The Republic of South Africa first flew this flag on April 27, 1994. It was originally designed as an ‘interim’ flag and a last minute decision was made to use it as the national flag.

The South African government has said the the flag is ‘a synopsis of principal elements of the country’s flag history’ and also that ‘no universal symbolism should be attached to any of the colours’. The only part of the flag that does hold symbolism is the ‘V’ or ‘Y’ shape in the flag. It is ‘the convergence of diverse elements within South African society taking the road ahead in unity’.