



**Australian High Commissioner to South Africa, HE Mr
Graeme Wilson
Training Course on Science, Technology and Innovation
Policy for SADC countries
5 November 2013, Johannesburg**

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

I am delighted to be here to celebrate the graduation of 22 participants in the Training Course on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy for SADC Countries.

Australia was pleased to help fund the Capacity Building Project for SADC members states to formulate science, technology and innovation (STI) policies, and to be a partner in this particular course.

Our focus on skills development in African countries includes having trained more than 3250 Africans in Australia and 2250 Africans in the region since 2011.

The Australian Aid Program has enjoyed a strong relationship with Department of Science and Technology (DST) for a number of years.

Australia and South Africa are increasing bilateral cooperation on Science and Technology through our bilateral agreement

- and especially through our co-hosting of the **Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope** – one of the world's largest and most exciting scientific projects.
- Australia and South Africa are working together to raise the profile of this truly transformational project and awareness of our cooperation on this venture (e.g. through a joint indigenous art project inspired by the SKA due to arrive in South Africa and

Australia in 2014; and through Australia's science circus program for kids coming to South Africa early next year).

- we are also using the SKA as a catalyst to highlight our broader science and technology cooperation.
- Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is working with its South African counterpart, CSIR, to complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between the two bodies.
- I extend my congratulations to all the participants in the training course. I hope you are inspired to continue your love affair with science, technology and innovation, and that you will go back to your respective countries filled with enthusiasm, passion and lots of good policy ideas in relation to research, innovation and higher education.
- I am confident that all of you will be future leaders in your particular areas of interest and expertise, and that you will look back on this course as an important milestone in your careers.