

Its Role

Take a minute to consider the important documents in your life: birth, school, marriage and death certificates. They're all endorsed by the Coat of Arms: the highest symbol of the State. The Coat of Arms is also a central part of the Great Seal. Absolute authority is given to every document with the Great Seal on it, as this means that it has been approved by the President of South Africa.

Its Design

The Coat of Arms consists of a series of elements organised in oval shapes:



The Oval Shape Of Foundation

The Motto: The motto is !ke e: /xarra //ke, written in the Khoisan language of the /Xam people. Its literal meaning is "diverse people unite". It calls for unity in diversity; for the nation to unite in a sense of belonging and national pride.

The Ears of Wheat: An emblem of fertility, wheat also symbolises growth and the development of potential. It relates to the nourishment of the people.

Elephant Tusks: Elephants symbolise wisdom, strength, moderation and eternity.

The Shield: The shield conveys identity and spiritual defence. It contains the primary symbol of our nation - its people.

The Human Figures: The figures are derived from images on the Linton Stone, a famous example of South African rock art. The figures are depicted in an attitude of greeting - symbolising unity and collective humanity.

The Spear and Knobkierie: Dual symbols of defence and authority, they are laid down in a peaceful way.

The Oval Shape Of Ascendance

The Protea: The protea is an emblem of the beauty of our land and the flowering of our potential as a nation.

The Secretary Bird: The secretary bird is shown in flight - the natural consequence of growth and speed. Its uplifted wings represent the ascendance of our nation and simultaneously offer protection.

The Rising Sun: An emblem of brightness, splendour and the nature of energy, the sun symbolises rebirth as well as the faculties of reflection, knowledge, good judgement and willpower. It is the symbol of life, of light and the wholeness of humanity.

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