



Ecco Chamber

FORTNIGHTLY ITALIAN NEWS MADE IN
SOUTH AFRICA



Parallel Roads of Freedom

- **Chamber's Note**
- **Job Opportunity: Deputy Secretary General**
- **Aperilink Announcement**
- **New Member: Quiver Tree Capital**



Chamber's Note

Parallel Roads of Freedom

Falling two days apart, there are many commonalities associated with Italy's Festa Della Liberazione (25 April) and South Africa's Freedom Day (27 April). For a start, both days celebrate the end of vicious political regimes – fascism in Italy, Apartheid in South Africa. In both cases, citizens of the respective countries received newfound rights and freedoms that had the potential to improve life for everyone.

About two and a half years after the Nazi occupation of Italy was ended, Italy signed in a new constitution and within almost exactly the same timespan after South Africa's first democratic elections, South Africa brought its own constitution into law. The transition in Italy required compromises amongst elites, particularly with the Catholic Church and the Italian monarch. In the lead up to 1994, similar elite compromises took place in South Africa, particularly between the incoming political establishment with the existing corporate structures in South Africa.

For nearly forty-five years, Italy was dominated by a single political party which gradually became riddled with factions and patronage. The party, known as the Democrazia Cristiana (DC), rode the wave of being Italy's first democratically elected party, discrediting opposition and appeasing multiple and often contradictory interest groups. This may sound familiar to South Africans who are twenty-seven years into their own democracy but face an ANC which has seemed to become endemically corrupt.

In Italy, the Democrazia Cristiana's dominance ended dramatically in the 1990s, during the judicial investigation into government corruption known as Mani Pulite. The house of cards began to topple when a politician called Mario Chiesa was arrested and began exposing the flagrant corruption of others within the Italian government. Might a similar event in the near future cause such immense change in South Africa?

There are obviously many differences between our two countries. Despite the deep-set corruption in Italy, the society was changed over thirty-five years owing to strong and continuous economic growth. Conversely, less than 20 years into South African democracy, the South African economy began to stagnate. This is likely to be as a result of several factors such as differing global contexts (between the 1960s and the 2010s), higher levels of international competition, and differing regional situations. A potential major factor hindering South Africa's economic prosperity is the unusual level of inequality which prevents millions of people from contributing to the growth of the economy as well as driving up crime.

Freedom Day thus has an ironic chime for many in South Africa. For example the Shackdwellers Movement, led by the recent recipient of the prestigious Per Anger Prize for human rights and democracy, Sbu Zikode thus celebrates Unfreedom Day each year on the 27th of April. We look forward to the day when all South Africans can truly celebrate their freedom, both in political and economic terms.

Italcham!

WE ARE HIRING



JOIN OUR TEAM



DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

- Bilingual Italian and English
- Preferably graduated in-law/ economics/political science
- South African Citizen, Permanent Resident Holder or General work permit
- Italian citizenship

**SEND YOUR CV TO SG@ITALCHAM.CO.ZA
REFERENCE "DSG APPLICATION"**



APERILINK

**In collaboration with Fiat
Chrysler Sandton**

Networking and Cocktails

**R250 MEMBERS
R400 NON-MEMBERS**
VAT excluded

**Dress Code:
Smart/Cocktail**

**Date: 13 May 2021
Time: 18:00 - 20:00
Location: Fiat Chrysler
Sandton**



VALVERDE
ECO HOTEL





Welcoming our New Member

Quiver Tree is not a typical Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment consultancy, but rather a structuring and advisory firm that focuses on B-BBEE. Specializing in the provision of Ownership and Enterprise Supplier Development (“ESD”). The commercial approach to BBBEE taken by QuiverTree is made by solid principles of corporate finance and risk management. The in-depth commercial experience & BBBEE expertise of QuiverTree enable us to deliver insights into the structures we implement for clients



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