

## **"MEMORIES OF THE FUTURE" - SOUTH AFRICA SCENARIOS 2014**

### REVIEWING TEN YEARS OF FREEDOM

As South Africa ends its first decade of freedom, government's attention is turning to the challenges the country will face in the next ten years.

As part of the process, The Presidency undertook a study to review the impact of government policies and programmes since 1994. The result, 'Towards a Ten-Year Review', was made public on 16 October 2003 and is available on the government website ([www.10years.gov.za/review/documents.htm](http://www.10years.gov.za/review/documents.htm)). The study identified the major achievements in the first decade of freedom and also indicated that there are still some major challenges in the next decade.

### Scenario Planning

At the same time, government embarked on a scenario planning exercise to understand a range of possible futures for the Second Decade of Freedom. The scenario storylines would act as a possible backdrop against which current and future policies will be carried out.

Scenario planning is about creating 'memories of the future' that expand our current thinking and broaden our policy planning. These 'memories of the future' help ensure that as the future unfolds we are better able to anticipate and to deal with whatever emerges.

### Developing Scenarios

The four scenarios developed are the product of eighteen months of consultation and research involving experts in both the public and private sectors. The development of these scenarios involved a number of steps.

Through research and discussion, "key driving forces" (KDFs) were identified as the factors most likely to affect South Africa over the next ten years. These forces have been carefully considered, not to make predictions, but rather to get a wider view of relevant, plausible and challenging possibilities in our future.

These KDFs range from anticipated long-range political and economic trends, to regional and local economic realities. Also examined, for example, are diverse factors like long-term weather conditions and global political and economic developments. Health issues, the impact of generational changes, levels of technological development worldwide and locally, are also amongst the KDFs considered.

Through this process two main axes were identified: global political and economic trends; and social cohesion in South Africa. These two factors formed the matrix that was then used to define the scenarios and develop storylines describing four different possible scenarios for South Africa in the medium-term.

### The Four Scenarios

The four scenarios are defined in terms of the possible combinations of the two principal driving forces - global environment and social cohesion.

\* 'S'gudi S'nais' is based on assumptions of South Africa existing in a more accommodating and accepting world, but failing to take advantage of this positive environment.

\* 'Dulisanang' ponders what our future might look like in a much more hostile, unilateralist world, unfriendly to developing countries, where we, as South Africans, none-the-less manage to create a more inclusive society.

\* 'Skedonk' combines assumptions about the emergence of both a very unfriendly outside world with an internally divided and dispirited society.

\* 'Shosholoza' assumes an accommodating world and an inclusive society here in South Africa.

"Storylines" - Filling in the Possible Futures

What are the main features of each of the four scenarios?

'S'gudi S'nais' is characterised by conflicts between those who have-a-lot versus those who have-a-little. Although the world has taken heed of 'the fire next time' warnings from the developing world, and multilateralism now prevails, South Africa loses its place in the jostle for investment and access to international trade. Growth is initially high but perversely so, surging to 6-8%, but later dropping to an average of less than 1% per annum by the decade's end as the impact of social fragmentation takes effect. This is a result in the main of situation in which the rich elect to ignore social inequalities and concentrate on selfish and often unethical amassing of wealth, and the state is indecisive in containing this.

'Dulisanang' describes a much more considerate and inclusive society. South Africa has responded to heightened global insecurity and endemic economic crisis by turning inwards to its own resources. Although growth is low, participation in the economy is high and compassionate values emerge strongly. And, despite limited resources, the state delivers on its social obligations but is unable to sustain such social delivery in the long-term due to low growth.

'Skedonk' is characterised by deep social divisions. Unilateralism in global relations is the order of the day, and the globe is beset with conflicts. Growth in South Africa is confined to areas like tourism and is stubbornly low all decade. The poor get poorer, AIDS has had devastating effects on the population, and, by decade's end, there is high unemployment and general social dislocation within South Africa. In this instance, the political and economic leadership would have responded to the unfavourable global climate by 'waiting for Goddot' - through inaction.

'Shosholoza' envisages South Africa, by the end of the Second Decade of Freedom, as a diverse and tolerant society whose local economy is surging ahead like a sleek express train. The global economy is also booming, and multilateral institutions have brought stability to the world's most intractable political conflicts. High economic growth has brought millions of jobs and much greater participation in the robust

economy. South Africa is well poised for a third decade of freedom, and opportunity and prosperity.

#### Challenges of the Second Decade of Freedom

These snapshots of possible futures include elements embedded in the here and now. But, depending on the actions of both the public and private sectors, South Africa will have only one future, which may resemble one of the four scenarios described above.

On its part, government has requested departments and clusters to assess policy priorities for the Second Decade of Freedom against the dynamics described in the four scenarios. In particular, they are addressing the challenge of how to encourage positive tendencies and counteract negative ones.

It is the belief of government that, in broad terms, the proposals outlined in Towards a Ten-Year Review address the main challenges in these scenarios, so we can fashion a future approximating that described by 'Shosholoza'. The proposals include: a social compact, bridging the divide between the "first" and "second economies", improvement in the state's performance, and encouraging democracy and high levels of growth and development in Southern Africa (refer [www.10years.gov.za/review/documents.htm](http://www.10years.gov.za/review/documents.htm)).

As with the Ten-Year Review, government encourages all sectors of society to weigh their programmes for the Second Decade of Freedom against a combination of possible futures, and ensure that we all strive to achieve the best possible outcomes in our joint quest for a better life for all.

Issued on behalf of The Presidency by: Government Communication and Information System (GCIS)

10 December 2003