

Proudly South African fashion livens up the red carpet

By [Vivian Warby](#)

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The delights of the country's rainbow nation are being emulated in fashion as the Mother City readies for the opening of parliament this morning.

A spectrum of colours, ranging from earth-saving green, to voluptuous violet, buttery yellow and eye-catching turquoise, donned the red carpet leading to the National Assembly where the State of the Nation Address will be heard today, 6 February.

Members of Parliament, ministers, Directors General, politicians and celebrities started arriving from the early hours of this morning in the traditional bright African garb - Zulu, Ndebele, Xhosa, amongst others - to more Western high-street fashion.

Notably this year, most of the dresses were designed by local designers, lending a loud proudly South African feel to the day.

Mpumi Mpofu, Director General of Transport, made her own stylish, yet subtle flowing floral knee-length dress in blues and violets and cut a stunning figure on the red carpet.

As excitement brewed to African beats outside the Parliamentary buildings, bright hues appeared to be the choice this year.

Former Premier of the Free State and Member of Parliament, Winkie Direko wore a stunning violet two-piece outfit, which was set off with a matching hat. The creation was designed by a local Chinese artist, Alice.

Direko said she had wanted to wear something that would add life and colour to the day.

In a turquoise two-piece with African beaded necklace, Sheila Camerer, Democratic Alliance MP, successfully tried out the Afro-chic look. "I've decided Afro-chic is going to be a new look for me for big functions."

From the Royal family, Bongi Maria Ntuli, MP from Mpumalanga wore a traditional Ndebele outfit. "The bright colours to me symbolise our rainbow nation. The big gold necklace around my neck symbolises that I am an Ndebele married woman."

From Limpopo, MP Freda Mathibela, wore a striking red outfit with a gold sun rising on the skirt and top of the two piece. "I am wearing an African outfit to show my pride in being African. The hat is a Zulu one," she said.

Meanwhile, members of the public are standing along Adderley Street and Hertzog Boulevard to catch a glimpse of President Kgalema Motlanthe and Deputy President Baleke Mbete when they make their way to Parliament.

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