



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PRETORIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia opens Honorary Consulate in Windhoek, Namibia

Australia will officially open its new Honorary Consulate in Windhoek, Namibia, on 19 March 2012. Mr Edward Raymond Fredrick Humphrey will be Australia's Honorary Consul, resident in Windhoek, with jurisdiction throughout Namibia.

The Honorary Consulate will be opened in the presence of the Australian Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Africa, Mr Bob McMullan.

Mr McMullan is pleased to be able to return to Namibia for the official opening of the Australian Honorary Consulate, having first visited Namibia as Special Envoy in October 2010. During his visit, Mr McMullan will also meet with senior members of the Namibian Government to celebrate Namibia's Independence Day and discuss the bilateral relationship. He also aims to deepen cooperation between Australia and Namibia on multilateral issues, including within the United Nations.

According to Australia's High Commissioner to Namibia, HE Ms Ann Harrap, the opening of the Honorary Consulate reflects Australia's growing engagement with Namibia. "Relations between our two countries continue to prosper, based on an increasingly broad range of common interests and shared objectives, especially in the commercial sector," Ms Harrap said.

Trade and investment between Australia and Namibia is growing. In 2011, two-way trade amounted to almost AUD\$14 million (approx. NAD112 million). Bilateral trade is expected to grow as it further diversifies.

There are currently 26 Australian companies operating in the Namibian resources sector, highlighting the investor-friendly environment created by the Government of Namibia. "Australian companies welcome the open, transparent and certain political and legal climate in Namibia and are pleased to contribute to job creation and skills transfer," Ms Harrap said. "The strong Australian presence at the Mining Indaba in February this year was a further vote of confidence in the resources sector in Namibia and southern Africa more generally".

Australia is proud to be supporting Namibia's development priorities. "Australian volunteers are an important component of our development relationship," Ms Harrap said. "We are also pleased that, in 2012, an increased number of Namibians will participate in postgraduate education and training opportunities through Australian Government-funded short and long term scholarships in key sectors such as mining, agriculture and resource management. Under the Australian 'Mining for Development' initiative announced at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Perth last year, Australia is committed to working with Namibia to achieve the strongest development benefits from Namibia's mining sector". Seven Namibian officials participated in mining study tours to Australia last year, reflecting the importance of this sector to both economies.

In 2012, Australia will work closely with Namibia to advance the Australian Government's 'Food Security in Africa' initiative, announced by Prime Minister Gillard in 2011. Under the Australian Government's "Strengthening the Rule of Law in Africa" program, Australia and Namibia are cooperating to build compliance enforcement capacity in the Namibian finance sector.

The Australian Honorary Consulate in Windhoek will also play an essential role in providing consular and passport services to the expatriate community and to Australian tourists keen to explore Namibia.

The Consulate will be open Monday to Friday from 0900 to 1700. Contact details as follows:

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Media representatives are welcome to attend the official opening of the Honorary Consulate on 19 March. Please rsvp by email will.butler@dfat.gov.au or telephone +27 12 423 6188.

For other media enquiries or to request an interview with Special Envoy Mr Bob McMullan, please contact Sandy Collett on +27 83 629 1591.