



Report of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation on its activities undertaken during the 5th Parliament (May 2014 – March 2019), dated 13 March 2019

Key Highlights

Executive Summary

The Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation (the Committee), based its work on its Strategic Plan May 2014-March 2019. When developing the plan, the Committee considered the priorities of government and the aspirations of Parliament in terms of the thrust of oversight for the 5th Parliament. The Committee also took into consideration the strategic objectives of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (the Department) for 2014-2019 for its inspiration on oversight focus areas. The Committee further opened space for inputs from stakeholders with interest in the work of the Committee and working on matters related to international relations.

From the onset, the Committee agreed that when it comes to issues of Foreign Policy of the country, there could be only one message to the outside world. Only the official South African Foreign Policy position on issues could be communicated to the outside world for consistency.

The Committee has recorded a number of milestone achievements in that. For the first time in the history of the Committee, it processed legislation. The Foreign Service Bill was meticulously processed by the Committee and adopted by the National Assembly on 21 November 2018. The mandate of the Committee is to oversee and ensure the implementation of South Africa's Foreign Policy. The uniqueness of this mandate is that the implementation of South Africa's Foreign Policy can only be meaningfully assessed and monitored through the performance of the Department internationally, and through the performance of its Missions abroad.

The current Parliamentary Oversight Model allows for a limited space for oversight beyond the borders of the South Africa, and this has been a major impediment to the work of the Committee. For the first time, however, the Committee conducted a milestone oversight visit beyond the borders, in Namibia, where it was able to come to a landmark determination on the custodianship of vacant state-owned

land parcels and properties abroad. The oversight impact was that it became a pilot project that would assist in solving similar challenges regarding the South African government's land parcels and properties in other parts of the world. It was also able to unlock the inaction by the Department to maintain or dispose of vacant state-owned land parcels and properties abroad.

The Committee also undertook a focused Study Tour comparing best practice on the regulation of the Foreign Service. The legislation will be the first ever in South Africa to regulate the management of South Africa's Foreign Service.

The Committee's overall oversight assessment of the Department is that, its overall political and diplomatic performance has been good and consistent over the past five years. The manner in which the Department has portrayed South Africa when engaging with global partners has put the country on a better space internationally. The challenge has been with the management of the Department's operational issues. The Committee has constantly responded with equal oversight vigour to ensure a meaningful service delivery to the people of South Africa on matters international.

The Committee resolved to engage with a number of stakeholders during the 5th Parliament. These varied between individual experts, think tanks, institutions of higher learning, institutes working on international relations matters, former ambassadors, media, civil society, youth and embassies resident in South Africa.

Each year the Committee would agree on its Annual Business plan for guidance on its activities for the year. However, due to the ever evolving nature of international relations, the Committee had to adapt to urgent matters that emerged and adjusted the programme to accommodate the changes. The Committee also received a number of delegations which were conducting "Follow-Your-Aid" tours to South Africa pursuant to bilateral relations existing between their countries and South Africa. The Chairperson of the Committee also received about 37 ambassadors and delegations during the term.

The Committee is of the opinion that, through innovative ways of oversight, they have achieved their mandate and performed in accordance with their agreed programme emanating from its Strategic Plan. The challenge remains with the implementation of the Oversight Model of Parliament.

1. Reflections on Committee Programme per year and on whether the objectives of such programmes were achieved

1.1 2014 Committee Programme

The Committee had orientation workshops which introduced members to international relations. The Committee visited the different branches of the Department which presented on their varying work to familiarise the Committee on different areas of international relations. The African Renaissance Fund presented on its mandate and on projects it was processing at the time. Various stakeholders introduced themselves to the Committee and presented on areas of their speciality. The Committee crafted its Strategic Plan and its first Annual business plan. The Committee processed the Department's Annual Report and adopted its first Budgetary Review and Recommendation Report (BRRR).

1.2 2015 Committee Programme

During this period the Committee dealt with the following:

The Foreign Service Bill [B 35 – 2015 (National Assembly – sec 75)] was referred to the Committee for processing. Due to budgetary constraints, the Committee could not undertake a Study Tour on the Bill in this particular year.

During this year, a Committee delegation undertook an oversight visit to Iran. The first leg of work of the Committee delegation began with oversight on the implementation of the resolutions of the Joint Commission between the Republic of South Africa and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which took place from the 9-11 May, 2015. The second leg was on oversight over the execution of South Africa's international relations policy by South African embassies in Tehran, Iran, which took place on 11 May 2015; and in Doha, Qatar, on 12 May 2015.

Briefing by the Department on the Strategic Plan 2015/20 and the Annual Performance Plan 2015/16 of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. There was also an expert analysis by a stakeholder on the performance trajectory of the Department.

Briefing by the Department on the Strategic Plan 2015/20 and the Annual Performance Plan 2015/16 of the African Renaissance Fund.

Briefing by the Department on DIRCO's and the ARF performance and financial report of the 4th quarter of 2014/15 financial year and

Briefing by the Department on the current political situation in South Sudan.

Briefing by a stakeholder on the conflict resolution processes in South Sudan.

Briefing by the Department on the South Africa-Cuba relations and latest developments on the Cuba-US relations.

Briefing by the Department on the progress and challenges of the Host Agreement between the African Union and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on the seat of the Pan African Parliament. Update on the lease agreement for the Pan African Parliament headquarters. Update on the progress to finding a suitable site to build the headquarters of Pan African Parliament.

Briefing by the Department on the outcomes of the 7th BRICS Summit held from the 7 to 9 July 2015 in Ufa in Russia.

Briefing on the participation of President Al-Bashir in the African Union Summit held in South Africa from the 7 to 15 July 2015. Adoption of the Committee draft programme.

Analysis by stakeholder of conflicts and insurgency in Africa and the processes of conflict resolution aimed to address them; and South Africa's peace-making efforts in Lesotho, Burundi and South Sudan.

Briefing by the Department on the processes towards Post 2015 Development Agenda and South Africa's position on the same; and South Africa's role and political input in the 70th Anniversary of the UN.

Briefing by the Department on the privileges and immunities extended to diplomats in South Africa and challenges of implementation in relation to the Vienna Convention on Privileges and immunities in diplomatic relations 1961, Vienna Convention on Consular relations 1963, UN Convention on Privileges and immunities for the United Nations 1946 and South Africa's Immunities and privileges Act of 2001: Department of International Relations and Cooperation.

1.3 2016 Committee Programme

During this period the Committee dealt with the following:

9 to 10 February 2016 - The Committee discussed the Strategic Plan of the Department. It was meant to assist the Committee identify critical areas which were of concern in the implementation of South Africa's Foreign Policy in the past five years; identify the strategic oversight approach by the committee to address those issues; identify trending foreign policy issues in the world today; develop an oversight strategy on how as a Committee it would respond to the developing trends; identify South Africa's response to international relations trends and how the Department of International Relations and Cooperation is responding at the moment; and draw oversight strategies to ensure implementation of the foreign policy prescripts.

Briefing by the Department on South Africa's strategic role, economic diplomacy related activities, and how its participation in the following South-South forums addresses domestic challenges: the BRICS New Development Bank; FOCAC, IORA and the developments under AGOA. Expert analysis on South Africa's role in these forums.

Briefing by the Department on the current political situation in Lesotho and Burundi and South Africa's role towards a peaceful resolution in the obtaining situations.

Expert analysis by a stakeholder on the developments around BREXIT.

Consideration and adoption of the Committee Draft Strategic Plan (2015 -2020).

Briefing by the Department on South Africa's strategic economic diplomacy role in furtherance of both continental and regional integration, examining its role in the NEPAD Presidential Infrastructure programme; Tripartite Free Trade Area launched in Egypt in June 2015 and the Grand Inga Dam project.

Briefing by the South African Council on International Relations and the South African Association of Former Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Chief Representatives on their mandate and the work they have done so far since their launch.

Briefing by the Minister on the Foreign Service Bill and South Africa's White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy, and other international political developments.

1.4 2017 Committee Programme

The Committee had planned to process and finalise the Foreign Service Bill. This had so far not been achieved due to the fact that the planned Study Tour to Canada was approved later in the year, and only one country instead of two were approved. This impacted on the Committee's plan to have a comparison with a country with legislation and that which only relied on codes and practice regarding management of a Foreign Service. Only one opportunity to conduct oversight presented itself, in that the Committee decided to do so while on a Study Tour in Canada. The Parliamentary oversight model is such that the Committee is unable to undertake regular oversight abroad where South Africa's Foreign Policy is being implemented.

It was noted during this period that the Department had been slow to implement some of the recommendations of the Auditor General, especially those that cause it to receive a negative audit outcome. As a result of this, the Committee had to dedicate its sessions to deal with these matters, however, not all issues have been addressed.

The Committee focussed on processing of the Foreign Service Bill. A number of stakeholders were engaged in different forms. A stakeholders' seminar was held in Pretoria in January 2017; followed by a number of engagements with affected departments; and other stakeholders submitted written submissions.

1.5 2018 Committee Programme

During this period, the Committee finalised processes on the Foreign Service Bill [B 35 – 2015 (National Assembly – sec 75)] and the National Assembly adopted it on 21 November 2018. The Committee undertook an oversight visit to Namibia, where there is a high number (20) of state-owned properties. Some of these properties are unoccupied, and are at different degrees of dilapidation.

1.6 2019 Committee Programme

2. Committee's focus areas during the 5th Parliament

- The work covered was in line with the 2014-2019 Strategic plan of the Committee, the strategic objectives of the Department and the priorities of government and the international developments influential to South Africa's Foreign Policy. The following are the activities of the Committee as oversight over the programmes of the Department:

a) Programme 1: Administration

Issues dealt with included ensuring strategic allocation of resources; ensuring there was improvement on the financial management of the Department and its entity, the African Renaissance Fund. The Department continued to operate in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment, and budget constraints. Much as the overall budget of the Department increased in the last financial year, it has been under pressure because of the impact by foreign exchange fluctuations. Other pertinent issues related to ensuring compliance with the supply chain management, an area of weakness within the Department. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer was implicated in some of the areas of concern, and the Committee recommended an investigation into the allegations.

There has been a recurring issue on the need to upgrade the obsolete Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems. The Committee and the AG were concerned about the security of information between the Missions and Headquarters; the matter is gradually receiving attention.

A need was identified for improvements in the management of the Asset Register for both movable and immovable assets of the Department. Heritage assets became a concern and was eventually sorted out; however, the completeness and accuracy of the Asset Register remains a concern. The Committee's oversight trip to Namibia highlighted the need for relevant management and maintenance of state-owned land parcels and properties abroad.

The Committee also recommended the creation of the position of the Chief Operations Officer to address operational issues and repeat findings by the Auditor- General. It was further noted that the Department had been battling with a high spending on leases at home and in the Missions abroad. The Committee recommended a need to develop an acquisition and disposal strategy.

In order to contain expenditure on compensation of employees within the ceiling as per directives from National Treasury, the Committee recommended the rationalisation of the Locally Recruited Personnel establishments. The Committee also interrogated the Department's services in the extension of Consular and civic services to South Africans abroad. The need for a focused management of the Department's property portfolio and for human resources which could strengthen the organisation, with a skills audit recommended in the finance department became very important.

The Diplomatic Academy and bodies created to assist the Department with Foreign Policy training and analysis were engaged. This was to ensure that they provided strategic foreign policy recommendations by conducting research on global trends and geo-strategic shifts, for early warning purposes. The placement of South African professionals in bodies to which the country is a member was also strongly advocated.

The overall issue of concern was the heavily burdened budget of the Department, not really increasing but the mandate was growing and most of the activities were carried out abroad, with foreign exchange fluctuations affecting it even more. A pointed discussion on foreign exchange budgeting with the Reserve Bank and National Treasury was recommended. The annual reports of the Auditor General of South Africa on the performance of the Department and its agency were engaged annually.

The oversight concerns with the African Renaissance Fund were its weak governance issues and lack of migration to the South African Development Agency (SADPA); the re-investing of its unused money into its bank account; its low disbursement rate; incidents of irregular expenditure; lack of project management and monitoring services were also discussed continuously through the term.

The issue of providing the Pan African Parliament (PAP) with a permanent headquarters has been on the agenda of the Committee for the term. South Africa offered to host the PAP in 2004, through signing a Host Country Agreement with the African Union. The Department and the Department of Public Works have not yet come to a workable solution towards honouring this international obligation. The Committee has since recommended that the matter be escalated to Cabinet level for a final determination.

The Committee has processed the Foreign Service Bill through the National Assembly on 21 November 2018, thus creating a milestone legislation establishing a single foreign service for the Republic of South Africa. The Committee saw the launching of the South African Council on International Relations (SACOIR), to advise the Minister on international matters and the Association of Former South African Ambassadors and High Commissioners.

b) Programme 2: International Relations

The Committee engaged the Department on its bilateral activities with different countries. These discussions would cover issues relating to economic, political and social relations that South Africa has with a plethora of countries. The oversight interest would be to ensure that the bilateral engagements with different countries respond to addressing South Africa's national priorities as reflected in the National Development Plan.

The Department strengthened bilateral political and economic relations with a number of countries through structured bilateral mechanisms and high-level visits at both the head of state and/or ministerial levels. The oversight interest was that the outcomes of these bilateral engagements should manifest through the direct and indirect investment by South Africa's key partners in strategic sectors of the economy. The Committee also ensured that the bilateral engagements translated into the promotion of South Africa's trade,

investment and tourism opportunities; and that the Department's marketing and branding initiatives aimed to portray South Africa as a stable democracy, safe investment destination and reliable trading partner.

This programme carried the bulk of the activities of the Department, and had the bigger share of the budget over the five years, and therefore the Committee had to dedicate a lot of time dealing with the items under this programme. The Committee dealt with oversight issues emanating from: supporting the structures of the African Union through enhanced African Agenda and sustainable development; promotion of the African Agenda 2063; strengthening political and economic integration in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and South Africa chairing SADC.

Economic diplomacy was high on the agenda, and the Committee expressed a political view that South Africa should rapidly advance her economic relations in Africa, especially in areas where it had been involved to secure peace and stability. South Africa should engage in economic diplomacy through the expansion of trade volumes, investment portfolio and economic relations across the continent. The Committee further recommended that the DTI and the Department should engage and deploy Trade Attaches in strategic countries for maximum benefit. The Committee further engaged in the strengthening South-South relations and South Africa's chairship of BRICS and IORA; and involvement in IORA, IBSA, FOCAC and TICAD. Relations with Cuba and the Economic Assistance Package were also discussed. In strengthening relations with the strategic formations of the North, discussions were held on relations with the EU; US and effects of BREXIT.

With regard to strengthening political and economic relations with the Middle East, the focus was on Syria and Palestine. The African Agenda became the main activity; with political developments and holding of elections in different parts of Africa taking center stage. The other issues included the fact that South Africa continued to support the continental initiatives and efforts to advance continental integration. The Committee engaged the Department on the activities of the African Union, since Africa is at the center of South Africa's Foreign Policy. The Committee engaged the Department to ensure that the strategic engagements and priorities on the African continent remained anchored on the strengthening of bilateral relations, the promotion of peace, security and stability, as well as economic cooperation and integration. The Committee also discussed the political and economic benefit of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the economic integration of SADC. Also discussed was the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Presidential infrastructure projects headed by former President Jacob Zuma.

Africa was considered relatively stable, with many countries holding elections regularly. There were pockets of instability and insecurity where South Africa continued to play her part through bilateral and multilateral efforts to bring about peaceful resolution of these conflicts. In the same breath the Committee discussed the political situations in Lesotho, the DRC, Zimbabwe, South Sudan, Central Africa Republic, Libya, Mali, Somalia, Burundi and Madagascar. In pursuit of South Africa's standing position on solidarity with the

people of Western Sahara, the Committee discussed the implications of the admission of Morocco into the AU. The concern was that the process for self-determination for the Saharawi people should not be hindered. The Committee also discussed South African troops' involvement in SADC, the AU and the United Nations (UN) peace-keeping missions.

The African Renaissance Fund was also engaged on its activities of a humanitarian nature in the continent as a tool (soft power) of South Africa's Foreign Policy. The Committee expressed concern on the low intra-African trade in the continent. The Committee expressed a political view and encouraged the continent to embrace the youth bulge and turn it into an opportunity for growth as it will bring about the fastest urbanisation rate in the world.

c) Programme 3: International Cooperation

The main oversight area was the monitoring of South Africa's commitment to multilateralism and rules-based international order. The Committee's engagements with the Department were to ensure that it participated and played an active role in all the fora of the United Nations system, including global security, sustainable development, human rights and international law. South Africa successfully participated in the ushering in of the SDGs, and the Committee presented its political view on the transition and on international obligations assumed by the Republic.

South Africa began serving its 3rd term, on 1 January 2019, in the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member. The Committee encouraged the Department to campaign relentlessly for the seat and later thanked Africa and the international community for demonstrating trust and confidence in South Africa. Stakeholders were engaged on the international VUCA environment within which South Africa found itself operating in.

The Committee discussed the divisions which were emerging in the western alliance, with the rise of anti-establishment movements and far-right parties in the European Union – Italy, Germany, France, Sweden, Poland and the United Kingdom with uncertainty over BREXIT; the tensions between the US and the EU over the handling of the Iran nuclear deal; and the emergence of China as a major global political and economic power and its dominance on the African continent. The Committee was mindful of and engaged the stakeholders and the Department on the continued tensions in the Middle East which brought about negative effects on energy security. It also brought about inter regional instability such as the Gulf States tensions with Qatar and Iran, the role of Turkey, the war in Yemen, and the conflict in Syria. The Committee discussed and engaged civil society on the Israeli-Palestine conflict. This was in pursuit of South Africa's position that there must a two-state solution to the conflict, the two states must co-exist in peace, with Palestine gaining the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine.

The Committee has raised concerns with the US administration signals of a return to the Monroe Doctrine approach and expressed a political view that South Africa should continue to resist efforts to undermine the multilateral approach to international relations. The Committee engaged the Department on the need to keep the agenda of the reform of the UN systems, in particular the UN Security Council. The Committee processed the approval for the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2018. South Africa deposited the Instrument of Ratification in New York on 25 February 2019. The Committee supported the continued provision of troops and military hardware and equipment support to the SADC Intervention Brigade in the DRC. The Committee discussed the participation of South Africa in the G20 to champion the aspirations of South Africa, Africa and the Global South. The Committee also noted the role South Africa played in the negotiations on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

The Committee agreed on the importance of South Africa hosting a World Food Programme's Humanitarian Response Depot, to facilitate distribution of aid material from South Africa. Filling of allocated quotas to South African was regarded paramount for the country to be able to influence policy directions of some of these organisations to which South Africa is a party. The new scale of annual contribution fees to the AU had not been finalised and the Committee urged for discussions with the National Treasury.

The Committee raised an oversight concern relating to Parliamentary treaty processes, in that there ought to be a common approach by all committees on how to process treaties referred to them. The Committee's view was also that there should be a central place for registering all treaties processed by Parliament. Monitoring of implementation of international obligations created by treaties should form part of the oversight remit.

The Committee expressed a political view on the withdrawal of South Africa from the Rome Statute, in that Parliamentary processes should be allowed to take place on the matter. The Committee also engaged the Department on the calls for arrest of persons with diplomatic immunity. The immunity of these persons is governed under the Diplomatic and Immunities Act 2001, a legislation under the responsibility of the Department.

d) Programme 4: Public Diplomacy and Protocol

Public diplomacy was active. It became an issue of continuous discussions by the Committee on the importance of a strategic approach to dissemination of information to the general public both local and international. The need for a proactive public diplomacy was a key issue for oversight, in order to curb misunderstanding and negative narratives of South Africa's positions on international affairs. Due to pressure of time, the Committee was not able to undertake its planned outreach programmes in 7 other provinces, to address the perceived elitist nature of South African foreign policy and to popularise Agenda 2063. Branding of the Department with the Minister

as the face of South Africa's foreign policy was part of the many recommendations made. The Committee had an oversight concern in that due to the obsolete nature of the Department's ICT, some Missions do not have updated websites as a result.

Oversight on State protocol was conducted through assessing the readiness and functionality of State Protocol lounges at international airports in the country. Cape Town, Durban and OR Tambo have been inspected for the period. The Johnny Makhatini Diplomatic Guesthouse was also inspected for compliance, and it was found to comply with expected standards of hospitality services to visiting VIPs.

The issue of intergovernmental coordination on international issues became a major oversight area for the Committee. Some provinces and municipalities continued to engage on international activities that were not coordinated by the Department. The Committee however managed to put a clause in the Foreign Service Bill which will require strengthened coordination.

The Committee continued to engage the Department on consular services, including the need to register citizens who travel abroad, for ease of reach in an emergency. The Registration of South Africans Abroad (ROSA) mechanism was withdrawn due to logistical issues. A new initiative, Travel Smart Kit, has been launched, which guides would be South African travellers on matters they need to be mindful of abroad, and to register at a resident South African embassy. The challenge as raised by the Committee is the voluntary nature of these services.

e)	International Transfers

Oversight was conducted on how well and timely South Africa paid its membership fees to the international organisations that the country is party to. There was an oversight concern relating to the implementation of the African Union resolution on self-financing/reliance. A new scale of assessment was agreed upon, and the Department and National Treasury were not finding one another on paying at the new assessed scale. This created arrears to South Africa's annual membership contributions.

The Committee advocated for the filling of quotas for employment of South Africans in the organisations that the country is party to. This became a key oversight factor, since it was considered that in order to be part of the influence, South Africans need to both occupy positions in strategic organisations, and or occupy strategic positions in international organisations. The concerns relating to the Department paying for portfolios of other departments in international organisations was also raised.

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3. Key Areas for Future Work

- Discuss and use the prepared concept paper on the role of the Committee regarding its oversight over the Department.
- Orientation of members on the mandate of the Committee.
- Address the Parliamentary oversight model and its impact on the mandate of the Committee.
- Strategic plan session for 2019-2024 in collaboration with stakeholders.
- Focussed oversight over the financial and non-financial activities of the African Renaissance Fund.
- Strengthen oversight on the low disbursement rate to needy projects by the African Renaissance Fund.
- Oversight on the processes towards the providing of a permanent headquarters for the Pan African Parliament.
- Oversight strategy on the implementation of processes for the migration of the African Renaissance Fund to the South African Development and Partnership Agency (SADPA).
- Oversight strategy on the implementation of the Foreign Service Bill when enacted.
- Oversight strategy on the activities of the South African missions abroad relating to implementation of their mandate.
- Oversight strategy on South African Missions abroad addressing domestic challenges through economic development and South Africa's strategic investment drive in Africa, in furtherance of the aspirations of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
- Enhance oversight on the integration agenda in the Southern African Development Community (SADC)
- Oversight strategy on the implementation of the policy on aligning foreign policy to domestic priorities through economic diplomacy and investment drives in other parts of the world.

- Enhance the role of South African missions abroad, to balance their act in terms of strengthening economic relations to be on par with political relations with strategic countries/partners.
- There is a need to advocate the importance of closer collaboration between government and business in furtherance of the economic diplomacy drive, for increased trade for South Africa.
- Oversight strategy on the implementation of economic diplomacy policy, through monitoring activities on bilateral commissions of cooperation with different countries.
- Oversight strategy on linking peace and stability to commercial diplomacy in the national interest of the Republic.
- Collaborate with relevant committee(s) of Parliament to advocate for the re-posting of Trade Attachés
- Strengthen oversight engagements with the counterpart parliamentary committees in BRICS, EU, SADC, AU, ASEAN, Latin America, US and UK after BREXIT.
- Oversight strategy on South Africa's priorities during its membership of the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for the 3rd time from 2019-2020.

- Strengthen oversight on the support for a peaceful transition to stability and economic development in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Enhance oversight on the engagements by the Executive with other countries on the emergence of parallel vote tabulation by election observer missions which poses a challenge to electoral processes across the continent.
- Strengthen oversight over South Africa's participation in the AU, UN and SADC mechanisms for peaceful resolution of conflicts in declared hotspots.
- Strengthen oversight on the solidarity support for Western Sahara towards self-determination and independence from Morocco.
- Strengthen solidarity support for a two state solution in the Israeli-Palestine conflict.
- Enhance oversight support for the lifting of the US economic embargo on Cuba, and the return of Guantanamo Bay.
- Oversight over the implementation of the model for acquiring, and maintaining state-owned land parcels and properties abroad.
- Oversight over the disposal of vacant state-owned land and properties abroad as defined in the Foreign Service Bill.
- Oversight strategy on the implementation of international agreements under the purview of the Department.
- Implementation strategy for implementation of Parliamentary resolutions on treaty processes in Parliament.
- Enhance oversight on the development and implementation of a turnaround strategy to address the recurring operational challenges in the Department.
- Enhance targeted oversight on the upgrading of the ICT system; existence of an up-to-date Asset Register; and turnaround plan on non-compliance with supply chain management.
- Continuation of the Outreach programme in the other seven provinces to demystify foreign policy. Only Limpopo and Western Cape were visited in 2013.
- Continued collaboration with the non-governmental stakeholders with interest in foreign policy issues.
- Training for Members on development diplomacy, peace-keeping diplomacy, conflict resolution, economic diplomacy, parliamentary diplomacy, public diplomacy, environmental diplomacy.
- Examination of all policies for the administration of foreign policy, such as the, consular assistance policy.
- Examination of legislation under the purview of the Department to identify areas that might need improvement.
- Honour invitations to attend the annual Heads of Mission conference in Pretoria, the biggest oversight forum.
- Honour invitations to attend Foreign Policy related international conferences hosted by South Africa for oversight information.
- Consider oversight visits to South African Missions abroad. Extremely urgent is the visit to the UN Security Council while South Africa is serving.
- Consider an investigative oversight to understand the situation better in Palestine, Western Sahara.
- Consider a study tour for best practice on oversight on SADPA, and on how other countries conduct oversight on Foreign Policy.

- **Highlights in general**

- Faced with the challenge of oversight model, the Committee resolved to regularly invite stakeholders to share their independent views on matters of Foreign Policy. This was aimed at shifting from an otherwise ‘boardroom oversight’ with engagement involving the Department alone. This has yielded positive results in terms of widening the knowledge base of members on the sector.
- The Committee processed legislation, the Foreign Service Bill, which will regulate and create a single foreign service for the first time in South Africa.
- From the onset, the Committee agreed that on matters of Foreign Policy there should be one message to the outside world, and that is in support of the Foreign Policy of the country.
- In line with solidarity and support of the peaceful resolution of conflicts in Western Sahara and the Israeli-Palestine issue, the Committee engaged both the Department and the opposing civil society groups on their views on these matters. The South African Foreign Policy positions were supported in both instances.
- For the first time the Committee conducted a dedicated oversight beyond the borders of South Africa, in Namibia. That oversight yielded positive results and a legacy for Parliament in that an oversight intervention has addressed an impasse regarding custodianship of state owned properties abroad.
- For the first time the Committee undertook a study tour to Canada, aimed at learning best practice regarding the regulation of a Foreign Service.
- The Committee discussed political conflicts in a number of countries and recommended line of action in support of South Africa’s Foreign Policy.
- Through robust oversight the Committee saw the Department establishing a position of a Chief Operations Officer to deal with recurring operational challenges.
- With the focused Committee oversight efforts, the Department received an unqualified audit opinion in 2016/17 after addressing the valuation of heritage assets in the Missions abroad.
- The Committee recommended an acquisition model which would be inclined to buying land and properties for missions abroad, as opposed to renting, which had become a cost driver in the budget of missions abroad. Disposal methods are stipulated in the Foreign Service Bill.
- The Department is struggling to maintain expenditure within the budget ceiling imposed on the compensation of employees. The Committee recommended the rationalisation of the position of Locally Recruited Personnel (LRPs), and this is slowly bearing fruit.
- Through the robust oversight intervention, the Department is actively taking all necessary steps to implement consequence management where necessary, to instil a culture of responsiveness and service delivery.

4. Key challenges emerging

- Parliamentary oversight model posed challenges regarding intended oversight programmes of the Committee. The uniqueness of the foreign policy portfolio is that the conduct of foreign policy is carried out by the headquarters of the Department in South Africa, and the bulk of the work is discharged by the many (124) South African missions abroad. This phenomenon demands that the Committee conducts oversight on the activities of the South African missions abroad; and assess South Africa's performance in international organisations the country is a party to.
- The Committee was able to conduct only one oversight visit to Namibia. The Model regards international oversight as study tours, and subject to the frequencies prescribed in the current oversight model. The Committee finds itself disadvantaged in that while other committees are allowed four oversight periods, this committee would not benefit from a similar opportunity.
- The Committee should be allowed to attend Foreign Policy inclined international conferences which take place in South Africa, in order to oversee the participation of the Department towards influencing outcomes of such forums.
- The alignment of foreign policy to domestic imperatives is yet to be understood in such a way that results on the ground point to the linkages needed. There is a need for an aggressive trade, investment and economic diplomacy drive by the Missions abroad.
- Due to the technical nature of the issues on the mandate of the Committee, the need for designation of members to lead a subject – matter is pertinent to ensure deeper understanding around the issues.
- The Committee has noted that Branches of the Department are increasingly frustrated by the slow response from government departments in following up on opportunities and areas of possible cooperation identified by the Department through its Missions abroad.
- South African companies doing business in Africa are increasingly facing legal and financial discrimination in the countries they operate from.
- The Committee has observed that, in general, South Africa is reluctant to leverage on the goodwill it has with different countries that it works with. This would assist the country to do more in support of domestic priorities.
- There is a need for regular conferment between committees of Parliament for purposes of a joint oversight approach on the activities of the Executive in furtherance of economic diplomacy and economic opportunities abroad.
- In preparation for the enactment of the Foreign Service Bill, the Department should develop a property management policy, and focus on acquiring new skills in construction and management.
- The membership of the Committee changed a number of times, thus affecting continuity.
- Adoption of minutes was not so regular, thus affecting opportunities for follow up action.
- The cancellation of meetings resulting in other issues having to be taken out of the programme.

- The programme changed often due to the ever-evolving nature of the international environment, and therefore it was not always possible to adhere to the annual business plan.

- **To the National Assembly**

- The Parliamentary Oversight Model poses challenges for the Committee in executing its mandate. The Committee conducts oversight over the implementation of South Africa's Foreign Policy. The execution of Foreign Policy is largely beyond the borders of South Africa. The engines behind the implementation are the South African Missions abroad, hence the Committee's oversight remit extends to the said Missions. The Oversight Model presupposes that oversight is conducted internally in the provinces, anything attempting to do that externally becomes a Study Tour. In the past five years, the Committee was allowed only one oversight visit, to Namibia. Parliament thus achieved a milestone oversight intervention, where the impasse around custodianship of state owned properties abroad was addressed by the Committee.
- It would serve the work of the Committee well if it would be allowed two external oversight visits a year.
- Members serving in this Committee should be considered when making deployments to international parliamentary forums.
- Reports from these parliamentary forums should be shared with relevant committees to enable tabling and debates in the House.
- Conferment with the Committee on matters of international affairs is necessary and encouraged as prescribed in the Rules.
- The Committee should be allowed to attend Foreign Policy inclined international conferences which take place in South Africa, in order to oversee the participation of the Department towards influencing outcomes of such forums.
- The Committee should be allowed to attend the annual Heads of Mission conferences held in Pretoria. This is the only forum where the Committee would have all South African Ambassadors and High Commissioners in one place, to engage them on the work they do. This is a huge opportunity to conduct oversight and gather information for future follow up with the Department.

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- 5. **Recommendations**

- The work of the Committee is influenced by the activities the Department undertakes internationally. Because of the ever-evolving nature of international relations, the Committee has to adapt to the pace of developing international events, and to how South Africa responds to them. As such, the Committee has to be flexible and have an adaptive programme.

1. Introduction

1.1 Department/s and Entities falling within the committee's portfolio

Narrative on the department(s) and entities falling within the committee's portfolio and if there were any changes during the term. Example of new entities being established and/or shifted from or to the Department; department being split and/or newly established.

a) Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Core mandate/strategic objectives

b) Entities:

Name of Entity	Role of Entity
The African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund	It was established in 1999. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ To promote democracy and good governance▪ To contribute to human resource development▪ To support socio-economic development and integration▪ To provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief▪ To support cooperation between South Africa and other countries▪ To contribute to Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development

1.2 Functions of committee:

Parliamentary committees are mandated to:

- Monitor the financial and non-financial performance of government departments and their entities to ensure that national objectives are met.
- Process and pass legislation.
- Facilitate public participation in Parliament relating to issues of oversight and legislation.

1.3 Method of work of the committee (if committee adopted a particular method of work e.g. SCOPA.)

The Parliamentary Oversight Model gives limited space for oversight beyond the borders of South Africa. The mandate of the Committee demands that it conducts external oversight, as a result, the Committee had to adapt to the situation by ensuring it conducts oversight wherever it would have travelled abroad. It also engaged the relevant stakeholders and think-tanks on issues in order to benefit from expert and independent views on matters on its agenda.

1.4 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide an account of the Portfolio Committee on International Relations and Cooperation work during the 5th Parliament and to inform the members of the new Parliament of key outstanding issues pertaining to the oversight and legislative programme of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation and its entity.

This report provides an overview of the activities the Committee undertook during the 5th Parliament, the outcome of key activities, as well as any challenges that emerged during the period under review and issues that should be considered for follow up during the 6th Parliament. It summarises the key issues for follow-up and concludes with recommendations to strengthen operational and procedural processes to enhance the committee's oversight and legislative roles in future.

2. Key statistics

The table below provides an overview of the number of meetings held, legislation and international agreements processed and the number of oversight trips and study tours undertaken by the committee, as well as any statutory appointments the committee made, during the 5th Parliament:

Activity	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
Meetings held	18	20	25	24	27	114
Legislation processed					1	
Oversight trips undertaken		2		1	1	4
Study tours undertaken				1		1
International agreements processed					1	1
Statutory appointments made						
Interventions considered						
Petitions considered	1					1

3. Stakeholders:

The Committee engaged a number of stakeholders in the 5th Parliament. These varied between individual experts, think tanks, institutions of higher learning, institutes working on international relations matters, former ambassadors, media, civil society, youth and embassies resident in South Africa.

4. Briefings and/or public hearings

It is helpful to call upon any South African Heads of Mission to address the Committee on any issue and benefit from first-hand information. The outreach programmes highlighted that the citizenry has no understanding of Foreign Policy, especially how it improves their lives.

5. Legislation

The following pieces of legislation were referred to the committee and processed during the 5th Parliament:

Year	Name of Legislation	Tagging	Objectives	Completed/Not Completed

Year	Name of Legislation	Tagging	Objectives	Completed/Not Completed
2014/15				
2015/16	Foreign Service Bill	75		Completed (21 November 218
2016/17				
2017/18				
2018/19				

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges emerged during the processing of legislation:

- The Bill was tabled in Parliament in August 2015.
- The processes for consideration of Bills in Parliament include soliciting written submissions by any member of society with interest in the subject matter.
- The Committee was not able to receive substantial number of submissions on the Bill from the public, despite many attempts to extend the closing date on the advert calling for submissions.
- As a result, the Committee resolved to hold a Public Seminar in Pretoria, where it invited participants across a wide spectrum of society: **academia, labour, unions, business, students, research institutes, think tanks, media, foreign policy analysts, foreign policy activists and practitioners, former diplomats; civil society, and other relevant voices** - basically anyone that could make a meaningful contribution to the process. The aim was to attract participants who would assist the Committee to strengthen the Bill before it is finalised.
- The Committee further resolved to undertake a Study tour for best practice on governing Foreign Service. A series of events also delayed the event of undertaking the Study Tour on the Foreign Service Bill. The Committee had intended to visit at least two countries: where there is legislation and where they relied on practice.

- It will be recalled that two major events on the Parliamentary programme influenced the changes in the travel plans that the Committee initially had. These were the Questions to the President and the Motion of no confidence. All committees were asked to change travel plans to accommodate these two events.

b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- The Bill establishes a full-fledged Diplomatic Academy, monitoring of its establishment is important to enable full implementation of the Bill when enacted.
- Organised labour, Departments of Home Affairs, Defence felt like their input was not fully covered in the Bill, a need to monitor the implementation of areas that affect them.

6. Oversight trips undertaken

The following oversight trips were undertaken:

Date	Area Visited	Objective	Recommendations	Responses to Recommendations	Follow-up Issues	Status of Report
23 – 24 September 2014 and 17 October 2014	Facilities and premises of the headquarters building of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation; Protocol State Lounges; State Guesthouses and the Pan African Parliament.	Familiarising itself with the temporary office accommodation afforded to Pan African Parliament, in terms of physical structure and relevant facilities at the disposal of the Pan African Parliament;	See the Oversight report			Adopted on 3 May 2017

Date	Area Visited	Objective	Recommendations	Responses to Recommendations	Follow-up Issues	Status of Report
		<p>Assessing the financial accountability of the Department regarding office accommodation for Pan Africa Parliament in Midrand; and</p> <p>Assessing the implementation and compliance by the Department, of the provisions of the Host Country Agreement between the African Union and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on the Seat of the Pan African Parliament signed in 2014.</p>				
9-12 May 2015	Teheran, Iran and Doha, Qatar	Oversight on the processes aimed at the implementation of the Joint Commission between the Republic of South Africa and the Islamic Republic of Iran	See the Oversight report			Adopted on 3 May 2017

Date	Area Visited	Objective	Recommendations	Responses to Recommendations	Follow-up Issues	Status of Report
9-17 September 2017	Canada	<p>Assess and ensure accountability in the conduct of international relations by the identified embassy abroad.</p> <p>Measure and evaluate the identified embassy's performance in its bilateral relations with the identified country.</p> <p>Through the application of parliamentary diplomacy, determine the identified embassy's performance in multilateral forums, in furtherance of national interest and Outcome 11 of government strategic objectives</p>	See the Oversight report			Adopted on 31 January 2018
30 July to 4 August 2018	Windhoek and Walvis Bay, Namibia,	To understand and have adequate information on the scale of the operational and diplomatic challenges posed by vacant state-	See the Oversight report			Adopted on 31 October 2018

Date	Area Visited	Objective	Recommendations	Responses to Recommendations	Follow-up Issues	Status of Report
		owned land parcels and properties across the globe.				

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges emerged during the oversight visits:

- Technical/operational challenges

There were challenges with flights bookings for Members.

- Content-related challenges

The objectives of the oversight visit were clear, the situation on the ground impacted on the proposed sequence of events. Some of the stakeholders were not available.

b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- The South African Missions abroad still need to understand the linkages between their work and that of the mandate of the Committee. There is a need to continue with oversight visits abroad where state owned properties remain vacant, to assess the extent of which the Department is implementing recommendations of the Committee.
- Consider as a priority the undertaking of an oversight visit to the UN Security Council while South Africa is serving as a non-permanent member (2019-2020).

7. Study tours undertaken

The following study tours were undertaken:

Date	Places Visited	Objective	Lessons Learned	Status of Report
9-17 September 2017	Ottawa, Canada	The overarching objective of the study tour was to create a learning platform for the Portfolio Committee in relation to policy and legislative mechanisms to regulate governance and oversight on the international environment. It was to create space for the Committee to engage its counterpart committee on legislation governing diplomatic service. The study tour would highlight good lessons and best practices that would benefit the Committee. It was also to create avenues for dialogue on various aspects of law-making that are responsive to the regulation of officials operating within the highly volatile and ever changing international environment.	See the Study Tour report	Adopted on 31 January 2018

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges emerged during the study tours:

- Technical/operational challenges
- Content-related challenges

Some of the visited stakeholders were not available, and impacted on the flow of information that the Committee was looking for. Some of the information was not disclosed due to its sensitive nature.

b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- There is a need to have future study tours on the form or governing structure of SADPA, and on how other countries conduct oversight on Foreign Policy; or on investigative oversight on the situations in Palestine and Western Sahara.

8. International Agreements:

The following international agreements were processed and reported on:

Date referred	Name of International Agreement	Objective	Status of Report	Date of enforcement
13 September 2018	Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons	The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons, with the goal of leading towards their total elimination.	The Report was adopted by the Committee on 24 October 2018	

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges emerged during the processing of international agreements:

- Technical/operational challenges
- Content-related challenges

The agreements are not tabled on time for consideration by Parliament, thereby not allowing enough time for the Committee to be well briefed and scrutinise the content and what national interest the agreements were addressing. The Nuclear Arms Treaty surfaced after a year since its signature and had to be processed in a week.

b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- There is a need for a uniform processing of international agreements in Parliament.
- Oversight should commence on the actual implementation of the said agreements and how they impact on domestic priorities.
- Conferment among committees on treaties with cross-cutting elements, and referral of treaties to committees needs to be managed.
- Parliament should consider informing the Committee of when an international agreement has been approved by both Houses. Furthermore, it should request that the Minister of International Relations and Co-operation informs the Committee of when an instrument of ratification is deposited and when an agreement comes into force for South Africa.

9. Statutory appointments

None

10. Interventions

None

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11. Petitions

The following petitions were referred to and considered by the committee:

Title	Date referred	Current status
Petition of the National Coalition for Palestine (NC4P),	14 August 2014	The Committee met with the NC4P and reported on the meeting

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges were experienced during the processing of petitions:

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b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- South Africa remains committed to a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, and supports a two-state solution with the two states at peace with one another, and with East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine. The peace talks have collapsed and South Africa continues to be in solidarity with the people of Palestine. An investigative oversight be undertaken to assess the situation on the ground and recommend a course of action to the executive.

12. Obligations conferred on committee by legislation:

The Committee has been reporting on the BRRR processes since 2014/15 to 2017/18. The Committee has made recommendations to the National Assembly for the Department to take certain action towards enhancing the conduct of foreign policy. The Committee subsequently followed up on its recommendations through oversight to the headquarters of the Department.

a) Challenges emerging

The following challenges emerged during the statutory appointments:

- Technical/operational challenges
N/A
- Content-related challenges
N/A

b) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

Operational issues remain the biggest challenge on the performance of the Department. Follow up oversight visit should be undertaken. Matters pertaining to the irregular expenditure of the African Renaissance Fund, as highlighted by the report of the Auditor General be dealt with.

13. Summary of outstanding issues relating to the department/entities that the committee has been grappling with

The following key issues are outstanding from the committee’s activities during the 5th Parliament:

Responsibility	Issue(s)
Department	Develop a turnaround strategy to address recurring operational issues that impact on the performance of the Department. Finalisation of processes towards the establishment of the South African Development Partnership Agency (SADPA); implementation of the Coordination mechanism on foreign relation activities by South African agencies; completion of a public diplomacy strategy.
Portfolio Committee	Continue outreach programmes; oversight on legislative mandate; oversight on policy mandate of the Department; oversight on the implementation of international agreements; address the financial management issues with regard to the African Renaissance Fund. Examine how the African Renaissance Fund could also improve the rate of disbursement.

Responsibility	Issue(s)
National Assembly	The Committee should request a review of the Parliamentary Oversight Model to allow for external oversight.

14. Other matters referred by the Speaker/Chairperson (including recommendations of the High Level Panel)

The following other matters were referred to the committee and the resultant report was produced:

Date of referral	Expected report date	Content of referral	Status of Report
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

c) Issues for follow-up

The 6th Parliament should consider following up on the following concerns that arose:

- No international relations related concerns were raised in the High Level Panel report.