

The SAC-IAWJ celebrates the appointment of its founding members as President of the Supreme Court of Appeal and Justice of the Constitutional Court

A victory for the SAC-IAWJ, its founding member Justice Mandisa Maya is the first woman in the history of our country to fill such an esteemed position in the South African judiciary as President of the Supreme Court of Appeal. The celebrations continue as Justice Leona Theron also a founding member of the SAC-IAWJ is appointed to the highest court in the land – The Constitutional Court.



Madam Justice Mandisa Maya



Madam Justice Leona Valerie Theron

The South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges (SAC-IAWJ) proudly congratulates Justice Mandisa Muriel Lindelwa Maya on being appointed in the position of the President of the Supreme Court of Appeal. We also proudly acknowledge and congratulate Justice Leona Theron on her appointment to the Constitutional Court of our country. Justice Maya and Justice Theron are leaders of high esteem. They have come a long way contributing to the capacity and advancement of competent

women in the judiciary to construct a genuine democracy that we are striving towards. Since Justice Maya's acting as President of the Supreme Court of Appeal she has given women equal opportunity to act in the Supreme Court of Appeal to capacitate them for the future. Both Justices stand out as icons for women everywhere: in the judiciary, in South Africa and on the world stage. We fully support them and look forward to strengthening the qualitative participation of women leadership in the judiciary.

FINDING FREEDOM through READING behind BARS!

(Woman behind bars, the forgotten?)



FINDING freedom through READING behind BARS is a project initiated by our own SAC-IAWJ Provincial Coordinator of North West Province, Charlotte Senekal, Klerksdorp Regional Magistrate. This project kicked off on Thursday, 27 April 2017 at 11h00, on **Freedom Day**. SAC-IAWJ members from North West Province, Lizelle Kok, Tshadi Leshomo and Louisa Mabile participated in this event. Freedom Day is celebrated by South Africans with great excitement and deep emotion. President Nelson Mandela in his address to our nation on 27 April 1995 stated:-

“As dawn ushered in this day, 27 April 1995, few of us could suppress the welling of emotion, as we were reminded of the terrible past from which we come as a nation, the great possibilities that we have, and the bright future that beckons us.”

Having given thought to the address of President Mandela on Freedom Day, 1995 the members decided to focus on woman in prison, as one of their projects. They realized, women in prison should not be forgotten, despite the stigma of their criminal convictions and their physical removal from society. They have hurt other people, and the project, is not intended to excuse their criminal behavior in any way. There is nothing worse for the mental well-being of inmates, women, to cope with prison life, than being idle. Engaging in activities, which are productive and experienced as meaningful, can help women in prison to feel their time has a purpose.

Magazines such as **Your Family, Essentials, Women and Home** were sourced from Caxton for 12 months for the woman incarcerated at Potchefstroom Correctional Facility. Magazines will go a long way toward keeping women, incarcerated, connected to the outside world, which they will someday need to re-assimilate into.

The officials at the Potchefstroom Correctional Facility appreciated that magistrates, members of SAC-IAWJ took time to visit the woman's section of the facility and to let the woman in prison know, that they are not forgotten to the outside world. Ms Leshomo described the experience as *"what better way to spend Freedom Day than by freeing the minds of those confined in the walls of prison, through reading. It was a moving and fulfilling experience to see the faces of the female inmates showing appreciation, at the idea of keeping them busy and freeing their confined minds. Further that they are not regarded as useless members of society and not forgotten. Their hope of living a better life after prison was restored."*



Magistrate Lizelle Kok shared her experience of the visit as follows:-

*"As a district court Magistrate and Head of Office in a small Magistrate's Court, I have to wear a lot of different T-Shirts every day. When I walk out of my Criminal Court, I take off my Criminal Court T-Shirt and put on my Children's Court T-SHIRT. When the children walk out the door, I change my T-SHIRT to a Domestic Violence or Harassment Court T-SHIRT. Following that, I walk back into court to do my civil matters and put on my Civil court T-SHIRT and then promptly change it again for my Maintenance court T-SHIRT. But on the 27th of April 2017 I got to change my normal T-SHIRTS for a new kind of T-SHIRT that I don't get to wear that often. My **Humanity T-Shirt**.*



We congratulate our provincial Co ordinator, Ms Charlotte Senekal for a sterling job well done and for making an important impact on behalf of the SAC-IAWJ in the North West Province.

Joburg walk to the Constitutional Court while Raising Awareness of Lupus and Cancer on Human Rights Day

Gauteng members of the SAC-IAWJ, supported by their friends, and family members rose to the occasion on Human Rights Day, 21st March 2017 in conjunction with the Lupus Foundation to raise awareness of Lupus and Cancer. They participated in a walk through the streets of Johannesburg leading up to the Constitutional Court in raising this awareness.

Judge Leonie Windell and her team organised this informative and fun event providing an opportunity to sight see and provide our bodies with much needed exercise and laughter. This walk was also in memory of Belinda Molamu, one of our founding members who succumbed to lupus. Volunteers from the Lupus Foundation of South Africa shared information about lupus demystifying this disease for us. T-shirts and caps of the Lupus Foundation of South Africa were made available for purchase to those who wished to purchase same.



Gauteng members ready and geared for the walk

The walk also presented an opportunity for a private walking tour in and around the Constitutional Hill precinct led by Mr Gerald Garner of Joburg Places. We were treated to an informative tour of the Constitutional Court, No 4 Prison, the Old Fort and the Women's Jail. At various stages along the tour, the history of South Africa, especially the injustices of the Apartheid past and how the country overcame that legacy to the point of an exemplary constitution was highlighted and reflected upon. After the tour was concluded, everyone enjoyed lunch at the Immigrant Bar and Restaurant.

Rising the Bar, High Tea

A Health and Wellness High Tea was held on Saturday, 8 April 2017 at the Premier Hotel, Rhodesfield, Johannesburg. The Gauteng members of the SAC-IAWJ in celebration of International Health Day and reflecting on the health and wellbeing of women and children participated in this speculator and glamorous event in aid of children at the Phutanang Mental and Physical handicapped school in Tembisa, Gauteng.

There is value in taking time to reflect on health and wellbeing of all women through educational programs, supporting and acknowledging the health of our members and our children who are most vulnerable in society. The children at the Phutanang School are affected by mental and physical disabilities. The entrance fee at this event was to

bring a basic care-pack gift for a teenage boy and a teenage girl, children of the Phutanang School in Tembisa.

The event acknowledged the hard work each individual puts into their work and celebrated that sacrifice, that spirit of caring and giving to society and our fellow human beings.



A bevy of beautiful judicial officers – Magistrates and Judges graced the event. It was well attended. The delegates included Justice Kampepe of the Constitutional Court and Mr Djaje, Gauteng President of the Regional Court.

The event was mainly sponsored by the Premier Hotel and Bonitas Medical Aid. A dynamic and informative speaker from ER24, Henning Jacobs delivered a practical talk on the steps to alleviate and deal with trauma. He explained that judicial officers sitting on the bench are exposed to continuous stress and trauma on a daily basis from the disputes that they adjudicate upon.

The continuous stress, shock, emotional and psychological stress is experienced without even being aware of it. It is for this reason that practical and frequent practices be maintained to manage trauma and stress.



Mr Jacobs provided us with tools to help ourselves. We learned how mental health affects physical health and how to combat and alleviate stress. He

explained that a confidant, either a family or friend can play a vital role in helping with trauma. He advised everyone to choose two or three people to talk to about how you feel. He emphasized that it must be someone you trust. The family or friend need not give advice, they need just to listen to how you feel. He placed great emphasis on the need to have fun and also to do something spiritual, like going to Church, meditation, yoga need to exercise to increase oxygen levels in our cells.

Tips on how to live a balanced lifestyle, know what helps and harms your health was delivered by CANSA. The need to choose healthy foods to assist in combatting cancer, the necessity of regular check-ups and the focus on holistic positivity was emphasized and reinforced.

Ms Samantha Dawn Pillay joining the Lupus Walk and the High Tea event captivated all with her resilience, fortitude and zest for life despite the onslaughts of cancer and lupus. She survived cancer not once but thrice while still battling the debilitating effects of Lupus. Samantha is truly an inspiration to us and to women everywhere. Despite these debilitating illnesses she climbed Mt Kilimanjaro and is planning to go scuba diving in the warm currents of the Mozambique.

Ms Samantha Pillay addresses delegates at the High Tea. What a **phenomenal woman!** You inspire us to climb our own Kilimanjaros.



Prizes galore were won by many of our participants at this dazzling and informative event. Justice Khampepe praised the event and encouraged us all to continue uplifting each other.

Accolades go to Gauteng provincial co-ordinators, Melissa McGregor, Colleen Collis and their teams for raising the bar in organizing such a spectacular event. This event overflowed with goodie bag giveaways, prizes, an informative health and wellness program, enjoyment of scrumptious high tea, time to socialize, and a social service outreach to the most vulnerable in our society – our children. Well done judges, you fill us with pride.

Please take note there are more upcoming activities in the provinces. Gauteng members will be hosting a Gala Dinner shortly. The North West province has confirmed their gala dinner for 3 November 2017.

SAC-IAWJ undertakes two International Trips

A judicial exchange programme took place between the South African Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges (SAC-IAWJ) and Women Judges Association of Malawi (Wojam) from 25-26 March 2017. A delegation of 12 members from the SAC-IAWJ arrived in Lilongwe, Malawi on the evening of the 24th of March 2017, after a delayed flight due to heavy rain, to a jam-packed programme. The President of Wojam, Justice Esme Chombo welcomed the South African delegates to the warm heart of Africa – Malawi. To engage in this important and historic event between the two women judges associations.



The South African team in Malawi – From back row L-R Anthia Ramos, Lalitha Chetty, Marlene Marais, Charlotte Oosthuisen-Senekal, Sylvia Mandla, Sadia Jacobs, Rudo Chitapi, Tabeth Masengu, Judge Shane Kgoele, Elmarie Du Toit, Rochelle Francis, Mikateko Mabobo, Vuyokazi Noncembu and Cathy Page

The objectives of the conference were to share experiences, skills and knowledge enhancement for the benefit of the work of both organizations. Exchange best practices and enhance professional networks. It aimed also to contextualize practical challenges for the judiciary and solicit recommendations while gaining knowledge of each country's judiciary and judicial systems.

Justice Rizine Mzikamanda of the Supreme Court, on behalf of the Chief Justice of Malawi acknowledged the historical event of the meeting of the two women judges associations. He noted that in the 21st century governments and society were still slow to bring women into decision making positions. Women recognizing these challenges began working towards concrete solutions to work in partnership with men. Good partnerships take people and organizations forward. This translates to holistic inclusions of both women and men in the pursuit of justice for all.

The discussions highlighted that judicial powers have far reaching consequences. And such powers exercised in society must be done with humility, wisdom and knowledge. These values are primed as the hallmarks of this calling. Delegates agreed that a judicial position is a calling and not just a job. It puts one's intellectual wits to test. A judicial career communicates to the world that there is a quest for justice. The ultimate objective of law is:-

1. The Welfare of society
2. To cast aside one's religious view, bias and prejudice
3. To fight the lack of knowledge
4. Affirm the Attribute of God/spirituality
5. Establish a Sense of purpose
6. It is a rare privilege in the world to judge the deeds of human kind where errors have serious consequences
7. Values of Constitution – judges have only one morality that of the Constitution of their Country.
8. Judgments have serious consequences for people.
9. Listen to counsel, learn more to do justice.
10. The public should benefit from your knowledge.

Justice Fiona Mwale gave a dynamic presentation on Mentorship. She cautioned leaders that "You are not a leader if you are not mentoring." The greatest act of a true leader is to be a mentor and the greatest thing about you as a leader is to make yourself irrelevant. She motivated that it is essential and beautiful to see someone grow and succeed. The judiciary needs to have a legacy to invest in people and promote multi- dimensional thinkers - *leaders* who think outside the box. She was also firm in her resolve that each leader and judicial officer should also be mentored. She cautioned – 'be careful who you are drinking from'. A mentor has to teach the mentee how to deal with issues with an unemotional stance. The steps being: -stop;

step back, detach and analyse. Confidentiality and setting up boundaries remain essential in a mentor-mentee relationship.

The SAC-IAWJ acknowledges that this trip would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship and assistance of the Norwegian Embassy and the DGRU of the University of Cape Town. We acknowledge and thank all who have participated in making this visit a richly rewarding one and enhanced the scope for future collaboration between the two sister organizations. This sharing of experiences has advanced opportunities for strengthening SAC-IAWJ work in South Africa.



The excited team waiting to board the flight to Malawi

Judge Shane Kgoele and Judge Margi Victor attended the IAWJ Africa Region Conference in Kenya during May 2017. Judge Victor recounted:-

“The conference was well attended by delegates of the IAWJ all over Africa and further - e.g Uganda, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Ghana, South Africa, Botswana, Nigeria, Benin, Zambia, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, USA and Mexico. It was clear that senior women in the Judiciary from the said countries were well represented. The Chief Justice of Kenya, The Honourable David Maraga addressed the conference as did the President of Kenya, his excellency

President Uhuru Kenyatta. See the attached photo when he spoke to our President of the SAC – IAWJ, Judge Shane Kgoele.



Judge Kgoele shakes hands with President Kenyatta

It is clear the Kenyan Government and the Kenyan Department of Justice support the Kenyan Chapter of the International Association of Women Judges with financial aid and with permanent secretarial support. The theme of the conference was “Women Judges enabling sustainable Development Goals: Opportunities Challenges and Strategies”. The resolutions addressed the poverty and socio economic disparity suffered by women in sub-Saharan Africa. Other resolutions provided that women Judges should lobby for policy and legislative change to remove barriers.

Members of the National Chapters should be empowered with more programmes and information to deepen their knowledge of National, International and Regional law. A further resolution was that we as women judges recognise the rampant discrimination resulting in gender based violence and harmful cultural practices.

President and Vice-President of the SAC-IAWJ, Judge Shane Kgoele and Judge Margaret Victor at the IAWJ Africa Region Conference in Kenya during May 2017.

It was a meaningful and constructive conference. We were well treated and even had our own bodyguards.”



From the Desk of the President

AGAINST ALL ODDS

“Faith is not knowing what the future holds, but knowing who holds the future”.

These are the words that kept us alive as an Association all the years when we were awaiting this historic moment that has arisen. Congratulations are in order as we have been blessed with the appointment of two of our founder members, **Justice Mandisa Maya** and **Justice Leona Theron** to the two highest positions in the Judiciary. When we started the Association in 2004, we knew this will eventually come no matter what. They really made us proud. They actively and consistently supported the Association against all odds. That is

why we do not hesitate to say to them *“Just because you come from simple beginnings does not mean you will end simply. God has so much more for you”*

The year has come and it is almost gone. The membership drive the Executive Council agreed upon is yielding positive result. We have experienced a high number of new members from the magistracy, Judges and Legal Practitioners. Our Vice-President Judge Margie has done a tremendous recruitment drive in Mpumalanga Province, and we will soon have Provincial Representatives there by the August AGM Conference in Polokwane. Judge Leonie Windell has also been doing a vigorous recruitment drive of Judges and we are pleased to announce that we have more +- 30 Judges who are our members. The recruitment drives included a visit to our Senior Judges at the SCA where I met with our Sisters on the 30th May 2016 and the meeting yielded a positive result.



Seen here from L-R are Justice Theron, Judge Kgoele, Justice Maya, Justice Dambuza, Judge Mbatha, JP Molemela, Judge Naidoo, Justice Tshiqi and Justice Salduker

Everything is on track in as far as the Conference in Limpopo is concerned. Justice Sujana Manhor, a retired SCA Judge from India has already booked her ticket to Polokwane, Limpopo. If you have not yet booked yours, you might find yourself missing this *“herstoric”* event where we will be celebrating our two heroes that I mentioned above. Remember the closing date for Registration is the 15th July 2017 and no late registration will be accepted. We will meet in Polokwane.

Judge Kgoele, President of the SAC-IAWJ

See you in Polokwane

At the 13th Annual Conference and AGM
With the theme "Let's wrap the wide arms of the Law around those who need it."

	International Association of Women Judges <i>advancing human rights and equal justice for all</i>
S.A CHAPTER:	
13TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE REMINDER	
11 - 13 AUGUST, POLOKWANE, SOUTH AFRICA	
Time	Day 1: 12h00 Onwards Day 2: 08h00 Onwards with Gala Dinner at 18h00
Venue	The Ranch Hotel, Polokwane
Exciting Speakers & Topics Include	The Honourable Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng Judge President D Mlambo Judge President E Makgoba Judge President F Legodi Minister of Women in the Presidency, Ms S Shabangu Minister of Justice & Correctional Services, Adv. M Masutha Madam Justice S Manohar (Retired Justice from the Supreme Court of India) Transformative Constitutionalism Women's Empowerment Transformation of the Judiciary Gender Law and Racism
Reg Form	Please complete the attached registration form
Inquiries & RSVP	Magistrate L Chetty (Lchetty@justice.gov.za) Magistrate E Du Toit (EDuToit@justice.gov.za) Leon Peter (Clerk to Victor J, Lpeter@judiciary.org.za)

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