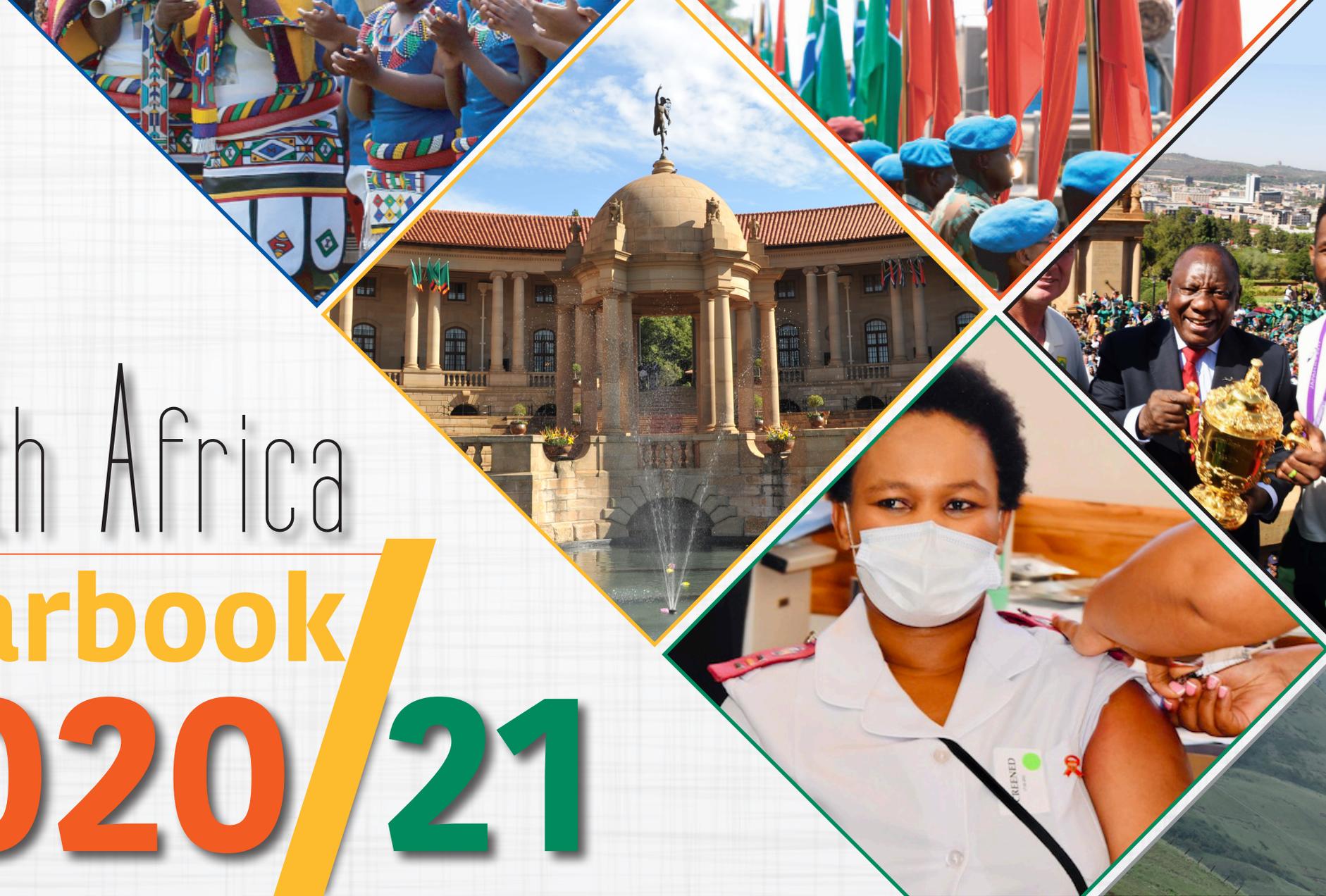


South Africa Yearbook 2020/21



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**STAY
SAFE**

VACCINATE TO SAVE SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT CORONAVIRUS



South Africa

Yearbook

2020/21

FOREWORD



The 2020/21 edition of the *South Africa Yearbook* (SAYB) is published at a time when South Africa is undertaking a process of recovery and rebuilding, following the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Government acted decisively to deal with the deadly pandemic by safeguarding lives and livelihoods. The measures taken in March 2020 helped to curb the spread of COVID-19 and allowed government enough time to intensify prevention efforts and strengthen the healthcare system to be able to respond to the anticipated increase in infection rates. Government introduced a massive social and economic relief package to mitigate the hardships caused by COVID-19 and prepare the country for the phased reopening of the economy.

As a result of the pandemic, South Africa has experienced a sharp decline in economic growth and a significant increase in unemployment. We have, therefore, made it a priority to accelerate the pace of our economic recovery to overcome poverty, hunger, joblessness and inequality.

The Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan – which we launched in October 2020 – aims to create jobs, primarily through aggressive infrastructure investment and mass employment programmes; reindustrialise our economy, focusing on growing small businesses; accelerate economic reforms to unlock investment and growth; fight crime and corruption, and improve the capability of the State.

Operation Vulindlela, an initiative of The Presidency and National Treasury, aims to open the way for high-impact economic reforms in network industries such as energy, water, telecommunications and transport. It focuses on a number of priority reforms and seeks to ensure that they are effectively and swiftly executed.

The Infrastructure Fund, which was launched this year, has fundamentally transformed the State's approach to the financing of infrastructure projects through mobilising finance from public entities, the private sector and multilateral institutions.

The African Continental Free Trade Area, which came into operation on 1 January 2021, will ensure that South African businesses expand into markets across Africa and enable the country to position itself as a gateway to the continent. With its advanced infrastructure, diverse economy, sophisticated capital markets and developed

manufacturing capacity, South Africa is the ideal location for any company wanting to reach the continental market.

As part of the recovery of our tourism sector, which was particularly hard hit by the pandemic, South Africa is introducing eVisas to visitors from 15 countries across the world.

To expand energy generation capacity, government is working with Eskom to find ways of ensuring that the utility's financial position improves, manages its debt and reduces its dependency on the fiscus.

Government continues to intensify the fight against crime and corruption, and is strengthening the State by advancing honesty, ethics and integrity at all levels of the Public Service. The National School of Government provides ongoing training to government officials to ensure a capable state.

The signing of performance agreements between Ministers and the President is intended to enhance accountability and focused performance by members of the Executive.

To ensure that deserving students are supported to access tertiary education, government is implementing the policy of providing fee-free higher education.

South Africa is facing another pandemic in the form of gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF). The National Strategic Plan on GBVF provides a framework to guide the country's response to dealing with the crisis by, among other interventions, making law-enforcement agencies more effective in combating the scourge.

This edition of the SAYB details these developments alongside many other government programmes and projects. It chronicles a year in which the country has faced unprecedented challenges, to which it has responded with determination, resourcefulness and most importantly, unity.

Mr Cyril M. Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa
November 2021

South Africa Yearbook 2020/21
Twenty-eighth (28th) edition
(Originally published as *South Africa Official Yearbook*)

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Design and layout: Moipone Mampane

ISBN: 978-0-621-49290-3

The *South Africa Yearbook* (SAYB) is compiled and edited by the GCIS. The editorial staff has taken all reasonable care to ensure correctness of facts and statistics. However, any person requiring formal confirmation of any data in the SAYB or more detailed specific information, should contact the responsible government institution. Additional information is also available on *Government Online* (www.gov.za).

Unless otherwise specified, the information contained in this book was the latest available by November 2021.

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