



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Bulletin One



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Globalisation has had a profound impact on higher education and training. Increasingly, governments, universities and other institutions of higher learning and research, academics, lecturers and students are actively participating and contributing to international developments and exchanges in the post-school system.

For the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), international relations provides an opportunity to enhance the quality and effectiveness of education offerings and strengthen South Africa's relations with other countries through the sharing of best practices in policy development, teaching, learning and research. The aim of the Department's international engagements is to create access for South African policy makers, students, academics, lecturers

and trainers to participate in the international exchange and production of knowledge and skills, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of South Africa.

International relations provides an opportunity to enhance the quality and effectiveness of education offerings and strengthen South Africa's relations with other countries

The DHET's international relations activities support its overall mission to develop capable, well educated and skilled citizens who are able to compete in a sustainable, diversified and knowledge-intensive international economy.

This, the first annual International Relations Bulletin provides a glimpse of the international activities the DHET has engaged in over the past year.

Dr B Nzimande, MP
Minister: Higher Education and Training



International engagements undertaken by the DHET and public post-school institutions contribute to the development of the overall intellectual capital of our country, enhancing mutual and intercultural understanding and cooperation between nations, as well as strengthening foreign policy initiatives and economic competitiveness.

In this first edition of the International Relations Bulletin, we reflect on participation in a number of multilateral and bilat-

eral forums, such as the International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training held in Shanghai, the hosting of an Extraordinary Meeting of SADC Ministers of Education and other activities involving countries in Africa, North and South America, Europe and Asia. Various levels of engagement are covered, including Ministerial visits, students, academics and officials studying abroad, and the participation of interns in the department's international activities.

GF Qonde
Director-General: Higher Education and Training

SADC MINISTERIAL MEETING

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Ministers of Higher Education began the discourse of prioritising higher education in the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Education and Training and the Second Decade of Education Plan of Action by pronouncing the need for a clear strategic vision for higher education that is informed by comprehensive information and data on the status of higher education in the region. Ministers reiterated their commitment to higher education at the 2011 SADC Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Education and Training held in Windhoek, by agreeing to convene a dedicated ministerial meeting on higher education in order to agree on a regional policy direction for the sector to inform the development of a regional strategic plan.

The Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA) has undertaken extensive work towards facilitating the discourse of the long-term vision of higher education by conducting comprehensive research studies on higher education in 2009 and convening a number of regional leadership dialogues with higher education institutions on various thematic areas of higher education.

The research studies conducted by SARUA to date, clarify positive developments, challenges and the potential of the sector. Positive developments include the expansion of higher education in terms of increasing enrolments and provisioning, particularly with increasing numbers of private universities. However, the studies also highlight the challenges of low research output, shortages of staffing capacity, inadequate quality assurance mechanisms, lack of data and information on private higher education and its potential, as well as the overall lack of accurate and comparable data on higher education in the region for systems planning, monitoring and understanding of capacities in different countries in order to drive regional collaboration and cooperation.

The October 2011 SARUA leadership dialogue on 'building higher education scenarios 2025 for developing a strategic agenda for development in SADC' explored different scenarios for higher education in the region and proposed strategic interventions for building the capacity of the sector to meet the ever increasing demand for higher education in the region. The outcome of the leadership dialogue made it clear that if the current level of investment is continued, the region will not achieve the target of 30% tertiary enrolment by 2050,



Deputy Minister Mkhize addresses the Meeting

due to low funding. It became clear that there is need for a systematic paradigm shift in the overall investment in higher education, in order for it to yield its expected contribution towards political, social, economic, innovation and technological development of the region.

Consequently, a two day Extra-Ordinary Ministerial Meeting on Higher Education was convened by South Africa on 4-5 June 2012, to formulate a clear policy vision for higher education. It was an extra-ordinary meeting because it exclusively focused on higher education. The objective of this 2-day meeting was to set a policy direction for higher education in the region by allowing Ministers of higher education in the region to discuss the status and challenges of the sector, based on the work that has been undertaken by SARUA.

The plan was to ensure that this policy vision will be translated into a regional strategic framework for higher education and training, which will eventually outline the key priorities for both the short and long term. The 2-day meeting was also used to launch the establishment of the Technical Committee on Higher Education to take the matter forward.

All Ministers of Higher Education in all the SADC Member States and their Permanent/Principal Secretaries or Directors General were invited to the meeting. Some of the Ministers were unfortunately unable to attend but they did, however, send their senior officials to represent them. The meeting focused on the following thematic discussions:

Thematic Discussion 1: Access and Participation Rates

This discussion explored the current trend of participation rates and provision of higher education, including

the role of private higher education, its potential and challenges.

Thematic Discussion 2: Funding and Capacity Building

This theme examined the funding of higher education and the requirements for capacity building in the region. Possible scenarios of funding higher education, which are sustainable for the next 10-15 years, were discussed.

Thematic Discussion 3: Research and Monitoring

This theme examined the research capacity of higher learning institutions in the region, as well as data collection and reporting on higher education.

At the end of the 2-day meeting, the Ministers agreed and endorsed the following recommendations, to be implemented by the Higher Education Technical Committee that was launched during the meeting:

- Increase higher education access and participation

rates

- Enhance the quality and relevance of higher education
- Improve higher education funding and infrastructure
- Foster effective leadership, governance, management and human resource capacity
- Improve higher education research, monitoring and evaluation
- Establish and facilitate regional cooperation and collaboration.

Specific activities on how to take these recommendations forward were outlined; these are now the responsibility of the newly established Technical Committee.

Ms Prudence Makhura, Deputy Director for Africa and Middle East, DHET

SADC MINISTERIAL: AN INTERN'S PERSPECTIVE

I was an enthusiastic International Relations student at the University of Pretoria, eager to learn how the world works. My studies taught me the theory of International Relations, how big international bodies, like the United Nations, operate and this captivated my interest. I immersed myself in research on how international leaders balance their national priorities with international interests, and how they collectively solve international problems that have domestic implications. In April 2012 I started my very first formal job -- working as an intern at the Department of Higher Education and Training.

I was placed in the Chief Directorate: International Relations, working under the Director of Global Partnerships. I couldn't wait to sink my teeth into global issues in education. I dealt with the Department's engagements with European and North American countries, but my longing to have personal impact in the functioning of multilateral gatherings still remained. Then the Directorate: Africa and Middle East was tasked with the responsibility of organising and coordinating the SADC Extra-Ordinary Meeting of Ministers of Education at the OR Tambo Southern Sun Hotel, in June 2012. Other employees from the Chief Directorate were requested to assist with running the conference. I was tasked with the responsibility of head

usher and in this capacity I worked with two other interns, Evelyn Nkawane and Azwindini Matshusa.

Our job was to ensure that ministers had all the documents they needed for the meeting and were at the right place, at the right time. The ushers were some of the few that were allowed in the conference room during the meeting of the ministers. I had a front row seat, witnessing Southern African leaders in education deliberating on matters that impact on the region as well as domestically. It was fascinating to hear about the experiences of the various delegates regarding their endeavours to improve education in their countries.

The leaders discussed the lack of capacity to produce research in higher education institutions and possible solutions. The two days of the conference went by smoothly and I learnt more from standing and listening to interactions of leaders, than I could have from a book. I also learnt to appreciate the work and effort that goes into organising such a conference and left with a desire to contribute intellectually to providing solutions to common problems, be it regionally or internationally.

Ms Reneilwe Kgang, Intern for Global Partnerships, DHET

18TH CONFERENCE OF COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION MINISTERS (18CCEM)

At the invitation of the Mauritian Minister of Education and Human Resources, Hon Dr Vasant K. Bunwaree, Minister Nzimande, accompanied by senior officials from the Department of Higher Education and Training, attended the 18th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (18CCEM) held in Mauritius from 28-31 August 2012.

The aim of the Conference was to enable education ministers and senior officials from Commonwealth member countries to discuss key education issues and challenges pertaining to the meeting of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Officials who met to reflect on the theme of the conference, consider key background documents, as well as review the proposed conference arrangements, sessions, documents and recommendations to be forwarded to ministers.

The SOM report covered the work and progress of the Commonwealth Secretariat (SC), the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), as well as contributions to the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) and a proposal to establish the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Facility (CTEF).

Ministers also received reports

tius.

- **The Youth Forum** brought together young people and students from across the Commonwealth, aimed at affording them an opportunity to discuss the future of education, enhance their capacity and strengthen their role in the Commonwealth Education Sector. The DHET supported the participation of Mr Jackson Merahe, a member of the Student Representative Council of the University of the Western Cape to represent South African young people at the conference.

During the conference, Minister Nzimande also engaged in bilateral meetings with the Hon. Dr Rajeshwar Jeetha, Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology in Mauritius. Both Ministers agreed on the need to further explore areas of cooperation, such as joint studies in the fields of maritime and agriculture. The Mauritian Minister also noted that they had opened a distance university and would like to learn from the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Minister Nzimande's presence in Mauritius was honoured by a friendly gesture from his Mauritian counterpart by being invited to plant an Ebony tree to symbolize the strengthening of relations and cooperation in education between Mauritius and South Africa at the University of Mauritius.

Ms Beata Mtyingizana, Director for Global Partnerships, DHET



Swami Vivekananda International Convention Centre, Mauritius

The CCEM is one of several ministerial conferences held every three years to enable Commonwealth member states' ministers of education as well as those of health and finance, for example, to meet and discuss key areas of common interest, aimed at accelerating development.

At 18CCEM, ministers received reports emanating out of deliberations from the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), which preceded the Ministerial Meeting. The SOM was made up of senior government offi-

from other meetings that ran parallel to the SOM, these included:

- **The Post-Secondary and Higher Education Leaders Forum** brought together lecturers and vice-chancellors from various universities to engage in discussions on how to bridge gaps in post-secondary education. At this forum, the Minister was invited to join his Mauritian counterpart, Minister Rajeswhar Jeetha as a panelist responding to questions from the floor during a session held at the University of Mauri-

TVET IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING: SHANGHAI, 13 -16 MAY 2012

The Congress was aimed at increasing participation in skills development through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). It aimed to provide a global platform for knowledge sharing, reflection and debate on the changing landscape of TVET and wider skills development systems. The Congress addressed key directions to ensure that the sector meets national and regional development objectives as well as individual aspirations.



The delegation preparing for the conference

About 800 policy-makers and practitioners met to:

- Identify and discuss present and future challenges in TVET policies and reforms.
- Build better understanding of and share knowledge on the contributions of TVET to development.
- Inform perspectives for international cooperation in the field and decide on joint directions for future work and support to TVET at national, regional and international level.

The four-day Congress offered a variety of opportunities to share

knowledge on progress of TVET reforms in UNESCO's 193 Member States. The outcomes of these debates – which brought together key TVET stakeholders including policy-makers, social partners and civil society - informed policy-making, intensified efforts to address key challenges, strengthen cooperation among Member States, regional and international organisations, and inform UNESCO's work in the field.

South Africa hosted a Roundtable on the role of TVET in the development of middle-income countries in order to stimulate debate around the role of TVET in:

- Assisting middle-income countries to improve and sustain high economic growth rates;
- Job creation and equitable and inclusive growth;
- The transformation of the economy of Middle Income Countries; and
- Supporting public policies aimed at the equalisation of opportunities and development in the MICs.

Minister Nzimande chaired the Roundtable and the panel included ministers from other middle-income countries.

The conference took place more than a decade after the last Congress in Seoul (1999). It was noted that in the intervening period, a number of countries have devel-



The Oriental Pearl Radio & TV Tower from the Huangpu River, Shanghai

oped some national policies on TVET and there was an ongoing debate about the definition of TVET, including terms such as technical and vocational skills development (TSVD). It was further noted that the least developed countries are still struggling to finance TVET, resulting



The Minister chairing meeting in Shanghai

in weak systems in the area of skills development.

In general, the conference was very well run and provided many opportunities for delegates to interact with one another. The performance of the Chinese economy is very impressive, particularly the role of TVET in growing that economy. The need for ongoing work, collaborations and partnerships between congresses, was underscored.

Prof Peliwe Lolwana, Director, Education Policy Unit, University of Witwatersrand and part of the South African delegation

COMEDAF V

5TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION

The Minister of Higher Education and Training and a delegation of senior officials attended COMEDAF V, which took place in Abuja, Nigeria from 23-27 April 2012. COMEDAF takes place every two years and brings together Ministers of Education from the African continent, regional economic communities and specialised educational agencies.

The aim of COMEDAF V was to discuss progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa, consider the mid-term evaluation report of the Plan of Action (POA), and follow up on decisions made at COMEDAF IV, held in Kenya in 2009. The conference began with a meeting of senior officials, to discuss Teacher Development and was followed by the Ministerial meeting.

Following in-depth discussions, the Ministers made several recommendations, to be considered at the July 2012 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The Ministers:

- called upon the African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the midterm evaluation of the Second Decade of Education, in order to ensure acceleration of achievement of agreed goals and emphasised the need to identify champions and institutions that have demonstrated excellence in specific areas of the Plan of Action, so that they could serve as examples, promote the implementation of the POA and increase its visibility;
- urged Member States and RECs to ensure that they attend COMEDAF meetings and be more diligent in providing education monitoring reports to the obser-

vatory;

- called on Member States to consider establishing a seed fund for all AUC education and training programmes, such as the Mwalimu Nyerere Scholarship Scheme, Pan African University, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) centres, Teacher Development and Youth Empowerment;
- invited the AUC, RECs and Member States to promote and strengthen public and private partnerships in Africa for education and entrepreneurship, especially in the area of TVET;
- once again requested RECs to strengthen their education desks and strive to attend COMEDAF and other education meetings and send regular reports to the Commission;
- called upon RECs and Member States to enhance multi-sectoral collaboration in view of the fact that education is crucial to the development and provision of human resources in every sector;
- called upon civil society organisations to promote, publicise and implement the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa;
- requested the AUC to set up two committees on Higher Education and TVET, including formal and non-formal education; and request the committees and the Pan African Conference on Teacher Development (PACTED) to report to the next COMEDAF Bureau meeting; and
- endorsed the implementation of the Pan African University and its Act of Establishment.

Mr Richard Ndaba, Director for Africa and Middle East, DHET

UNESCO-IIEP POLICY FORUM AND EFA LAUNCH

In October 2012, at the invitation of the United National Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Institute for Education Policy (IIEP), the Minister for Higher Education and Training attended the launch of the Education For All (EFA) Global Monitor Report 2012 (GMR), as well as a Policy Forum organised by IIEP, titled Engaging Youth in Planning Education for Social Transformation.

The GMR examines how skills development programs can be improved to boost young people's opportunities for decent jobs and better lives. The Report also includes statistical indicators on all levels of education in more than 200 countries and territories. Conveying SA support for the GMR, Minister Nzimande shared a platform with the Director-General of UNESCO, Madame Irina Bokova, as well as Mr Gordon Brown, the UN Special Envoy for





Global Education.

The GMR launch was followed by a Ministerial briefing session, organised by IIEP, for the Ministers of Education present. Input from Minister Nzimande included South Africa's needs as they relate to IIEP strategy. These can be summarised as follows: IIEP to assist with capacity building and sharing of best practice for colleges on monitoring and evaluation as well as governance, and to assist with the model for norms and standards for Vocational Education and Training sectors.

The GMR launch and the briefing were followed by an IIEP Policy Forum. Minister Nzimande presented and moderated a panel debate between senior policy-makers, development agencies, youth and NGOs, titled Roles of the state and other stakeholders in connecting education, learning and the world of work. His input was very well received by fellow panellists and the rest of the Forum.

Ms Nolitha Vukuza-Linda, DHET representative based in Paris, France

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING (COL)

Established in 1987 as an inter-governmental body by the Heads of Commonwealth Governments, CoL's mission is to assist those governments to "expand the scale, efficiency and quality of learning by using appropriate technologies". Particular emphasis is placed on open and distance learning (ODL). Based in Vancouver, with about 40 staff members and an office in India, CoL initially concentrated on higher education, but has subsequently diversified. It has been my privilege to be South Africa's representative to the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) for two terms of office.

CoL has three strategic goals:

Quality Education for all Commonwealth Citizens: Increased access to affordable primary, secondary and tertiary education, especially for girls, women and the marginalised;

Human resource development in the Commonwealth: Sustainable and replicable learning systems in place for farming, health and skills development in the formal and informal sectors;

Harnessing open and distance learning and technologies to achieve development goals: Improved capacity of governments and civil society to provide quality learning for achieving Millennium Development and Education for All goals.

CoL has four **Education Initiatives** (Open Schooling, Teacher Education, Higher Education and the Virtual University of Small States), and three **Livelihoods and Health Initiatives** (Technical and Vocational skills, Lifelong Learning for Farmers, and Healthy Communities).

Recent achievements

Best known for its efforts to develop capacity in ODL among Commonwealth countries, CoL has recently made valuable contributions regarding international policies and models. CoL has played an essential role in supporting UNESCO in taking forward policy around Open Education Resources (OER). These efforts culminated in a UNESCO Congress in June last year, which passed a declaration urging countries to adopt OER policies and, in particular, to ensure that all educational resources paid from the public purse are made available as OER. South Africa actively participated in the lead-up to the conference and is exploring ways of responding to the declaration.

CoL has also been at the forefront of developing models for Open Schooling (flexibly organised opportunities for students to proceed with secondary education), a tested model for Lifelong Learning for Farmers, and an evolving model for small states to cooperate in making tertiary opportunities available at home rather than migrating.

Many of CoL's activities are Pan-African in nature – some 48%. Of the remaining activities, about 50% occur in Africa! CoL has entered into partnership with a number of South African institutions. SAIDE (South African Institute for Distance Education)'s OER Africa Initiative played a key role in the lead up to and the actual OER Congress; SAQA has been instrumental in developing a transnational qualifications framework for the Virtual University of Small States; the Media and Training Centre for Health has benefitted from a number of capacity building exercises and also embarked on joint initiatives; the University of Limpopo has been a key

institution in a Unicef/COL Child Friendly School Initiative, CoL assisted UNISA by organising a mock institutional audit prior to the HEQC audit; SAIDE is a regular contributor

At end of Ms Glennie's terms on the Board, the Chair, the Hon Burchell Whiteman from Jamaica, wrote: "I take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding contributions Ms Jenny Glennie has made to the COL Board in various capacities ... We have benefitted immensely from her guidance, insights and advice over the years. Jenny has brought an invaluable perspective on open and distance learning which served to keep the focus on COL's basic mission and mandate as the only intergovernmental organization established to promote distance education and technology-enhanced learning."

to the Commonwealth Open Schools Association; and the list goes on.

How is CoL funded and governed?

Over the last six years, the number of countries which support CoL has grown immensely, with contributions from over forty Commonwealth members, including a number of SADC countries, ranging from \$5 000 to \$2 600 000 per year. As one of the major donors, South Africa is awarded a place on the Board of Governors, which consists of representatives of the major donor countries (Canada, UK, India, Nigeria, New Zealand and South Africa), representatives from each of the Commonwealth regions, and the Secretary General of the Commonwealth.

In order to remain responsive, CoL has instituted an upfront consultative process with Commonwealth countries regarding their needs in areas where CoL has developed expertise. This is enabled through a system of country Focal Points – one from each country. In the preparation of the 2012 -2015 plan, Focal Point meetings were held in all four regions of the Commonwealth.

Completing my terms of office

South Africa's new representative is Prof Narend Bajinath, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Unisa, and I have no doubt that he will do South Africa proud!

Ms Jennie Glennie, Director, SAIDE and South Africa's representative on the CoL Board from 2005-2012

NORTHERN ENGAGEMENTS

SIGNING A JOINT DECLARATION ON COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING WITH THE EU

On 17 May 2012 the DHET and the EU signed the Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Education and Training at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town. The Declaration is the formal endorsement of years of rapidly intensifying collaboration among the two partners. EU Director General for Education and Culture, Mr Jan Trzczyński called the agreement "a stepping stone in the quality of our cooperation." His counterpart, Deputy Minister Hlengiwe Mkhize, maintained that "international partnerships are a resource for the improvement of quality and relevance" in education. She stated that "there are many lessons to be learned through cooperation with the EU".

The Joint Declaration formalised growing relations between the Republic of South Africa and the European Union as well as tacitly establishing the Sectoral Policy Dialogue on Higher Education and Training, which had been mooted during the South Africa/European Union Joint Cooperation Council meeting of 2008. The signing



Director-General Jan Trzczyński and Deputy Minister Hlengiwe Mkhize

of the Joint Declaration was greatly facilitated by the EU Director-General being on an official visit to South Africa, which coincided with a Joint EU, South Africa, and African Union conference on responsive and quality postgraduate education at the University of Western Cape, the third general meeting of the African Higher Education Harmonisation and Tuning group, and the

second Study in Europe Fair at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Director-General Trusczyński, whose four-day tour around the universities in the Cape region was perhaps a greater endorsement even than his signature, called the agreement “a steppingstone in the quality of our cooperation.” While technically the Declaration does not have immediate practical implications, it is an important political statement that has been long overdue. It reaffirms the importance both parties attach to education in the activities that have been developed following earlier agreements such as the Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA), the Joint Action Plan of 2007 and the Joint Declaration of 2009 as well as the conclusions of the EU-SA Joint Cooperation Council meetings of 4 November 2008 and 23 July 2009, calling for broadening cooperation in the fields of education and training.

The Declaration opens the way for cooperation across the entire education system, but in the years ahead there will likely be a bias towards higher education and vocational education and training. The main difference between the Declaration and similar documents signed with other strategic partners of the EU, is the mention of equity in education. This addition was specifically requested by the Department of Higher Education and Training as it is a key element in the country’s education strategies. Among the first focal areas for intensified collaboration will be mobility and postgraduate education and research, equity and quality in education, quality assurance mechanisms and stakeholder involvement. Other fields that are explicitly mentioned in the agreement are recognition, credit transfer and accumulation, qualifications frameworks and the transparency and transferability of qualifications, teacher education, benchmarks, lifelong learning policies and strategies and vocational education and training.

Deputy Minister Mkhize stressed that the greatest challenge that needs to be addressed with education -- and that, therefore, will be a focal point for policy dialogue -- is youth unemployment, which she called “still unacceptably high”. “International partnerships are a resource for the improvement of quality and relevance

in our education system,” she said. “There are many lessons to be learnt through cooperation with the EU.” EU Ambassador to South Africa, Roeland van der Geer, stressed that cooperation with South Africa is not quite the same as with countries where the EU builds bridges and roads. “As a leading country on the continent, South Africa is also a key partner for jointly facing the challenges of Africa as a whole.” The Declaration obliges its signatories to jointly set up a rolling work programme to conduct their education policy dialogue. They will regularly review its implementation and discuss avenues for future cooperation. To this end, senior officials from both sides will meet, in principle once a year, with the venue alternating between Brussels and South Africa or any other venue agreed on by both sides.



French Day at Vaal University of Technology

THE SOUTH AFRICAN-FRENCH RECIPROCAL SEASONS

The South African-French Reciprocal Seasons are a bilateral form of cooperation that was initiated by the Presidents of South Africa and France in 2011. Through these exchanges, that encompass cooperation across a wide spectrum of activities, including different art forms, university, school, scientific and research cooperation in the form of joint partnerships, it was envisioned that bilateral relations would be strengthened. By facilitating better understanding of the culture of both countries, people-to-people as well as institutional link-

ages between the French and their South African counterparts would be strengthened.

Both countries jointly funded planned activities and canvassed the private sector to fund other activities. The Department of Arts and Culture is the lead department on the South African side. Higher education is one of the areas of collaboration between South Africa and France. In early 2012, the DHET was requested to participate in the South African-French Reciprocal Seasons and has continued to do so. The DHET’s participation in the Reciprocal Seasons has ensured that the benefits that accrue to South African universities, that participate with their French counterparts, are more widely spread to encompass historically disadvantaged institutions as well.



From 16 August to 25 September 2012, eight South African universities hosted a "French Day" as part of the France-South Africa 2012 & 2013 Seasons. The University of Venda hosted the first French Day on Thursday 16 August, followed by Wits University on the 21st and the Vaal University of Technology on the 23rd. The events were jointly organised by the Embassy of France in South Africa and the departments of International Relations of each university, and aimed to promote existing Franco-South African collaborations, strengthening links between scientific communities and promoting student exchanges. Students and academics had the opportunity to listen to several presentations on various topics, which ranged from the scramble for Africa, and conservation (UniVen) to palaeoanthropology and animal migration tracking at Wits and renewable energy and Huguenot history at VUT. Cultural art forms (music, dance, fashion shows, art exhibition etc.) and exhibitions designed by Pretoria-based French research centres, IRD and CIRAD, on animal husbandry and humid tropical forests, all contributed to complete the experience.

French Day at Vaal University of Technology:

The event took place in the context of increasing collaboration between South Africa and France as the number of scientific articles co-published by French and South African scientists increased by 200% over the past five years. Joint collaboration has resulted in over 100 different projects and this has positioned South Africa as France's 5th ranked research partner in terms of volumes of joint research output.

COOPERATION WITH GERMANY ON SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

A government-to-government agreement on development co-operation between the Federal Republic of Germany (BMZ) and the Republic of South Africa was

concluded in mid- 2012, which, amongst others, identified skills support to micro enterprises as a critical development area. To this end, the two governments agreed to use the South African proposal: Active Labour Market Strategy (ALMS) Programme as a conceptual basis of the future overall technical cooperation programme for skills development in the second/informal economy in South Africa. This programme is under implementation, with German cooperation providing technical assistance and the National Skills Funding committing financial resources that are, amongst others, employed for the training of young previously disadvantaged entrepreneurs. Provision is also made to ensure that those trained are given start-up capital to facilitate their entry into business.

On a visit to Germany in March 2010, Minister Nziemande met with Dr Annette Schavan, the German Federal Minister for Education and Research, in Berlin and agreed to establish ministry-to-ministry collaboration which, at that time, did not exist, except for interaction in the context of the ALMS programme. The 7th South Africa-Germany Bi-National Commission, in Berlin on 8 May 2012, where South Africa and Germany committed to growing their partnership in strategic areas, including skills development, gave added impetus to the drive to solidify ministry-to-ministry cooperation, especially around vocational education and training. The Bi-national Commission announced the creation of Education and Energy Working Groups, to afford the DHET and its German counterpart's space and scope to concentrate their focus on cooperation on the area of vocational education and training as well as skill development, especially in the context of the German dual system.

Mr Gareth Macquela, Deputy Director for Global Partnerships, DHET

OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (ODA)

In line with its mandate and strategic objective, the Directorate Development Support performed its key role in the Department by coordinating Official Donor Assistance (ODA) projects funded by international donors, monitoring spending and evaluating projects, providing guidance and rendering assistance to project managers of conditional grants as well as donor-funded projects.

Projects facilitated during the course of 2012 included; DANIDA, the European Commission's General Budget Support project on Career Guidance, as well as the African Development Bank grants. During the first half of 2012, a policy on ODA and partnerships was developed and approved by the Director-General. The policy serves to provide guidelines on the management of ODA and partnerships in the DHET. It outlines proce-

dures and the roles of all role players, in order to ensure organisational efficiency, productivity and cohesion in soliciting development resources. The policy is available on the DHET website.

DANISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (DANIDA)

A bilateral partnership between the SA government and the Kingdom of Denmark was formalised in an Agreement signed by the Minister on 15 December 2010. DANIDA Support to Education and Skills Development (SESD) III is a sequel to SESD I and II, which were implemented between 2002 and 2009, and aimed to strengthen the ability of FET Colleges to provide quality vocational education.

The primary objective of SESD III is to work towards achievement of “an effective and sustainable system of exit support for FET graduates, as an integrated part of student support services, at selected colleges established, documented and shared as best practice with the entire FET College sector”. Twelve public FET Colleges in four provinces, EC, KZN, NW and WC, were identified to participate in the project, over a period of 3 years (ending in 2014). The total donor funding contribution amounted to R26 million. Each participating college received a funding allocation of about R1,2 million, which they are required to utilise in line with their sub-

mitted and approved project proposal aimed at strengthening student support services.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

The Career Guidance Services Project is a Ministerial flagship project funded by the National Skills Fund (NSF) with R99 million over 3 years, 2010/11- 2012/2013. Additional funding of R60 million was successfully secured from the EU's General Budget Support grant through the National Treasury. The primary objective of the Career Guidance Services Project is to establish a national, comprehensive and independent career advice service through development of a web-based career advice e portal that will interface with the National Learners' database, overseen by SAQA. Due to SAQA's mandate on the National Qualifications Framework, the Minister requested SAQA to be the lead partner, with DHET, in the career guidance project for the country. SAQA is currently implementing the Career Advice Services project on behalf of the DHET. In addition to the web portal, the Project will also include a helpline, walk-in centres, radio campaign and print media as part of the career guidance services.

Ms Gloria Maaka-Tlokana, Director for Development Support, DHET

TRILATERAL COOPERATION IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Official development assistance makes up a very small proportion of the overall education budget in South Africa. However, it plays an important role by supporting key projects and pilot programmes and enabling the implementation of best practices, often learnt from abroad and modified for the South African context.

In spite of being a recipient of development assistance, South Africa is also in a position to contribute to the development of education in the rest of Africa. The combination of its education infrastruc-

ture, skills and expertise, within close proximity to other countries in need of development assistance, and with a number of parallel developmental experiences, puts South Africa in a special position to provide support to its neighbours and other countries on the continent.

The often cited quote “South Africa cannot be an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty”, does not only refer to an ethical obligation to contribute to the development of our neighbours; whilst acknowledging South Africa's developmental challenges, we

The DHET is committed to pursuing an outreach agenda in Africa

recognise the importance of ensuring that the countries to our north benefit from, and have a stake in our efforts to address these challenges. The development of our region has long and short term implications for South Africa's own economy and stability.

Although South Africa is currently not an official donor country, it provides assistance to other coun-

tries in a number of ways and is sometimes referred to as an “emerging donor”. One of the ways South Africa supports international development, is by means of the implementation of trilateral cooperation initiatives.

Trilateral cooperation entails combining the needs of a developing state with expertise and infrastructure available in South Africa and the financial resources of a third, donor country. The DHET is committed to pursuing an outreach agenda in Africa and strongly supports participation in trilateral cooperation projects. Programme implementation of current DHET projects is headed by higher education institutions.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), initiated its first round of trilateral cooperation projects with South African government departments in 2009. The DHET’s project to provide capacity building support to education officials in South Sudan was approved and has been implemented since 2010. This project is

due to be completed during 2013 and will have resulted in participation in postgraduate training at Wits University by more than ten education officials from South Sudan.

A second project was approved in 2011 and began implementation in 2012. Its aim is to increase academic teaching and research capacity in the field of constitutional law in Ethiopia, Uganda, South Sudan and Kenya, through the University of Pretoria.

In 2012 USAID made a third call for trilateral cooperation proposals. Two of the five projects submitted for consideration by the DHET were successful and are expected to begin implementation in 2013. The University of Stellenbosch, in partnership with Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the University of Botswana and Polytechnic of Namibia will develop a solar energy resource map and database of Southern Africa, which aims to facilitate the rollout of solar energy in the subcontinent. The University of Pretoria, in collaboration with the University of Cape Town and the Uni-

versity of the Western Cape, with partners in nine countries on the continent, will undertake a survey of soil chemistry and microbiology in sub-Saharan Africa. This data will contribute to establishing national genetic resource catalogues, land management and utilisation, as well as monitoring the impact of climate change and desertification.

The DHET’s current trilateral cooperation projects are small, with limited funding, but have the potential for wider impact on both South Africa and the countries the projects aim to benefit. This includes the transfer of skills by academics when they return to their home institutions, the training of officials who are capacitated to contribute to more effective government administration in their own countries, as well as the lasting impact of research and data collection by academics.

Ms Ruth Roberts-Chen, Deputy Director for Africa and Middle East, DHET

STUDY VISITS TO MALAYSIA AND JAPAN: 11-25 FEBRUARY 2012

The DHET and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) entered into an agreement, in August 2011, to implement a bilateral technical cooperation “Employment Improvement Project”. This is a two-year project, aimed at strengthening the industry-based human capacity for South African Universities of Technology. In particular, the project focuses on strengthening the work readiness and employability of science, engineering and technology (SET) graduates by imparting “productivity”, “logical planning” and “innovation” skills in line with national



strategies. It aligns with the National Skills Development Strategy Three (NSDS3), which, in relation to youth development, focuses on developing career paths and promoting sustainable employment and in-work progression by means of an effective and efficient skills development system.

The project was piloted at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), with a month-long training course targeted at selected undergraduate and postgraduate



students, and was later extended to other universities of technology. The project uses what is called “the pull system”, whereby professionals from industry are invited to share their knowledge and experience in the university class-room or on the production site. In February 2012, JICA sponsored a study visit to Malaysia and Japan for two DHET officials, Mr Thabo Mashongoane and I, as well as Directors of Cooperative Education from the universities of technology, to learn best practices about graduate employability and innovation. The two countries were selected on the basis of their well-developed technology and innovation systems, as well as their experience with techno-skills development and training, especially amongst the youth. Japan is considered to be a useful model for new skills development paradigms, whereas Malaysia is seen as a leader in skills development fields, alongside countries such as Australia. The delegation spent one week in each country.

Innovation is well-entrenched in the Japanese education system. The Innovation School within the Institute of Engineering Education at the University of Tokyo, is considered to be one of the best innovation schools in Asia. The school focuses on an interdisciplinary Masters course for the innovation system, so as to understand the process design of creation, using the knowledge structure technique. It is reportedly one of the only innovation schools, alongside Stanford University in the USA, which has adopted a human centred approach to innovation in tertiary education. The school demonstrates how innovation can be anchored and supported

within the university environment. It places innovation at the centre of university curriculum/programmes, rather than regarding it as something that students only consider after completion of their studies.

Another clear lesson from the Japanese higher education system is that, with respect to universities of technology and technology colleges, lecturers are required to have both academic knowledge, in terms of qualifications, as well as industry experience, before they are allowed to teach at these institutions. The close collaboration between the university/college system and industry is well-developed, and it assists students with issues of job placement, internships and general employability, as they would have already established connections with companies by the time they complete their studies. Vocational and technical colleges are autonomous and credible in their own right, but also serve as feeders to universities.

The Malaysian education system is clearly articulated, with a coordinated post-school system. Students are able to move easily from a technical college to a university of technology, and even to a traditional university, as credits accumulated are recognised throughout their period of study. The pre-university college model in Malaysia prepares students for university studies, and thereby contributes to high success rates at universities.

Mr Simon Motlhanke, Acting Director, University Policy and Development Support, DHET

MINISTERIAL VISIT TO JAMAICA

It was during the Caribbean rainy season that Minister Nzimande led a senior delegation on a working visit to Jamaica. This visit followed the successful State Visit by President Jacob Zuma to the island on 6 August 2012 and coincided with Jamaica’s 50th anniversary celebrations. The President emphasised that cooperation between universities on joint research projects, as well as student and academic exchange pro-

grammes, should be pursued. Jamaica is a small island with approximately seven million people, boasting the fastest runners in the

Jamaica is a supplier of a skilled labour force, many of whom retain their home addresses.

world and a great musical tradition with many of the reggae lyrics having contributed to our mental liberation and consciousness. Jamaica is a supplier of a skilled labour force,

many of whom retain their home addresses.

The purpose of Minister Nzimande’s visit to Jamaica was to continue strengthening bilateral relations, specifically to gain insight into the education system, with a view to benefit from, share best practices and concretise the strategic partnership between the two countries in the field of education. The Ministers exchanged views and experiences on technical and voca-

tional skills training and development, teacher training, inter-institutional collaboration amongst colleges and universities, research collaboration, experience and knowledge sharing, and programme exchanges.

The Ministers identified several areas for further exploration and cooperation, which included opportunities for bilateral and tripartite cooperation, with specific interest in faculty development programmes for underdeveloped institutions of higher education. The visit deepened the bilateral relations between South Africa and Jamaica and broadened areas for possible South-South cooperation. Minister Nzimande also visited various institutions of higher education in Jamaica and conducted consultations with various stakeholders.

During a campus tour of the University of the West Indies, the delegation also met three South African students, sponsored by the National Treasury and the Association of Black Accountants of South Africa. These students are attending a special Accounting and Masters programme at UWI. This campus is home to the fastest man on earth, Usain Bolt and its alumni include seventeen Prime Ministers. UWI campuses are operating in all countries in the Caribbean. Minister Nzimande paid a courtesy call to Minister Natalie Neita-Headley, Minister responsible for sports, and reiterated South Africa's congratulations for the sterling performance of the Jamaican Olympic team.



Minister Nzimande in Jamaica

High Commissioner Mathu Joyini and the members of the South African High Commission in Kingston lent their full support to the Minister and his Delegation. The High Commission worked closely with the Ministry of Education in Jamaica in ensuring a successful visit.

Mr Ghaleeb Jeppie, Chief Director for International Relations, DHET

ENHANCING COOPERATION WITH CUBA

On 16 February 2012, Minister Nzimande and his Cuban counterpart, Minister Miguel Díaz-Canel, signed a cooperation agreement in the field of higher education.

The agreement realises the wish, by both countries, to see the building of stronger ties between South African and Cuban higher education institutions. It cements long existing links between the two countries that have seen the training of hundreds of South African medical doctors in Cuba as well as the receiving of expertise from Cuban doctors in South African hospitals and institutions.

The agreement sets out concrete areas of cooperation, which include, amongst others, the need to pro-

mote the studying of the Spanish language; establishing a Spanish and Latin American studies programme in selected South African higher education institutions as part of promoting Latin American history, politics, economics and higher education experiences in South Africa. The agreement also covers key areas through which collaboration between institutions could be fostered. These include agricultural studies, teacher education and models of university education delivery.

The agreement was signed on the

margins of the 8th International Congress on Higher Education, *Universidad 2012*, held in Havana between 13 and 17 February 2012. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Deans of Health Sciences from South African universi-



Minister Nzimande with Cuban Minister of Higher Education, Miguel Díaz-Canel

ties who were attending the conference and had formed part of the Minister's delegation.

The Cuban conference on higher education, or the *Universidad* as it is commonly known, is a biennial event that has been taking place in Cuba since 1998, and is intended for academics and other stakeholders from all over the world to deliberate and share their experiences in the higher education sector and also to map a way forward on how to mitigate the challenges faced by higher education institutions in a changing world.

Minister Nzimande delivered a speech titled *the contribution of post-graduate training to knowledge production, innovation and local development*, which was followed by a brief discussion.

In addition to attending the conference, Minister Nzimande also engaged in bilateral meetings with the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training of Cuba, Oberto Santin. At this meeting, the delegation learned more about the history of the Cuban education system, particularly its higher education landscape.

Minister Nzimande also visited the *Universidad de las Ciencias Informáticas* (UCI)/ University of Information Sciences, which is a relatively new institution, established in 2002 under Fidel Castro's leadership. The primary objective of creating this institution was to ensure massive training of high level specialists in informatics.

There are seven faculties with a current registration of 6478 students

spread out in eight teaching buildings and three thousand work stations on the main campus. There are also three regional faculties and three regional development centres that are attached to companies. The campus boasts various kinds of residences and staff apartments in a small university complex with shops, pre-schools, a gym and medical facilities all within walking distance.

The signing of an agreement with Cuba during this visit will lead to the forging of closer ties between our respective institutions, as there is much to learn from institutions such as UCI.

Ms Beata Mtyingizana, Director for Global Partnerships, DHET

WORLD SKILLS AMERICAS REGIONAL COMPETITION

DEPUTY MINISTER'S VISIT TO SÃO PAULO, 12-18 NOVEMBER 2012

Deputy Minister Manana led a delegation of Department officials, including the Services Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) and the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services SETA (MERSETA), to attend the 42nd WorldSkills Americas competition held in São Paulo, Brazil in November 2012, at the invitation of the National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship (SENAI). The purpose of the visit was to witness, first hand, the value of the competition for skills development in the participating countries.

Prior to the start of the competition the delegation undertook a guided tour of the SENAI School for Automotive Training and Apprenticeship, and the School for Textile Production and Fashion Design. Both facilities reflected world class infrastructure and training, strongly supported by private partnerships and government support. The SENAI organisation boasts several such schools across Brazil and is largely credited with popularising vocational education among Brazil's youth and employers.

SENAI was the lead organiser of the Americas leg of the competition, which is the precursor for participation

in the 42nd WorldSkills Competition to be held in Leipzig, Germany, in 2013, in which the winners would represent the Americas. Forty-seven countries participated in this regional competition, which covers countries from the Caribbean, Central America, North and South America.

Held over four days, the format of the competition involves the evaluation of contestants in six skills categories, covering forty-eight specified skills, which range



Deputy Minister Manana at WorldSkills Americas



from tiling and clothing production to sophisticated robotics. The contestants aged 16-24 years are required to apply their skills to internationally benchmarked tasks, which require them to interpret the written task sheet, analyse and solve challenges similar to those faced in a real work environment, aligned to international standards of work practice. Of particular note is that the competition also caters for contestants with physical and cognitive challenges in appropriate and designated skills categories.

Contestants are adjudicated by experts drawn from across the world for their knowledge and expertise. Evaluators observe contestants closely over the four days allocated to complete the assigned task, during which contestants must also be mindful of the pressures that come with industry and global competitiveness in job performance, such as maximizing productivity and minimizing materials wastage. Of importance is that skills related to work ethics, team work, health and safety practices, and planning capability are also

evaluated during performance of the task.

The visiting delegation gained several insights from attending the competition. Perhaps the most remarkable is the incredibly high standards set for contestants, as well as the remarkable support and participation of the private sector in the WorldSkills competitions. It also demonstrates the recognition and dignity accorded to blue collar professionals, commonly referred to as artisans and tradesmen in most countries. South Africa has much to benefit from using the WorldSkills International (WSI) platform to greatly improve perceptions around technical and vocational education generally, and around artisanship specifically, and simultaneously help us achieve world class training standards to ensure that we are globally significant and competitive.

Ms Aruna Singh, Director for Curriculum Development and Support, DHET

INDIA-BRAZIL-SOUTH AFRICA

ACADEMIC EXCHANGE THROUGH THE IBSA MOBILITY FUND

Since the inauguration of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) trilateral agreement, interest in strengthening academic partnership between the three member countries has been increasing. To this end, the Education Working Groups of the member states agreed to an IBSA Mobility Fund to the value of an annual Rand equivalent of US\$50,000. These funds are intended for the promotion of academic collaboration between the IBSA countries. Several joint projects were concluded in 2012.

The IBSA Mobility Grants served as a strong catalyst for the establishment of IBSA collaboration programmes and ...the potential for further collaboration is great.

MOBILITY INITIATIVES

In 2010 almost R1 million of the IBSA Mobility Fund had accumulated and was available for IBSA projects. Higher Education South Africa (HESA), in partnership with the National Research Foundation (NRF), issued a call for proposals for joint projects to be undertaken by South African academics and their counterparts in India and Brazil. Fourteen proposals were approved and grants made available. While the grants were generally too small to allow for full scale joint studies,

future possible collaborations were identified.

Most of the projects came to an end toward the latter part of 2011. Feedback reports were received during 2012. A brief description of each of the projects is provided below:

Mathematical modelling of fluctuations in space plasmas, was led by Prof R Bharuthram from the University of the Western Cape, in collaboration with Prof SV Singh of the Indian Institute of Geomagnetism and Dr P Muralikrishna of the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisa Espaciais. Their joint workshop served as a catalyst for establishing a strong IBSA collaboration programme in the mathematical modelling of fluctuations phenomena in space plasmas.

A workshop on thermodynamic properties of ionic liquids was led by Prof N Deenadayalu of the Durban University of Technology, with Prof M Aznar from the University of Campinas and Dr P Venkatesu from the University of Delhi and culminated in plans for future student and staff exchange.

A workshop on urbanisation and human settlements was led by Dr N Odendaal from the University of Cape Town (UCT). Collaborators agreed on common themes, data resources and research projects which will include comparative case studies in accor-



dance with identified research questions.

A trilateral consortium for studying the enzymology of lignocelluloses degradation was led by Prof B Pletschke of Rhodes University, in collaboration with Prof R Kuhad from the University of Delhi and Dr B Quirino of the Catholic University of Brasilia and Embrapa- Agrienergy. Student and academic exchange is envisaged.

A project on agricultural biotechnology, led by Prof G Bouwer of the University of the Witwatersrand, in collaboration with Prof B Venkatasamy from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and Dr F Hercos Valicente from Embrapa Maize and Sorghum, established a research network. Collaborators also served as examiners for post graduate theses and reviewed papers.

Dr Pillay from the University of Pretoria and Dr Bhana from the University of Kwazulu Natal (UKZN) led a team of four collaborators in **Women Studies**. They were joined by Dr Mintra from the TATA Institute for Social Sciences and Dr Mattos from Brazil. Their collaboration culminated in the publication of a book and an article for publication.

A collaboration on **Trans-Indian Ocean colonisation patterns of reef fishes** was led by Dr S van der Heyden from the University of Stellenbosch, joined by Dr S Floeter from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Dr C Ferreira of the Universidade de Rio de Janeiro and Dr K Shanker of the Indian Institute of Science. They addressed the question of whether southern Africa is a gateway to the Atlantic Ocean or vice versa. They initiated a research programme to sequence various genes to examine colonisation and population genetic patterns on a global scale. A paper will be submitted to Diversity or Distributions of the Journal of Biogeography.

Prof R Galvaan from UCT led a team including Prof S Galhego of the University of Sao Paolo and Prof S Saha from Manipal University. They dealt with **occupational therapy education for social transformation** and undertook exploratory research which revealed similarities and differences in theories informing curricula which aim to promote social inclusion. This resulted in co-authoring a manuscript for a journal publication.

The **building capacity of hospital and health services management engagement**, led by Prof C Jinabhai of UKZN and joined by Prof J Roberto Ferreira from the Federal Serotherapy Institute at the Centre of Global Health and Prof M Rao of the Public Health Foundation of India, identified the need for development of a professional graduate training programme in respect of leadership, management and executive ca-

capacity in the public health system.

Prof T Marwala from the University of Johannesburg, with Prof F Barque of the University of Pernambuco and Prof S Chakraverty from the Indian National Institute of Technology, held a **technical workshop on finite element updating using density based fish school search**. Their collaboration led to training of emerging researchers and a joint paper at the 2012 Congress on Evolutionary Computation in Australia.

A team, led by Prof J Malherbe from the University of Pretoria, collaborating with Prof P Chakraborty from the Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics and Prof E de Silveira of Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio de Janeiro, dealt with **future generation energy materials**. Two workshops were held (India and Brazil), six postgraduate students were trained, and the collaborators attended an international conference and submitted an article for publication.

Prof B Mayosi from UCT led a team, which included Prof L Guilherme of University of Sao Paolo and Dr G Karthikeyan from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, on the **development of a register of patients with rheumatic heart disease**. They also submitted an article for publication and were invited to submit a proposal for a grant from the Wellcome Trust, on the genetics of rheumatic heart disease.

Dr JA Karlsson from UKZN and Prof. Luis Armando Gandin from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul collaborated on a symposium and writing **workshop to initiate comparative education research on the intersectionality of poverty, gender inequalities, spatiality and education**. Even though the Indian participant withdrew (health reasons), the collaborators trained a number of postgraduate students, involved them in a three-day writing workshop to prepare co-authored articles, and presented a joint paper in Montreal, Canada.

CONCLUSION

The South African academics felt that the IBSA Mobility Grants served as a strong catalyst for the establishment of IBSA collaboration programmes and it is evident that the potential for further collaboration is great.

In general, this first partnership between the DHET, HESA and the NRF was highly successful. A second round of such collaboration will be introduced in 2013.

Dr Ronel Blom, Manager for Research and Innovation, HESA



WORKING WITH INSTITUTIONS

In mid-2010, the International Relations Chief Directorate embarked on a mission to visit all South African post-school education and training institutions, with the objective of strengthening and promoting closer collaboration on international relations matters. The visits were specifically targeted at the 23 public universities, 21 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and 50 public Further Education and Training (FET) colleges. The primary aim of these visits was to establish the nature and extent of international collaborations and engagements that these institutions are currently involved in, with a view to exploring possibilities for synergies and alignment with the work of government, and subsequently developing a database on these.

Better alignment between the work of institutions and government priorities will not only assist institutions in terms of knowing which countries or regions are of strategic value to South Africa, but will certainly assist the Department to better manage and coordinate international higher education and training agreements and programmes.

The process began with one-on-one meetings with all 23 public universities during 2010. The second phase, which included meetings with all 21 SETAs, was undertaken during 2011. The final phase of the visits included meetings with all 50 public FET colleges during 2012.

These meetings were successful and rewarding in many ways. Not only did we learn that all our post-school education and training institutions have a long history of international partnerships, but that these partnerships were quite spread-out across the world. The meetings also established that there was a shared uncertainty within the sector regarding the extent to which institutions should be engaging in international activities and the direction that these activities should take. This, as we learnt, was due to the lack of a national or sector-wide framework or guidelines that clearly stipulates issues pertaining to the internationalisation of higher education and training. It was against this background that the Department decided to develop an international re-

lations strategy.

All institutions applauded the Department for initiating the process.

our post-school education and training institutions have a long history of international partnerships

ing the visits. It was indicated that engagement between the Department and institutions on matters pertaining to international collaborations was long overdue and the Department was commended for initiating the process. To most institutions these one-on-one visits symbolised new beginnings, and indeed, the new direction that the Department is taking and they welcomed the efforts to foster closer collaborations between government and the sector.

There was a consensus amongst institutions that these meetings should take place on an annual basis in order to ensure the sharing of information and regular updates on developments. Therefore, the Department plans to meet and engage each sector on an on-going basis, preferably annually.

As a follow-up to these meetings, the Department developed a questionnaire it requested all institutions to complete, so as to capture, in greater detail, the nature and extent of the international activities of all institutions. The aim of the questionnaire was to populate a database on institutional linkages within the higher education and training sector, in order to ensure that we deepen these partnerships and foster better alignment with broader government priorities. The database will also be used to build on these partnerships and provide pointers on other possible and potential sources to enhance and add value to the skills development efforts of the sector. All three sectors (universities, SETAs and FET colleges) have completed their questionnaires and the Department is currently integrating the information into one dataset.

Ms Prudence Makhura, Deputy Director for Africa and Middle East, DHET

WARWICK IN AFRICA

Over 120,000 young Africans in South Africa, Ghana and Tanzania have benefited from transformed Maths and English teaching through Warwick in Africa, since start-up in 2006. The programme supports teaching Maths and English to young Africans and provides a range of formal and informal training and coaching for their teachers in schools and the local community. Developed with philanthropic funding by the University of Warwick, a UK research intensive university, outstanding students with teaching experience compete to power the programme with their high energy and talents, while experienced teachers also compete to support local teachers through master classes.

South African High Commissioner, Dr Zola Skweyeya, provided outstanding support through the development stages of Warwick in Africa.

It was through his auspices, that the Minister for Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande, and his delegation visited the University of Warwick in November 2010. One of the outcomes of that meeting has been the University's very fruitful partnership with University of Venda (UniVen). A Warwick delegation visited Thoyouyandou, where UniVen's Vice Chancellor, Peter Mbat, gave his whole-hearted support to facilitate the partnership with Warwick. A successful pilot was delivered in summer of 2011, which was closely evaluated to enable further development of the programme this year.

Early in 2012, eight UK based students were recruited to spend four weeks of their summer vacation teaching in two village schools near Thoyouyandou: Edison Nesengani Secondary, Tshino Village and Ratshikwekwete Secondary, Tshingulwana Village. Over

150 students competed for just 75 places. The selected students commit to attend pre-departure training sessions, employing a combination of group and individual in-



Warwick in Africa student teachers with learners at the Vuwani Science Resource Centre

terview sessions, cultural awareness, team, leadership and lateral thinking skill assessments, so that they can have an immediate impact when they arrive in the schools.

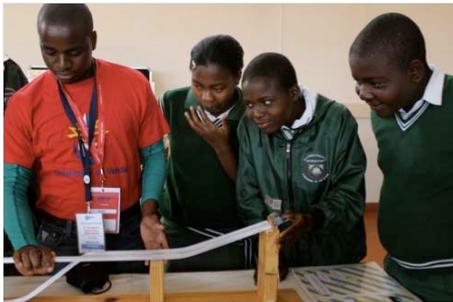
This year, UniVen enabled the programme to break new ground! With the support of Professor Sankaran, Venda physics academic and Director of the Vuwani Science Resource Centre, and Venda's Director of International Relations, Mr Cornelius Hagenmeier, the opportunity for UniVen students to take part in Warwick in Africa was advertised. A number of UniVen students applied and after a Skype interview, five were selected, committing to additional training over Skype and eventually three pioneering UniVen students joined the Warwick in Africa team!

Their immense contribution is summed up by Sattawat Sonsin, WIA student teacher, "Working alongside the Venda students was fantastic, they were an asset: the real, relatable people the kids could aspire to be like." And to show just what an impact the WIA team had, Sattawat added, "I would have loved to have stayed for longer just so I could see the progression in the learners' marks". One of their classes went from more than half the class scoring zero, to the majority getting 60 – 80% and one learner achieving 100%.

The relationship with Venda was deepened this year when two teachers from Ratshikwekwete Secondary and Edison Secondary school were selected to take part in a two-week study programme held on the University of Warwick campus. This programme is designed to support highly motivated teachers who will share their professional development with other col-



Student teacher George Kenison at a pre-departure training session



UniVen students joined the team

leagues on their return. During the trip, they visited a number of secondary schools to see how they were run, witnessed different styles of maths teaching, attended lectures at the Institute of Education, met colleagues in the Further Maths Network, which facilitates extra provision for the equivalent of higher grade maths students, and also ex-

perienced a few cultural highlights in the UK.

More information about Warwick in Africa is available on our website www.warwick.ac.uk/go/warwickinafrica.

Ms Mary McGrath, Director of Fundraising, University of Warwick in the United Kingdom.

UNDERSTANDING CHINA: RESEARCH AND CO-OPERATION WITH THE MIDDLE KINGDOM

China has had a presence in African countries for the last fifty years, as a cooperation partner, initially mostly driven by developing countries' solidarity and a revolutionary mission in assisting African liberation struggles. However, only since the late 1990s, the engagement has been driven clearly by economic interests and trade; since then, the exchange of goods has multiplied drastically and the presence of Chinese entrepreneurs and state-owned enterprises on the African continent has been substantial. China is now the biggest trade partner for a number of African countries. Its resource needs – like that of other emerging economies – has fuelled price spikes for some commodities that are Africa's major export goods. China's trade with Africa is at USD 166 billion annually; India's overall trade is USD 32 billion annually. Africa is now China's the fastest growing trade partner.

Chinese enterprises are engaging in Africa on two levels: firstly, bigger corporates, operating as multinational companies, often engaged in, say, infrastructure construction or telecommunication or mining activities. Secondly, small traders and small-scale investors from the Middle Kingdom, seek (and find) economic opportunities across Africa, often as retailers in so-called China-Shops. Additionally, and this is often overlooked, some African businesses have also grasped opportunities for engaging with the booming economy and manufacturing in China. The African businesses are mostly South African, when we look at the formal enterprises; there is, however, also a substantial transnational small-trader community from Africa, particularly in Guangzhou and in Zhejiang province. Interactions with China would ideally include small and medium enter-



prises, in order to spread experience and the benefits from opportunities that present themselves. At both levels, research is required to better understand the actors, their backgrounds, their business models and (possible) state support they might receive for venturing abroad.

On the African continent, we need to understand why Chinese actors have an interest in African states – from a perspective of African economies, societies and the interest in sustainable development. Foreign investments clearly are needed – but they will only contribute to development if the engagement is strategically used and embedded in longer-term strategies. A key issue to explore is South-South cooperation. It is a subject for analysis at an academic centre like the Centre for Chinese Studies (CCS) in Stellenbosch. More immediately, though, it also is a quality to feature in the CCS' work itself. Through direct collaboration and through work in China, we learn about Chinese realities. This collaboration also teaches us about the work on Africa in China and the questions that Chinese academics are asking. The CCS cooperates in various schemes with Chinese institutions; the latest to be established is in the framework of 10+10, calling for 10 think tanks on either side, to establish joint work.



The CCS is still a unique institution on the African continent. We work on Africa’s relationship with China in three work strands, namely the political partnership, the economic cooperation and the environmental sustainability of the relationship. Exploring the relationship to China does necessarily mean that we look into policy drivers in China – and are thus required to have a fair grasp of intra-China discussions on, say, macroeconomic policy, energy planning or foreign policy decisions. Also, a comparative approach is beneficial to the understanding of China’s activities in Africa. China is one – albeit by far the biggest– emerging economy engaging with African states and learning is clearly taking place where other actors in South-South cooperation are concerned. Furthermore, there is a need to compare to ‘traditional donors’ approaches: How is China different? Where does it offer new, other opportunities?

At the CCS, we understand that our uniqueness is

Africa is now China’s fastest growing trade partner

also a responsibility. Thus, capacity development with regard to the study of China-Africa relations, is part of our work. This is important for Africa as a whole – and it is important to our immediate work. We need to collaborate with researchers across the continent on the

topic. Through a scholarship scheme called Phandulwazinge China (“Understanding China” in Xhosa), we annually host two scholars from other African countries, who work with us on aspects of Africa’s relations with China. The scholarship, sponsored by the Open Society Foundation, comes with travel funds to China, so that empirical work is also possible in China herself.

While we cooperate with and learn from European, North American and Australian institutions– and intend continue doing so – South-South cooperation is a core requirement for our work. Nothing can replace direct interactions with Chinese researchers as well as with other African researchers working on China. Only through this intensive intellectual exchange can we construct a perspective on Chinese growth, its opportunities and risks, and its reality in African states, that serves the purpose to foster African development in the globalised world of the 21st century.

Dr Sven Grimm, Director of the Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Stellenbosch

The Centre for Chinese Studies at Stellenbosch University was established following the signing of an agreement of cooperation in the field of education between the governments of South Africa and China in 2004. It is the first institution devoted to the study of China in Sub-Saharan Africa and promotes the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experiences.

DHET OFFICIALS STUDYING IN CHINA

PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION COURSES IN CHINA

In 2011, the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China invited the Department of Higher Education and Training to nominate officials to apply for participation in a scholarship programme for a one-year Masters in Public Administration at a Chinese institution. Rodney Manyike, Deputy Director: Human Resource Development and I were nominated and when our applications were successful, we were granted permission to travel to China and study there for a period of one year.

The purpose of the study programme is to provide government officials from developing countries



with an opportunity to participate in an intensive one-year Master programme to both enhance skills in strategic planning and policy analysis and to gain an in depth understanding of China's education and public administration system that has assisted its development into the political and economic force it is today.

The course is hosted by two leading universities in economic and policy studies in China and on the Asia continent, Tsinghua University, in the political capital city of Beijing, and Sun Yat Sen University in the economic hub of Guangzhou, in Guangdong province.

Experience of the Course at Sun Yat Sen University (SYSU) and Life in Guangzhou

The course is intensive and the curriculum covers 'Introduction of Chinese Politics, Policy Development, Government Innovation and Budgeting and Finances as well as Strategic Planning'. Of great interest is the ability to successfully present and compress a two-year course into one year and to meet the standards and attain success

during this short period, participants have to be disciplined and dedicated. Even considering the demanding circumstances, SYSU made my stay enjoyable by ensuring high quality tuition, integrating theory and practice in an endeavour to achieve and maintain the high standards set by the Chinese Ministries of Education and Commerce.

I admire the cooperation between the two Ministries, which ensured that each module was accompanied by relevant field trips, including visits to different government departments and state-owned-enterprises, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. These field trips helped to bridge the gap between theory and practice, study and enjoyment. The experience gained on field trips also assisted the class to understand the importance of curricular alignment to labour market needs. DHET's continued participation in this programme will contribute towards the achievement of higher standards from employees and, by means of exposure to international experiences, will also result in higher

standards regarding practices and performance standards.

China is a great country in which to live and from which to learn. It has adopted a culture of hard work and high quality. It is not always easy to study and live in a foreign country, but, on the whole, Chinese people seem to make it easy for foreigners to feel comfortable in and part of this massive Asian country. My special gratitude to DHET's International Relations for affording us this golden opportunity and I encourage the DHET family to take full advantage of study opportunities such as these.

Mr Ike Mokhele, Deputy Director for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, DHET



Graduation ceremony

CHINESE GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP

A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

As the global debate on China versus the world rages on, I have found myself sitting in the middle of it all; watching the buildings go up, smelling the food steaming in the alleyways and mingling with over a billion people, in the very heart of China – Beijing. My position in China, particularly as a South African student, is unique in a number of important ways. We are on the cusp of a changing world. And in this emergent world, an understanding of Sino-African relations will become the trump card for any aspiring person.

The Chinese Government Scholarship has given me a significant opportunity that I truly value, even in the face of constant criticism. I say this because – speaking as a journalist – China is embarking on a monumental drive to globally increase its soft power. The evidence of this is apparent in the state-funded institutions slowly proliferating around the globe, and of course, in the Chinese Government Scholarship program. The Chinese are not shy of the word propaganda (and its local connotations are, in fact, deemed positive). Yet during

my stay of little over a year in China, I was never coerced into supporting China and its institutions in any way, or felt obligated to do anything for the scholarship, or even to acknowledge that I study under its benefit.

Why do I bring this up? Simply because, as much of a victim of China's soft power as others may consider me to be, I have gained an insight into China that is arguably more objective and correct than most of the speculative and often grossly misguided reports of China and its relations with the world (from both Chinese and Western sources). I come from the West, and slowly I am coming to 'know' a little of China too.

The scholarship has given me the financial freedom to pursue my degree without having to worry about external stresses. This freedom gave me the opportunity to engage with Chinese academics, everyday people (Beijing taxi drivers are gems for insight into Chinese thinking), government officials, the press and, of course, a host of other foreigners, all with their own notions and opinions of China. What better way

is there for understanding a rising power such as China?

An American professor of mine at Tsinghua University said something to me a while ago that I have slowly begun to acknowledge: At the end of this stint in China, I will effectively be a Western expert of the country. That is not to say there are not people smarter and more knowledgeable than me, but in the global context, there are only a handful of people who have lived, studied and gained an insight into China that so closely resembles what we may call 'reality'. You can never understand a place until you have lived there, and I have yet to find any foreigner living in China who disagrees on this score.

If there is one thing I can be certain of when considering the returns of such an opportunity, it is that the future will present virtually endless avenues of opportunity. The point of this paper is not to present my opinion of China, but rather to say that it is a place that must be experienced to be understood. And that such an understanding will necessarily be accompanied by dozens, if not hundreds, of newly opened doors.

There are two things to bear in mind when considering the



Tsinghua University Campus

Chinese Government Scholarship: firstly, it is a chance to truly get a taste of arguably the world's most important emerging superpower. Secondly, it is an opportunity for education, with no obligation of any kind of compensation in return.

As I write this piece, I am sitting at the top of a skyscraper looking down at the bustling streets of Beijing and enjoying a steaming cappuccino. Later, I will join an academic and friend from South Africa for lunch, and we'll most likely share opinions

on China and our experiences here. Tomorrow I have a meeting with a group of government officials, organised by the company at which I am an intern., and on the weekend, well, I may just take the bullet train to a neighbouring city and spend the day there.

To summarise, the scholarship has enriched and continues to enrich my life and I trust it will create the foundation for something much larger in the future.

Mr Daniel Charvat, South African journalism student at Tsinghua University, China.

ERASMUS MUNDUS SCHOLARSHIP

The Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme is funded by the EU and has provided support for South African academics and researchers since 2010. Support is aimed at South African higher education institutions that wish to implement joint programmes at postgraduate level or to set-up inter-institutional cooperation partnerships between universities from Europe and targeted third countries or individual students, researchers and university staff who wish to spend a study, research or teaching period at a university in Europe, in the context of one of the above mentioned joint programmes or cooperation partnerships.

TESTIMONIES FROM SOUTH AFRICAN BENEFICIARIES

I am grateful, and indebted for such an empowering journey. A journey that will not only change my future, but hopefully the future of so many South Africans in the low income housing sector, as my research aims at investigations around improving these developments.

Liezel Williams-Bruinders, PhD student, NMMU, K U Leuven, Belgium.

My [stay] at Radboud University was amazing ... the time we spent at the science building, home to Nobel prize-winning scientists, was something to remember. It was the opportunity of a lifetime.

Sarisha Perumal, Masters student, UKZN, Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

A year ago I would not have thought I would live so intensely in a foreign place, but my stay as an international

exchange student has been one of the best experiences of my life.

Nikara Mahadeo, Masters student, UKZN, Radboud University, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

Studying at KU Leuven in Belgium was very rewarding. I liked the collaboration which industry has with the university. I looked forward to going to class ...

Ferose Samaai, Masters student, CPU, K U Leuven.

I was mentored by a leading researcher in Poland and I got to understand what producing quality work entails. So if you want a solid research career and you want to gain that North-South perspective, this is the programme for you.

Pearl Mzobe, Masters student, RU, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland.



RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

THE ROLE OF THE DHET AND SAQA

The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) is legally mandated by Parliament to oversee the further development and implementation of the National Qualifications Authority (NQF); advance the objectives of the NQF; and coordinate the three sub-frameworks of the NQF. The NQF objectives include establishing a framework for learning achievements; accelerate access, mobility and progression in education, training and career paths; enhance quality; accelerate redress. To enable SAQA to carry out its responsibility to provide access, mobility and progression it must perform, amongst others, the function of providing an evaluation and advisory service for foreign qualifications consistent with the NQF Act.

There are two parts to this service provided by SAQA. Firstly, SAQA provides an evaluation service to recognise foreign qualification holders. These include foreign nationals who want to continue their studies in South Africa or want to enter our country to work on a temporary or permanent basis. It also includes South Africans who studied abroad and now want to return home. SAQA's responsibility entails ensuring that the qualification obtained by the foreign qualification holder is legitimately obtained by a legally acceptable institution in the country of origin. SAQA also matches this qualification with the NQF to ascertain where the qualification fits into our education and training system. For the period 2011/12 SAQA received and processed over 30 000 qualifications for recognition. The

top ten countries from which we received applications from during this year include Zimbabwe, India, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, the United States of America, China, Ghana, Zambia and Kenya.

This crucial work ... builds bridges between important political and commercial partners and carefully nurtures South Africa's strategic interests.

The second function related to our foreign qualifications legal mandate is to provide an advisory service to policy makers and departments. One of the key projects in which SAQA has been involved, includes providing advice to the Department of Higher Education and Training on the development of international agreements on the recognition of qualifications between countries. SAQA has worked very closely with and under the leadership of the International Relations Chief Directorate of the DHET in negotiating an agreement to recognise Russian qualifications. To date, a final draft agreement has been produced and is ready to be signed by the Ministers of Higher Education of the Russian Federation and South Africa.

The process of arriving at a suitable agreement has been long and challenging. This is mainly due to the fact that the two education systems are very different and their de-

velopment was influenced by different histories. Over the last number of years the education system of the two countries also underwent extensive reform. In order to foster better understandings of the two systems, mutual visits to Russia and South Africa were arranged and negotiators of the agreement spent considerable time crafting the joint agreement. In principle, the agreement is now in place and the legal aspects of the agreement have been finalised.

The agreement, when signed, will allow qualifications between Russia and South Africa to be recognised by both countries and will provide citizens of both countries appropriate access and mobility within the different systems. Furthermore, it will allow South African students to study in the Russian Federation and be able to return to South Africa with a very clear understanding of where they fit into the South African education and training system.

The relationship with the Russian Federation is a key component of building the relationship within the BRICS countries. This exercise with the Russians has taught us very important lessons on how to approach other, similar country agreements with India, Brazil and China. This crucial work of the International Relations Chief Directorate of the DHET, builds bridges between important political and commercial partners and carefully nurtures South Africa's strategic interests.

Mr Joe Samuels, CEO, SAQA

