



BUSA supports Commission for Africa



*Prof. Raymond
Parsons Economic
consultant to BUSA
and Overall Business
Convenor at
NEDLAC writes:*

BUSA welcomes the release of the Commission for Africa report as another important step in raising the development profile of Africa on the global agenda. While much of what is contained in the report is familiar terrain, it has the advantage of having both the backing of a wealthy and influential government – Britain – as well as the participation of certain African leaders,

including South Africa's Finance Minister, Trevor Manuel. BUSA hopes that at their Summit meeting in July, the G-8 countries will take concrete actions based on definite priorities. Taken together with the thrust of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), BUSA would like to see the necessary combination of political will and additional resources provide a way forward for the African continent. If only half of what is proposed in the Africa Commission report is eventually implemented, it will help to create a "critical mass" for alleviating poverty and promoting development in

Africa. The time is ripe for a big push on Africa, and to matchwords with deeds. What BUSA in particular hopes is that progressive improvements in the political and economic environment in Africa will steadily encourage increased trade and private investment upon which long-term wealth and job creation depend. All positive steps– ranging from outside aid and assistance to better governance and sound economic policies – which improve investor confidence in Africa are essential to lay the foundations for sustainable growth and development on the continent.

BUSA Portfolio Committee on Finance

Dennis Dykes

On 4 March BUSA submitted its ideas on the 2005/06 National budget to the Portfolio Committee on Finance. The delegation consisted of Dennis Dykes, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Economics Policy, and Ms Connie Motsumi of the LOA. Mr Dykes gave a brief presentation to the Committee, outlining BUSA's views of the plausibility of the economic assumptions, indicating key general principles that BUSA feels need to be instituted if the government's medium-term objectives on growth, poverty alleviation and employment are to be achieved and then assessing the budget in this context. The overall conclusion was that the government has done an excellent job of stabilising government

finances over the past few years and that the budget continues to capitalise on this good management. BUSA in particular applauded the cut in corporate tax rate (albeit small) and the moves to help small business. However, BUSA expressed regret that the government did not materially continue its reform of the tax system and left exchange controls unchanged despite the benign circumstances.

Questions from the Committee primarily centered on the exchange control issue), STC, the deficit and the advisability of new provincial taxes. Finally, BUSA expressed concern over the possibility of a plethora of new taxes at provincial level that could boost the overall tax burden and reduce competitiveness

Profile



Mvuseni Ngubane
President : BLA



Andiswa Ndoni
BLA- LEC CEO

Black Lawyers Association

BUSA has taken the initiative to create an awareness of its member organisations amongst its broad membership. The first to be featured in this profile section of the BUSA Bulletin is the Black Lawyers Association (BLA).

The BLA is a voluntary association where the members consist of South African attorneys, advocates, magistrates, prosecutors, law graduates and academics. "The name Black Lawyers Association has a historic meaning" explains Andiswa Ndoni, CEO of the BLA Legal Education Centre (LEC).

"When the BLA was founded the only people being discriminated against by apartheid in the legal fraternity were black lawyers hence the name." Andiswa makes it clear that the BLA constitution does not discriminate. "Membership is open to all organisations and is not based on their colour, sex or creed" said Andiswa. As early as 1984 the LEC introduced the building of capacity amongst black lawyers by conducting training in areas they were not exposed to. Recently the focus of the LEC has been on commercial law training. "We want to make sure our members

are apart of the main stream economic activities of this country" Andiswa said. The LEC is running a 12 week programme in conjunction with the American Bar Association - a follow up to the pilot programme run last year. The programme plans to cover issues like

- ♦Drafting of Contracts
- ♦Specific Agreements
- ♦Purchase and Sales Agreements
- ♦Specific Transactions etc.

Andiswa emphasized the BLA – LEC was mindful that training alone wouldn't take them

where they wanted to go but coupled with on the job training the end result would be ideal.

"There is also a need to include black lawyers in commercial transactions of business. There must be a concerted effort by BUSA members to hand out work to black lawyers." Andiswa also stated there was a need to start internships in various companies and law firms of BLA members. One of the first companies to join the intern initiative was VODACOM who will be hosting an intern for 6 months. The BLA is linked with Universities to give

law students the opportunity to go into law firms during the June and December holidays and see how things are run. Focusing on its Social Responsibility in 2005, the BLA-LEC has started a pro bono services initiative to the indigent community. Offering a call in service which refers callers to the branch closest to them, the BLA has branches in all 9 provinces. They have also adopted 2 children's homes for orphans of HIV, one in Voslarus and the other in Orlando.

Visit the BLA website at www.bla.org.za

IBSA signed in Cape Town

Friday 10 March marked the signing of the India Brazil South Africa Business (IBSA) Council agreement made amongst the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) and the National Confederation of Industries (CNI) on behalf of Brazil and finally BUSA. "India and Brazil SMEs contribute more to their countries GDP growth and employment than South Africa and as a country we can benefit from these lessons. While the automotive industries in both these countries are at a slightly better level than South Africa, they both produce vehicles that are locally designed and are of predominately local manufacture" said Bheki Sibiyi BUSA CEO on why the IBSA agreement is beneficial to SA. The objectives of IBSA Council is to:

- develop a strategy for the promotion of trade and economic co-operation amongst the three countries,
- pro-actively encourage trilateral business contact

and networking including a focus on SMEs and SMMEs,

- to facilitate the participation of businesses of the three countries in sectoral initiatives under the IBSA Dialogue Forum,

- to facilitate the formation of fora in specific industries and services which offer sustainable advantages for trilateral business ventures,

- to act as a catalyst in forming strategies and building better linkages for co-operation at multilateral level including the WTO, to promote the achievement of a fairer world trade regime, and

- to enable the private sector in all three countries to play a dynamic role in carrying out an effective dialogue process with

Governments on all sides with special reference to the suggestion of guidelines and policies relating to trade and investment amongst three countries.

Structurally IBSA will consist of five Senior Business Executives from each country as members. IBSA will hold an annual Business Council Summit on a rotational basis in

each country and hold other needs - based meetings and conferences. In order to obtain appropriate information on IBSA markets, it is the intention to carry out specific research plans and to make use of specific findings.

The 2nd National Anti Crime and Corruption Summit was held over the period of 1 and a half days (22 and 23 March 2005) at the CSIR Conference Centre in Tshwane. The event, opened by President Mbeki, was attended by Minister Geraldine Fraser Moloketi and Minister Trevor Manuel. BUSA vice president, Cas Coovadia, addressed the Summit, and expressed a sentiment of fighting corruption head on and committed business to this

An Asian African Summit will take place, in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 21 – 22 April 2005. This Summit is part of the Asia – Africa Partnership with its three pillars of government to government relations, interaction between regional structure and people to people or business interaction. Coinciding with

endeavour. The Summit divided into three commissions under the headings of Preventing Corruption, Combating Corruption and Transparency, Oversight and Accountability. The NACF Summit was closed by Minister Geraldine Fraser Moloketi who used an interesting experience as an example of how much progress has been made in the last ten years regarding corruption. The Minister had

Second NACF Summit

been on a radio show on SAFM called "After Eight" on the morning of the last day of the Summit and a woman currently serving a sentence for fraud called into the show. Brenda, the inmate, stated quite frankly that she had been committing fraudulent activities since before 1994 but it was only due to legislation and regulations passed after 1999 that she was apprehended.

To read these resolution visit the BUSA website at www.busa.org.za

Upcoming Events

this event is an Asian – African Business Summit co-hosted by Indonesia and South Africa (BUSA) that will be held from 22-23 April 2005 in Jakarta Indonesia. Business representatives who would like to attend are requested to submit their full names and contact

particulars to Ms Dorothy Coston dorothycoston@busa.org.za by no later than Monday April 8, 2005. A copy of the draft programme can also be obtained Ms Coston. Please note that there will be no attendance fee but travel and subsistence will be for attendees' own account. **3.**



International Involvement

BUSA at ILO in Geneva

BUSA's Bokkie Botha and Vic van Vuuren attended the ILO Governing Body (GB) meeting in Geneva held from the 8th - 19th of March 2005. The ILO's GB consists of Government Representatives, Worker Representatives and Employer Representatives. GB seats are limited and representatives from all three groups have to be elected to serve for a three year term of office. The seats are divided equally amongst the three groups

and in each group the seats are further divided into regional representation, taking into consideration the language differences. The GB meets in March and November of each year and the annual ILO conference is held in June of each year. The importance of the GB is that many decisions affecting international support for Africa, both direct and indirect, are taken at the GB meetings. Furthermore many debates regarding international social and labour policies

and standards are dealt with at these meetings including complaints against Governments and Employers. Since readmission to the ILO in the 90s, South Africa has been a prominent player at the ILO and at present the South African Government, Worker and Employer delegates are on the Governing Body. At this March's meetings Vic and Bokkie have participated in the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee. This is

an extremely important committee that deals with the strategic plans, programmes and finances of the ILO. Vic is also participating in the Committee on Technical Cooperation which deals with regional programmes and the funding that will be made available for them, e.g. Gender and HIV/AIDS programmes. Vic will also be participating in the committee on Multinational Enterprises. It is important for BUSA

that we play an active role at the ILO because it will enable us to play a proactive role in influencing international initiatives in our region and it will also enable us to play a much stronger role in the development of African business opportunities through a much stronger employer network.

International Standards Organisations meets in Brazil

A meeting of the ISO's Working Group on Social Responsibility was held in Salvador Brazil from 7 – 11 March 2005. The ISO, made up 146 members including Standards SA/ SABS, sets international compliance standards for conformity assessments on relatively technical matters relating to issues such as quantities and units packaging, freight containers and mechanical systems. Following a corporate

Social Responsibility Conference held in Sweden in June 2004 the ISO members were balloted on the possibility of developing an international standard to give guidance to Social Responsibility (SR) and consequently an ISO Working Group on Social Responsibility (WG SR) was established to prepare a SR "guidance" standard. Provision was made for ISO members to

nominate 6 people to represent the six stakeholders namely labour, industry, government, NGOs, consumers and others for its delegation. BUSA was nominated by SABS to represent industry on the ISO WG SR. The SA delegation comprised of Dr Sathir Basson (SABS) as leader of the delegation, Ms Dineo Shilenge (SABS), Mrs Norah Segoati (BPH

Billiton), Mr Nkosithabile Ndlovu (African Institute of Corporate Citizenship) and Mrs Friede Dowie (BUSA). The week long meeting was spent on process matters regarding procedure, structures, stakeholder engagement, the need for funding and communication, including translations. It is expected that each ISO member

would establish a so-called mirror committee nationally to prepare for WG meetings – with the word "mirror" referring to the need to include the identified six stakeholders in each national committee. The SABS will administer this national committee in South Africa. A decision as to whether there is a need for BUSA to set up a Task Group will be taken in due course.