



EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN BOTSWANA



PRESS RELEASE

EU-SADC EPA Negotiations Senior Officials Meeting in Gaborone on 28th April 2005.

Representatives from the European Commission (EC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries met on 28th April 2005. The SADC delegation was led by Mrs. B. Molosiwa, Permanent Secretary at the Botswana Ministry of Trade and Industry and the EC Delegation by Mr. K-F. Falkenberg, Director at the European Commission's Directorate General for Trade.

This Senior Officials meeting took place in the framework of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) negotiations. The discussions focused on Regional Integration issues, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS).

Both sides agreed that this meeting constituted an important step in the negotiation process, notably in outlining issues of common interest and by further elaborating the joint road map agreed by both sides at start of the negotiations.

The Senior Officials meeting was preceded by the first meeting of the SADC-EC Regional Preparatory Task Force (RPTF) on 27th of April. The RPTF has been set up to ensure the link between trade negotiations and development cooperation and to address capacity constraints of the SADC side.

The EPA negotiations are taking place in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement signed between the EU and ACP countries in 2000. It provides for the negotiation, before the end of 2007, of a new regional trading arrangement, compatible with the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The SADC-EU negotiations of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) were launched in Windhoek, Namibia on July 8th, 2004, and the first negotiation meeting at senior official level took place on December 7th, 2004 in Brussels. Countries negotiating the EPA with the EU under the SADC configuration are Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Tanzania, while South Africa participates as an observer.

**SADC Secretariat
Gaborone
28th April 2005**

**Delegation of the European Commission
Gaborone
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