

Paramount group executive receives top diplomatic award

Written by Administrator

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Pretoria - A senior executive at Africa's largest independent defence and aerospace business, Paramount Group received the highest state order that can be bestowed by the President of Chile on foreign citizens, in recognition of his diplomatic service as South African Ambassador. Victor Zazeraj was decorated with the Great Cross of the Order of Bernardo O'Higgins during a ceremony held at the Chilean Ambassador's residence in Pretoria. The Chilean Ambassador, Mr Francisco Marambio said: "Dear Victor, the Order Bernardo O'Higgins represents one of Chile's most valued distinctions. It was created to pay tribute to foreign friends of Chile, who have distinguished themselves in the promotion of a better understanding among foreign countries and Chile, or who are eminent in science, in altruism and in international cooperation. You fulfill all the requisites, set by the Council of the Order, to earn this tribute to you." A career diplomat with high level postings across the globe, Victor Zazeraj played an important role in shaping and strengthening the relations between South Africa and Chile. His last post was as South African Ambassador to Chile between 2004 and 2008. During that period of time he was involved in strengthening and deepening ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. He played an active role in developing commercial, political, and cultural ties with Chile. He also had the privilege of organizing the state visit, to the country, by former president Thabo Mbeki. Zazeraj commented: "A visit by the President of the country you represent is probably the biggest challenge you can face as Head of Mission during a posting. It was a very successful visit with President Mbeki delivering a historic speech to the two houses of the Chilean Parliament and some of the practical outcomes were the signing of several collaboration agreements between the two countries; the conclusion of the text of an Agreement to Avoid Double Taxation between South Africa and Chile, and the commencement of the study of an Agreement in the Field of Mining and Energy." During Victor's posting closer military ties were established including visits by South African naval vessels to Chile, closer cooperation in technology, astronomy, ocean sciences and increased trade and investment with numerous South African businesses investing in the country. Notes to editors The award was established in 1965 and named after one of the founders of the Chilean State, General Bernardo O'Higgins, who was also the leader in the struggle for independence by the Spanish colonies in America in 1810-1826. About Paramount Group Paramount Group is Africa's largest privately-owned defence and aerospace business. It is a leader in defence and security innovation and is a trusted partner to sovereign governments around the world, providing ground-breaking products, services and consultancy, including support for peace-keeping missions.

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