



## **European Union- South Africa Joint Statement and Action Plan on Cooperation in Surface Transport R&D**

Pretoria, 12 July 2007

### **I. Background**

#### *a. European Union - South Africa Science and Technology Partnership*

South Africa and the European Union (EU) enjoy a strong and fast evolving political and economic relationship, as embodied by the comprehensive Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) concluded between the two parties in 1999 and currently being revised. In recognition of the significant deepening of relations over recent years and the important potential for the further strengthening of cooperation, South Africa and the EU, following a proposal by the European Commission, are currently also finalising the formation of a new Strategic Partnership.

Science and technology has long been one of the mainstays of the South Africa – EU relationship. Indeed, the South Africa – EU Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation concluded in 1996 was the first-ever Agreement concluded between democratic South Africa and the EU.

Complementary to South Africa's Framework Programme participation, spanning the Fourth to the Seventh Framework Programmes (FP4-FP7) the South Africa-EU science and technology partnership has also been reinforced by a constructive policy dialogue between South Africa's Department of Science and Technology and the European Commission's Directorate-General Research, including collaboration in multilateral programmes and engagement regarding the role of science and technology as instrument for sustainable development. South Africa also enjoys strong bilateral science and technology partnerships with several of the EU Member States, which also reinforces the South Africa – EU relationship, as does the parties' extensive contact on support for African continental and regional science and technology programmes, especially those of the African Union.

The Sixth Meeting of the South Africa – EU Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Committee (JSTCC), held in Brussels in April 2007, expressed its satisfaction with the excellent state of cooperation but also reiterated both parties' commitment to work to expand and deepen their partnership. The primary instrument for the further development of South Africa – EU S&T is the European South African Science and Technology Advancement Programme (ESASTAP), an FP6 Specific Support Action implemented by the Department of Science and Technology.

ESASTAP's main priorities include raising awareness on Framework Programme opportunities in South Africa, the rendering of advisory and

support services to South African researchers, facilitating partner-matching between South African and European researchers and marketing South Africa's S&T excellence in Europe. These efforts have greatly contributed to South Africa's FP6 success and will play a central part as part of South Africa's FP7 engagement.

*b. Surface Transport R&D Cooperation*

Despite South Africa's Framework Programme success, and the critical role of surface transport (road, rail and maritime) in the South African economy (transport is for example a focus area of the chapter on Economic Cooperation of the TDCA) and correspondent transport R&D activities in the country, South Africa only achieved minimal participation in surface transport projects under FP4-FP6.

In order to address, situation the Department of Science and Technology in 2005 appointed a dedicated Framework Programme National Contact Point (NCP) for Surface Transport R&D and at the Fifth Meeting of the South Africa – EU JSTCC held in April 2005 in Pretoria, the parties also resolved to pay specific attention to promoting surface transport cooperation. These efforts resulted in the South African participation in an FP6 surface transport project, the SIMBA Coordination Action (CA).

Building on the dialogue and the identification of surface transport R&D started under the SIMBA project, and the Sixth South Africa – EU JSTCC's reconfirmation of the parties commitment to promote cooperation in this field, this Joint Statement and accompanying Action Plan is proposed to provide impetus as well as a roadmap for enhanced South Africa – EU surface transport R&D cooperation.

*c. Policy Context and Surface Transport in FP7*

The EU's strategy for international R&D cooperation in surface transport is framed by the development of the European Research Area, and its policy objective aimed at the internationalisation of European research. South Africa's strategy for international R&D cooperation in the field of surface transport is in turn informed by South Africa's National R&D Strategy and the concomitant objectives regarding the internationalisation of South African R&D.

The FP7, which will run from 2007 till 2013 will be the primary instrument through which South Africa – EU surface transport R&D cooperation will be promoted. Under the FP7 Transport theme, there is a three pillar strategy for surface transport R&D, focused on the dual objectives of addressing the competitiveness of European industries on the one hand and supporting EU policies as with regard to external relations and meeting global challenges such as climate change. In turn South Africa's FP7 engagement is informed by the objective leverage knowledge and innovation to support the provision of sustainable transport services within the South African economy.

## **II. Scientific and Technical Recommendations**

### **a. Topics and Technical Recommendations**

Through their ongoing dialogue the parties will identify surface transport R&D areas (topics) especially suited to mutually beneficial South Africa – EU cooperation. Concerted efforts will be undertaken to promote cooperation in these areas. The first selection of topics identified for this purpose are those developed at the first SIMBA workshop held in December 2006 in Stellenbosch (SA), following intensive discussions between European and South African Experts on Road Transport Research. These topics, covering three main activities within the field of road transport research, are:

- *Intelligent Transport System*
  - Electronic toll collection on road pricing;
  - ITS for public transport
  - Integrated traffic management
  - Real time traffic information
  - Incident detection and emergency response
- *Road Infrastructure*
  - Heavy vehicles and road wear
  - Road infrastructure safety
- *Automotive Research*
  - Alternative fuels
  - Vehicle safety
  - Vehicle production design
  - Public transport systems: Busses

The list of these topics will be updated on a regular basis through further and ongoing dialogue between the European Commission and South Africa, with the Action Plan being accordingly revised.

### **b. Action Plan**

The Action Plan sets out the following short-medium and long term actions, which have been agreed upon to improve South African – EU R&D cooperation in surface transport, under FP7 and beyond:

#### *i. Short-Medium Term Actions*


- Support for the South African Surface Transport NCP's efforts, including ESASTAP activities, to promote South African participation in the surface transport FP7 activities (e.g. including information dissemination, partner matching, etc.)
- Facilitating the participation of European researchers in appropriate South African surface transport research programmes open to international cooperation;
- Exchange of South African and European experts databases for reciprocal project evaluation and reviews; ,
- Reciprocal invitations for participation in strategic conferences, workshops and high-level (e.g. advisory) groups.

- Regular policy and information exchange on surface transport R&D and related developments.
- Promoting links between European Technology Platforms related to Surface Transport (ERTRAC-Road, ERRAC-Rail and WATERBORNE-maritime) and counterpart South African industry and technology programmes.

*ii. Long Term Actions*

- Fostering “Coordination Actions” similar to the existing engagement on road transport also extended to other strategic transport modes.
- Studying the feasibility of developing an appropriate "Implementation Arrangement" between the EU and South Africa as part of the development of South Africa – EU cooperation under the parties Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation.
- Identifying top-down areas for collaboration to address global surface transport challenges, e.g. climate change and urban mobility.

This Action Plan will be accordingly revised and updated through ongoing dialogue between the Department of Science and Technology and the Directorate-General Research, and progress in its implementation will be formally reported to the South Africa – EU JSTCC meetings.

  
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