

# Two new members for Business and Arts South Africa board

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Business and Arts South Africa is pleased to announce that it has appointed Charmaine Soobramoney and Yacoob Abba Omar to its board.

Now an independent consultant, Charmaine Soobramoney was most recently head of Stakeholder Strategy and Management at Old Mutual Wealth, while Yacoob Abba Omar is Head of Strategy and Communications at the Banking Association of South Africa (BASA). They replace outgoing board members, Richard Cock and Matthew van der Want.



"We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Richard for the incredible work he has done over the past 20 years, as well as the hugely valuable contribution made by Matthew," comments BASA chairperson, Andre le Roux.

"I have spent 20 happy and fruitful years on the BASA board, where I could speak on behalf of artists, and the arts community," comments outgoing board member Richard Cock. "I have seen BASA grow into a really effective organisation, and one which makes a real difference in South Africa. I will miss the great camaraderie of the BASA board, and I am happy still to be an ordinary member of BASA."

Soobramoney currently partners with executives and solopreneurs to identify and position their personal and business value proposition. Her skills span general management, sales and business development, legal and governance, relationships and negotiations, policy formulation, mentoring and coaching, and stakeholder management.

"I am delighted about my appointment and excited to serve on the BASA board," comments Soobramoney. "The artistic space is my escape and helped me cope with the stresses of the corporate executive life. In this phase of my journey I want to use my skills, networks and experience to assist BASA and the people it represents to get the recognition and resources it deserves. "

Omar, who recently submitted his PhD on 'Sovereignty and National Identity in South Africa' through Wits University, is equally buoyant about BASA's ability to impact on different spheres, including the economy and national unity.

"I am very excited at the confidence placed in me. I believe that the creative industries sector can play a huge role in restoring dignity to a nation still recovering from the trauma of the past, which is being exacerbated by persistently high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality. The arts have proven to be effective job generators. BASA can play a role in uplifting those engaged in survivalist enterprises to becoming successful small and medium enterprises. We should also look at how we position and market our country's cultural products so they are valued even more domestically and internationally. Most critically we must find ways in which our sector can promote national unity, reconciliation and tolerance."

Prior to his current position, Omar was Director Operations of the Mapungubwe Institute (MISTRA), a Johannesburg-based research institute. He served as South Africa's Ambassador to Oman from 2003 to 2008, United Arab Emirates from 2008 to December 2012, and as Deputy Director-General of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) from 1998 to 2002.

"For the past 20 years BASA holds a good reputation as a lean mean organisation, delivering an impactful relationship

between Business and the Arts with a track record of good corporate governance. Looking forward, I believe the two new appointments of Abba and Charmaine gives us skills in finance, legal, administration, politics and research, in business and government. Together with the skillset already on board this moves BASA beyond a strong board towards an exceptional board with a unique set of skills to support our public stakeholder, the DAC, and our private partners,” says Le Roux.

BASA’s board is chaired by Andre le Roux, with Deputy Chair being Mandie van der Spuy, and comprises of Charmaine Soobramoney, Yacoob Abba Omar, Herman Bosman, Mandla Langa, Hilton Lawler, Khanyi Mamba, Dr. Gianni Mariano, Dorothea Moors, Carel Nolte, Gail Walters, and Michelle Constant.

## Charmaine Soobramoney

Independent consultant Charmaine Soobramoney has held positions including that of Stakeholder Strategy and Management at Old Mutual Wealth, Head of Business Development at Acsis, General Manager and Company Secretary of the Association of Collective Investments (now ASISA) and Senior Manager of Sage Life Legal Services. Charmaine has spent in excess of two decades in leadership, strategic and operational roles within commerce and industry organisations such as Business Unity South Africa, the Advertising Standards Authority. She was also a director on the Financial Sector Charter Board and the Board of the Savings Institute of South Africa amongst others. Currently she serves as a non-executive director and an audit committee member at a few companies and holds qualifications in law and finance as well as a masters degree in Financial Management from the University of London.

## Yacoob Abba Omar

Yacoob Abba Omar is Head of Strategy and Communications at the Banking Association of South Africa (BASA). Before that he was Director Operations of the Mapungubwe Institute (MISTRA), a Johannesburg-based research institute. He served as South Africa’s Ambassador to Oman from 2003 to 2008, United Arab Emirates from 2008 to December 2012, and as Deputy Director-General of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) from 1998 to 2002. Before South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994, Abba served in the African National Congress in several capacities. He serves on the board of SA Tourism and the Board of Trustees of the South African National AIDS Council. He is also on the Advisory Committee of the Wits Centre for Diversity Studies and of South African History Online.

## About BASA

BUSINESS AND ARTS SOUTH AFRICA NPC:

Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) NPC is an internationally recognised South African development agency with a suite of integrated programmes implemented nationally and internationally. BASA encourages mutually beneficial partnerships between business and the arts, securing the future development of the arts sector in South Africa and contributing to corporate success through Shared Value. BASA was founded in 1997 as a joint initiative of the Department of Arts and Culture and the business sector as a public/private partnership. For more information on BASA, contact us on 011 447 2295 or visit our website: [www.basa.co.za](http://www.basa.co.za)

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## Business and Arts South Africa



Business and Arts South Africa (BASA) is an internationally recognised South African development agency which integrates the Arts into, and contributes to, Corporate's commercial success. With a suite of integrated programmes BASA encourages mutually beneficial partnerships between business and the arts.

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