



## **The Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA) appoints Dr Sandy Africa as the new Director of Research**

**Johannesburg, 14 January 2025** – The Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA), welcomes Dr Sandy Africa who joined us at the beginning of January 2025 as the new Director of Research. Dr Africa takes over from Professor Susan Booysen, who has been instrumental in advancing the Mapungubwe Institute’s research agenda during her tenure.

Dr Africa brings to MISTRA an illustrious career spanning nearly four decades, encompassing academic excellence, public policy contributions, and thought leadership in post-conflict governance, peacebuilding, and security oversight. Her professional journey has included leadership roles in South Africa’s public sector, academia, and civil society, with an emphasis on research, strategy development, and capacity-building.

Before joining MISTRA, Dr Africa served as an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Sciences and Deputy Dean of Teaching and Learning at the University of Pretoria. She taught and researched International Relations, Security Studies, and Public Policy while actively participating in governance initiatives across Africa and internationally. Dr Africa is an accomplished author with numerous peer-reviewed publications, chapters in books, and policy-focused research outputs to her credit. She was the Chairperson of the Expert Panel appointed by President Cyril Ramaphosa into the July 2021 Civil Unrest.

In her new role, Dr Africa will oversee MISTRA's diverse and transdisciplinary research portfolio, ensure quality assurance across all outputs, and spearhead strategic reflections that tackle South Africa's and the continent's pressing challenges. She will work closely with MISTRA’s teams and networks to build robust research partnerships, promote public intellectual engagement, and position MISTRA as a global thought leader.

Reflecting on this new chapter for MISTRA, Executive Director Joel Netshitenzhe stated, “Dr Sandy Africa’s appointment is a moment of pride and great expectation for MISTRA. She embodies intellectual rigour and commitment to the kind of transformative research that MISTRA stands for. Her leadership promises to strengthen MISTRA’s impact on strategic dialogue in our country and further afield. We also extend deep gratitude to Professor Susan Booysen, whose visionary stewardship has laid a solid foundation for Dr Africa to build upon.”



Commenting on her new appointment, Dr Africa said, “It is an honour to join MISTRA as Director of Research and to be entrusted with leading a research programme that seeks to respond to the strategic challenges facing South Africa and the African continent. I look forward to engaging with MISTRA’s distinguished research teams, partners, and wider communities to ensure the Institute remains a beacon of thought leadership and a catalyst for evidence-based policy development.”

**ENDS**

Issued by The Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection (MISTRA).

**Media enquiries:** Funie Rabambi [funie@twenty8zero7.com](mailto:funie@twenty8zero7.com) and/or 071 252 0027