

Tuesday, 16 June 2026

19TH CSPOC NEWSLETTER



Mr Lamola Condemns Anti-Immigrant Violence, Calls for Regional Migration Action

Soweto, Johannesburg | 16 June 2026

Addressing the opening of the 19th CSPOC Conference, South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola, firmly condemned anti-immigrant violence and urged coordinated regional action on migration management.

Lamola cited figures showing over 45 million Africans living outside their home countries, with more than half remaining on the continent. He referenced a 2025 Afrobarometer survey revealing that nearly six in ten young Africans aged 18 to 25 had considered emigrating in search of better economic opportunities.

Against a backdrop of violent anti-immigration protests in South Africa, the Minister was unequivocal: *"There is no excuse for violence against foreign nationals in our society,"* adding that immigration law enforcement rests solely with the state.

Lamola moved to correct widespread social media misinformation, confirming that two Mozambican nationals had been killed in Mossel Bay, while investigations into the deaths of five Ethiopian nationals pointed to gang violence rather than xenophobic attacks. He dismissed claims that Nigerian, Ghanaian, or Ethiopian nationals had been targeted in anti-immigrant violence.

While condemning vigilantism, he acknowledged the strain of unmanaged migration on public services and labour markets, pledging stronger enforcement against employers exploiting undocumented workers. He called on Commonwealth parliamentarians to collectively address migration's root causes, including conflict, unemployment, and limited economic opportunity across the continent.

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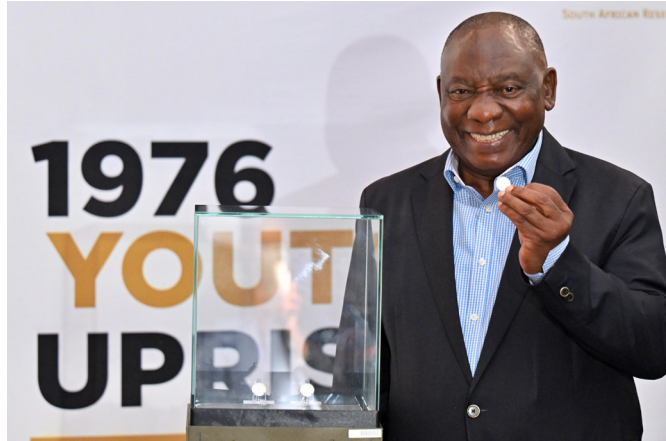
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Commemorating the sacrifices
of June 16 while advancing
parliamentary leadership for a
stable and prosperous Africa.

19TH CSPOC
Conference of Speakers & Presiding Officer
of the Commonwealth, Africa Region
Proactive Parliaments & Sustainable Development:
An Imperative for Political Stability in Africa



19th CSPOC Conference Kicks Off in Johannesburg

South Africa's Gauteng province opened the 19th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments (CSPOC) of the Commonwealth Africa Region today, bringing together heads of parliament and legislative representatives from across the continent at Emperors Palace, Johannesburg.

Hosted jointly by the Parliament of South Africa and the Gauteng Provincial Legislature, the three-day conference unfolds under the theme *"Proactive Parliaments and Sustainable Development: An Imperative for Political Stability in Africa."* Delegates will examine the parliamentary leadership's role in governance, public trust, and Africa's development.

The opening day holds deep symbolic weight, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the June 16, 1976 Soweto Uprising. Before proceedings began, delegates travelled to Soweto to lay wreaths at the Hector Pieterse Memorial, honouring the youth who were killed by apartheid police while protesting inferior education policies.

The venue itself carries historic significance. Welcoming delegates, NCOP Chairperson Ms. Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane noted that Emperors Palace was the site of the CODESA negotiations that gave birth to democratic South Africa.

"We convene on the 50th Anniversary of the June 16 Uprisings, where the youth of this land made the ultimate sacrifice against a repressive apartheid government," she said, adding that the day remains one of mourning and remembrance rather than celebration – a moment to honour those whose courage shaped the freedoms Africa enjoys today.

Plenary sessions continue over the next two days.



Ms Mazibuko Positions Gauteng as Africa's Gateway to Growth

Acting Premier Faith Mazibuko opened the 19th CSPOC Conference by positioning Gauteng as Africa's gateway to trade, investment, and shared development, not just South Africa's economic engine.

Drawing on the legacy of the 1976 generation, she challenged today's leaders to pursue a prosperous, inclusive, and globally competitive Africa. Despite being South Africa's smallest province geographically, Gauteng is home to over 16 million people and contributes more than a third of the country's GDP. It hosts major financial institutions and multinational corporations, linked to the broader continent through robust transport and logistics networks.

Mazibuko outlined a bold vision – a globally connected, technologically advanced, and environmentally sustainable city region. The provincial government's priorities include economic growth, job creation, infrastructure development, digital transformation, and community safety.

She stressed that growth must be inclusive, creating opportunities for youth, women, entrepreneurs, and historically excluded communities, a message that resonated strongly with the assembled legislators. Her central call was one of continental unity: "The continent will rise not through competition amongst ourselves, but through cooperation, partnerships, and shared growth."

She urged delegates to leave the conference with practical solutions and meaningful partnerships in hand.



Addressing heads of parliament and representatives from over 50 legislatures across the continent, she described immigration and co-existence as complex global challenges rooted in unresolved historical issues, ones best tackled through multinational platforms like the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

She called for stronger parliamentary institutions capable of advancing democracy, peace, and sustainable development, and urged African nations to fully explore the Africa Continental Free Trade Area.

"Africa cannot be split into tiny political and economic units and hope to command its share of the globe," she said.

Mtshweni-Tsipane framed Africa's economic struggles – poverty, unemployment, and inequality – as symptoms of deeper fragmentation, arguing that the continent's path forward lies in unity of purpose rather than catching up with others. "There is no one to catch up with, only for Africa to become the best version of itself," she stated.

She closed by urging African nations to assert their collective interests through cooperation, particularly amid today's turbulent and interconnected global crises.

South Africa Assures CSPOC Delegates that the Country is Home for all Africans

NCOP Chairperson Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane officially opened the 19th CSPOC Conference by reassuring delegates that South Africa welcomes all Africans, pushing back against perceptions of anti-immigration sentiment.