

**Remarks by H. E. Sibongiseni Dlamini-Mntambo at the Special  
Seminar for Diplomats on the Fall Session of Parliament, 9  
May 2018.**

Thank you, Prof Cardozo.

His Excellency Ambassador Nobs, my fellow co-chair this evening;

Honourable Julie Dzerowicz, Member of Parliament for Davenport;

Honourable Dean Allison, Member of Parliament for Niagara West;

Ms Jen Pedersen, Senior Policy Advisor;

Ms Sarah Goldfeder, Principal of Earnscliffe Strategy Group;

Prof. Teddy Sammy, Director of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University

Prof Andrew Cardozo, President of the Pearson Centre

Special guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening, Sanibonani, gooienaand, bonsoir.

I am told that I only have three minutes to speak but after *all* those introductions I think I probably have about 10 seconds left. So let me be quick!

I would like to thank the organisers for the honour of requesting that I serve as *honourary* co-chair for this event. My colleague and co-chair this evening, Ambassador Nobs, will probably support me when I say that when people outside of our profession think of diplomats they often think of things like ribbon cuttings and endless receptions over glasses of fantastic - hopefully South African - wine! But I do not take my co-chairing of this event lightly – even if it is just “honourary.”

I come here this evening very curious to hear what our friends in Canada's parliament will be tackling at this session. From the hopefully tense and dramatic discussions here this evening, I will be trying to gain a sense of how Canada is defining itself in this era. And whether its international engagements make it clear that it is embracing a new global order, or if it is merely business as usual.

We meet at a fascinating, albeit tense, time in global affairs. Ladies and gentlemen, South Africa is concerned about the growing penchant over the last two decades for unilateralism in international affairs. We view this as a threat to global peace, security and development. We remain convinced that we need to work *together* to strengthen the multilateral systems of governance and collective global decisions.

Some in this room may be driven to despair by constant talk of global doom and gloom. If you need inspiration... if you need an example of how change can be brought about by deliberations in the hallowed halls of Parliament Hill, or how action can be achieved through civil society mobilisation; look no further than

Canada and Canadians' involvement in the liberation of South Africans.

Ladies and gentlemen, this year marks the centenary of the father of our nation, Nelson Mandela. Madiba, as we fondly refer to him at home, visited Canada in June 1990; a mere four months after his 27-year imprisonment. During this visit, the former prisoner who would eventually become President was invited to address Parliament. Speaking on Parliament Hill, he said <and I quote>: *“I would like to take this opportunity to salute the great Canadian people whom you represent... They have proved themselves not only to be steadfast friends of our struggling people but great defenders of human rights and the idea of democracy itself. They are to us like brothers and sisters from whose warm embrace we shall never be parted.”* <end quote>

On that note, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you well with your deliberations here this evening.

Once again, thank you to the organisers for creating this platform to share views and find areas of common ground.

I thank you.