

Catherine Constantinides: Detailed CV Curriculum Vitae. 2026

African Leader | Human Rights Defender | Humanitarian | Environmental & Climate Activist

Summary:

Catherine Constantinides is a renowned human rights activist and social entrepreneur dedicated to promoting social justice and sustainable development in South Africa and globally. As a 2013 Archbishop Tutu African Oxford Fellow and 2016 Mandela Washington Fellow, she has worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights of marginalized communities across South Africa and around the world, including the people of Western Sahara. She sits on the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation board, the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance, the Saharawi Human Rights Commission and is a Commissioner of the Presidential Climate Commission.

Constantinides co-founded Generation Earth, a youth-led environmental organization, and has led initiatives addressing climate justice, water security, and waste management. Her work has taken her to global platforms, including the United Nations, and earned her numerous awards, such as the UBUNTU Award for Youth Diplomacy. She was the Executive Director of Lead SA under Primedia Broadcasting and the executive director of Miss Earth South Africa, promoting environmental justice, awareness and empowering of young leaders. Constantinides' commitment to human rights and sustainability has inspired countless individuals, making her a respected voice for change.

A Dedicated and passionate leader with extensive experience, working in the spaces of community development, climate action, sustainability, across the media landscape, social entrepreneurship, social justice, human rights, environmental, conservation and wildlife programmes and climate justice. She has a proven track record of driving impact and positive change through collective action and community engagement.

Education:

Executive Education:

- Leading Women Programme. Gordon Business School (GIBS). (2025)
- Sustainable Fundraising For Non-Profits. WITS Business School, Lilly School of Philanthropy (August 2025)
- Advanced Human Rights Course on Children's Rights in Africa (University of Pretoria, Centre for Child Law, Dullah Omar Institute.) (June 2024)
- Institute of Directors South Africa (IODSA): Corporate Governance and Board Effectiveness (May 2021)
- Wits Language School. Spanish Module A. DVC Academic. (2020)
- Wits Language School. Zulu Module A. DVC Academic. (2019)
- Occasional Studies: Politics, Wits University (2018)
- Social Entrepreneurship and Systems Change, UCT Business School / Bertha Centre (2017)
- Mandela Washington Fellowship African Leadership Programme, University of Virginia and College of William & Mary. (2016) 1
- Public Relations Diploma, PRISA (Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa). (2006) - Bachelor of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand Law, Anthropology (2001, incomplete due to financial constraints)

Board Positions and Roles

- Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance Board Member: 2019 – present Audit and Risk Committee Member
- Ahmed Kathrada Foundation Board Member: 2020 – present
- Merchants of Light NPC Board Member: 2022 – present Director: 2022 – present
- Presidential Climate Commission: Commissioner: 2026 – 2031

Awards and Accolades Received:

- Congress of Business & Economics: Excellence in Leadership Award (2024)
- Cyprus Diaspora Forum Awards: Social & Philanthropy Award. CYDIA Awards (2024)
- Glamour Women of the Year 2023: Humanitarian Game Changer. (2023)
- Named as 100 Mandela's of The Future. News24. (2020)
- South African UBUNTU Award for Diplomacy, awarded by the South African Government (2016)
- Honourary Member: The Golden Key Society of South Africa (2015)
- SA Premier Business Awards: Young Entrepreneur of the Year (2013)
- Mail and Guardian 'Greening The Future' Award (2013)
- Winner of TOPCO SA's Top Young Women Entrepreneur Award (2013)
- Thaba Ya Batswana Community Award (2013)
- Top Young Female Entrepreneur – National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) (2013)
- Enviropeadia Community Youth development programme Award Winner (2012)
- Embassy of Greece to South Africa: Climate Change Panathinaiki Award (2011)
- eta Award for Women in Community and Energy (2008)

Fellowships:

- African Leadership Institute : Archbishop Tutu Fellowship programme (South Africa & UK) (2013) SAID Business School, University of Oxford (September 2013)
- Mandela Washington Fellowship. University of Virginia, College of William & Mary (2016)
- Climate Reality programme, training by US Vice President Al Gore (Istanbul, Turkey) (2013)
- Women-Led Businesses: Building a strong & sustainable economy (UK. Wilton Park. Oct 2014)
- Golden Key International Honours Society (2015)
- apolitical academy Fellowship: Leadership Award. Women in Public service. (2018)

Employment History:

Merchants of Light NPC: Director (2020 to present) Community Development, Food Security and Humanitarian relief aid across communities

Generation Earth: Co-Founder. (2011 to present)

ONE DAY LEADER TV series. (2014 – 2019) Resident Judge and Mentor Executive Director,

LEAD SA: Primedia Broadcasting (2012-2016)

- Spearheaded national campaigns and projects
- Managed International Mandela Day projects and campaigns
- Coordinated welcome and send-off events for athletes during the

2012, 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games

- Promoted education and government accountability
- Actively participated in the UNFCCC COP 17 Climate Conference
- Organized AIDS Day activations, Road Safety awareness campaigns, and environmental initiatives
- Led the Lead SA Hero Campaign across four radio stations
- Developed and implemented Stop Rape & Drug Watch campaigns and Drug Watch campaign, serving as a spokesperson and brand ambassador

Ambassadorial Roles:

- Quadriplegic Association Ambassador for Gauteng and National (1997-Present)
- Play Your Part Ambassador for Brand South Africa (2011 - 2025)
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Ambassador: 2014 - 2020

Leadership Experience: Catherine writes as a thought leaders across topics of climate change, social justice, human rights and active citizenry. She is often profiled in the media and has built a powerful repour with journalists and media houses alike. She has spoken on global platforms and given key note addresses around the world sharing her work, passion and commitment to climate justice, development and human rights. - 'Conversations with the President'. HIP Alliance and ANC President, HE Ramaphosa. March 2019 Community Input and engagement by Catherine Constatinides - Power Summit by Marie Claire, Nelson Mandela Foundation and AUDI. (2018)

- Key Note Address at the 24th General Assembly of the Interparliamentary

Assembly on Orthodoxy hosted by Italian Parliament. Rome. (25-30 June 2017)

- Dialogue of Development & Rights. Wits Business School. (March 2017).

Speaker

- PRISM Awards. Judge. (2012- 2016)
- Social Cohesion Advocate: Minister of Arts & Culture (2013-2021)
- Ambassador and Spokesperson, Brand South Africa and Play Your Part: national campaigns (2014 - current)
- Interact President, Mondeor High School (1998-2000)

- Rotary's Interact District Representative (1998-1999)
- SRC Representative (1996-1998) / Head of SRC Representative Body (1999
2000)
- Deputy Head Prefect (2000) / Governing Body Student Representative (1999
2000)
- World Vision 40 Hour Famine Leader (1998-2000) Secondary Education:
- Mondeor High School, Gauteng Senior Certificate, Full Matriculation Exemption
(1996-2000)

Launch of Generation Earth - an international environmental youth network
(2011) 4 As Co-founder of Generation Earth, Catherine Constantinides alongside
Ella Bella Leite launched a networking platform for young people to get actively
involved in Climate, Sustainability and Green issues. This is a platform that was
endorsed by the UN Environment Programme (UN Environment) and TUNZA
Africa. The platform allows a structure and framework for young people to
engage on Global Issues such as Climate Justice, Just Transitions, Sustainability,
the Circular Economy. Through engagement and discussion, they are able to
come up with tangible long term sustainable solutions for the greatest threat that
our Generation will face, Climate Change.

2005-2008: Launch of Radio Show on Radio Today Catherine Constantinides
hosted her own Radio Show for the above period, highlighting community
development work, inspirational stories, green programmes and climate
activism work that she was responsible for.

2005-2007: Work in Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines - working within the
space of community development, sustainability and grass roots level
humanitarian work. Catherine connected with communities, educated and
developed young people, women and community leaders sharing her
experiences, passion and drive with them, allowing them to unlock their own
potential and harness their growth ability. Education:

Brief Profile and Bio:

Catherine Constantinides is a South African born Activist and agent of change. This dynamic woman has travelled the world and worked hands on in some of the world's most forgotten communities as a human rights defender, humanitarian and activist having worked in countries across the world including Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Philippines, Cote D'Ivoire, Cambodia, Egypt, Algeria and Western Sahara to name but a few. Her roots remain embedded in the communities she serves daily in South Africa. Her passion for development, human rights, sustainability and climate justice is evident in the endless work that her organisation and programmes have achieved over the past two decades. Her work as an activist and humanitarian began from the time she was still at school using her leadership skills to harness and grow as her journey and path took her to greater things. Catherine has spoken on global platforms and actively worked within the UN systems, namely the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva and the UN Security Council in New York, where she has used her voice and media platforms to lobby, engage, moderate and advocate for human rights, while fighting the injustices of oppression, human rights violations and atrocities.

Additionally she has used international platforms to stand behind these causes and values. She was the Guest of Honour at the closing ceremony at the World Youth Forum in Egypt where she addressed an audience 5000 strong and was broadcast to more than 10 million people.

She has been listed as one of Africa's Top 100 Young People, has been given accolades by government, institutions and global entities. She is a Mail and Guardian Top 100 South African to have lunch with, listed in SA's second season of 21 Icons and was an Archbishop Tutu African Oxford Fellow and Mandela Washington Fellow. She was

recently announced as Glamour Magazine's Humanitarian of The Year, a prestigious award that highlights her activism, advocacy work and passion for Human Rights, Climate Justice and Food Security.

Constantinides was at the helm of the Lead SA programme under the Primedia group for several years, using her passion for democracy, constitutionalism and patriotism to drive the programmes and agenda, and nationwide activations for the platform.

She has also led the Miss Earth South Africa leadership programme and the organisation is proud of the more than, 60 000 trees that they have planted over the past 20 years.

Constantinides continues to work hands and feet on the ground championing nutrition, food security, waste, access to safe, clean water and the bill of rights to name but a few. This Human Rights Defender is no stranger to the world and has more energy than most. She can be found on social media platforms under @ChangeAgentSA