



PRESS RELEASE

EU SUPPORTS FURTHER CONSOLIDATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BOTSWANA

The Delegation of the European Union to Botswana on 8th October 2015 launched activities geared towards spreading human rights in Botswana. The activities, supported by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), have been allocated approximately 6, 7 million Pula in this second round. The EIDHR programme was first launched in 2013.

In August 2014 the EU Delegation for the second time invited Botswana civil society organisations to come forward with proposals on how the EU can support them in providing nation-wide human rights/civic education; supporting the rights of the child and strengthening child protection mechanisms at all levels; advocacy and promotion of broad and inclusive political and social dialogue on minority/ indigenous rights, the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) persons and the death penalty.

This process has resulted in four organisations having been awarded EU funding: Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (NCONGO) for providing human rights education to local stakeholders and communities in the region; Minority Rights Group International for work on the recognition of minorities and their rights; Botswana Network on Ethics, Law and HIV/AIDS (BONELA) for promotion and protection of human rights of rural communities and most at risk populations; and Stepping Stones International for work on child protection/sexual abuse.

For his part, the Head of the EU Delegation to Botswana, Ambassador Alexander Baum, said; "*protection of human rights is at the core of European Union foreign policy*". He went on to emphasise that the funding being allocated in this new programme "*confirms the EU's strong belief in the importance of civil society for a dynamic and tolerant society and the need to keep the discussion on human rights alive at all times. Human rights can never be taken for granted in any society. They have to be won every day and knowing ones rights is necessary for claiming them. By this programme the EU wishes to contribute to that necessary dialogue,*" he added.

The EIDHR is a self-standing financial instrument which promotes democracy and human rights worldwide. It aims to contribute to the development and consolidation of democracy, the Rule of Law, and respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms within the framework of the European Union's policy on development cooperation with third countries, consistently with the European Union's foreign policy as a whole. The EU is also fully committed to supporting the work of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations and the implementation of the agreed recommendations in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).

For further questions, please contact:

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