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Head of Delegation

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NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF:
Mr. R. MOORE, DIRECTOR, DG DEV/E

Subject: Weekly Press Review – South Africa (31 August - 6 September 2009)

*Please note that this Press Review reflects the views of the newspapers covered,
and not the views of the Delegation*

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The sixth ministerial meeting of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) forum agreed in Brasilia to strengthen the dialogue between the three emerging powers.

Eight international conglomerates face apartheid-era lawsuits against them.

The ANC condemned a Canadian decision to give a white South African refugee status.

Government has set a tight deadline for implementation of the National Health Insurance plan.

Outspoken academic Dr Mamphela Ramphele called the continued existence of makeshift schools in SA a "crisis".

Lodewijk Briët

cc: Ms Wiedey-Nippold; MM Cocchi; Navarro; Ms Brewka Pino (DEV); MM Thompson; Wunenburger; Casella; (TRADE); MM Quince; Trimiño Pérez; Krastev (AIDCO); MM Sivenas; Mizzi, Ms Saarela (AGRI); MM Clancy; Jennings (COMM); Delegations in SADC region; MM Wood; Ms McLauchlan (EP Secretariat)

SA WEEKLY PRESS REVIEW 31 August - 6 September 2009

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Manuel releases Green Paper on National Planning Commission

Sunday Independent, 06/09/09

<http://www.sundayindependent.co.za/?fArticleId=5153896>

Minister in the Presidency Trevor Manuel released his green paper on the National Planning Commission, which proposes involving independent experts and strategic thinkers in determining the country's long-term planning priorities, and which will guide decisions and policy choices made in the short term. In addition, a policy document issued by Collins Chabane, the Minister responsible for performance monitoring and evaluation in the Presidency, spells out how his unit will work with the planning commission, and across the government, to ensure that whatever is decided, is measured against clear goals. Fierce debate is expected in the government, the tripartite alliance and broader society over the proposals.

SA wants Zimbabwe power-sharing talks to 'pick up pace'

Mail & Guardian, 04/09/09

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-03-sa-wants-zim-powersharing-talks-to-pick-up-pace>

Thandi Modise, Deputy Secretary-General of the ANC, said SA wanted to see a recovery in Zimbabwe which would allow the more than three million Zimbabweans refugees living in SA to return home, as they were placing a huge strain on South Africa's healthcare, education and housing resources. Modise said SA wanted negotiations between Mugabe and the MDC to pick up pace. She said SA, and Southern Africa as a whole, want to see a Zimbabwe that is beginning to work and to put its citizens first.

India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) forum agrees to boost South-South co-operation

allAfrica.com, 02/09/09

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200909020001.html>

The sixth ministerial meeting of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) forum agreed in Brasilia to strengthen the dialogue between the three emerging powers in order to establish common positions on regional and international matters and boost South-South cooperation. In a joint statement issued at the end of the meeting, the ministers said the channel of dialogue that has been established to date should serve to broaden the collective voice of the South. The statement also called for a greater voice for developing nations in the decisions of multilateral bodies.

Multinationals face apartheid-era lawsuits

Business Report, 03/09/09

<http://www.busrep.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=552&fSetId=260&fArticleId=5150069>

Eight international conglomerates face litigation following an SA government decision not to continue opposing the lawsuits against them. The conglomerates being sued in the class action are Barclays, Daimler, Ford, Fujitsu, General Motors, IBM, Rheinmetall and

UBS. SA Justice Minister Jeff Radebe has written to the presiding judge of the US District Court of the southern district of New York reversing the government decision under former president Thabo Mbeki not to support lawsuits that were launched in New York by the victims and their organisation, Khulumani Support Group.

ANC condemns 'racist' Canadian refugee ruling

Mail & Guardian, 02/09/09

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-01-anc-condemns-racist-canadian-refugee-ruling>

<http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-09-04-canada-appeals-controversial-refugee-case>

The ANC condemned a Canadian decision to give a white South African refugee status, rejecting it as "racist", "sensationalist" and "alarming". The article reported that Canada had granted South African citizen Huntley refugee status because of his claim that the SA government could not protect him from persecution by "African South Africans". Canadian newspaper the *Ottawa Sun* reported that Huntley had provided "clear and convincing proof of the SA government's inability or unwillingness to protect him" to a Canadian immigration and refugee board. SA Home affairs spokesperson Ronnie Mamoepa said the government was "disgusted" by the ruling, describing it as "baseless allegations against our people and our country". The Mail & Guardian (4/9) reported that Canada's federal government said it would challenge the ruling, as it showed "a serious lack of judgement".

State sets a tight deadline for national health plan law

Business Day, 03/09/09

<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/Content.aspx?id=80444>

Deputy Health Minister Dr Molefi Sefularo told private healthcare industry delegates that government intended to have legislation in place by next April to start implementing the National Health Insurance (NHI) plan. He assured delegates that the NHI would be implemented in a phased manner to allow for consultation, policy-making and legislation review. Sefularo acknowledged that it would be a complex and demanding process, but he said the government had a "moral and social imperative to implement the NHI". Democratic Alliance MP Mike Waters said it was imperative to have wide and extensive consultations on the plan.

School funding crisis

Sunday Times, 06/09/09

<http://www.thetimes.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=1061014>

Five years after former Minister of Education Naledi Pandor promised to rid the country of makeshift schools, Mpumalanga school principal Andries Ngobeni is still running his school from under the shade of a marula tree. Outspoken academic Dr Mamphela Ramphele called the situation a "crisis", which was perpetuating inequality between South Africans. She said the country had spent billions building stadiums, yet there were no "millions" to build schools. Ramphele said the problem was not the failure by government to allocate money, but poor leadership and management by provinces and local authorities. The Department of Basic Education has estimated that R98 bn is needed to build new schools and replace existing facilities which are in a poor condition.