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## Honorary Consul for South Africa welcomes South African Transport Minister to Felixstowe

**Felixstowe, UK, 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.** Avi Lasarow, Honorary Consul for South Africa for the Midlands region, welcomed South Africa's Deputy Transport Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga to Felixstowe Port on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December, as trade relations between South Africa and the UK continue to develop.

With the aim of demonstrating to the Minister the privately-owned structure of UK ports, which differ from South Africa's state-run shipping system, the visit included a tour of the port and presentation from Hutchison Ports' Head of Corporate Affairs, Paul Davey.

The capability of Felixstowe – a port which dealt with approximately £60billion of goods in 2011 – was demonstrated, along with its transport links through road, rail and coastal feeder services.

Anne Page, Honorary Consul for South Africa for the East of England, said: "We are delighted to welcome the Deputy Minister to Felixstowe. As Britain's largest container port, dealing with approximately 40% of the UK's total container cargo and with close proximity to the major ports of Northern Europe, we selected Felixstowe as a prime example of the UK's private port system."

Avi Lasarow, Honorary Consul for South Africa for the Midlands region, added: "We trust that visits such as this will help develop best trade practices both in South Africa and the UK in years to come. With differing transport structures we have a lot to learn from one another and we trust that visits to ports such as Felixstowe will be instrumental in developing that process."

**ENDS**



*(Left to right: Avi Lasarow, Paul Davey, Sindisiwe Chikunga)*

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **About Avi Lasarow**

Born in Johannesburg, in 1976, Avi is one of South Africa's leading international entrepreneurs. Winner of the Prestigious Shell Young Entrepreneur of the year award in 2004, in 2005 he set-up Trimega Laboratories, a world-leading, Manchester-based forensic science company. Prior to Trimega, Avi founded DNA Bioscience, a paternity testing company. He began his career at Citibank, where he became an Assistant VP in the bank's technology department, before turning to entrepreneurship. In 2009, he was shortlisted for the UK National Entrepreneur Award.

Avi has long-standing interests in and commitments to the Midlands. In 2011, Avi was invited by the National Association of Child Contact Centres to be a Trustee on a national basis with focus on Midlands and the north-west England. Avi is a long-standing member of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, and with Trimega, sponsored the Birmingham Law Society and the Leicestershire Law Society in 2011.

Avi's contribution to the development of trade relations between South Africa and the UK has included:

- 2012. Guest speaker at the Grahamstown Investec School of Business to talk about bi-lateral relations and entrepreneurship.
- 2011. Wreath-laying at Birmingham's Centenary Square Remembrance Day service, 13 November, in memory of the 25 South Africans pilots who flew in the Battle of Britain, and the hundreds of South Africans who flew for the cause of freedom in World War Two.
- 2011. Guest speaker at the UK South African National Youth Development Conference to talk, on the topic of youth development in South Africa.
- 2011. Guest speaker at The South African Business Club, London, the City's leading South African networking organisation, on "tips learned" as an entrepreneur doing business both in the UK and South Africa.
- 2010. Invited to speak as part of a panel in London at the "Home-Coming Revolution" conference in London, providing insights for entrepreneurs aiming to return back to South Africa and setup a business. The Homecoming Revolution is a non-profit organisation aimed at reversing South African skills shortages.
- Speaker at Buckingham Palace with HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in Audience and 250 heads of local authority children services to talk about how drugs and alcohol impact families and children, which is a technology now exported to South Africa.

## **UK-South African relations**

This is an important era for UK-South African relations. In June, the ninth UK-South Africa Bilateral Forum, hosted by Foreign Secretary William Hague, re-affirmed the commitment made during President Zuma's 2010 state visit to the UK to double bilateral trade between the two countries by 2015. The UK Department for International Development committed to invest £76 million between 2011 and 2015 to support the South African government with a range of development initiatives.

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