issue was raised by Ronnie Kasrils, founding member of the ANC's armed wing *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK), in a recent piece published in *The Daily Maverick*, when he states, "As much as there is a growing literature, the history of MK is under-recorded [and] barely exists in the annals of the country's conventional national military historiography", which is still dominated by research on the old establishment.[145] A review of the literature suggests a similar lack of research on the ANC's foreign policy in exile, in particular how the movement used arts and culture to communicate with foreign audiences.[146] Thus, until this situation changes, any analysis of the bureaucratic environment within which certain diplomatic practices were conceived and planned by both oppressor and liberator will mean that there is insufficient

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141 Christopher Connelly, 'Apartheid Rock', *Rolling Stone*, 10 June 10 1982, < http://www.rollingstone.com/music/features/apartheid-rock-19820610>

142 Mike van Graan, 'Beyond Europe: The arts and institutional change in South Africa', *European Journal of Arts Education* Vol. 2, Issue 3, 2000.

143 Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.

144 Jan Melissen, 'The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice', in: Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy.*

145 Ronnie Kasrils, 'Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK): How the armed struggle succeeded', *The Daily Maverick*, 05 December 2016 <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2016-12-05-umkhonto-we-sizwe-mk-how-the-armed-struggle-succeeded/#.WE1dYdV97IU>

146 Shirli Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid: ANC Cultural Groups and the International Anti-Apartheid Struggle', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 2, June 2007.

information to make a proper evaluation of the latter, as is unfortunately the case in the following few pages.

6.1 Branding apartheid

Apartheid was one of the most penetrative and perverted political policies of the 20th century. From 1948 to 1994 the NP-led government systematically, consciously and visibly inflicted severe discrimination and suffering on the majority of the South African population, to the point that by 1966 the UN General Assembly labelled apartheid a "crime against humanity".[147] To justify external support for its racial policies, South Africa mounted a global marketing campaign to influence governments and the general public. Much of the campaign was focused in the US, where the regime ran "one of the most expensive information campaigns in the world"[148] to influence Americans (and by default Western thought).[149]

This campaign was largely run by DIRCO's predecessor, the South African Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), whose overriding goal at the time was the "preservation of a white controlled state" and to "ensure the security, status and legitimacy of [South Africa] within the international community".[150] The specific unit within the department mandated to disseminate propaganda and information was the now-abolished Department of Information, established in 1955. During the mid-1970s, this unit became a standalone government department and, under the leadership of the infamous Eschel Rhoodie, it rapidly overshadowed the DFA's presupposed dominant foreign policy-making position, embarking on a large-scale and secret propaganda offensive, and operating in at least 18 countries by the early 1980s.[151] Rhoodie's questionable ventures, however, came to an abrupt end with the Information Scandal,[152] and in 1980 the information department and its functions were reintegrated into the DFA.[153] From then on, the department became the principal mouthpiece of apartheid, and propaganda was officially acknowledged as a foreign policy tool.[154] In 1983, the internal and external mandates of the information

147 United Nations (UN), *The Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa*, Resolution 2202 A (XXI), 16 December 1966.

148 Rebecca Davis, 'Selling apartheid: new book lays bare South Africa's propaganda war', *The Guardian*, 01 September 2015.

149 Ron Nixon, *Selling Apartheid: South Africa's global propaganda war*, Jacana Media: Johannesburg, June 2015.

150 James Barrber and John Barratt, *South Africa's Foreign Policy: the search for status and security, 1945-1988*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1990.

151 African National Congress (ANC), *Apartheid Propaganda Offensive*, paper presented by the ANC to the Commonwealth Media Workshop on Countering Apartheid Propaganda, held in London on the 20th to the 22nd May, 1985, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 2012.

152 In July 1978, Rhoodie was forced to resign his position as Secretary of Information following a major political scandal involving the Department of Information, which allegedly misappropriated state funds for secret (and supposedly unsanctioned) projects, including the funding of local and international newspapers to challenge the opposition press in South Africa, as well as buy friendly coverage abroad. The scandal, also known as 'Muldergate', was to culminate in the resignation of the Minister of Information, Connie Mulder, and President, B.J. Vorster.

153 Roger Pfister, *Apartheid South Africa and African States: From Pariah to Middle Power 1962-1994*,

154 ANC, *Apartheid Propaganda Offensive*.

unit were separated, with foreign affairs retaining the latter.[155] This new unit eventually oversaw an extensive network of 'independent' bodies tasked to spread apartheid propaganda, which included non-governmental organisations (NGOs), foundations and associations, multi-national companies, and academic think-tanks. Another vital element of the information unit's activities was intelligence support.

Indeed, it is common knowledge that South African intelligence worked alongside and independently of the DFA to promote apartheid. This included, especially from the 1980s, the hiring of lobbying and public relations firms to identify apartheid sympathizers, as well as setting-up a myriad of front organisations in all sectors of society to market South Africa.[156] A case in point is the South African Foundation (SAF). Ostensibly set up by South African business interests, and self-described as the "diplomatic arm of South African business,"[157] the SAF was actually a "major promotor of the campaigns against [South African] sanctions".[158] Like many other similar structures, the sole objective of SAF was to convince the world that the regime was "conducting a legitimate struggle for [its] right to self-determination and independence".[159]

Despite such an orchestrated marketing campaign, the DFA and sister departments found it increasingly difficult to give legitimacy to South Africa's racial policies and promote the country's image abroad. Attempts to shift attention away from the brutal realities of apartheid – the mowing down of students in Soweto, the murder of Steve Biko, and later the state of emergency crackdowns – were instead galvanising international revulsion over apartheid and isolating South Africa even further. Reversing this state of affairs necessitated a rethink. "What Pretoria needed was a more sophisticated and subtle approach – one that did not publicly try to defend the apartheid system", suggest *New York Times* journalist Ron Nixon, who recently wrote a book on apartheid propaganda.[160] One solution came in the form of arts and culture.

Indeed, from the mid-1970s, foreign affairs and other departments oversaw several cultural-diplomatic interventions designed to provide indirect support to South Africa's foreign policy objectives. These include government-sanctioned 'tribal

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155 Marie Muller, 'South Africa The Ministry of Foreign Affairs: From Isolation to Integration to Coherency', in: Brian Hocking, *Foreign Ministries: Change and Adaptation*, Macmillan Press: London, 1999.

156 Other intelligence structures include the Bureau of State Security (BOSS), its two predecessors the Department of National Security and the National Intelligence Service (NIS), and the military's Directorate of Military Intelligence.

157 Richard Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash: South Africa propaganda in the United States*, The Africa Fund, December 1988.

158 During the late 1980s, the SAF maintained a high profile in Washington, its representatives lobbying US congressional and administration offices, testifying at hearings, speaking to business groups and other organisations, distributing literature, and arranging 'fact-finding' trips to South Africa for influential Americans. The SAF also maintained offices in a number of other western countries, including France, the UK and West Germany, and these were often manned by South African ex-diplomats.

159 ANC, *Apartheid Propaganda Offensive*.

160 Sanford J. Ungar, 'South Africa's Lobbyists', *The New York Times*, 13 October 1985; Ron Nixon, *Selling Apartheid: South Africa's global propaganda war*.

musicals', such as *Ipi Tombi* (1975), which effectively celebrated the apartheid status quo to foreign audiences.[161] Similarly, van der Westhuizen explains that, during the height of the 1980s political crises, several films – including possibly *Maloyi* (1978)[162] – were developed by local and foreign production companies acting as front organisations for DFA's information unit "which tended to reinforce tribal identities".[163] Foreign affairs seems to have invested considerable resources into marketing the idea of 'separate development'. For example, between 1987 and 1988, the department reportedly allocated around R30 million (in today's terms, roughly equivalent to R690 million) for "image-building programmes overseas" in the US.[164] Essentially, these programmes aimed at convincing foreign audiences, particularly in North America and Western Europe, that "ethnic separation was necessary for political stability" and to counter the communist threat within and outside its borders.[165] Or put in another way, the white-minority government was the region's upholder of Western culture and values, and a strategic ally of the West.[166] Several examples of these programmes are discussed below.

6.1.1 Chelsea Flower Show (1976–1994)

From 1976 to 1994, DFA's information unit funded and helped organise the Cape Town-based Kirstenbosch botanical gardens to participate in the annual Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show in London, UK. The yearly exhibitions, according to South African researcher Melanie Boehi, were "an exercise of apartheid state image improvement", with South African fynbos wildflowers particularly suited for this purpose due to their strong association to the country's natural beauty and culture.[167] This sentiment is reiterated in a report by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), which suggests that Chelsea was originally conceived as an "image-building initiative" and "diplomatic expansion programme" of the DFA.[168]

According to Boehi, the relationship between the apartheid government and Kirstenbosch was initiated in 1975 by Rhoodie, when he was still the Secretary of Information.[169] Rhoodie ostensibly organised for British flower arranger, Pam

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161 Shirli Gilbert,

162 *Maloyi*, released in 1978, relates the tale of a sophisticated city-born woman who is bewitched by a witchdoctor. She is eventually won over by the mysticism of tribal life and discards her Western lifestyle.

163 Van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania?*

164 Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash.*

165 Van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania?*

166 It is difficult to have an overall estimate of the cost of South Africa's apartheid image-building campaign, given that it extended beyond the regime's official programs, and included the promotional activities of South African business interests. Official estimates put annual spending on the campaign at about $100 million a year, though the true amount might never be known.

167 Melanie Boehi, 'Remembering apartheid's botanical diplomacy at the Chelsea Flower Show', *The Daily Maverick*, 31 May 2016, < http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2016-05-31-remembering-apartheids-botanical-diplomacy-at-the-chelsea-flower-show/#.WEAuPNV97IV>

168 South African National Biodiversity Institute, *Our History at the Chelsea Flower Show*, accessed on 01 December 2016, < http://www.sanbi.org/sites/default/files/documents/documents/sanbi-kirstenbosch-history-chelsea-flower-show.pdf>

169 Between 1972 and 1978, Rhoodie travelled the world as the South African Secretary for Information in an attempt to burnish the image of the NP's white-minority government. He was

Simcock, to fly to Cape Town to meet with officials from foreign affairs,[170] and was hired shortly after by the department to assist Kirstenbosch to design the 'South Africa' flower display at Chelsea. SANBI confirms that Kirstenbosch won 17 Gold Medals at Chelsea, pointing out that, each year, flowers were sourced and dispatched from Kirstenbosch in Cape Town to the South African embassy in London, where embassy staff members, in turn, provided logistical support to set-up the award winning flower stand.[171] Government funding for Chelsea continued until 1994, after which it was replaced by private sponsors.[172]

6.1.2 Foreign student exchange (1985–1994)

In the field of education, there are some feint indications – albeit very faint – that student exchange programmes were held to support South Africa's foreign policy during apartheid. There are two problems that preclude a clear assessment of this issue. First, the likelihood of it being documented in any official or public records database is slim (given South Africa's poor international profile at the time). Second, there is no comprehensive South African data set on the number of enrolments and graduation numbers of foreign students at tertiary institutions before 1994.[173] Despite these obvious limitations, some broad inferences are possible.

Perhaps the clearest indication of an apartheid student exchange programme comes from a 1988 report prepared by The Africa Fund[174] for the former United Nations (UN) Centre Against Apartheid.[175] According to the report, between 1985 and 1990 the director of a US public affairs firm, William 'Bill' A. Keyes, a former policy advisor to US President Ronald Reagan, was hired by the South African embassy in Washington, D.C. to set-up "educational exchanges and scholarships" for an undisclosed amount of black students in South African.[176] Regrettably, further details of this arrangement are not publically available,[177] although it is worth noting that Keyes, today, is extensively involved in education and organising scholarships for African-American students.[178] Nevertheless, several other reports confirm that Keyes

forced to resign in July 1978, following a major political scandal involving the Department of Information, which was allegedly misappropriating state funds for secret projects, including the funding of local and international newspapers to challenge the opposition press in South Africa and buy friendly coverage abroad. The scandal was to culminate in the resignation of Cabinet Minister Dr Connie Mulder and President, B.J. Vorster.

170 Boehi, 'Remembering apartheid's botanical diplomacy'.

171 South African National Biodiversity Institute, *Our History at the Chelsea Flower Show*.

172 Boehi, 'Remembering apartheid's botanical diplomacy'.

173 Nico Cloete, Johann Mouton and Charles Sheppard, *Doctoral Education in South Africa: Policy, Discourse and Data*, African Minds: Cape Town, 2015.

174 The Africa Fund, which operated from 1966 to 2001, was a US non-profit organisation that worked to support struggles against colonialism and apartheid in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

175 Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash*.

176 Here, and throughout the rest of the report, the term 'black' refers collectively to all three of the main groups that the apartheid government sought to officially segregate from the ruling white 'race', namely: Indians (or Asian), Coloured and African 'races'.

177 Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash.*

178 In 2003, Keyes established the Institute for Responsible Citizenship, a non-governmental education body that "selects some of America's best and brightest African American male college students for an intensive two-summer enrichment program in Washington, DC". See: <https://theinstitute.net/>

was Pretoria's "point man" in America,[179] and until 1990 was tasked by the embassy to "promote South Africa's ties with black Americans, particularly those interested in doing business [in South Africa]", as well as to "stop a rising tide of African-American opposition to the South African government".[180] Incidentally, shortly before he was hired, Keyes travelled to South Africa as a guest of the abovementioned SAF, and met with senior officials of the DFA, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Roelof Frederik "Pik" Botha, and his deputy Louis Nel.[181]

The only other clear reference of foreign student training, although perhaps falling more in the ambit of defence diplomacy,[182] is provided in a paper by military education historian, Deon Visser, on the history of the South African Military Academy, based in Saldanha.[183] According to Visser, the Academy, which has provided formative and functional training to South African military officers since 1958, admitted a few 'foreign' students from the former TBVC-countries and several officers from the Swazi Defence Force before 1994.[184] Although it cannot be confirmed if additional foreign students attending the Academy, there is a good chance that this effort was part of the broader apartheid plan to win regional allies, given that the Department of Defence was (and still is) considered a vital component to assist foreign affairs in achieving government's foreign policy objectives.

6.1.3 Red Scorpion (1989)

In the same year that the crude and blatantly obvious pro-apartheid video *The ANC method: violence*[185] was aired in Canada in 1988,[186] another foreign film production linked to the wider propaganda war, but with less obvious ties to Pretoria, was being shot in South Africa-controlled Namibia. The action film, *Red Scorpion*, loosely based on the life of Angolan military leader and South African ally Jonas Savimbi,[187] depicts a Soviet military agent sent to an African country to assassinate an anti-communist rebel leader, only to switch sides and join the group against the Soviets. The production was written, directed and produced by Americans, starring US-based actor Dolph Lundgren (of Rocky IV fame),[188] and defied a US cultural boycott and a 1986 US law that articulated that doing business with South Africa was 'undesirable'

179 Ron Nixon, *Selling Apartheid: South Africa's global propaganda war*.
180 Juan Williams, 'South Africa's Newest Lobbyist is a Black American', *The Washington Post*, 21 November 1985.
181 Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash*
182 See, for example: Anton Du Plessis, 'Defence Diplomacy: conceptual and practical dimensions with specific reference to South Africa', *Strategic Review of Southern Africa,* 2008.
183 Deon Visser, 'Image and identity in military education: A perspective on the South African Military Academy', *Society in Transition*, Vol. 33, No.1, 2002.
184 *Ibid*.
185 The video can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiatefZzi3k>
186 Gerald Caplan, 'Many Canadians suffer from a convenient apartheid amnesia', *The Globe and Mail*, 16 December 2013. Worthington's video includes an interview with the apartheid-era covert operative, Craig Williamson.
187 Jonas Savimbi (3 August 1934 – 22 February 2002) was the military leader of the pro-Western Angolan rebel movement *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA). During apartheid, Savimbi was a key South African ally and a noted anti-Communist.
188 James Brooke, 'South Africa Helps U.S. Film Makers in Namibia with Troops and Trucks', The New York Times, 9 January 1988.

(although not illegal).[189] This was made possible through the film's executive producer, Jack Abramoff, an ardent right-wing supporter and known sympathiser of the apartheid government.[190] South Africa financed *Red Scorpion* through the International Freedom Foundation, a South African-funded front-company where Abramoff served as president from 1986 to 1992.[191] The involvement of DFA's information unit, which by this stage was solely engaged in external operations, is unknown. Nevertheless, the film was shot with the help of the South African Defence Force (SADF), which provided military vehicles and equipment, personnel and military advisors to Abramoff for the production.[192] When the film opened in the US in early 1989, South Africa attempted to keep its links with the film secret. But despite its best efforts, Abramoff's film drew strong protests in the US and was eventually placed on a UN list for having violated the organisation's cultural boycott of South Africa.[193]

6.2 Impact

Without sufficient facts and figures, it is difficult to understand the impact of the abovementioned initiatives, as well as the apartheid's state cultural-diplomatic initiatives in general. Thus, it is perhaps more helpful to recognise that some cultural activities did not always emerge in a vacuum, but were shaped by politics, and they themselves, possibly, each shaped world politics. Quite clearly, the wealth of aid and equipment extended to the US production of *Red Scorpion* stemmed from the South African politics behind the movie's plot. The anti-communist film was a thinly veiled attempt by the regime to create endorsement for its policies and sympathy for its war efforts in Angola. One report claims that the film partly succeeding in this respect, suggesting that it "created significant links for apartheid South Africa with the US" and "offered ways for Pretoria to gain major propaganda opportunities".[194]

South Africa's long-standing participation in the Chelsea flower show created similar opportunities, which, according to Boehi, "allowed the apartheid state to maintain international relationships" and also reassure "white South Africans that they were not completely shunned by the international community".[195] Indeed, it seems unlikely that Rhoodie would have expected foreign affairs to be involved at Chelsea for almost two decades; rather, Kirstenbosch's unforeseen success would have encouraged the

189 This law was the *Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986*, enacted by the US Congress on 29 September 1986. The law imposed sanctions against South Africa and included several preconditions for lifting the sanctions that aimed to end the apartheid system. President Regan publically opposed the bill, calling in "economic warfare", and vetoed the bill in Congress on 26 September 1986. However, a few days later, the US Congress overturned Reagan's veto and approved the bill. This event marked the first time in the 20th century that an American president had a foreign policy veto overridden.

190 Earnie Smith, 'Jack Abramoff, Film Producer', *Tedium*, 07 April 2016, <http://tedium.co/2016/04/07/jack-abramoff-film-producer>

191 Sam Kleiner, 'Apartheid Amnesia: How the GOP conveniently forgot about its role in propping up a white supremacist regime', *Foreign Policy*, 19 July 2013, http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/07/19/apartheid-amnesia/>

192 Brooke, 'South Africa Helps US Film Makers in Namibia with Troops and Trucks'.

193 Leonard, *Apartheid Whitewash.*

194 *Ibid*.

195 Boehi, 'Remembering apartheid's botanical diplomacy'.

department to remain committed to the programme for as long as it served its purpose.

Meanwhile, although the evidence is thin and mostly anecdotal, there is some indication that student exchange initiatives were encouraged by the apartheid government, and were most likely viewed as an insurance policy of sorts. Long obsessed with maintaining its autonomy and survival during its pariah years, South Africa would have done whatever necessary to create some leverage to win the favour of future leaders, both civilian and military. And, of course, Pretoria did manage to hang on, although just barely, to a few low-level friendships in Africa and elsewhere, most notably Malawi, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Israel, although history shows us that these alliances were more about politics and defence, and less about culture.

Ultimately, apartheid's tactical victories in the broader cultural sector paled in comparison to the strategic losses South Africa incurred through its 'diplomacy of isolation'. The NP's propaganda and culture offensive, although conceived and planned like a military campaign, was incapable of countering the extent to which liberation and equality had come to permeate the intellectual, cultural and economic space of many African countries and the rest of the world. International support and solidarity for the liberation movement did not happen by chance, however. If anything, the NP-led offensive was met by an equally, if not more effective, cultural-diplomatic campaign by the ANC to win the hearts and minds of the international community.

6.3 Culture as a 'weapon of struggle'

As previously stated, relatively little has been written on the ANC's overall foreign policy while in exile, given the overall lack of primary sources on the party's international activities at the time. Even less academic consideration has been given to its external propaganda campaign directed at severing the roots of apartheid. What is abundantly clear from the literature, however, is that the ANC, took the international dimension of its struggle very seriously,[196] and building international support was the key factor in the fight against apartheid.[197] Indeed, only a few years after the party was banned in 1960, "the ANC's External Mission…became the most important organ of the ANC".[198] Nowhere, perhaps, is this more evident than in the size of the ANC's diplomatic network developed over the years. For instance, just before the release of former President Nelson Mandela in 1991, a study notes that "South Africa had 29 missions abroad to the ANC's 44," with the latter having representations in key multilateral institutions, such as the UN, the Organisation of Africa Union (OAU) and the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM); South Africa, on the

196 Roger Pfister, 'South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy Towards Africa', *Electronic Journal of Africana Bibliography*, Vol. 6, 2000.

197 Scott Thomas, *The diplomacy of liberation: the foreign relations of the African National Congress since 1960*, Tauris Academic Studies: London, 1995.

198 Vineet Thakur, 'Foreign Policy and its People: Transforming the Apartheid Department of Foreign Affairs', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, Vol. 26, No.3, 2015.

other hand, was suspended from the UN in 1974 and only managed to secure seats in the Atlantic Treaty Powers, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.[199]

From the late 1970s, much of the ANC's diplomatic focus was directed towards seeking recognition as the predominant liberation movement in South Africa, and, at the same time, underlining the party's status as a government-in-waiting.[200] This approach was chiefly informed by the ANC's adoption in 1978 of the Vietnam-inspired *Four Pillars of the Revolution* strategy, which stressed the need for international support/solidarity to win the 'people's war' (the other three pillars being armed struggle, national mobilisation, and establishment of underground structures). According to former President Thabo Mbeki, the main purpose of international solidarity was "the isolation of the apartheid regime" and establishing firm relations in Africa and "throughout the rest of the world."[201]

The diplomatic unit responsible for overseeing the ANC's foreign policy was the Department of International Affairs (DIA). Little is known of this unit beyond a few basic facts. The date of its establishment is unclear, although it was definitely active throughout the 1980s, seeing as it was headed by the late Johnstone 'Johnny' Makhathini from 1983 to 1988,[202] and later by Mbeki from 1989 to 1993.[203] Under their leadership, the DIA ran an extensive network of non-state diplomatic networks throughout world, which included establishing links with governments, international institutions, NGOs, and support groups in practically all major foreign capitals.[204]

Even less is known of the DIA's sister department, the Department of Information and Propaganda (DIP), the ANC's public relations unit, also headed by Mbeki during the 1980s before moving to the DIA following the untimely death of Makhathini in December 1988. In Mark Gevisser's unauthorised (and updated) biography of Mbeki, entitled *A Legacy of Liberation*, it is revealed that Mbeki was "given a clear and unambiguous brief by [ANC President Oliver Reginald] Tambo, namely "[t]o inform people about the ANC, whoever they are…anybody at all, even those we think are suspect".[205] Apart from this small, yet important clue surrounding the purpose of the DIP, its activities – much like those of the DIA – remain largely enigmatic.

This situation creates a dilemma, because without any further context it becomes difficult to confidently suggest that the ANC's broader diplomatic and propaganda activities in exile were directly linked to "an increasingly sophisticated discourse

199 Thakur, 'Foreign Policy and its People'.
200 *Ibid*.
201 Thabo Mbeki, *Celebrating ANC President Oliver Reginald Tambo*, lecture by the Patron of the TMF (Thabo Mbeki Foundation), Thabo Mbeki, on Oliver Tambo, as part of the Celebration of the Centenary of the ANC: University of Fort Hare, 19 October, 2012.
202 South African History, *Johnstone Mfanafuthi Makhathini, ANC's head of the Department of International Affairs*, 3 December 1988, < http://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/johnstone-mfanafuthi-makhathini-ancs-head-department-international-affairs-dies-exile-za>
203 Roger Pfister, 'South Africa's Post-Apartheid Foreign Policy towards Africa'.
204 Thakur, 'Foreign Policy and its People'.
205 Mark Gevisser, *Legacy of Liberation: Thabo Mbeki and the Future of the South African Dream*, Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, UK, 2009.

within the [ANC] movement about culture's role…in external propaganda work".[206] While this role in itself is largely undocumented, the available literature suggests that, from the 1980s, arts and culture occupied a firm place on the ANC's agenda, and that the party intended to use the arts "as a kind of showpiece or slogan" to fight apartheid.[207] This theme was discussed at length in what is hailed as "one of the most important flashpoints in the history of South African art", namely the 1982 Gaborone Culture and Resistance Festival.[208] The festival was arranged under the auspices of the Botswana-based Medu Art Ensemble, "an organisation formally unaffiliated [with the ANC] but whose members were, at least by the early 1980s, largely ANC".[209] John Peffer, a specialist in modern African art and photography, explains in his seminal study *Art and the end of Apartheid* that the stated purpose of the festival was to "examine and propose suggestions for the role of art in the pursuit of a future democratic South Africa".[210]

The important fact to note here is that a formal ANC delegation attended the conference, although in what official capacity is unclear. Nevertheless, the party's representatives are said to have endorsed the festival's proposition that 'art is a weapon of the struggle', despite some reservations expressed within and outside its ranks as to its precise meaning and implications,[211] and also expressed a willingness to "politicise culture in South Africa in order to broaden the struggle against the apartheid state".[212] Thus, the ANC held the view – not unlike its oppressor – that arts and culture could supports its diplomatic efforts. In one of the few studies that investigates how culture came to play a role in the movement's work in exile, Shirli Gilbert, a South African-born musician and historian based in the UK, explains that two of the ANC's "most significant" projects were the Mayibuye and Amandla ensembles.[213] These are discussed in more detail below.

6.3.1 The Mayibuye Cultural Ensemble (1974–1980)

According to Gilbert, an important contributing factor to the ANC's thinking around culture in diaspora was the growing international success of an 'agit-prop'[214] group called the *Mayibuye Cultural Ensemble*. The initial motivation for the group, established in late 1974 by Ronnie Kasrils and fellow ANC activist, Barry Feinberg, was to "integrate artists into the struggle, particularly in the realm of international solidarity" and "raise awareness about apartheid".[215] Mayibuye initially performed in

206 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.
207 Interview with Barbara Masekela, 1993, quoted in: Gilbert, 'Singing against Apartheid'.
208 Eben Lochner, *The Democratisation of Art: Cap as an alternative art space in South Africa*, dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Arts at Rhodes University, 02 June 2011
209 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.
210 John Peffer, *Art and the End of Apartheid: Volume 2*, University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2009.
211 Gilbert explains that one of the slogan's fiercest detractors was Albie Sachs, who in 1989 proposed at an ANC meeting in Lusaka that it be banned.
212 Eben Lochner, *The Democratisation of Art*.
213 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.
214 The term 'agit-prop', derived from 'agitation' and 'propaganda', implies various arts forms, such as stage plays, pamphlets, and motion pictures with an explicitly political message.
215 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.

the UK, but during its approximately five-years of activity it gave almost 200 performances throughout Europe, "securing a reputation as the cultural voice of the ANC".[216] While on tour, Mayibuye was able to consolidate and build new relationships with anti-apartheid group representatives across Europe, as well as participate in "solidarity events with movements with which the ANC had ongoing diplomatic friendships", including those from Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique.[217] Gilbert explains that the ensemble's act, however, was relatively short-lived, due to "membership turnover and the absence of long-term programming" (Kasrils, for example, was relocated from London to Angola to play a commanding role in MK in 1977).[218] Nevertheless, after the 1982 Gaborone arts festival, the ANC appears to have become more strategic in its thinking about the arts, and did not repeat the same mistake with a second group.

6.3.2 The Amandla Cultural Ensemble (1978–1990)

Shortly after Gaborone, the ANC established the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), a move which reportedly intensified interest in culture within the party and also cemented the idea within the ANC's top structures, particularly its National Executive Committee (NEC), of supporting a "more permanent, professional touring ensemble made up of younger activists".[219] Mbeki, who at the time was the head of DIP, reportedly "supported the idea of a permanent cultural group."[220] Critically, this is one of the rare instances in the literature where a clear link exists between DIP and the ANC cultural-diplomatic initiatives. Nevertheless, drawing on the experience of Mayibuye, the NEC put its weight behind a cultural group called the *Amandla Cultural Ensemble*, established by exiled musician Jonas Gwangwa in late 1978 – that is, around the same time the ANC began rolling-out the Four Pillar's strategy among its rank and file. In the first few years of Amandla's existence, performances were limited to the MK training camps in Luanda, Angola. But after Gabarone, Amandla travelled to more than sixty countries around the world – including South America, Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia and the Soviet Union – and became the *de facto* cultural ambassador of the ANC.[221] In one of the group's London performances, ANC President OR Tambo reportedly commented that "it took him 20-years to do what Amandla had done in two hours – to promote South Africa and the struggle for freedom".[222] Of course, when that freedom was finally in reach, especially after the release of Mandela in February 1990, Amandla's *raison d'être* was called into question and the group gradually broke-up.

6.4 Impact

216 *Ibid*.
217 *Ibid*.
218 Shana L. Redmond, *Anthem: Social Movements and the Sound of Solidarity in the African Diaspora*, NYU Press: New York, 2014.
219 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.
220 *Ibid*.
221 *Ibid.*
222 Republic of South Africa, *The Presidency: Presentation of National Orders*, Presidential Guesthouse, Pretoria, 27 April 2011.

Again, the impact of cultural activities like Mayibuye and Amandla are difficult to quantify, and the task is made more difficult without sufficient literature covering the ANC's cultural-diplomatic initiatives in exile. Nonetheless, some broad outcomes can be identified. Firstly, the performances of Mayibuye and Amandla reflect ANC thinking around the interdependency between diplomacy, culture and its external foreign policy while in exile. Secondly, although there were no formal links between the two cultural ensembles, they both shared a common diplomatic objective, namely projecting an image of South Africa that would encourage the international community to lend its political and financial support to end apartheid. Thirdly, Mayibuye and Amandla showed that cultural activities could effectively mobilise international support and awareness for political causes – provided they received sufficient political backing and strategic direction.[223]

7. South Africa: the sleeping soft power giant?

When South Africa emerged from apartheid isolation in 1994, amid great expectations, the new government was confronted with a key dilemma, namely presenting itself as a radical departure from the previous apartheid government.[224] Thus, for obvious symbolic and political reasons, the old regime's foreign policy and culture had to make way for political legitimacy defined by the ANC's vastly different political philosophy, external experience, constituency, and priorities.[225] In foreign affairs, this necessitated a bureaucratic and ideological restructuring. Firstly, two different organisational cultures, the "diplomats of isolation" (the old DFA) and the "diplomats of liberation" (the DIA), were amalgamated into the new DFA, launched in May 1994. Secondly, two sets of normative cultures, the "realism of the old guard" and the "idealism of the ANC", were pitted together.[226] The outcome of this process, apart from important philosophical shifts and many changes in emphasis and priorities – chiefly, exerting South African influence through soft power[227] – was that the cultural diplomacy establishment, of both the old DFA and DIA, was effectively dismantled.[228] Thus, the old guard's notorious information unit was inevitably shutdown, with some of its functions incorporated into a new public diplomacy programme sometime after 1994.[229] But the programme, it would appear, was unable or unwilling to draw lessons from South Africa's early experiences with cultural diplomacy, partly because groups like Amandla, given their origins, did not resonate with the "emerging identity and culture of the new South Africa" nor with the complex process of nation-building,[230] and partly because South Africa, as a

223 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.
224 Gerrit Olivier and Deon Geldenhuys, 'South Africa's Foreign Policy: From Idealism to Pragmatism', *Business and the Contemporary World*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1997.
225 Marie Muller, 'Current developments in South African diplomacy', in: Jovan Kurbalija (ed.), Modern Diplomacy, Academic Training Institute: Malta, 1998.
226 Thakur, 'Foreign Policy and its People'.
227 Chris Landsberg, Chris, and Jo-Ansie van Wyk (Eds.), 'South African Foreign Policy Review', *Africa Institute of South Africa*, Vol.1, 2012.
228 Thakur, 'Foreign Policy and its People'.
229 Republic of South Africa, Department of Foreign Affairs Annual Report 2002/03,
230 Gilbert, 'Singing Against Apartheid'.

whole, lacked a common national identity, important for the effective expansion of soft power.[231]

Of course, another possible reason for the withering away of cultural diplomacy is due to, for lack of a better term, South Africa's 'celebrity diplomacy', that is, relying on the marketing power of anti-apartheid stalwarts such as Kader Asmal, Albie Sachs and, in particular, Nelson Mandela. As Van der Westhuizen explains, the new South Africa "enjoyed a level of international exposure that both evolved and revolved around the personage of Mandela as the quintessential icon of the South African brand".[232] Indeed, the 'honeymoon' phase of Nelson Mandela's presidency, between 1994 and 1999, saw the country move quickly from isolation to integration, wherein it gained significant international credibility, acceptance, and moral identity as a major African player.[233] In this period, not only did soft power become a component of South African foreign policy, "it became the central component", with the new DFA playing a crucial role in "developing a coordinated, coherent soft power strategy".[234]

Fundamental to South Africa's projection of soft power was the DFA's formulation of the aforementioned public diplomacy programme, specifically set-up to manage South Africa's reputation both at home and internationally. This saw the establishment of a Public Diplomacy Unit (PDU) sometime in or after 1994, later upgraded to a full branch around 2011 by order of DIRCO (the DFA's successor).[235] According to DIRCO, the purpose of the branch is to communicate "South Africa's role and position in international relations in the domestic and international arenas".[236] The basic objective, as DIRCO explains, is to "enhance understanding of South Africa's foreign policy among all stakeholders, including national and international audiences".[237] This is primarily achieved through media relations and management, as well as news gathering and analysis.[238]

DIRCO's public diplomacy programme has been the sole bureaucratic structure in the new government dealing with South Africa's application of soft power. While there is little doubt that the programme remains "indispensable in the pursuit of [South Africa's] foreign policy objectives",[239] government public relations alone cannot effectively deal with issues commonly recognised as eroding South Africa's soft

231 Van der Westhuizen, *Beyond Mandelamania?*
232 *Ibid*.
233 Ogunnubi and Amao, 'South Africa's Emerging "Soft Power'
234 Chris Landsberg, Chris, and Jo-Ansie van Wyk (Eds.), 'South African Foreign Policy Review', *Africa Institute of South Africa*, Vol.1, 2012.
235 Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation, 19 October 2011 <http://pmg-assets.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/docs/2011/brrr/111021pcintbrrr.htm>
236 Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.
237 *Ibid*.
238 SC van der Westhuizen, *Foreign policy, public diplomacy and the media: The case of South Africa, with specific reference to the denial of visas to the Dalai Lama*, thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Masters at the University of South Africa (UNISA), 2013.
239 Forward address by Ambassador JM Matjila, Director-General of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation in: Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.

power, including: recurring incidents of xenophobia;[240] regional resistance towards its (perceived self-imposed) hegemonic posture;[241] questions surrounding its international human rights posture;[242] and its unclear posture against its fight against corruption.[243] Counteracting these challenges requires, not only positive media reporting, but also an ability to foster mutual understanding with other states and societies, particularly in times where more 'traditional' forms of diplomacy are strained or absent. Incidentally, this is a view shared by the *National Development Plan* (NDP), which in 2011 proposed that DIRCO should develop "a more sophisticated public diplomacy strategy that encompasses more than a communications function" but also "people-to-people initiatives",[244] the latter, of course, a cornerstone of cultural diplomacy.

This thinking is not new to DIRCO. On the contrary, Graham takes pains to underline that DIRCO in fact "has a comprehensive understanding of the meaning and value of cultural diplomacy," as evidenced by numerous references to the latter by various high-level officials of the department since 2010.[245] And yet, both Graham and Georghiou confirm that the most that South Africa's diplomatic missions abroad tend to organise are their "usual" cultural events, such as music concerts, exhibitions of artwork, food and wine festivals, which typically coincide with national days or anniversaries, and which are often short-term, under-resourced, and uncoordinated with other departments, specifically with DAC.[246]

The apparent lack of urgency on the part of DIRCO to improve the management of cultural diplomacy beyond the point of rhetoric has been a matter of concern to the arts and culture department. According to Graham, DAC has been adamant that cultural diplomacy requires greater cooperation and coordination with DIRCO, and that it should be granted its rightful place among other forms of South African diplomacy.[247] For example, the *Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage*, presented by the DAC in November 2016, recommends that "a joint strategy be developed between DAC and DIRCO for international cultural cooperation and

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240 Oluwaseun Tella and Olusola Ogunnubi, 'Hegemony or survival: South Africa's soft power and the challenge of xenophobia', *Africa Insight*, Vol. 44, No. 33, 2014.

241 Olusola Ogunnubi and Olumuyiwa Babatunde Amao, 'South Africa's Emerging "Soft Power" Influence in Africa and Its Impending Limitations: Will the Giant Be Able to Weather the Storm?', *African Security*, Vol. 9,No. 4, 2016.

242 Lauren Hutton, 'The doldrums of South African foreign policy', *The Daily Maverick*, 03 June 2016, < https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2016-06-03-the-doldrums-of-south-african-foreign-policy/#.WE_5jdV97IU>

243 Adam Wakefield, 'Phosa: South Africa's instability scares away investors', *Mail & Guardian*, 20 May 2015, <http://mg.co.za/article/2015-05-20-south-africas-instability-scares-away-investors-anc-stalwart>

244 Republic of South Africa, *National Development Plan 2030: Our Future-make it work*, National Planning Commission, 2011.

245 According to Graham, the most significant statement by DIRCO on cultural diplomacy was made during the department's annual conference in November 2010, when DIRCO's former deputy minister, Marius Fransman, noted in his keynote address that cultural diplomacy is "about a country projecting its power in the domain of ideas – to influence the idea and outlooks of states…and non-state actors to pursue its national interest and enhance its geopolitical standing". See: Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.

246 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'; Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.

247 Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.

diplomacy in which the respective role of the two departments are clarified".[248] The bill goes on to propose that arts and culture initiatives should be promoted and integrated with strategies "for international cooperation and diplomacy", the latter (presumably) run by DIRCO.[249]

Until now, the call for greater integration seems to have been met with a cool response from South Africa's executive,[250] with DIRCO pouring cold water on the idea of cultural diplomacy in its latest strategic plans and annual reports. Considering the arguments presented in this report, and others like it, it seems to fair to suggest that the current state of affairs is undesirable, and that a change is needed.

While it is true that South Africa already boasts a significant soft power profile, in the form of its cultural and media exports, its highly-rated universities, its ability to host mega-sporting events, as well as a healthy tourism and hospitality sector,[251] many of these activities remain uncoordinated and are the result of individual initiative, rather than strategic policy. Taking a more integrated approach under the rubric of cultural diplomacy, on the other hand, holds enormous potential for South Africa to improve its international image and stimulate its national economy, particularly through the creative industries – the latter recognised as "one of the most rapidly growing sectors of world economy".[252] This argument is also put forward by the NDP, when it states: "Promoted effectively, the creative and cultural industries can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal".[253] In South Africa's case, the creative economy is reported to be making significant strides towards the country's economic transformation,[254] but at the same time faces several challenges impacting on its growth potential. One of these challenges, according to Arts and Culture Minister Nathi Mthethwa, is the "lack of access to markets [outside South Africa]".[255] Clearly, the barriers faced by companies when going international are numerous. But a key ability to conclude commercial agreements, and therefore access new markets, involves a combination of language, cultural awareness and skills to communicate across cultures – skills that South African diplomats appear to lack.[256]

A re-assessment of South Africa's cultural diplomatic capability would also serve to identify areas of untapped potential. Foreign student exchange is a case in point.

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248 DAC, 'Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage: Second Draft', *Republic of South Africa*, November 2016

249 *Ibid*.

250 Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa*.

251 Ogunnubi and Amao, 'South Africa's Emerging "Soft Power'.

252 Republic of South Africa, 'Address by the Minister of Arts and Culture Mr Nathi Mthethwa', *World Economic Forum: Unleashing the Economic Potential of the Sector*, 03 June 2015 < http://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-nathi-mthethwa-world-economic-forum-3-jun-2015-0000>

253 Republic of South Africa, *National Development Plan 2030.*

254 Quantitative information from 2013 indicates that South Africa's creative economy contributed 2.9% to the national GDP and 3.6% to the total employment, with cultural exports valued at $256 million (compared to $171 million in 2004).

255 Republic of South Africa, 'Address by the Minister of Arts and Culture Mr Nathi Mthethwa'.

256 Georghiou, 'Cultural diplomacy'.

South Africa is a major African destination for international students,[257] with roughly 18% of all African students studying abroad enrolled in South African institutions. [258] Yet, only a few government departments – in particular science and technology – make scholarships available to the higher education sector, though these are generally targeted at South African citizens. DIRCO, on the hand, does not offer scholarships for foreign students to South African institutions, and this is arguably a missed opportunity to support South African foreign policy goals. As the discussion has shown, there is an argument to be made that government-funded exchanges could have a profound effect in spreading a positive view of South African culture in general, as well as building appetites for South African cultural products.

With this in mind, the following and final section contains the key findings and recommendations of this discussion document.

8. Culture and South Africa's national interest: key findings and recommendations

- Cultural diplomacy is about promoting a country's culture abroad to advance the national interest and foreign policy objectives. Although it viewed as a subset of public diplomacy, it holds sharp dissimilarities with the latter. Cultural diplomacy is about developing long-term relationships through art, culture and science and implementing programmes such cultural agreements and educational exchanges. Public diplomacy, on the other hand, is more concerned with promoting the national image over the short-term through official communications and public relations programmes. Both concepts, however, are rooted in the International Relations concept of 'soft power' – that is, the ability of one country to persuade the position of another without force or coercion.

- Countries differ widely in their administration of cultural diplomacy. Some countries rely on government agencies and cultural attachés to manage cultural diplomacy programmes, while others rely on non-profit institutions closely associated with the diplomatic service. Agencies are run by a single government department (such as the Institute Français, which falls under the French foreign ministry) or jointly run by two or more government departments (in Brazil's case, its foreign affairs and culture ministries). On the other hand, foreign cultural institutions, such as the British Council, German Goethe the Confucius Institutes, are run with varying degrees of administration and funding links to government. Some of these institutions, in turn, are funded and managed by a single ministry, such as the Confucius

257 Jenny J. Lee and Chika Sehoole, 'Regional, continental, and global mobility to an emerging economy: the case of South Africa', *Higher Education* Vo. 70, No. 5, November 2015.

258 Samantha Spooner, 'South Africa universities winning race for Africa's students', *Mail & Guardian Africa*, 15 September 2014, < http://mgafrica.com/article/2014-09-11-why-south-africas-universities-offer-africas-students-the-best-options-and-the-tricks-they-need-to-know>

programmes which are affiliated with China's education ministry, while others like Alliance Française are predominantly self-funded and are supported by volunteers.

- Cultural diplomacy is undertaken for a range of purposes, including connecting to and/or advancing the interests of specific groups abroad that are important to the state (such as diasporas), and developing bilateral relationships (including economic, political, and diplomatic elements), and helping to maintain these relationships in times of tension. The application of cultural diplomacy to pursue a broad range of national interests is not universal. Different states – powerful and less powerful – tend to focus on different aspects of cultural diplomacy, usually concentrating resources on specific areas aligned to their foreign policy objectives and capabilities. There are also a variety of activities linked the practice of cultural diplomacy, including educational scholarships, cultural exchange programmes, and cultural group performances. A more controversial activity related to cultural diplomacy, but one that is nonetheless undertaken by some states, is to use cultural practitioners to collect information or support other intelligence activities.

- There are plenty examples in history of cultural diplomacy, and why the practice is important for states and international relations. For example, during the Cold War, US cultural-diplomatic initiatives formed the backbone of bilateral relations with the Soviet bloc, which were primarily funded by the CIA, as well as the US Department of States' Division of Cultural Relations. Although intelligence support would be mostly inappropriate and counterproductive today, that history is a useful reminder of how US policymakers considered the promotion of national culture, values and symbols vital to US national security. The impact of US Cold War programmes are significant: (a) broadly speaking, exposure to American culture, especially among elites in Moscow and East Berlin, served to illuminate the inadequacies of the Soviet system, indirectly leading to its eventual collapse in 1989; (b) country recipients of cultural programmes in Central and Eastern Europe programmes gravitated towards the West after the fall of the Berlin Wall; (c) in the post-Cold war era, American culture, together with the English language, has enjoyed tremendous global popularity right into the 21st century, with the US economy being a key benefactor; and (d) many recipients of US education exchange programmes eventually came to occupy high-profile positions in their own countries, with 1,500 becoming cabinet-level ministers, 177 becoming heads of state or government, and countless others holding senior positions in their own government.

- Education exchange during the Cold War was perhaps America's most significant cultural weapon, as it served, over the long-term, to create influential political and social networks abroad, establish and maintain allies, promote trade and business, and ensure US global influence following well into the post-Cold War world. That said, the US ideological victory against the

Soviet system also resulted in a significant reduction of US cultural-diplomatic activities, and the general and systematic watering-down of US soft power. Thus, despite the more recent acknowledgement at the highest levels of government that America is engaged in a 'cultural struggle' against religious extremists, the US since 9/11 has been unable to mount a coherent, large-scale cultural diplomacy effort tailored to contemporary challenges, given that culture has remained a low public-policy priority for the US State Department, which, in turn, has reportedly relied too heavily on the private sector on key aspects of national cultural policy.

- Brazil is one of the few countries that also established a formal cultural diplomacy capability during the Cold War. From the 1960s, the Brazilian foreign ministry oversaw a string of agencies, such as its Cultural Information Department, that planned and implemented various cultural initiatives. However, by the mid-2000s, Brazil's cultural sector faced a set of inter-related problems that were diluting its soft power, including a trade deficit in cultural goods and services, despite Brazil's cultural exuberance and diversity, as well as being the wealthiest nation in Latin America. Brazil's preparations for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games spurred the government to improve its international branding and image, a process that involved reinforcing and re-organising its cultural diplomacy capabilities, including: (a) launching a salvo of cultural-diplomatic initiatives aimed at expanding the international diffusion of Brazilian arts, culture and heritage, as well as boosting the creative economy; (b) increased media coverage and global promotion of Brazil's annual international cultural events, such as the Rio Carnival Festival; (c) drafting of a new strategy for external culture relations lead by the Brazilian culture ministry, in collaboration with the foreign affairs, trade and industry, science and technology, and tourism ministries; and (d) delineating clear roles and responsibilities between ministries, with foreign affairs being the main contact point for the country's cultural institutions and networks abroad. Although results are inconclusive, there are signs that Brazil's revamped cultural diplomacy capacity is having some impact, including a higher demand for Brazilian cultural services (particularly design, new media, and advertising and architecture), significant growth in the creative industry, particularly since 2011, and some gains in terms of employment and value add to Brazil's economy.

- While China's history with cultural diplomacy does not run deep, the selling of Chinese culture to the world has been become a central strategy for the Chinese government to develop its bilateral relations and solidify its rising global position. China's thus represents an important example of how cultural diplomacy is being applied in the modern era, particularly by an emerging global power. Since around 2011, China's cultural policy has undergone major reforms, with an emphasis on building the 'China brand' through a variety of cultural initiatives, and supporting with substantial resources. There are two key reasons for China's cultural reform. The first is economic: a vibrant cultural

sector is viewed by the Chinese government as an alternative source of economic growth and employment. The second is political: China aims to use the cultural sector as a tool of soft power through which to increase its own global influence. The latest economic data suggests that China's cultural reforms are having their intended effect. For example, China is now the leading global exporter of cultural products, and its share is roughly double the size of its nearest competitor, namely the US. Key amongst China's cultural initiatives include increasing the number of Confucius Institutes (which teach Chinese language and culture to foreigners) and Chinese Cultural Centres (which showcase Chinese culture) around the world. In this regard, by 2020, China plans to establish an additional 500 language institutes (from the current 500) and 30 cultural centres (from the current 20). However, China's growing influence and cultural penetration has been met with growing resistance in various parts of the world, with critics pointing out that it is using its cultural and language institutes to, not only promote its political aims, but also to restrict academic freedom and conduct surveillance of Chinese students abroad.

- While the term cultural diplomacy may be new in South African policy, the concept is not. Before 1994, apartheid and anti-apartheid diplomats promoted various cultural activities to seek international support for their respective causes. The old establishment's Department Foreign Affairs (DFA), as well as other government departments, particularly intelligence and defence, oversaw several cultural-diplomatic interventions designed to justify the apartheid policy of 'separate development'. These interventions, including supporting film productions with anti-communist undertones, such as *Red Scorpion*, as well as events showcasing 'South African' culture, such as the Chelsea flower show in London, were designed to convince the world that the white-minority government was the region's upholder of Western culture and values, and a strategic ally of the West. While these interventions appear to have created significant links for the apartheid state, and afforded Pretoria to gain major propaganda opportunities, particularly in the US, the apartheid cultural offensive was incapable of countering the international support and solidarity generated by the African National Congress (ANC) in exile through its own campaign to win the hearts and minds of the international community.

- Although a somewhat undocumented topic, the ANC, particularly after the celebrated Gaborone cultural festival in 1982, made a concerted effort to politicise culture in order to broaden the struggle against the apartheid state. Thus, the ANC held the view – not unlike its oppressor – that arts and culture could supports its diplomatic efforts. Two of the ANC's most significant projects in this regard, were the Mayibuye and Amandla ensembles, which became the cultural ambassadors of the ANC in the late 1970s and 1980s respectively. Their performances had a common diplomatic objective, namely projecting an image of South Africa to encourage international political and financial support to end apartheid. Although both groups were disband before 1994, they

marked an important step in South Africa's experience with cultural diplomacy, given that they reflected ANC thinking around the interdependency between diplomacy, culture and foreign policy.

- One of the outcomes of the amalgamation process in 1994 was that South Africa effectively lost its cultural diplomacy capability. The old guard's notorious information unit was inevitably shutdown, and some of its functions were incorporated into a new public diplomacy programme – essentially a government public relations office – within the 'new' DFA, later upgraded to a full branch by DIRCO in 2011. Those behind the public diplomacy unit appear to have been unable or unwilling to draw lessons from South Africa's pre-1994 experiences with cultural diplomacy, partly because groups like Amandla, given their origins, did not resonate with the emerging culture of the new South Africa nor with the complex process of nation-building, and partly because South Africa, as a whole, lacked a common national identity, important for the effective expansion of soft power. While there is little doubt that DIRCO's pubic diplomacy branch is indispensable to projecting South Africa's image abroad, it cannot effectively deal with issues commonly recognised as eroding South Africa's soft power, such as recurring incidents of xenophobia. Counteracting these challenges requires, not only positive media reporting, but also an ability to foster mutual understanding with other states and societies, particularly in times where more 'traditional' forms of diplomacy are strained or absent, a view, incidentally, shared by the National Development Plan (NDP). Although DIRCO reportedly has a full appreciation of the meaning and value of cultural diplomacy, it has, to date, poured cold water on the idea of coordinating and/or implementing cultural-diplomatic initiatives with other government departments, particularly Arts and Culture (DAC), which is currently leading the drive to establish a South African cultural diplomatic framework. This current state of affairs is problematic, partly because DAC is not mandated to carry out foreign policy, a duty which rests primarily with DIRCO (as well as the South African Presidency), and partly because a government-wide approach under the rubric of cultural diplomacy holds enormous potential for South Africa to improve its international image and stimulate its national economy, particularly through the creative economy.

On the basis of the arguments and findings presented in this report, we reach the following two key recommendations:

- South Africa's application of soft power, while hardly ineffective, could be significantly improved with increased inter-departmental cooperation and institutional capacity for cultural diplomacy, which aims to increase South Africa's role in the world through a variety of culture-related initiatives, such as sponsored educational exchange. South African cultural relations, which continue to flourish and grow organically, should not be confused with the country's cultural diplomacy, which involves employing cultural-diplomatic initiatives in support of the national interest and foreign policy objectives. At

the same time, cultural diplomacy should also not be mistaken for public diplomacy, as the two concepts require different competences, fulfil different objectives and have different timeframes – although, importantly, they should be seen as two separate fields operating in mutually reinforcing ways.

- The effective implementation of cultural diplomacy requires DIRCO, DAC and other relevant government departments to work under a common strategic framework in order to maximise South Africa soft power potential. This framework should be anchored to a commonly-defined national identity, a clearly-defined national interest, and an understanding of South Africa's past experiences with cultural diplomacy, as well as the experiences of other nations, particularly similarly-placed ones, and integrate this collective knowledge with existing foreign policy objectives.