



Media Advisory
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Turning the Key for Responsible Business and Development in Southern Africa

Under the theme "Business and Development: Doing responsible business in the southern Africa", the Southern Africa Trust and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), with support from the Flemish Government will on 25 November 2010 host a public dialogue at the DBSA office in Midrand, South Africa.

The dialogue is aimed at mainstreaming poverty in the regional integration agenda and to discuss how business can effectively contribute to overcoming poverty, both at national and regional levels. The Public Dialogue is the first of a series of four dialogues within a joint project with the Flemish Government called "Regional Integration and Development: A Public Dialogue Series on South Africa and its neighbours".

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mozambique and current Chief Executive Officer of the Joaquim Chissano Foundation, Dr Leonardo Simao will deliver a keynote address; followed by the former Zimbabwe Minister of Finance, Dr Simba Makoni.

Various issues that will be discussed include:

- The state of regional integration in the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- The business climate in SADC and how conducive it is for attracting and retaining investments;
- The role of business in sustainable development and poverty reduction and the relevance of the B4D Pathfinder as an inclusive business model in the context of SADC;
- The relevance of a tripartite partnership between business, government and civil society for the success of responsible business practices;
- Approaches to responsible business; and
- Recommendations on the way forward including funding requirements.

There is widespread recognition that government alone cannot deal with the problem of poverty or achieve the Millennium Development Goals due to resource and capacity constraints. Support from a wide range of sectors that include the private sector and civil society could make a meaningful impact to those directly affected by poverty.

"The private sector is increasingly working with and investing in pro-poor models and this does bring about thriving markets. There are also some public-private partnership ventures that are doing well in improving access to education, empowering women and considerably eliminating gender inequalities in the region. These are innovative development measures that should be integrated in the regional integration agenda for the benefit of the poor," says Dr Prega Ramsamy, Head of the B4D Pathfinder at the Southern Africa Trust.

Various representatives like the SADC Secretariat, Business Unity South Africa, National Business Forum, the Youth Chamber, SADC Employers Group, SADC Council of Non Governmental Organizations, international and bilateral organisations and selected business organisations are expected to attend.

Members of the media are invited to attend the public dialogue. Confirmation of attendance should be directed to Ms Mpho Kgosidintsi on the contact details below.

The Southern Africa Trust is an independent non-profit agency that supports deeper and wider regional engagement to overcome poverty in southern Africa.

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