

Thirty years of South African foreign policy and UK relations

Friday 10 May 2024 | 09:30 – 13:15 (London, BST) | 10:30 – 14:15 (Pretoria, SAST)

Chatham House & online via Zoom

In the wake of South Africa's historic transition to democracy in 1994, symbolized by Nelson Mandela's inauguration as president, the global community, particularly Western nations, hailed the dawn of a 'new South Africa', capable of assuming a vital role in fostering conflict resolution, driving economic prosperity across Africa, and championing democracy and human rights worldwide.

In its post-apartheid foreign policy, South Africa has notably served three terms on the UN Security Council, advocated for the expansion of BRICS, and will be the first African host of the G20 in 2025. However, its continental ambitions have been limited by resistance to its economic expansion and democratic principles, and doubts about its suitability as Africa's global representative. Moreover, domestic political and economic challenges have posed obstacles to successive administrations' pursuit of regional and global agendas.

At this event, speakers will reflect on the complexities of South Africa's foreign relations and examine both historical dynamics and future prospects of its relationship with the UK.

09.00 – Registration

09.30 – Keynote address

HE Jeremiah Kingsley Mamabolo, South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom

Chair: **Christopher Vandome**, Senior Research Fellow, Africa Programme, Chatham House

09.45 – Panel 1: Understanding thirty years of South African foreign policy

Professor Chris Landsberg, Professor and SARChI Chair of African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, University of Johannesburg

Lesley Masters, Senior Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, Nottingham Trent University

Professor Adam Habib, Director, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

Dr Philani Mthembu, Executive Director, Institute for Global Dialogue (*online*)

Discussant: **Mohamed Cassimjee**, Former diplomat, South African foreign service

Chair: **James Hamill**, Author of *Africa's Lost Leader South Africa's continental role since apartheid*

11.15 – Coffee break

11.45 – Panel 2: The UK - South Africa relationship (in conversation)

Lord Oates, Co-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on South Africa

Sharon Constançon, Chairperson, South Africa Chamber of Commerce

Amol Prabhu, CEO, South Africa & Market Head for Africa, Barclays

Risana Zitha, Managing Director, Africa, DAI Magister

Chair: **Christopher Vandome**, Senior Research Fellow, Africa Programme, Chatham House

13.00 – Closing remarks