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Department:  
Trade and Industry  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# Joint Press Release

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## Press Release

*.../for immediate release*

### **Minister Davies and EU Trade Commissioner Malmström mark first anniversary of Economic Partnership Agreement**

*South Africa's Minister for Trade and Industry Robert Davies and EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström met in Johannesburg today to review their respective trade and investment agendas. They also took the opportunity to celebrate the one-year anniversary of putting the Economic Partnership Agreement, or EPA, between the EU and six countries of the Southern African Development Community into practice.*

*In their bilateral discussion, both the Minister and the Commissioner acknowledged the need to maximise the benefits of the EPA and move forward with its implementation.*

*The Minister and the Commissioner emphasised the importance of trade that supports development and promotes inclusive growth. For this reason, after the meeting, Minister Davies and Commissioner Malmström addressed some 150 civil society representatives from South Africa and the SADC region. They discussed the Economic Partnership Agreement's provisions to support sustainable development, and how its impact should be monitored.*

*The two also discussed the upcoming 5th EU-AU Summit that will take place in Abidjan on 29-30 November 2017. They agreed on the common priority to support young people to acquire the skills they need and to secure employment, as this is a key element in delivering sustainable development.*

*Minister Davies said: "Both parties should work together to ensure that the EPA contributes to the structural transformation agenda of the region, enhances trade and promotes mutually beneficial outcomes."*

*Commissioner Malmström emphasised that this is a partnership of equals. She said: "As partners, it is our joint responsibility to ensure that the benefits of our Economic Partnership agreement are felt by all in the region. We all have a common goal – to create prosperity for people in Southern Africa and in Europe. The EPA only delivers results if we work together."*

During her visit to South Africa, Commissioner Malmström will visit Witwatersrand University tomorrow to give a lecture on global trade issues. She will also visit an organic farm managed by a young black female entrepreneur, who intends to make use of the Economic Partnership Agreement

to export organic agricultural products to Europe. More info about the Commissioner's visit, including speeches and photo material, can be found [here](#).

### Background

*2017 marks ten years of the EU-South Africa Strategic Partnership. Its trade and investment dimension is of paramount importance in the bilateral relations. Trade with the EU represents 27% of South Africa's overall trade, while EU foreign direct investment (FDI) amounts to 77% of total FDI. This partnership has been mutually beneficial to both parties and presents further opportunities to enhance trade between them. For instance, since the entry into force of the EPA, South African exports of fisheries products and flowers have considerably increased.*

*The SADC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement entered into force on 10 October 2016. It provides opportunities for trade in agricultural goods and seafood, protects geographical indications such as rooibos tea and Paarl wine, and renews the regional partnership, promoting development.*

*The EPA applies to all Southern African Customs Union (SACU) countries, the oldest customs union in the world. It also applies to Mozambique, and contains rules that can spur further regional integration and foster regional value chains.*

*The EU is supporting the region and South Africa with projects aimed at reinforcing the regional market by improving transport links, facilitating trade, developing regional value chains, supporting small businesses and providing training.*