

CANADA-BOTSWANA RELATIONS

Canada established bilateral relations with Botswana in 1966 through our embassy in Pretoria. After Zimbabwe became independent in 1980, our representation was transferred to Harare. Central to our relationship are common pre-occupations with apartheid in South Africa, independence for Namibia, Commonwealth membership and development assistance programs. Botswana's Foreign Minister, Dr. Chiepe, has expressed Botswana's appreciation of Canada's policy toward South Africa and characterized it as a balanced and imaginative approach to counter apartheid.

Canadian development assistance to Botswana is expected to reach \$25 million over the next five years. Assistance to Botswana focuses on providing technical assistance in several key sectors: transportation, mining, education social infrastructure, and water resources. As part of Canada's commitment to the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) based in Gabarone, Canada is supporting the construction of a power line which will join northern Botswana to the Zambian electricity grid. CIDA has also approved a regional telecommunications connectivity project that will eliminate the need for SADCC countries to pass their telecommunications traffic through Capetown. Special programs and food aid round out the picture of Canadian aid to Botswana.

Canadian trade with Botswana has not been significant, nor is it easily detected due to Botswana's membership in the South African Customs Union. However, Canadian exports of goods and services to Botswana are estimated at \$5 million annually and include geological survey equipment and pharmaceuticals. Canadian companies have submitted bids for aircraft, road graders, water piping and telecommunications equipment. Botswana is one of the few countries in the Southern African region where export (EDC) financing is available. Export opportunities for Canadian companies to Botswana lie primarily in the agricultural sector and multi-laterally funded infrastructure projects.

During the past few years, the bilateral relationship has been strengthened by numerous high-level visits, including the visit of Colin Blackbeard, Botswana's Minister of Works and Communications and his Permanent Secretary Moses Lekaukau in July 1985. In November 1986, Vice-President and Minister of Finance, Mr. Peter Mmusi led a SADCC delegation to Ottawa