



Joint Press Release

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.../for immediate release

SA EU talks on trade

The Minister of Trade and Industry, the Honourable Dr Rob Davies, and the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Honourable Mr Senzeni Zokwana, met today with the Ambassador of the European Union in South Africa, Dr Marcus Cornaro, to discuss bilateral trade relations between South Africa and the EU.

The meeting took place in the context of the entry into force of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the EU and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) EPA group in October 2016. Both parties agreed that the EPA marks the strengthening of SA-EU trade and investment relations. Its relevance was aptly emphasised in the 2017 State of the Nation Address.

Both parties acknowledged that 2016 marked a very good year with bilateral volumes of exports increasing on both sides only expected to improve in view of the number of new opportunities created by the Agreement.

With regard to poultry, the meeting took place in the context of important job losses in the industry, public protests and massive media coverage.

The Ministers emphasised the importance of the poultry sector to rural development and the revitalisation of Agriculture and the Agro-processing value-chain. The Ministers highlighted the measures implemented by Government to date which aim to address the challenges facing the industry in totality.

The meeting recognised the crisis in the poultry industry as being complex and thus offered a platform to exchange views on the challenges faced by the industry which includes structural and competitiveness issues as well as increased imports.

The EU Ambassador underlined that the EU is of the view that the crisis is caused more by the structural challenges affecting the poultry sector rather than by EU imports. The Ambassador also expressed EU's support to the restructuring of the industry and recalled that exports of South African poultry to the EU are an opportunity which should be pursued.

Both parties expressed good will to help facilitate market access and to enhance their cooperation on sanitary and phytosanitary issues (SPS).

The EU and South Africa are further committed to engage in outreach activities, sector analyses, the tackling of trade barriers and the smoothing of trade flows to help business take full advantage of the Economic Partnership Agreement.

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