



Joint Press Release

Ministry of Water and Environmental Affairs of the Republic of South Africa
European Union Delegation to the Republic of South Africa

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.../for immediate release

South Africa and the EU Reaffirm Shared Commitment to Address the Climate Change Challenge

The South African Government and the European Commission discussed today the pressing issue of climate change and stressed the importance of intensifying urgent actions to address the challenge at the international, regional, national and grassroots levels.

Ms Edna Molewa, South African Minister of Environmental Affairs, and Mr Maroš Šefčovič, Vice President of the European Commission for the Energy Union, met to discuss cooperation on climate change. The Vice-President and the Minister's delegation also visited the Khangezile School in Springs near Johannesburg to see at first hand a practical example of South Africa-European Union cooperation with regard to the application of green technologies in community centres. Minister Molewa conveyed the South African government's appreciation to the EU for its ongoing support to a number of environmental projects in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa and - commenting on the Khangezile School initiative - commended in particular its strong focus on enhancing public awareness of the climate change challenge and on the important role of women and youth.

The partners confirmed that environment and climate change remain a priority area for bilateral cooperation, as outlined in the South Africa – European Union (SA-EU) Strategic Partnership of 2007 and agreed to enhance their dialogue in these areas, notably covering green and ocean economy in the context of the SA EU Forum on Environment and Sustainable Development. In this regard, they noted progress in development cooperation with EU support through NGOs to projects ranging from waste management to eco-tourism and permaculture gardens to carbon farming, with many of these projects being co-funded by the South African Government.

The EU reiterated its support to South Africa's infrastructure development through the Infrastructure Investment Programme for South Africa (IIPSA) managed by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). Sustainable energy, transport, waste and water management are among the focal sectors of the programme and a number of promising proposals are being considered.

South Africa is also one of the six beneficiary countries under the EU-funded SWITCH Africa Green programme implemented by UN agencies, targeting sustainable consumption and production practices.

In their discussion on multilateral cooperation, the partners reaffirmed their shared commitment to secure the adoption of an ambitious new Protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at COP21/CMP11 in Paris in December. This would mark the successful conclusion of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, upon which the current round of multilateral negotiations is based.

The partners discussed their respective Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the new global agreement on climate change. South Africa welcomed the EU's pledge to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030 as compared to 1990 and informed that it is finalising its preparations to submit South Africa's INDC to the United Nations in time for inclusion in the UN's synthesis report on the aggregate effect of the INDCs. The contribution would include not only mitigation, but also adaptation and means of implementation, which are of central importance in the current negotiations.

The South African Government and the European Commission will continue to cooperate with each other and to engage other partners ahead of the Paris Conference to help ensure its success.

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