



P R E S S R E L E A S E

EU Ambassador presents letters of credence to President Khama

The European Union (EU) Delegation to Botswana and SADC is pleased to announce that the new Head of Delegation, Ambassador Alexander Baum, presented his credentials to His Excellency the President on Monday 22 September. Ambassador Baum replaces Ambassador Gerard McGovern, who served in Botswana from February 2011 until August 2014. Ambassador Baum was previously posted in Malawi in the same capacity for a period of four years. His career includes assignments in Asia, South America and other African countries as well as at the EU Headquarters in Brussels.

The EU and Botswana enjoy a long-standing partnership built around shared values and common concerns that Ambassador Baum and his team at the EU Delegation will continue to nurture together with the EU Member States. In this regard, it is worth noting that a new cycle of development cooperation has been recently approved for Botswana for 2014-2020 where Human Resource Development will receive the biggest funding allocation. At a time when many international development partners have left Botswana, the European Union is committed to stay on and continue to support the Government's efforts to reform the education sector. Cooperation will be widened to also include reform of the wider public sector with a view to rendering it more cost efficient and strengthening service delivery; the new programme will also help to increase the capacity of civil society organisations in Botswana to fulfil their mandate.

Furthermore, in August this year, negotiations on the SADC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) were successfully concluded. This will allow for goods produced in the EPA SADC countries – including Botswana, the group's lead negotiator – to enter the EU market quota-free and duty-free. This new partnership is expected to provide a platform for boosting economic relations between the region and the EU.

Finally, the EU Delegation to Botswana is also accredited to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and as such contributes to the Political Dialogue between SADC and the EU and manages the regional financial envelope that supports the region's integration efforts. Ambassador Baum, who also served in Tanzania, is personally very attached to the Southern African region and looks forward interacting with SADC Secretariat in Gaborone.

