

SA launches radio to broadcast foreign policy

South Africa launched an online, 24-hour radio station on Thursday, 17 October that aims to showcase its foreign policy and shore up its position as a continental economic and political powerhouse.



Foreign policy to be broadcast. Image:
freedigitalphotos.net

Ubuntu Radio, operated by the Department of International Relations and Co-operation, will "change how Africa is covered," said spokesman Clayson Monyela ahead of the launch.

"South Africa has a good story to tell and we have done extremely well over the past 20 years. Our foreign policy has evolved but that story is not being told," he added.

Pushing for a permanent African seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), South Africa is the only African member of the G20 and part of the BRICS grouping, alongside Brazil, Russia, India and China.

But its foreign policy has sometimes gone against the grain, notably in the Libyan conflict that saw the ousting of Moamer Kadhafi. Pretoria initially voted for the UN resolution authorising the air campaign in Libya but then became critical of the campaign.

The country's approach on neighbouring Zimbabwe also came under fire after the 2008 disputed elections that led to a political impasse.

Monyela said the station aimed to stimulate public debate, with phone-in programmes and talk shows.

"We are not going to talk at our audience, but we are going to have discussions and conversations with people because

people need to know what informs decisions on certain matters," he said.

Used in local South African languages, "ubuntu" describes African-style humanity. South Africa has an estimated 14m Internet users, roughly 39% of the adult population.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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