

# Sweden & South Africa



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Jacque Prinsloo

Peter Tejler, Sweden's new ambassador to South Africa, presented his letters of credence to South African President Kgalema Motlanthe at the Presidential Guesthouse, Pretoria, on October 10.

## Motlanthe welcomes Swedish ambassador

**Sweden's new ambassador to South Africa, Peter Tejler, in mid-October presented his letters of credence to the President of the Republic of South Africa, Kgalema Motlanthe.**

Ambassador Tejler congratulated President Motlanthe to his recent appointment as the third president of democratic South Africa.

Tejler said links between the two countries, which began with Sweden's support to the liberation struggle, had strengthened and deepened over the years and developed into a true partnership:

"We have found ways of expanding our partnership into areas like defence, conflict prevention and conflict resolution in third countries.

"Sweden, without a colonial legacy, and South Africa, as a vibrant democracy and strong international actor, can together contribute to creating better conditions in the region," said Tejler.

President Motlanthe said relations between Sweden and South Africa went back a long time: "It's a bond that spans the broadest cross section of our society. Our people have benefited from that relationship and interaction and we believe that your presence here will cement that bond.

"We have found the relationship with your people to be very enriching and genuine. Many of the Swedish people who have visited South Africa have visited the villages and lived with our people. They are regarded and treated as sisters and brothers."

Tejler took up his position as ambassador to South Africa in September 2008. Among other things, he has previously served as Sweden's ambassador to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The ceremony took place in Pretoria on October 10.

*Åsa Fridh  
Communications officer  
Embassy of Sweden, Pretoria*

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### FROM THE AMBASSADOR

*Dear readers,*

In September my wife and I left Sweden for South Africa, a country far away in geographic terms. The many encounters I have had since: with civil society, Swedes, businesses, township dwellers, politicians, the President and many others have convinced me of the deep sympathy and genuine partnership that permeate relations between Sweden and South Africa. Swedish support to the struggle against apartheid is fondly remembered. Similarly, many Swedes have warm memories of, and feelings for, South Africa and its people. This gives us a unique opportunity for the future.

Today's challenges – be they climate change, peace and security, communicable diseases like HIV and AIDS and TB, human rights and gender equality – can only be tackled together in a partnership between equals. Such a foundation signifies today's relations between our countries. It's my privilege, together with my colleagues, to continue to nurture a partnership between two countries that may be far apart geographically, but close in hearts and minds.

*Peter Tejler  
Sweden's ambassador to South Africa*



Pawel Flato

# New strategy for Swedish-SA cooperation

**The work to develop a new framework for future cooperation between Sweden and South Africa is in full swing.**

The new strategic framework, which will come into force in early 2009, will encompass a large portion of relations between Sweden and South Africa. Although bilateral development cooperation will be a vital part, trade and economic cooperation, political relations and regional cooperation will be equally important.

"This is not just a development framework," says Dag Sundelin, development counsellor at the Swedish embassy in Pretoria. "The idea is to make sure that policy is coherent, and that no sector is seen in isolation from others."

Both countries will develop their own policies and strategies in response to the joint framework. In addition to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swedish

National Police Board, the Folke Bernadotte Academy and the Swedish Trade Council, which are all already collaborating with South African counterparts, have been assigned to contribute to the

**"The idea is to make sure that policy is coherent, and that no sector is seen in isolation."**

Dag Sundelin, development counsellor,  
Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria

strategy on the Swedish side.

At a country meeting in September, both countries mentioned human rights, gender equality, trade, HIV and AIDS, environment and climate change and peace and security as priority areas for future collaboration.

## Four legs in Swedish-SA cooperation

Relations between Sweden and South Africa can be divided into four "legs",

where regular relations without development funding of course represent the lion's share. The other three are development-funded cooperation in HIV and AIDS and possibly other areas of mutual priority, regional and tripartite cooperation in Africa and partner-driven cooperation with some development funding.

Partner-driven cooperation involves equal, co-financed partnerships between public authorities, municipalities, universities, non-governmental organisations and trade organisations, to name a few. Partnerships can receive some development funding to kick-start relations, but should be self-sustaining in the long term. Overall goals are development and poverty alleviation.

The two countries agreed that mutual benefit, added value, common interest and shared responsibilities would be guiding principles for future cooperation.

Åsa Fridh

## Anders Möllander bids farewell to SA

South Africa's Department for Foreign Affairs said goodbye to former Swedish ambassador Anders Möllander with pomp and circumstance. Among the guest were some 100 representatives of South African government, public authorities, organisations and business, as well as diplomats from all over the world.

"For more than 20 years your life has been inextricably connected to the democratic struggle in South Africa and in the region as a whole," said former South African Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Aziz Pahad, in his speech to Anders Möllander. "We highly appreciate your enthusiasm."

Möllander was first posted to South Africa in 1987, when the apartheid regime was still firmly in power. He said what had happened in the country since then was close to a miracle:

"If I had said in 1987 that I expected Mandela to be released and the ANC un-banned during my posting, I would not have been believed. And yet this is what happened."

"Miracles are performed fast in this country, growth and develop-

ment may take a bit longer." Pahad said that Möllander, and Sweden as a whole, worked with South Africa in a way that reflected equality:

"We are true friends

finding solutions together. Sweden and South Africa have built a relation that is strong and driven by common values and principles."

Pahad mentioned the Binational Commission, BNC, between Sweden and South Africa as an "excellent framework" for relations between the two countries. "The economic cooperation continues to expand, and in the areas of culture and academia our



From left, Anders Möllander; Gert Grobler, deputy director-general for Europe and the Americas at South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs; and Aziz Pahad

relations are quite impressive."

The reception took place at Burgers Park Hotel in Pretoria. Government delegations from Burundi and the Sudan attending a workshop on peace and reconciliation organised by the African peace and security organisation ACCORD, also took part in the festivities.

Åsa Fridh

# Clergy an asset in fighting HIV and AIDS

“Clergy can lead the way to undo the stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV and AIDS,” says Dr Edwina Ward, chairperson of ANHERTHA, a programme that involves theology students in the fight against AIDS.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, has decided to support the African Network for Higher Education and Research in Theology and HIV and AIDS, ANHERTHA, which offers scholarships to theology students’ research in HIV and AIDS.

Dr Edwina Ward, senior lecturer at the University of KwaZulu Natal and director and chairperson of ANHERTHA, says the reason for involving the church in combating HIV and AIDS is that no other institution is as well integrated in society:

“Clergy have the power to reach

all sectors of society and empower their many congregants. They can talk about HIV from the pulpit, they can mobilise the community, they can offer a dignified burial to those who die of AIDS. They can lead the way to undo the stigma and dis-

crimination surrounding HIV and AIDS.”

Ward says although attitudes towards

HIV and AIDS have improved in recent years, “there are still some churches that divide the community into ‘us’ and ‘them’. HIV equals sex equals sin. This is unchristian!”

ANHERTHA works with theology students at master level at universities in South Africa, Ethiopia and Tanzania, students who are preparing to work as pastors, priests and youth leaders.

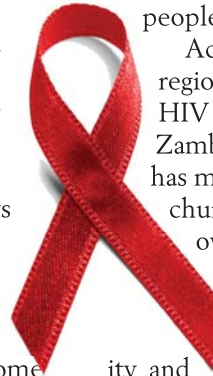
Students taking part in the pro-

gramme spend one year researching the entire field of HIV and AIDS. Each student is placed in a community to work with its members in training, teaching, caring and counselling people about HIV and AIDS.

According to Davies Chitundu, regional advisor at the Swedish HIV and AIDS team in Lusaka, Zambia, working with the church has many advantages. Not only are churches and religion present all over these countries, but given that churches will remain for the foreseeable future they also provide continuity and sustainability. In addition, the church already has established structures, making it easier to reach communities.

In 2010 ANHERTHA will open to undergraduate students, to enable ministers and pastoral counsellors to start working in communities earlier.

Åsa Fridh



## “HIV response from workplace is critical”

More than five million South Africans are currently living with HIV, and over 1,700 people are infected with the virus every day. “In a country where one fifth of the adult population is HIV positive, the response from the workplace is critical,” says Dag Sundelin, development cooperation counsellor at the Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria.

Given the magnitude of the pandemic, the Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria in 2004 embarked on an HIV and AIDS workplace-based programme for all staff and their families.

The programme consists of an HIV and AIDS policy, information and education workshops, voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), medical and counselling services, 24-hour free call centre access, post-exposure prophylaxis counselling and treatment and HIV and AIDS-related days and activities. It has a 12-month cycle of activities to keep all staff and their families informed and educated.

To ensure confidentiality, the embassy uses an external service

provider who is an expert in the field, explains Sundelin. “It is important that we, when we implement the policy, create a non-discriminatory environment for staff members infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. A responsible approach to HIV and AIDS protects the interests of both the embassy, its employees and their families.”

According to Sundelin the education and information strategy has changed the way staff responds to HIV and AIDS:

“During a recent education and information session all staff actively participated in the session, and openly discussed difficult questions such as why an individual should test. There was an openness as never before.”

VCT was available after the educa-



From left, Anders Rönquist, economist at the embassy; Zackie Achmat, director of the Treatment Action Campaign; and Dag Sundelin.

tion session and a record number of people tested. “During this VCT session, which lasted well beyond closing time, more people than ever tested. This is a positive development which shows the increased openness and trust among our employees,” says Sundelin.

Ria Schoeman  
Senior HIV and AIDS advisor  
Embassy of Sweden, Pretoria

### Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria takes over responsibility for Namibia

On October 15, when the Swedish embassy in Windhoek, Namibia, closed, the Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria took over the responsibility for political and consular relations between Sweden and Namibia. The embassy will also promote Swedish-Namibian trade relations in cooperation with the Swedish Trade Council. For more information visit [www.swedenabroad.com/pretoria](http://www.swedenabroad.com/pretoria).

### Watch, hear, feel and experience South Africa in Göteborg, Sweden

From November 8 until January 11 Frölunda Culture House in Göteborg is hosting a two-month South Africa celebration where visitors can experience the country through seminars, exhibitions, film, music and workshops. The event is part of the municipal twinning between Göteborg and Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

### SA award to Swedish novelist

*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, by Swedish author Stieg Larsson, was in October named winner of the 2008 Exclusive Books Boeke Prize. The book is the first volume in the *Millennium* trilogy, named after the magazine where the main character, journalist-hero Mikael Blomkvist, works.

### ITP course in Cape Town, South Africa

The second phase of the International Training Programme "Pesticide Management and Pesticide Risk Reduction" was held in Cape Town in November. Seventeen countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America were represented. "This is a good way of using Swedish resources for development cooperation. Knowledge is transferred to and between institutions, authorities, universities and companies," says Niklas Bergman, project manager at Swedish company NIRAS, which was responsible for the programme.

### Swedish, SA police celebrate relations

In September the Swedish National Police Board held a seminar in Stockholm together with the South African Police Service, celebrating their 10 years of development cooperation in South Africa. The seminar focused on lessons learned and best practice in areas such as education, human rights, equality, personnel and labour union issues, as well as new multilateral cooperation between Sweden, South Africa and other African countries.



From left: Mayor of Lidköping Kjell Hedvall, Oscar Shigwana, Ajay Laloo, Hasse Karlsson, ITM Worldwide AB and John Gillies, International Trade Center in Geneva

## Swedish trade award to SA, Namibian entrepreneurs

South African and Namibian entrepreneurs Ajay Laloo and Oscar Shigwana were joint winners of the Swedish-hosted International Trade Management Worldwide Award for 2008, in October.

Laloo and Shigwana were announced joint winners in recognition of their "exceptional insight and outstanding progress" while participating in the International Trade Management, ITM, programme in South Africa and Namibia.

"We are really happy that two deserving entrepreneurs from Southern Africa received the award," says Markus Johnsson, responsible for skills development programmes at the Swedish Trade Council in Johannesburg, South Africa.

"It shows that there is great potential for Southern African small and medium-sized enterprises, and that we chose the right people to participate in the ITM programme. We are optimistic that the programme will continue to thrive."

The ITM programme aims to build export competence in small and

medium-sized businesses. It includes a blend of company practice, export coaching and local and international seminars.

Says Laloo: "The ITM programme equips people with the right skills and knowledge to trade internationally. The professors and facilitators running the programme are exceptionally knowledgeable and experienced."

*"We are really happy that two entrepreneurs from Southern Africa received the award. It shows that there is great potential for Southern African SMEs."*

Markus Johnsson, Swedish Trade Council

Shigwana, who owns a marble and granite company in Namibia, says: "With the strategic management and international marketing skills I have learnt

through the ITM programme, I look forward to growing the company even further."

ITM is run together with local partners in a range of countries across the world. Each year, the local partners nominate candidates for the ITM Worldwide Award.

In South Africa the ITM programme is run by the Swedish Trade Council and the Department of Trade and Industry, dti, as part of the Swedish-South African broader economic cooperation programme.

For more information, visit [www.swedishtrade.se/bec](http://www.swedishtrade.se/bec).

# CSR in focus on trade minister's visit

Sweden's Minister for Trade Dr Ewa Björling in October paid a two-day visit to South Africa. It was the last stop on Björling's Africa tour, which also included visits to Angola, Zambia and Botswana.

The main focus of Björling's trip was Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR.

"It is not possible to speak about CSR without mentioning HIV and AIDS," said Björling. "This global challenge is one of the most urgent threats to humankind, and it requires joint action now. The private sector has a key role in this struggle."

Speaking to Swedish and South African companies at a seminar on green trade relations, Björling said addressing climate change and increasing environmental awareness were key factors in achieving sustainable global development:

"Environment is one of three priorities in Swedish development cooperation. I am convinced that business communities in Sweden and Southern Africa can develop new technologies and potential products that can better protect and improve our environment and promote increased awareness."

Further, Björling said the Swedish government would continue to find synergies between trade and development cooperation, adding that Swe-



From left: Minister for Trade Ewa Björling; Ulf Berg, president and CEO of the Swedish Trade Council and Martina Larsson, project leader at the Swedish Trade Council in Johannesburg

den had increased trade-related aid contributions by 30% in the past year.

The Swedish government earlier this year launched its new Africa policy, which according to Björling reflects the positive changes that have happened in Africa in the last decade.

Through the new Swedish approach for Africa, she said, Sweden is doing more to combine its efforts in different areas, such as security, trade and development assistance, to create a single, coherent policy.

During her visit Björling also held talks with South Africa's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Sue van

der Merwe, among others, and took part in the South African launch of Ophelia Haanyama Orums' film *Ophelia*, about life as HIV infected in Sweden and Zambia.

Further Björling visited an industrial school in Soweto supported through the South African-Swedish Broader Economic Cooperation programme, and the Swedish company Sandvik, which runs a comprehensive HIV and AIDS programme for its employees as part of the Swedish HIV/AIDS Workplace Programme.

*Åsa Fridh*

Shizeeda Osman

## "Taxes central to achieving MDGs"

**Tax collection is central to building the necessary institutions for democratic states and achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals, a recent taxation conference in South Africa concluded.**

An international conference on taxation, state building and capacity development, organised by the South African Revenue Services, SARS, in Pretoria in August, requested donors to increase their support to strengthening tax administrations in African countries to help reduce these countries' depend-



Thomas Kjellson, Sida

Karin Berner Wallfelt

ence on donor assistance.

Participants at the conference represented African, South American, North American, Asian and European tax administrations as well as 10 donor organisations. Thomas Kjellson from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, and Lars Åke Leijkvist from the Swedish Tax Agency took part.

The conference was a result of increased interest in cooperation between developing and developed countries to improve revenue collec-

tion in developing countries.

In 2005 just 1.7% of donors' total bilateral aid to government administration, economic policy and public sector financial management was directed to tax administration.

The Swedish Tax Agency and SARS, who have been working together in South Africa for over 10 years, are currently exploring opportunities for cooperating with other African countries to help strengthen tax administrations in the region.

*Thomas Kjellson  
Programme Officer  
Division for Democratic Governance  
Swedish International Development  
Cooperation Agency, Sida*

# Swedish-South African opera brings the roofs down in Umeå and Cape Town

"Mark my words: a modern classic". Those were the words of renowned music critic Camilla Lundberg after the opening of *Poet and Prophetess*, an opera jointly staged by the Cape Town Opera and Norrlandsoperan.

Seven months after the world premier in Umeå in snowy, northern Sweden, *Poet and Prophetess* opened at Artscape in the presence of South Africa's Minister of Arts and Culture, Dr Pallo Jordan, the Swedish Ambassador Peter Tejler, and the creators of the production.

For librettist and general manager of the Cape Town Opera, Michael Williams, the inspiration came from discovering the Swedish East India Company and its routes through the southern tip of Africa.

A few hours of reading during a cold and dark February night in Stockholm left Williams with the idea of a fictive meeting of a Swedish poet and an African prophetess in a time when the world was experiencing great economic and social changes.

As a result, the opera captures silly rituals from an 18th century royal court in Sweden, a fight for principles onboard a ship outside the African coast, the determination of strong women, and the hardships faced by a Xhosa community. It explores the intersection between Swedish and

South African history in the era of the Enlightenment. On stage are some of the talented singers who participated in the previous joint production, Ger-shwin's *Porgy and Bess*.

Speaking after the performance, Ambassador Tejler noted that relations between Sweden and South Africa indeed do go way back and encompass all parts of society.

Cooperation between the two opera houses – popularly referred to as the southernmost and the northernmost in the world – and its people shows the

strength and width of this relationship.

Maths Larsson Goethe's *Poet and Prophetess* is the grande finale of a three-year-long, close relationship between the Cape Town Opera and Swedish Norrlandsoperan. The cooperation was facilitated through the Swedish-South African Cultural Partnership Programme.

Jessica Olausson  
Secretary for politics, press, information  
and culture  
Embassy of Sweden, Pretoria



Vuyisile Hlaka, member of the Cape Town Opera Voice of the Nation Ensemble



Ingrid Skeppsbroo, played by Elisabet Strid, Norrlandsoperan



Jula, played by Philisa Sibeko, and Balintulo, played by Aubrey Lodewyk, both members of the Cape Town Opera Voice of the Nation Ensemble



Ingmar Bergman near his home on Fårö island, which provided the setting for many of his films.

## SA film festival pays tribute to Bergman

In 2007 the world lost three iconic filmmakers in just 50 days: Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman; Senegalese Ousmane Sembène, known as the father of African cinema; and the Italian film maestro Michelangelo Antonioni.

The Tri Continental Film Festival, one of South Africa's leading film festivals, hosted *Out of Frame*, a tribute to Antonioni, Bergman and Sembène, as an independent section of the 2008 edition of the festival in Johannesburg and Cape Town at the end of August.

According to Katarina Hedrén, one of the co-organisers, *Out of Frame* was formed as a way of paying tribute to the lives and works of these cinema greats with a weekend of screenings of selected films in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

"These film makers were non-conformist and tremendously productive – their combined film production amounts to more than 110 films in some 60 years. Many of these are milestones in the history of film."

So why the name "Out of Frame"?

"It was inspired by a trait that characterised Antonioni's style of filmmaking, namely to let part of the action take place off the film screen.

Though not visible to the eye, what took place outside the cinema screen was as tangible as what happened on the screen," says Hedrén.

Also, she says, although lost to the world, Antonioni, Bergman and Sembène will continue to live forever through their legacy.

The films screened during the *Out of Frame* festival were Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* and *Wild Strawberries*, Michelangelo Antonioni's *L'Avventura* and *L'Eclisse*, and Ousmane Sembène's *Ceddo* and *Xala*.

*Out of Frame* was supported by the Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria, the Italian Institute of Culture and the Italian embassy in Pretoria, the Tri Continental Film Festival, M-Net's African Film Library and the Pan African Federation of Filmmakers as well as local filmmakers Akin Omotoso and Khalid Shamis.

The organisers of *Out of Frame* were Katarina Hedrén, former co-director of the CinemAfrica African Film Festival in Sweden; editor and director of photography Francesco Biagini; researcher Vanessa Dantas and filmmaker Claude Haffner.

Åsa Fridh

## Pippi starred at State Theatre

Pippi Longstocking has flaming red pigtails, a horse that lives on her porch and a pet monkey named Mr Nilsson. In August she made a guest performance at the Pretoria State Theatre.

Pippi, one of Sweden's best loved children's book characters, sleeps with her feet on the pillow and her head under the covers, bakes cookies on the floor and fights burglars single-handedly, even though she's just nine.

In conjunction with an interactive production of *Cinderella*, the South African State Theatre in Pretoria hosted a Pippi Longstocking exhibition.

Over a thousand school children visited the exhibition and enjoyed the Pippi wigs, costumes, toys and games.

Åsa Fridh



# Swedish dancer expresses beyond cultures and continents

What happens if you take an experimental Japanese dance form, train a Swedish dancer to master it, let it be inspired by the South African landscape and animals and perform a dance that speaks to a cross-cultural audience?

The answer is the Void performance project, the first Butoh dance solo to tour South Africa.

Initiated by Swedish dancer Caroline Lundblad, also known as Frauke, and South African arts producer Vincent Truter, the project consisted of dance performances, lectures and workshops at South African universities, including Rhodes and WITS.

The project explored and developed the art form of Butoh, an unusual Japanese dance, in cross-cultural contexts between Sweden and South Africa. The original sound score was developed by Swedish music producer Henrik Astrom and the jewellery art designed by Hanna Liljenberg from the School of Design and Crafts at the University of Göteborg. Swedish producer and photographer Karin Johnson was also part of the project.



Frauke dancing among the plants in the Wilds, Johannesburg.

The dance was not only performed on dance stages but also in lecture halls and training spaces through a lecture series and training and development workshops. This provided a holistic insight into the Butoh dance as well as an opportunity for young dancers to extend their understanding and experience of dance studies.

South African dance critic

Adrienne Sichel says: "Frauke is an immensely powerful, daring artist with an exceptional capacity to create exquisitely mesmerising theatre."

To the international team this was just the first step in building future collaborations. The Void team will perform throughout Sweden in late 2008 and early 2009. For more information visit [www.frauke.se](http://www.frauke.se).

Vincent Truter  
Arts project producer



Ann Carlsson

## Rope-skippers from Kämpinge to SA

Fifteen rope-skippers travelled all the way from Kämpinge in southern Sweden, to take part in the World Championship in rope-skipping in Cape Town and practise skipping with children at 12 schools in KwaZulu Natal.

One junior team, one senior team and a few individual skippers had practised every day in their school holidays to meet the world elite.

Twenty countries from different parts of the world participated. The Swedish senior team in "double Dutch" (skipping with two ropes at the same time) came fourth, just one point from the bronze medal, while the junior team broke the record in two different speed categories.

The teams also practised rope-skipping at 12 "Stars for Life" schools in KwaZulu Natal. Stars for Life, which aims to support students in avoiding being infected with HIV, was founded by Swedes Dan and Christin Olofsson.

"No two schools were the same, but they all made an equally strong impression on us," says Ann Carlsson at Kämpinge Gymnastics Club.

"The teams skipped among tufts of grass and loose sand, accompanied by music from the car stereo. Everyone was jumping and screaming. They all wanted to skip; the headmasters, teachers, boys and girls."

Some schools received bags with skipping ropes to enable them to continue skipping after the team left.

The last day ended with a girls' football tournament in a meadow.

"Half of the girls were playing barefoot among tufts of grass and cowpats. We ended by sitting down together under the glowing sun, singing the Swedish and South African national anthems. We will never forget those days."

Åsa Fridh

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*The Embassy of Sweden in Pretoria works to promote deeper relations between Sweden and South Africa in business, politics, national and regional development and other areas. The embassy is paving the way for a transformation of grant-based development cooperation into partner-driven cooperation, based on mutual interest and joint financing. Cooperation between Sweden and South Africa focuses on reducing poverty, inequality and vulnerability, fighting HIV and AIDS and consolidating democracy and respect for human rights.*