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cultural observatory

Nelson Mandela
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Proposed Policy Framework for Cultural Diplomacy in South Africa

Submitted to the Department of Arts and Culture

MEASURING & VALUING SOUTH AFRICA'S CULTURAL & CREATIVE ECONOMY

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Contents

1. Rational for this report

Within the current field of international relations, there is little dispute that cultural diplomacy is a key diplomatic tool used by governments to advance their national interests. This point was emphasized in particular by the South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) in their recent report entitled, *South Africa: Cultural Diplomacy and the National Interest*. Among the report's key findings is the clear lack of reference to the concept of cultural diplomacy within South African policy, particularly within the diplomatic corps; the report also indicated that current government-wide activities to promote South Africa's image abroad are largely uncoordinated, underfunded and not linked to specific national objectives, including promoting regional stability and attracting foreign investment. In short, without appropriate policy instruments, Government lacks a dedicated in-house capacity to develop long-term relationships with other nations through various arts and culture programmes under the rubric of cultural diplomacy.

Against this background, the purpose of this document is to translate the main findings of the abovementioned SACO baseline report into a government-wide policy framework to advance cultural diplomacy in South Africa. The proposed framework, amongst other things, calls for greater inter-departmental cooperation between key stakeholders – particularly the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) – and increased institutional capacity for implementing cultural programmes abroad that serve to advance South Africa's foreign policy objectives.

2. Cultural diplomacy within the South African policy context: a working definition

The study of cultural diplomacy has successfully established itself as a stand-alone theory and practice. Most policymakers and cultural practitioners around the world agree that the practice of culture penetration is important for states and international relations. Yet, as discussed in the SACO report, there is no standard definition of the term or what it precisely constitutes – primarily because the term "culture" means different things to different organisations and people.

At the theoretical level, various international studies on cultural diplomacy propose different characteristics, use interchanging terms, and often distinguish it from overlapping concepts, such 'public diplomacy', 'foreign cultural policy' and 'international cultural relations'.[1] That said, the *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy* (ICD), an international non-profit organisation that promotes the study of cultural diplomacy, adopts a widely used 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".[2]

In practice, and because the current literature is devoid of a clear-cut definition, governments and other institutions tend to focus on different aspects of cultural diplomacy, usually concentrating resources on specific areas aligned to their foreign policy goals and, of course, the resources available for their implementation. For example, Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs views cultural diplomacy as "an important instrument…to open markets for [the country's] cultural industry [and] to stimulate political and economic dialogue [to] foster mutual understanding [and] respect between nations".[3] This description falls directly in line with one of Brazil's key policy objectives, which is to promote "the

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[1]   These concepts are discussed in more detail in the SACO baseline report on cultural diplomacy.
[2]   See: <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_culturaldiplomacy>
[3]   Brazil Ministry of Foreign Relations, *Cultural Diplomacy*, accessed 30 May 2017, < http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/en/cultural-diplomacy>

dissemination of Brazilian arts and culture…to stimulate cultural cooperation and the teaching of the Portuguese language".[4]

Currently, South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) does not recognise culture diplomacy as a core diplomatic tool and, as such, the term is not used or defined in any DIRCO policy documents. Despite this, in 2010, the former deputy minister of foreign affairs, Marius Fransman, noted 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".[5] Viewed in this way, cultural diplomacy would arguably assist DIRCO in meeting its strategic objectives, including to strengthen and consolidate political and economic relations in Africa and the rest of the world, particularly within the South-South community (i.e. the "African Agenda" and the "Agenda of the South").[6]

Although officials from the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) have loosely defined cultural diplomacy as "the use of culture to further international policy objectives",[7] the DAC *Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* ('*Revised White Paper*') directly draws its understanding of the term from the American scholar Milton C. Cummings, who defines cultural diplomacy as the "peaceful and constructive interaction between different cultures, or the exchange of ideas, information, art, lifestyles, value systems, traditions, beliefs and other aspects of cultures with the intention of fostering mutual understanding".[8] This definition, while useful, does not sufficiently capture the South African international relations landscape.

Nonetheless, DAC's draft proposal does at least provide insights into the policy context within which South Africa should advance its cultural initiatives abroad. For a start, it suggests that South African cultural diplomacy should be "based on the country's unique approach to global issues founded on *Ubuntu* and respect for all nations, peoples and cultures, since it is in South Africa's national interest to promote and support the development of other peoples and societies".[9] The Revised White Paper goes on to explain that South Africa's post-1994 foreign policy is – at least, in theory – "grounded…in the interdependency between culture, diplomacy and international cooperation" in order to "facilitate intercultural communications and understanding [within] the global system."[10] It is also worth noting that the draft document further underlines the domestic impacts of cultural diplomacy, mainly providing "creative skills development and economic opportunities for South African arts, culture and heritage practitioners" operating in the country's cultural and creative industry.[11]

Taking into account the international accepted definitions of cultural diplomacy, and the factors related to international culture promotion in the South African context, the following **working definition** for South African policymakers is proposed:

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4   *Ibid*.
5   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.
6   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020', *Department of International Relations and Cooperation*, 2015.
7   Republic of South Africa, 'Cultural Diplomacy: a pillar of our International Relations', *Department of Arts and Culture (DAC)*, accessed 30 May 2017, <http://www.dac.gov.za/content/cultural-diplomacy-pillar-our-international-relations>
8   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage: Third Draft', *Department of Arts and Culture*, February 2017.
9   *Ibid*.
10   *Ibid*.
11   *Ibid.*

"Cultural diplomacy is a tool of diplomacy which focuses on promoting South Africa's culture abroad to advance the country's trade, political, diplomatic, and socio-economic interests. This is achieved by developing long-term relationships with state and non-state actors through (bilateral and multilateral) arts and culture programmes, such as educational scholarships and cultural agreements, which aim to support foreign policy goals, attract foreign investment, promote the creative economy, and enhance South Africa's regional influence and international standing".

3. Locating cultural diplomacy within legislative and other mandates

At present, cultural diplomacy is not a strategic priority within Government. The concept is not referred to in any piece of legislation, but usually found in policy documents and speeches by government officials.[12] Nonetheless, the following are specific constitutional and legislative mandates, as well as policy directives, that could provide the building blocks and framework for a cultural diplomacy policy in South Africa:

3.1 Constitutional mandate

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996, as amended) is the supreme law of the country. While it does not specifically address cultural diplomacy, Chapter 14, Section 23, of the Constitution provides for "the negotiating and signing of all international agreements", by the national executive. In this regard, Chapter 5 of the Constitution defines the President of South Africa as the Head of State and Head of the National Executive, whose primary responsibility, amongst other things, is to promote the unity of the nation and that which will advance it.[13] This includes conducting inter-state relations and entering into international agreements.[14]

3.2 Legislative mandate

Currently, there is no Act or Bill within the national government that includes the concept of cultural diplomacy. However, an act administered by DIRCO, specifically drafted to support the department's economic diplomacy agenda, but which also has some bearing on the application of cultural diplomacy, is the *African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund Act, 2001* (Act 51 of 2001). The Act establishes the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund (ARF), which aims to enhance cooperation between South Africa and other countries, in particular African countries, through the promotion of democracy, good governance, the prevention and resolution of conflict, socio-economic development and integration, humanitarian assistance and human resource development.[15] Recently, DIRCO notified its intention to replace the Act with the Cabinet-approved Partnership Fund for Development (PFD) as the main legal authority for funding development-cooperation initiatives of the department. The unit that is expected to manage, coordinate and facilitate all South African official outgoing development cooperation programmes and projects is the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA).[16]

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12   Lebogang L Nawa, 'Cultural diplomacy and policy in South Africa', paper presented at *The Second International Cultural Administration Conference*, University of International Business Economy. Beijing, China, 12 July 2014.
13   Republic of South Africa, *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996.
14   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.
15   *Ibid*.
16   *Ibid*.

3.3 Policy directives

At present, there is a single draft bill that deals with cultural diplomacy, namely DAC's Revised White Paper, which, at the time of writing, is yet to be adopted by the Cabinet (the latest draft was published by DAC in February 2017). The DAC introduced the revised bill in 2013, the first time that an updated policy document on arts and culture had been tabled publicly for comment since 1996. The original bill, namely the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* ('ACH White Paper'), which sought to address inequality, poverty and unemployment through culture in the post-1994 era, makes no mention of cultural diplomacy, although there is a particular focus on international cultural exchanges, as articulated in Chapter 6 of the bill. The chapter, entitled 'International Cultural Corporation', calls for South Africa to "maximise opportunities" to develop multilateral cultural relations with Africa and re-integrate South African culture with the continent and beyond.[17]

One of the aims of the Revised White Paper is to endorse "a dynamic approach to cultural diplomacy and international cooperation".[18] In this regard, it recommends that "**a joint strategy be developed between DAC and DIRCO for international cultural cooperation and diplomacy in which the respective role of the two departments are clarified**".[19] The draft bill goes on to propose a list of initiatives for the DAC to develop a cultural diplomacy policy, including "**design, fund and implement a national strategy for international art, culture and heritage cooperation and diplomacy**", ideally in conjunction with officials from DIRCO.[20] In sum, DAC has made it clear that: (i) Government should establish a national policy framework for cultural diplomacy; (ii) implementing cultural diplomacy programmes abroad requires greater cooperation and coordination with DIRCO; and (iii) the concept should be granted its rightful place among other forms of South African diplomacy.

As discussed in the SACO report, there is a clear lack of reference to cultural diplomacy within DIRCO policy, apart from the odd reference to the concept by diplomats at recent events organised by the department. To be fair, DIRCO's 2011 *White Paper on South African Foreign Policy* (DIRCO White Paper) does allude to the sister concept of public diplomacy,[21] which is viewed as "essential to actively project South Africa's image, values and culture both domestically and abroad".[22] The paper also goes on to suggest that "South Africa's greatest asset lies in the power of its example".[23] However, while the department may recognise the importance of culture as a means of creating international goodwill and understanding, other DIRCO policy directives – such as the *Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020*,[24] and 2009 policy directive *Measures and Guidelines for Enhanced Coordination of South Africa's International Engagements* – do not recognise cultural engagement as a core diplomatic tool. Instead, all these documents collectively reaffirm DIRCO's continued reliance on the so-called traditional tools of foreign policy – politics, economics and defence – to conduct its affairs.

Another policy directive worth highlighting for its relevance to cultural diplomacy is the *National Development Plan: Vision 2030* (NDP). The NDP, adopted by Cabinet in 2012, proposes that DIRCO should develop "a more sophisticated public diplomacy strategy that encompasses more than a

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17   Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa.*
18   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage
19   *Ibid*.
20   *Ibid*.
21   The key differences between cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy are highlighted in greater detail in the SAC discussion document on cultural diplomacy.
22   Republic of South Africa, White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy: Building a Better World: the Diplomacy of Ubuntu, Department of International Relations and Cooperation, 13 May 2011
23   *Ibid*
24   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.

communications function" but also "people-to-people initiatives",[25] the latter, of course, being a cornerstone of cultural diplomacy. In other words, the NDP calls for South Africa to enhance its regional image and influence by establishing a dedicated capacity to foster mutual understanding with other states and societies, particularly in times where more 'traditional' forms of diplomacy are strained or absent. Not only should this capacity focus on advancing South African arts and culture abroad, but also contribute toward building a more effective creative industry which, according to the NDP, "can contribute substantially to small business development, job creation, and urban development and renewal" in South Africa.[26]

Although not national government policy, but rather the position of the African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners, a report entitled *African National Congress NGC* 2015: *Discussion Documents*, refers to a "Cultural Diplomacy programme", which seeks to promote South African culture through a variety of organised events, such as music and film festivals.[27] While the ANC's reference to cultural diplomacy in its policy statements is noteworthy, the scope of the programme underlines the general limited appreciation and value of cultural diplomacy by South African policymakers (at least, those operating outside the DAC). Indeed, a key finding of the SACO report was that most of South Africa's diplomatic missions abroad tend to organise 'usual' cultural events – music concerts, exhibitions of artwork, food and wine festivals – which typically coincide with national days or anniversaries; these activities, however, are often short-term, under-resourced, uncoordinated with other departments (specifically with DAC) and, above all, not part of a clear strategy to support South African foreign policy.

4. Proposed policy framework and objectives

In recent years, the idea of a South African cultural diplomacy capability has been floated at lower governmental levels, as well as (directly or indirectly) referred to in specific legislation and policy. Its implementation, however, has been wanting, as evidence by the absence of a strategic policy and/or legal framework to underpin it. This document proposes a broad, non-descriptive protocol for achieving this end:

4.1 Secure policy consensus at executive level

Executive-level consensus is a critical first step to establish any kind of national policy. For cultural diplomacy, this can be secured by designing a business case that should represent a substantiated argument for the value and impact of a South African cultural diplomacy capability. The business case should form the basis of consultation to the executive and enable them to make an informed decision regarding whether to invest in cultural diplomacy, or not. Executive buy-in and support would largely depend on informing decision-makers on the complete portfolio of cultural diplomacy, given that this portfolio is not widely understood within South African policy circles. It should also aim to overturn the traditional view led by some South African diplomats that culture is not the 'real' work of foreign ministries.[28]

In this regard, the business case should highlight the fact that cultural diplomacy is undertaken for a broad range of national interests and involves a wide variety of activities. It should also underline, at the same time, that its application is not universal. As discussed in the SACO report, states do not usually

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

[26]   *Ibid*.

[27]   African National Congress, *African National Congress NGC 2015*: *Discussion Documents*, 2015.

[28]   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.

focus on all aspects of cultural diplomacy, but instead tend to concentrate human capital and resources on specific areas aligned to their foreign policy objectives; furthermore, so-called 'middle-power' countries with comparable national interests to South Africa often rely on cultural diplomatic initiatives to project themselves in their immediate region by shaping long-term attitudes and preferences, and thus attract partners and friends.

Historically speaking, one of cultural diplomacy's more effective instruments – regardless of country or region – has been education exchange programmes. This is because, as has been the case for the United States (US) since the late 1940s, scholarships help to create some leverage to win the favour of future leaders, access their influential political and social networks, and establish and maintain allies. The SACO discussion document highlighted that Government does not currently promote or offer foreign student exchange programmes in South Africa, suggesting that this was a missed opportunity to support long-term foreign policy interests (this issue is discussed in more detail in section 4.5).

4.2 Formalise interdepartmental cooperation

Cultural diplomacy is a multi-faceted and multi-layered foreign policy tool, often involving more than one department, level of government or non-governmental agency. Thus, from a policy perspective, its core issues are cross-cutting. As such, steps should be taken to formalise interdepartmental cooperation for cultural diplomacy in order to regulate the relationship between, and respective roles of relevant Government departments. In South Africa's case, cultural diplomacy functions clearly resonate strongly within two specific departments, namely DAC and DIRCO.

Regardless of the model choice for interdepartmental cooperation – whether by means of a memorandum of understanding (MoU), white paper and/or act – the resulting agreement would need to address two factors. Firstly, the relationship between different cultural diplomacy role-players should be managed and guided under the constitutional principal of cooperative governance and intergovernmental relations, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the Constitution, as well as the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (Act 13 of 2005), which regulates and facilitates the conduct of intergovernmental relations and policy direction between different departments. Secondly, DIRCO would need to play a leading role in promoting cultural diplomacy initiatives outside the country, given that the department, by Constitution, is the only national department mandated to carry out foreign policy, as well as sign agreements between Government and international parties. But, as highlighted in the SACO report, DIRCO has remained non-committal on the matter, despite recent calls made by some officials within the department for greater cooperation on cultural diplomacy. This effectively implies that DAC, for a number of years, has been acting alone to establish a South African cultural diplomatic framework in Government, which possibly explains why the concept has yet to capture the full imagination of the executive branch.

4.3 Develop new or revised policy

A common policy framework for action on cultural diplomacy, located at either the legislative or policy level, is required to move the concept beyond the point of rhetoric in South Africa. A high-level scan and analysis of the policy and legislative environment impacting on cultural diplomacy, as completed above, suggests that key role players have not fully explored and tabled the key issues regarding the promotion of South African culture abroad to support the national interest, and neither have they sufficiently highlighted where and how this capability can assist Government in achieving specific strategic objectives. In some cases, relevant policy is completing lacking, in particular a cultural policy within the diplomatic corps.

This situation, arguably, requires a re-think of existing policy in order to maximise South Africa's soft power potential. In this regard, the SACO report recommended that a South African cultural diplomacy policy should be informed by, and anchored to: (i) a commonly-defined national identity; (ii) a clearly-defined national interest; and (iii) an understanding of South Africa's past and present experiences with cultural diplomacy, as well as the experiences of other nations, particularly similarly-placed ones. This collective knowledge, in turn, could form the basis for an entirely new, standalone policy on cultural diplomacy or used to update existing policy directives.

Ideally, this should be a collaborative process, led by DAC and DIRCO, and with additional inputs made from other relevant departments, including tourism, science and technology, and trade and industry. This will not be an easy process for a number of reasons. First, both DAC and DIRCO occupy South Africa's international affairs space, which arguably has caused tensions between the two departments. Secondly, bringing officials with complementary areas of expertise, generating and refining ideas, and writing and revising policy drafts often leads to a host of difficulties. For example, specific conclusions may be deliberately obstructed by one department when some inputs are perceived to be inconsistent with its own policies. Thirdly, there is a possibility that DIRCO could 'hijack' the policy-making role for cultural diplomacy, seeing as it has tendency to "formulate foreign policy in isolation without taking into account the needs and interest of the various South African stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society";[29] lastly, the diplomatic corps has a weak understanding of cultural diplomacy: not only do diplomats narrowly conceive the concept as merely comprising touring artists, film festivals, and food and wine festivals, but they also lack the technical knowledge on how cultural programmes would be implemented to a target audience.

The abovementioned challenges could be overcome if all relevant stakeholders become more in tune with the strategic and practical needs of cultural diplomacy. In this regard, an inter-departmental consultative conference on cultural diplomacy would be a useful mechanism to collect and share information on the concept, and may be the starting point to develop a hybrid policy on cultural diplomacy. Ultimately, this policy should offer an alternative approach to the traditional conduct of foreign affairs, one which focuses on the dissemination of South African culture, values and ideals that serves to enhance the country's influence and image abroad, promote the creative economy, and effectively further the wider philosophy of *Ubuntu* on which South African foreign policy is rooted.[30]

4.4 Establish an appropriate institutional platform

A new or revised South African policy on cultural diplomacy would need to look into the institutional arrangements of the various stakeholders, both in and outside Government. Currently, there is no body within Government specifically assigned to develop and implement cultural diplomacy policy and programmes, although certain function are arguably submerged into the operations of units housed at both DAC and DIRCO.

On one hand, DAC runs a Chief Directorate: International Relations, which deals with various cultural aspects pertaining to the country's foreign relations, principally international cultural cooperation. At this stage, the directorate lacks a coherent policy on cultural diplomacy, as well as staff dedicated to managing relevant programmes. Furthermore, although DAC was responsible for establishing SACO, a national research centre hosted by Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the centre is principally

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[29] This particular concern was raised in a research paper compiled by the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA) which explains the rationale for the establishment of the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA). See: Nelson A. Besharati, *South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA): Strategic Aid or Development Packages for Africa?*, SAIIA, August 2003.

[30] Republic of South Africa, 'White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy'.

involved in disseminating policy-relevant research on cultural diplomacy[31], and not implementing policy and programmes at the operational level.

On the other hand, DIRCO has put into place a Chief Directorate: Public Diplomacy, which is tasked to communicate "South Africa's role and position in international relations in the domestic and international arenas" and "enhance understanding of South Africa's foreign policy among all stakeholders, including national and international audiences".[32] Again, while DIRCO's public diplomacy directorate is one of few bureaucratic structures dealing with South Africa's application of soft power, the directorate is chiefly involved in media and public relations, as well as news gathering and analysis,[33] and not in projecting South African culture abroad to support foreign policy objectives.

In considering these challenges, the SACO discussion document identified key international trends in implementing cultural diplomacy against which to examine South Africa's approach. The report highlighted, first of all, that many countries are extremely active in marketing their culture and language worldwide through formal cultural institutions and networks. The SACO report went further, explaining that countries differ widely in their administration and funding of cultural diplomacy. In this regard, cultural diplomacy units are either 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, which in Brazil's case are the foreign affairs and culture ministries; either way, the main contact point for national cultural institutions abroad, including a country's embassies, general consulates, and cultural networks and centres, is usually foreign affairs. In some cases, cultural diplomacy units are also run by non-profit entities with varying degrees of administration and funding links to government. These include the British Council, Japan Foundation, German Goethe Institut, Alliance Française, and the Confucius Institutes. These bodies, in turn, are often linked (i.e. funded and/or 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 supported by volunteers. In short, there are various institutional arrangements that can be adopted for cultural diplomacy.

For South Africa, this means that key implementing agencies would need to decide what bureaucratic framework can best advance South Africa's cultural diplomacy agenda, including establishing physical outposts – i.e. cultural centres, libraries, and so forth – abroad to promote South African culture in key geo-strategic regions. Although spread among two units based in DAC and DIRCO, ultimate responsibility for international work in culture, like other aspects of South African foreign policy, would rest with DIRCO. Given the latter's record with cultural diplomacy, any new or reworked policy framework will require a stronger a commitment on the part of DIRCO. In practice, this would mean elevating cultural diplomacy to a more strategic position in its foreign policy toolkit and giving it equal standing to public diplomacy and other forms of soft power. This does not necessarily imply setting-up a new bureaucratic structure for cultural diplomacy within the department, but possibly expanding the portfolio of its existing public diplomacy directorate,[34] and also relying on its vast network of embassies around the world to provide the space for having potential cultural practitioners on the ground closely monitoring projects in different countries.

4.5 Develop policy objectives and instruments

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[31]   See: <https://www.southafricanculturalobservatory.co.za/about-us>

[32]   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.

[33]   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.

[34]   As noted in the SACO report, cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy 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.

Cultural diplomacy seeks to achieve a wide range of objectives, specific to a country's foreign policy goals. As highlighted in the SACO discussion document, these objectives usually include:

■ advancing trade, political, diplomatic, and economic interests;

■ creating mutual understanding and building stronger relationships through arts and culture programmes (and maintaining these relationships in times of diplomatic tension);

■ connecting to and advancing the interests of specific groups abroad that are important to the state (such as diasporas); and

■ raising a state's international image by promoting its culture, values and ideals.

These objectives, in turn, are pursued through a variety of instruments/programmes/activities, including:

■ cultural and educational exchange programmes/scholarships;

■ cultural group performances, artist performances and exhibitions;

■ seminars and conferences, and support for festivals and concerts abroad;

■ 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; and

■ support for cultural activities of other countries held 'at home'.

Many of the above-listed activities are not new to DAC, but these have been predominantly organised under the banner of international cultural relations (which tends to expand organically) and not cultural diplomacy (which is more actively involved in purposefully *creating* relationships in order to promote the natural flow of exchange and human-interaction). Thus, the key question is: what cultural diplomacy policy goals and instruments would enable South Africa to be in the best position to achieve its foreign policy goals?

According to the Director-General of DIRCO, Ambassador Jerry M. Matjila, "the creation and maintenance of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Africa remains the thrust of [the department's] foreign policy".[35] Until now, DIRCO has focused on promoting two soft power capabilities to attain this goal. The first is 'celebrity diplomacy' i.e. relying on the marketing power of anti-apartheid stalwarts, particularly Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, to enhance South Africa's international credibility, acceptance, and moral identity. The second is the aforementioned public diplomacy programme, which manages South Africa's reputation through public relations.

While these two initiatives have been indispensable to pursuing South Africa's foreign policy objectives, the reality is that South Africa's (fading) anti-apartheid image and positive media reporting alone cannot effectively deal with issues eroding the country's soft power. The SACO report identified these as: recurring incidents of xenophobia; regional resistance towards South Africa's (perceived self-imposed) hegemonic posture; questions surrounding Government's international human rights posture; and also Government's unclear posture against the fight against corruption (and more recently, against the

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[35]   Republic of South Africa, 'Revised Strategic Plan 2015-2020'.

expanding power of private wealth over the political system). In order to more effectively counter these challenges, the SACO report went on to propose that short-term public diplomacy efforts should be supplemented with longer-term cultural diplomacy programmes, the latter relying on cultural exchange to achieve its intended goals. Using the working definition that has been advanced of what constitutes cultural diplomacy in the South African policy context, these goals can be presented as follows:

■ promoting South Africa's culture abroad to advance the country's trade, political, diplomatic, and socio-economic interests;

■ developing long-term relationships with state and non-state actors through an array of bilateral and multilateral arts and culture programmes;

■ attracting foreign investment and promoting the growth of the creative economy; and

■ enhancing South Africa's regional influence and international standing.

Furthermore, as indicated above, South African policy-makers have an array of cultural diplomacy instruments to choose from. Apart from the possibility of reshaping existing government-sponsored cultural activities (art exhibitions, film festivals, conferences, and so forth) to support South African diplomatic initiatives, a real-world cultural diplomacy policy ought to take into account the considerable impact of educational exchange on regional and international sentiments toward South Africa.

Indeed, the SACO report underlined that influential states – both powerful, and less powerful – have for years perceived international students as a net contribution to their national economy. This is because some sponsored students eventually occupy high-profile positions in their native countries; over time, they tend to inherently gravitate towards a host country that was 'generous' enough to sponsor them a tertiary degree or other advanced qualification; and so, having been exposed to a particular language and culture, they might instinctively direct business opportunities towards that host country, and are more likely to actively support the latter's foreign policy, regardless if it is perceived as 'right' or 'wrong' by the rest of the international community.

While the idea of providing scholarships and grants to foreign students in South Africa holds enormous potential, the reality is that government-sponsored education exchange is not encouraged for foreign students at South African institutions – this despite the fact that, for several years, South Africa has been a major hub for African students and academics alike.[36] While some departments – including DAC and Science and Technology – make scholarships available to the higher education sector, these are generally targeted at South African citizens.[37]

There is another serous challenge, namely that fewer African students have been enrolling at South Africa universities in recent years due to ongoing fears of xenophobia attacks.[38] Clearly, there would be little point in establishing an education exchange programme if South Africa struggles to attract sufficient numbers of African students because of divisive, anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric. This problem can be approached, in part, by improving South Africa's image through cultural programming that fosters dialogue, and that promotes knowledge about South African culture in targeted African

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[36]   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>

[37]   For example, DAC, in partnership with SACO, offers scholarships for post-graduate studies to South African students at South African universities

[38]   Carien du Plessis, 'Xenophobia fears: 'Fewer African students enrolling at SA universities', *News24*, 9 June 2017, <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/xenophobia-fears-fewer-african-students-enrolling-at-sa-universities-20170608>

states.[39] Significantly, this approach would assume a depth of dialogue that extends beyond press releases, favourable media coverage, and websites – that is, far beyond public diplomacy.

Aside from this, Government should seriously explore the option of establishing and managing some sort of coordinated bursary scheme for international students. The proposed scheme, which could fall under the auspices of one or more national departments and/or national research institutes, should seek to: (i) identify and sponsor Africa's future leaders and serve to prepare them for the leadership roles they are likely to inherit, in both government and business; and (ii) provide a (comparatively inexpensive) platform in which to spread a positive view of South Africa and build appetites for South African products in general. Incidentally, the task of identifying high-potential talent could be supported by research and assessment tools already available to Government, including SACO's cultural diplomacy country briefs and similar briefs prepared by DIRCO's Policy, Research and Analysis Unit. These social science tools, furthermore, could be supplemented with data-oriented processes for identifying leadership potential, examples of which are typically found in the private sector.

Another instrument of cultural diplomacy that policy-makers should look into, and which South Africa currently lacks, is the establishment of cultural centres in strategic regions around the world. Arguably, the absence of permanent institutions, which can offer a range of literature, exhibits, films, speakers, and discussions, and staffed by trained cultural officers, presents a lost opportunity for South Africa to promote its culture abroad. Establishing physical outposts for cultural and public diplomacy is a common approach pursued by both powerful states, such as France and China, and emerging countries, including Brazil and Nigeria, which seek to exert their global and regional influence respectively. In the case of Nigeria, its government has ostensibly opened-up cultural and information centres in both China and Brazil, and in 2013 there were plans to establish the first Nigerian cultural centre in Africa based in Johannesburg, which was intended to "complement the operations of the Nigerian High Commission" in South Africa.[40] According to senior Nigerian officials, the main purpose of these centres is to:

- promote Nigerian culture abroad and provide general information about the country;

- strengthen international cultural relations with governments and making inroads into targeted societies to win 'hearts and minds'; and

- strengthen bilateral relations and trade with countries of geo-strategic interest to Nigeria.[41]

Leading international practice suggests that countries like Nigeria are increasingly establishing cultural diplomacy centres abroad to support their foreign policy, and there is no reason why South Africa should not follow suit. The suggested cultural centres could be arrayed under several different rubrics, either falling directly under DIRCO, DAC, or (preferably) under both departments – or, possibly, falling outside the supervision of Government as independent, non-profit institutions.

Keeping in mind that there is no international consensus on the best framework for implementation, the final model in South Africa will be ultimately shaped by the strategic priorities of Government and various key stakeholders. Either way, it is suggested that national research bodies, particularly SACO, could provide a policy advisory capacity, as well as regular research and development inputs, into the proposed cultural and information centres.[42] Furthermore, the latter could also work in partnership with

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

[40]   Taiwo Oladokun, 'Nigeria's Culture House opens in South Africa', *The Nation*, 10 April 2013, < http://thenationonlineng.net/nigerias-culture-house-opens-in-south-africa/>

[41]   *Ibid*.

[42]   Graham, *Towards a Cultural Diplomacy for South Africa.*

DIRCO's proposed development cooperation unit, the SADPA, to further meet the department's strategic objectives.

5. Conclusion: envisaged policy framework for cultural diplomacy

As this report has attempted to show, many countries around the world implement cultural diplomacy to build long-term relationships with state and non-state actors based on common values, project the national brand, enhance the flow of global relations and commerce, and stimulate the growth of their national creative economies. These countries, moreover, tend to view their culture and language as a valuable public good and do not hesitate to invoke culture as an integrated negotiating tool in trade-related aspects of international relations.

South Africa currently lacks a coherent policy on cultural diplomacy. For many years, it has essential relied on government-sponsored public relations – i.e. public diplomacy – to project a more positive image of the country in Africa and beyond. But this approach is insufficient to deal with challenges currently eroding South Africa's soft power footprint in the region, including xenophobia and corruption. On the other hand, a government-wide cultural diplomacy policy – focused on the growth in the reach of South African culture and trade of its cultural products abroad – holds enormous potential for the country to support its foreign policy objectives. This strategy should be more than a technical instrument or 'optional-extra' of South African foreign policy. Rather, it should become part of the very fabric of its international relations.

Thus, the range of policy strategies and instruments that have been proposed in this report are an attempt to form a consolidated government position on cultural diplomacy that would serve to advance South Africa's national interests in the medium to long term. As in other similarly-placed countries, cultural diplomacy can make a significant contribution to South Africa's application of soft power. In this regard, the report has indicated that the proposed framework will require various stakeholders – particularly DAC and DIRCO – to cooperate together more formally and integrate their existing capacities for cultural diplomacy more closely. However, without increased inter-departmental cooperation, as well as buy-in from the executive branch, the proposed framework will simply not work.

With this in mind, tabled below is a summary of the proposed policy framework that Government should consider to advance cultural diplomacy in South Africa:

Table 1: proposed cultural diplomacy policy framework

Policy objective	Policy instrument	Policy impact/outcome
Executive buy-in	Business case detailing the scope, value and impact of cultural diplomacy for South Africa	Executive approval for the development of a government-wide cultural diplomacy policy and capability
Inter-departmental cooperation	Consultative stakeholder conference	Common understanding of cultural diplomacy

Increased buy-in from DIRCO for cultural diplomacy |

Policy objective	Policy instrument	Policy impact/outcome
		Roadmap towards an inter-departmental policy and specific implementation plan for cultural diplomacy
Policy consolidation	MoU, White Paper or any other form of official agreement to formalise inter-departmental cooperation for, and common policy position on, cultural diplomacy	Develop common policy position on cultural diplomacy under leadership of DAC, DIRCO, or both departments Determine which national department is, or which departments are, ultimately responsible for coordinating cultural diplomacy initiatives abroad
Policy development	Draft a new, government-wide policy on cultural diplomacy Alternatively, revise existing policy directives and legislative mandate relating to cultural diplomacy	Explore and table key issues on how culture penetration abroad can support South African national interests and foreign policy Agreement on where and how cultural diplomacy capability can assist DIRCO and DAC in achieving specific strategic objectives

Policy objective	Policy instrument	Policy impact/outcome
Institutional arrangements	Establish a dedicated unit for cultural diplomacy falling directly under DIRCO, DAC, or under the supervision of both departments	Establish a bureaucratic framework that can best advance South Africa's cultural diplomacy agenda abroad
	Alternatively, increase inter-agency cooperation between, and expand portfolio of, DAC's International Relations Chief Directorate and DIRCO's Public Diplomacy Chief Directorate	Elevate cultural diplomacy to a more strategic position in DIRCO's foreign policy toolkit and give it equal standing to other forms of diplomacy
	In both instances, develop suitable capabilities (including coordination, project management, finance, technical expertise), as well as staff requirements and training for implementing cultural diplomacy programmes abroad	
Policy instruments	Re-formulate existing cultural programmes abroad – including cultural performances, artistic performances, seminars and conferences, festivals and concerts – to coincide with South African diplomatic efforts and support foreign policy objectives	Promote South Africa's culture abroad to advance the country's trade, political, diplomatic, and socio-economic interests
		Develop long-term relationships with countries and ensure culture penetration with societies through an array of arts and culture programmes
	Cultural and educational exchange programmes/scholarships	Improve South Africa's image through education exchange that fosters dialogue, and that promotes knowledge about South African culture in targeted countries
		Identify and sponsor future leaders in Africa and prepare them for their future leadership roles (in government and business) through scholarships, grants, and/or bursaries

Policy objective	Policy instrument	Policy impact/outcome
		Win the favour of future leaders, access their influential political and social networks, and establish and maintain allies
		Promote South Africa's culture abroad to advance the country's trade, political, diplomatic, and socio-economic interests.
		Attract foreign investment and boost the growth of the creative sector
		Enhance South Africa's regional influence and international standing
	Set-up and operate cultural and information centres abroad	Improve South Africa's image through cultural programmes and activities that foster dialogue and that promote knowledge about South African culture in regions of geo-strategic importance to the country
		Promote South Africa's culture abroad to advance the country's trade, political, diplomatic, and socio-economic interests
		Identify and access influential political, economic and social networks that could potentially boost foreign investment to South Africa
		Enhance South Africa's regional influence and international standing
		Support regional diplomatic efforts, particularly in times of tension

Policy objective	Policy instrument	Policy impact/outcome
Consolidated and integrated Cultural Diplomacy interventions	Consolidated Country Briefs supported by detailed Transversal Cultural Diplomacy Implementation Plans	Consolidated, shared understand of country and strategy/Specific implementation plan