

Minister Naledi Pandor: Profile



Naledi Pandor is South Africa's Minister of Higher Education and Training. A life of exile from 1961 until 1984 resulted in an international flavour to her education. She holds a BA from the University of Botswana and Swaziland and an MA in Education from the University of London. In 1992 she studied for a Diploma in Higher Education, Administration and Leadership at Bryn Mawr in the USA. In 1997 she completed an MA in Linguistics at the University of Stellenbosch and a Diploma in Leadership in Development at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, while she was serving as an MP.

Pandor became an MP in 1994 and has amassed impressive experience in positions of public office, including deputy chief whip of the ANC in the National Assembly from 1995 to 1998, deputy chairperson of the National Council of Provinces in 1998, and its Chairperson from 1999-2004. Her experience in education policy planning made her a welcome appointment as South Africa's Minister of Education in 2004. She has been a member of cabinet ever since, serving as Minister of Education (2004-2009), Minister of Science and Technology (2009-2012), Minister of Home Affairs (2012-2014), and as Minister of Science and Technology (2014-2018)

Pandor has received honorary doctorates from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, University of Stellenbosch, and the University of Lisbon (Portugal).

She was awarded the American Association for the Advancement of Science's 2016 Science Diplomacy Award, for promoting development through science in South Africa and abroad. Jean Lebel, the President of Canada's International Development Research Centre, recommended her for the award and wrote that she is leading numerous efforts to promote the research capacities of young and emerging scientists, particularly female scientists. "Under Minister Pandor's leadership," he continued, "South Africa has become a catalyst for developing scientific capabilities across the African continent". The Association is the world's largest general scientific society and the publisher of the journal *Science*.

UNISA awarded her the Outstanding Educator Award, an award reserved for alumni and extraordinary South Africans. On awarding her Germany's highest federal award, the Grand Cross of Merit, the German Ambassador to South Africa, Walter Lindner, said: "Pandor is for us a symbol of the new South Africa: modern, innovative, dedicated to scientific progress and also outstanding female leadership".

She is married to Sharif Pandor and they have four children and two grandchildren.