

## SAGCC Chairperson's 2018 Annual Report

### 1. SAGCC visits to Georgia:

- a. An official visit was paid to **Tbilisi from 24 till 28 June 2018** during which meetings were held with Ambassador Beka Dvali, GE Rugby, GE National Wine Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and Tbilisi based members of the SAGCC. The Tbilisi attorney company, "CLI Attorneys" undertook to enroll as a new member of the SAGCC - which they did when they signed up as a member of the SAGCC during October 2018.
- b. An official visit was paid to **Telavi on 28/29 June 2018** during which meetings were held with the Kakheti Governor, Vice Mayor of Telavi, Heads of Sport and Tourism, Kakheti region and the Dean of the Faculty Agra Sciences at the Telavi State University.
- c. A 2<sup>nd</sup> official visit to Georgia took place from **04 till 12 October 2018**. Six members of the SAGCC, Including the CEO of *Travel and Sport* , Steven van Zyl and three members of his staff, participated in the visit. On **06 and 07 October 2018** meetings were held in Telavi with the Kakheti Governor, the Deputy Governor, Deputy Mayor of City of Telavi, Dean of the Telavi State Uni and sport officials from Kakheti region/Telavi. Various sport facilities in Telavi were visited. Some of the SA and GE winemakers who participated in the annual "*Winemaker Exchange Program*" were visited at the respective host Wineries in Kakheti region on 07 October 2018.
- d. **Meetings were held in Tbilisi on 08 October 2018 with:**
  - Division, Physical Education and Sport Development Georgia
  - Head of Georgia National Tourism Administration
  - Director of the International Economic Relations Department at MFA
  - Head of the Support Department at Enterprise Georgia
- e. **Meetings were held in Tbilisi on 09 and 10 October 2018 with:**
  - Mr Juba Maruashvili – Tourism and member of the SAGCC
  - Col Giorgi Manjavidze (MIA) – a courtesy call, and to discuss the treatment/search of South African passengers upon arrival at Tbilisi International Airport
  - Georgia Rugby as well as a visit to some of their facilities in and around Tbilisi
  - Various Georgian Tour Operators/Travel Agents
  - Georgian National Wine Agency

## 2. Activities in general:

- a. The Chairperson was one of the speakers at the “2018 Tbilisi Global Investment Forum” held on 05 October 2018 in Tbilisi. The topic was “The challenges of doing business in SADC region”.
- b. A 45-minute **TV Interview** was held with the Chairperson by *Business Time GE* in Tbilisi at the Hotel Mercure on 10 October 2018.
- c. A **MoU** was signed between SAGCC and “Georgia Asia Africa Chamber of Commerce” (GAACC) at the Hotel Mercure, Tbilisi on 11 October 2018. Steven van Zyl fellow member of the SAGCC, attended as well.
- d. A **MoU** has been signed between the *Faculty of Agra Sciences at the Telavi State University* and the *Faculty of Wine Sciences at the University of Stellenbosch*. It makes provision for student exchange programs, academic lectures and joint research programs. A visit by the Dean of the Telavi State University to Stellenbosch University, has been agreed on in principle.
- e. **Winemakers Exchange Program:** During the 2018 Georgian harvest season (September/October 2018) five SA winemakers participated. They were from Robertson, Van Loveren and Graham Back Wineries. Currently one female Georgian winemaker participates in the 2019 South African harvest season. She is based at Excelsior Winery, outside Robertson. During 2018 the 18<sup>th</sup> South African Winemakers have participated in this program. During the same period seven Georgian Winemakers participated in the program – indeed an achievement to be proud of.
- f. **SAGCC Management Committee (MC) meetings:** Three MC meetings were held during reporting period. In September 2018, SAGCC members met socially with visiting delegates from MFA in Tbilisi.  
Remark: Generally, all SAGCC members receive invitations to the Georgian National Day function and the year-end function for Georgians living in South Africa, which is annually hosted by HE Ambassador Beka Dvali.
- g. **Lesotho: Georgian grapes for Lesotho:** During 2017 it was agreed with the *Georgian National Wine Agency* that it would donate Georgian grape plants (mainly *Saperavi* cultivar) to Lesotho. The following points apply:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Phase: Georgia will donate grape plants for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase to cover 07 hectares of land in Lesotho
  - A sponsor to pay for the transport of the grape plants from Georgia to Lesotho, needs to be found
  - Should the 1<sup>st</sup> phase be implemented successfully, another 07 hectares will be covered – to eventually have 21 hectares of Lesotho land covered with Georgian grapes. These grapes will be used to produce “Georgian wine - produced in Lesotho” to further stimulate tourism in Lesotho
- h. **Visit to Lesotho:** On 14 June 2018 a visit was paid to Lesotho during which the 1<sup>st</sup> Prince (the 2<sup>nd</sup> brother of the Lesotho King) offered 30 hectares of land with access to water for such project. The following points apply:
  - The local community must be stakeholders in this project and as such benefit from it with emphasis on job creation

- The 1<sup>st</sup> phase will cover 10 hectares of grapes of which 07 hectares will be Georgian grapes for wine making - 03 hectares will be South African table grapes for local consumption
  - Lesotho must determine the customs and quarantine requirements with South African Ports Authorities for bringing these plants into Lesotho
  - Lesotho must confirm access to electricity in order to pump water from a nearby river (with constant flow) to the land designated for the grapes
  - Lesotho must confirm the availability of tractors/farm equipment from within the immediate (local) villages to do soil preparation and planting of grapes
  - Soil preparation, planting and staff training will be managed/co-ordinated by a designated South African Winery
3. **Membership:** There are currently 34 paid members with two more new members to enrol any day soon – the most ever number of paid members. The SAGCC is growing from strength to strength. Where many Business Chambers globally are struggling to survive (some have even closed-down), the SAGCC has more than doubled its membership the past year. Courtesy the good support of Ambassador Dvali, all Georgian Honorary Consuls in the SADC region have enrolled as fully paid members of the SAGCC. Solomon Adamashvili is the first SAGCC member in Namibia – enlarging the SAGCC footprint in the SADC region. An updated list of all SAGCC members (with their contact details) has been made available to all SAGCC members, the Embassy of Georgia in Pretoria and MFA in Tbilisi.
  4. **Finances:** Financially the SAGCC is in its healthiest position since establishment more than five years ago. On 06 March 2019 there was an amount of R21 925.88 on the FNB account of the SAGCC. Payment of 2019 membership fees are due, meaning that the SAGCC could soon double its current financial standing. A special thanks to Marius Jooste and Gerda Heyman for the regular updates on payments made by members as well at the submission of financial statements of the SAGCC.
  5. **SAGCC web-site:** The web-site of the SAGCC has been overhauled, now offering better service and exposure of its members and their businesses – see [www.sagcc.biz](http://www.sagcc.biz) A special thanks goes to Petro Kruger who worked closely with the web designer “ Web Promotions” .
  6. **Business/trade:** Three rather big business enquires (volume-wise) have been treated by the SAGCC. These were for skimmed milk, manganese and coal. The quantity required for skimmed milk was so huge that neither South Africa, nor Australia or New Zealand (even collectively) could supply. It was required by a Georgian/Austrian company – apparently for the Russian market. The specific specs for manganese are not available in South Africa. A new attempt to find such in Zambia, will soon be launched after consultation with the Georgian Honorary Consul in Lusaka, Zambia. Recently a request was received for frozen chicken pieces all sorts. However, the volume required is huge - and South Africa is a major importer of chicken.

Remark: The status quo regarding the possibilities for commodity trading stays unchanged. As much as South Africa has the goods (variety and quality), it is not price competitive when it comes to the Turkish and Dubai markets – not to mention distance/time!

7. **Best business prospects:** Without doubt tourism and sport – rugby teams with their supporters and school exchange programs, provide a healthy volume for good hospitality business. This will further improve once visa requirements for Georgians have been lifted.
8. **Sport coaching program:** Courtesy the Dubai based G-SMEG, a coaching program for Kakheti sport coaches has been approved by the Kakheti sport authorities. With the completion of the new Telavi stadium (both rugby and indoor mat sport), the roll out of the coaching program is due any day soon. A special thanks to Simon Clarke, CEO of G-SMEG. Not only have they spend many hours on the design of this program, but have they also spent a huge amount of money on travel/accommodation, etc.
9. **Rugby:** Rugby between South Africa and Georgia is possibly on its best level ever. Liaison/activities take place spontaneously and on a regular base. Numerous U18 and U20 teams (both 7's and 15-men rugby) from both countries have visited each other for either warm up matches and/or coaching clinics. One of our valued members *Travel and Sport* is focusing on school exchange programs which includes sport/rugby, education, history etc. Various South African school teams have visited Georgia since the launch of this initiative in October 2018. A special thanks to Steven van Zyl, CEO of *Travel and Sport*. Another member of the SAGCC, Ivan van Zyl, CEO of *The Sport Academy SA* is planning to bring Georgian sport teams to South Africa. They offer quality training facilities and accommodation. A special thanks to Ivan van Zyl.
10. **Activities by individual SAGCC members:** Individual members of the SAGCC will get an opportunity during the AGM on 07 March 2019 to share and reflect on their activities between South Africa and Georgia the past year. However, special mention needs to be made of the individual activities of Maritz and Suzel Aldum, Petro Kruger, Fed Hume, Billy Pienaar, Steven Van Zyl, Juan van der Westhuizen, Juba Maruashvili – to mention a few! Some of them have successfully established legal entities/businesses in Georgia during the past year.
11. **Screening/vetting of prospective business partners:** The past year a service to prospective bilateral business partners/companies has been successfully introduced to ensure clean/proper bilateral business initiatives. Courtesy Marius Jooste, who came up with a quick and innovative assessment method, three potentially fraudulent South Africa based business entities were identified and stopped from doing business with Georgia. A special thanks to Marius Jooste.
12. **Chairperson's Liaison with Diplomatic Chambers and Trade Offices of Pretoria based foreign Embassies:**
  - a. **National Day functions attended in Pretoria:** The National Day functions of Georgia, Austria, Ukraine, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Turkey and Qatar were attended. The highlight was the Georgian National Day celebrations held on 04 June 2018 at the Brooklyn Theatre in Pretoria. The Chairperson had the honour to be the *Master of Ceremony* at this historic event.
  - b. **Various other diplomatic functions** were attended such as film evenings, wine-tasting events, working lunches, lectures on topics of multilateral/international importance as well as invitation by other Embassies/Ambassadors based in Pretoria.

**13. Conclusion:** It was indeed a huge honour to Chair and represent the SAGCC – both locally and abroad. Please allow me to thank the following for their contributions and assistance during 2018:

- a. The 2018 Management Committee (MC) of the SAGCC
- b. HE Ambassador Beka Dvali and his staff at the Georgia Embassy in Pretoria.  
Remark: The positive results achieved during 2018 are proof of a successful working relationship between the SAGCC and the Embassy – a relationship which is based on mutual trust and driven by completed staff work ethics.
- c. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in Tbilisi
- d. The Kakheti Governor, Deputy Governor and Mayor of City of Telavi
- e. Dr Wolman, Honorary Consul of Georgia in Cape Town for his good advice and donations in support of SAGCC visits to Georgia
- f. Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM)
- g. Georgia Rugby
- h. Qatar Airlines
- i. Celia Pienaar for her support during SAGCC visits to Georgia