



The National Identity



Passport of Patriotism

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MINISTER'S FOREWORD



In 1994, South Africa embarked on a transformative journey to build an inclusive, democratic, and prosperous nation. Guided by our progressive Constitution and powerful national symbols, we continue to strive for unity in diversity.

Thirty years into freedom, a new chapter begins. This is a fitting time to reflect on what unites us as South Africans. Our national symbols, chosen through a truly representative process in 1994, are powerful expressions of our shared values and aspirations. The flag, coat of arms, and anthem are more than just emblems; they embody our commitment to a brighter future, together. The recent elections underscored the importance of collaboration, and studying our symbols can strengthen this sense of shared purpose.

This booklet delves into the essential symbols that define our South African identity, fostering national pride and a deeper understanding of who we are. We will explore:

- The Constitution: The bedrock of our democracy, guaranteeing fundamental rights for all.
- The National Flag: Unveiling the story behind its colours, design, and symbolism.

- The National Anthem: A powerful reminder of our connection to Africa and our shared destiny.
- Our National Fauna and Flora: Our living heritage consisting of plants and animals, a reminder of our unique natural gifts that we should care for and be proud of.

Our national symbols provide a foundation for our collective identity that goes beyond sports and cultural passions. They represent core values, such as unity in diversity, and our shared goals for a thriving nation. Singing the anthem or raising the flag evokes a powerful sense of belonging, strengthening our social fabric.

This booklet is an invitation for all South Africans to learn more about our national symbols, their history, and proper use. Let's celebrate our motto, "IKE E: /XARRA //KE" (Diverse people unite!), by embracing the symbols that embody this very spirit!



Mr Gayton McKenzie, MP
Minister of Sport, Arts & Culture

OUR CONSTITUTION

The Constitution was drafted in terms of Chapter 5 of the interim Constitution (Act 200 of 1993) and was first adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996. It was signed into law on 10 December 1996.

The process of drafting the Constitution involved many South Africans in the largest public participation programme ever carried out in South Africa.

After nearly two years of intensive consultations, political parties represented in the Constitutional Assembly negotiated the formulations contained in the text, which are an integration of ideas from ordinary citizens, civil society and political parties represented in and outside of the Constitutional Assembly.

This Constitution represents the collective wisdom of the South African people and has been arrived at by general agreement.

To this extent, the Preamble of the Contitution encapsulates the dreams and aspirations of the people of South Africa.

The Preamble of our Constitution

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom
in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our
country; and Believe that South Africa belongs to all who
live in it, united in our diversity.

We therefore, through our freely elected representatives,
adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic
so as to:

Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based
on democratic values, social justice and fundamental
human rights;

Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in
which government is based on the will of the people and
every citizen is equally protected by law;

Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the
potential of each person; and

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its
rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

May God protect our people.

Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika. Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso.

God seën Suid-Afrika. God bless South Africa.

Mudzimu fhatutshedza Afurika. Hosi katekisa Afrika.

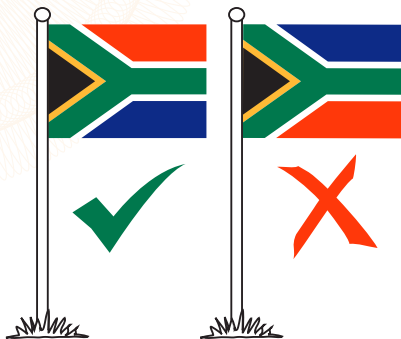
The National Flag



The National Flag of the Republic of South Africa was taken into use on 27 April 1994.

The unique central design of the flag, which begins as a “V” at the flag-post and comes together in the centre of the flag, extending further as a single horizontal band to the outer edge of the fly, can be seen as representing the convergence of diverse elements in South African society, which then take the road ahead in unison. This idea also links up with the motto of the new National Coat of Arms, namely !ke e: /xarra //ke, in the language of the /Xam San people, which literally means “diverse people unite”.

- The Flag must not touch the floor or the ground.
- The Flag must be not used as a tablecloth or be draped in front of a platform.
- The Flag must not be used to cover a statue, plaque, cornerstone, etc. at unveiling or similar ceremonies.
- The Flag must not be used to start or finish any competition, race or similar event



When the flag is hoisted on a flagpole, the red band must be the uppermost and the black triangle must be on the side of the pole or hoist.

When it is displayed horizontally against a wall, the hoist should be to the left of the spectator and the red band uppermost.

When the National Flag is displayed vertically against a wall, the red band should be to the left of the spectator with the hoist or the cord seam uppermost.



THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika
(God Bless Africa)
Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo,
(Raise high Her glory)
Yizwa imithandazo yethu,
(Hear our Prayers)
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo.
(God bless us, we her children)

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso,
(God protect our nation)
O fedise dintwa le matshwenyeho,
(End all wars and tribulations)
O se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso,
(Protect us, protect our nation)
Setjhaba sa South Afrika - South Afrika
(Our nation South Africa - South Africa)

Uit die blou van onse hemel,
(Ringing out from our blue heavens)
Uit die diepte van ons see,
(From the depth of our seas)
Oor ons ewige gebergtes,
(Over our everlasting mountains)
Waar die kranse antwoord gee,
(Where the echoing crags resound)

Sounds the call to come together,
And united we shall stand,
Let us live and strive for freedom,
In South Africa our land.

Remember,
all should stand to
attention with their hands
placed at their sides while
singing the National
Anthem.



History of the National Anthem:

The National Anthem was proclaimed in 1997. It is a shortened, combined version of two anthems ('Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika' and 'The Call of South Africa'/'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika'); sung between 1994 and 1997. It is unique in that it is sung in five languages.

'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika' was composed in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga, a Methodist mission schoolteacher. The poet Samuel Mqhayi later added seven additional stanzas in isiXhosa. A Sesotho version was published by Moses Mphahlele in 1942. 'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika' became a popular church hymn that was later adopted as an anthem at political meetings and was sung as an act of defiance during the apartheid years.

'Die Stem van Suid-Afrika' is a poem written by CJ Langenhoven in May 1918, with music composed in 1921 by the Reverend ML de Villiers. It was first sung publicly at the official hoisting of the national flag in Cape Town on 31 May 1928. It was not until 2 May 1957 that government pronounced Die Stem as the official national anthem of South Africa. In 1952, the official English version, 'The Call of South Africa', was accepted for official use.

PROTOCOL ON RESPECTING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

- The National Anthem should be recited with appropriate respect.
- All should stand to attention with their hands placed at their sides while singing the National Anthem.
- Male civilians should take their hats off when singing the Anthem.



The National Coat of Arms

The National Coat of Arms is the highest symbol of the State. The Coat of Arms was launched on Freedom Day, 27 April 2000. A central image of the Coat of Arms is the well known secretary bird with its uplifted wings.

Symbolism of the Coat of Arms

Above the bird is the rising sun, a force that gives life while representing the flight of darkness and the triumph of discovery, knowledge and understanding of things that have been hidden, and illuminating the new life that is coming into being.

Below the bird is the protea, an indigenous flower of South Africa, which represents beauty, the aesthetic harmony of all its cultures, and South Africa flowering as a nation. The ears of wheat are emblems of the fertility of the land. The elephant tusks symbolise wisdom, steadfastness and strength.

At the centre stands a shield, which signifies the protection of South Africans from one generation to the next. Above it is a spear and a knobkierie. Together, they assert the defence of peace rather than a posture of war. This shield of peace, which also brings to mind an African drum, conveys the message of a people imbued with a love of culture.

Contained within the shield are some of the earliest representations of humanity in the world. Those depicted were the very first inhabitants of the land, namely the Khoisan people. These figures are derived from images on the Linton Stone, a world-famous example of South African rock art.

The motto - !KE E: /XARRA //KE, written in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people, means 'diverse people unite'.

The Provincial Coats of Arms



Eastern Cape



Free State



Gauteng



KwaZulu Natal



Limpopo



Mpumalanga



North West



Northern Cape



Western Cape

The National Animal: SPRINGBOK



The National Animal is the SPRINGBOK (*Antidorcas marsupialis*). This species has adapted to the dry, barren areas and open grass plains and is thus found especially in the Free State and North West Province, and in the Karoo up to the west coast. They move in small herds during winter, but often crowd together in bigger herds in summer. They breed throughout the year and lambs are born after a six-month gestation period.



The National Flower is the GIANT or KING PROTEA (*Protea cynaroides*), found in the southwestern and southern areas of the Western Cape, from the Cedarberg to just east of Grahamstown. The artichoke-like appearance of the flower heads of the king protea lead to the specific name 'cynaroides', which means 'like cynara' (the artichoke). A number of varieties in colour and leaf shapes are found, but the most beautiful is the pink flower.

The National Tree: REAL YELLOWWOOD

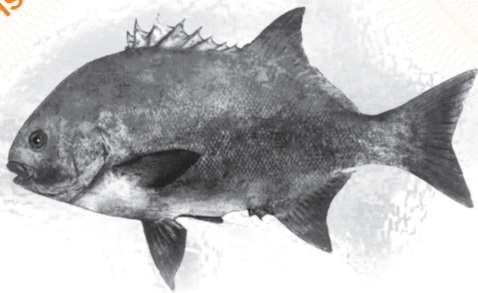


The National Tree is the REAL YELLOWWOOD (*Podocarpus latifolius*), found from Table Mountain, along the southern and eastern Cape coast, in the ravines of the Drakensberg up to the Blouberg and the Soutpansberg in Limpopo. The Yellowwood family is primeval and has been present in this part of Africa for more than 100 million years. The crown is relatively small in relation to its height and is often covered with grey lichen.



The National Bird is the BLUE CRANE (*Anthropoides paradisica*). It is quite common in the Karoo, but is also seen in the grasslands of KwaZulu-Natal and the Highveld, usually in pairs or small family parties. This elegant bird is a light blue-grey in colour, with a long neck supporting a big head, long legs and elegant wing plumes that sweep to the ground. It eats seeds, insects and reptiles.

The National Fish: GALJOEN



The National Fish is the GALJOEN (*Coracinus capensis*), which is found only along the South African coast. It keeps to mostly shallow water, is often found in rough surf and sometimes right next to the shore. The Galjoen is a familiar sight for anglers. Its diet consists mainly of red bait (ascidians), small mussels and barnacles. It is also known in KwaZulu-Natal as blackfish or black bream.

The National Orders

National Orders are the highest awards that a country, through its President, bestows on its citizens and eminent foreign nationals.

The new National Orders were conceived in the spirit of nation building and social cohesion. The objectives of the new designs are:

- To reflect the ethos and values of the rich diversity of South African traditions.
- To include indigenous symbols and systems of awards.
- To redress imbalances created by the past policies.

National Orders are awarded once a year during the National Orders Awards Ceremony hosted by the Presidency.



The Order of Mapungubwe is awarded to South African citizens for achievements that have impacted internationally and served the interests of the Republic of South Africa. The first and highest category of this Order is awarded in platinum. Other categories are Gold, Silver and Bronze.



The Order of the Baobab is awarded to South African citizens for distinguished service. It is an award for contributions in the following areas:

- Business and the economy
- Science, medicine and technological innovation.
- Community service.



The Order of the Companions of O R Tambo is awarded to foreign nationals (Heads of State and Government) and other foreign dignitaries. It is awarded for friendship shown to South Africa. It is therefore an order of peace, co-operation and active expression of solidarity and support.

The Order of Luthuli is awarded to South Africans who have made a meaningful contribution to the struggle for democracy, human rights, nation-building, justice, peace and conflict resolution. It symbolises the vision of the late Chief Albert Luthuli - the legendary liberation struggle leader and first African recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1961.



The Order of Mendi for Bravery is awarded to South African citizens who have performed an extraordinary act of bravery that placed their lives in great danger, or who lost their own lives saving or trying to save the life of another person, the life of another person, or by saving property.



The Order of Ikhamanga is awarded to South African citizens who have excelled in the fields of arts, culture, literature, music, journalism and sport.



The Parliamentary Symbols

The Mace is a symbol of authority of the Speaker of the National Assembly. When the Sergeant-at-arms carries the Mace into the debating chamber, and places it before the Speaker of Parliament, it means that the National Assembly is formally in session and that its proceedings are official.



The Mace was designed to reflect the history, traditions, and diverse cultures and languages of South Africa. The design also celebrates the country's natural beauty, its plant and animal life and its rich mineral resources.

- The shape of the mace recalls the knobkerrie, an African symbol of defence as well as authority and leadership.
- Gold symbolises not only our country's natural wealth, but also the indigenous knowledge of Africa and the ancient African gold mining traditions of Mapungubwe.

The Black Rod is the symbol of the authority of the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP). The Black Rod reflects the important role of the provinces in the functioning of the NCOP.



The shape of the new Black Rod is in the form of a knobkie, an African symbol of defence, of authority and leadership. The protea, at the head of the Black Rod, is South Africa's National flower, and symbolises national pride.

The beadwork reflects on South Africa's diverse people and its rich cultural heritage. The clasping hands in gold symbolises freedom, peace and cooperation. The black rod stands in a drum when the council is in session. The drum is an expression of the African tradition of drums calling people to gather and speak. It is also symbolic of our achievement of democracy through dialogue.

The Parliamentary Emblem

Parliament launched its new emblem during a Joint Sitting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces.



Symbolically **the sun** heals the divisions of the past, improves the quality of life of all South Africans, frees the potential of each person and builds a united and democratic South Africa, taking its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

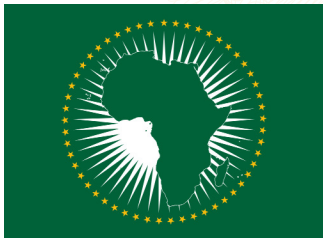
The Protea leaves symbolise our people.

The drum symbolically calls the people's Parliament, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces, to consider national and provincial issues.

The book symbolises our Constitution as it lays the foundation for a democratic and open society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.

The African Union (AU) Flag

The African Union (AU) was established on the 26th of May 2001 in Addis Ababa to replace the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and was launched on 9th of July 2002 in South Africa.



The AU is a union consisting of 54 African states with a Vision to realise “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena.” This vision of a modern, forward looking, dynamic and integrated Africa will be realised through relentless struggle on several fronts and as a long-term undertaking.

The African Union has repositioned itself and shifted focus from supporting liberation movements in the onetime African territories under colonialism and apartheid, as envisaged by the OAU since 1963 and the Constitutive Act, to an organisation spear-heading Africa’s development and integration.

The flag of the African Union has a dark green map of the African continent on a white sun, surrounded by a circle of 54-pointed gold stars representing the all Member States, on a dark green field symbolising hope of Africa.

The African Union Anthem

Let us all unite and celebrate together
The victories won for our liberation
Let us dedicate ourselves to rise together
To defend our liberty and unity

O Sons and Daughters of Africa
Flesh of the Sun and Flesh of the Sky
Let us make Africa the Tree of Life

Let us all unite and sing together
To uphold the bonds that frame our destiny
Let us dedicate ourselves to fight together
For lasting peace and justice on earth

O Sons and Daughters of Africa
Flesh of the Sun and Flesh of the Sky
Let us make Africa the Tree of Life

Let us all unite and toil together
To give the best we have to Africa
The cradle of mankind and fount of culture
Our pride and hope at break of dawn.

O Sons and Daughters of Africa
Flesh of the Sun and Flesh of the Sky
Let us make Africa the Tree of Life.

For further information on the national symbols:
Contact the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
on 012 441 3204;
Visit the DSAC website at:
<http://www.dsac.gov.za>



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