



**Conference on Innovation for Poverty Alleviation**  
**Side event to the South Africa-EU Summit**  
**Tuesday 18 September 2012**

The **South African Department of Science and Technology (DST)** and the **European Commission** are organising a Conference on “**Innovation for Poverty Alleviation**” as side event to the fifth **South Africa – EU Summit**. The Conference will present and celebrate the European Union’s development cooperation programme on “Innovation for Poverty Alleviation” with South Africa. The event will take place **in Brussels on Tuesday 18 September 2012**. The programme will include a keynote address by His Excellency, **President Jacob Zuma**, President of the Republic of South Africa as well as contributions from the European Commissioner for Development, **Commissioner Andris Piebalgs** and South Africa’s Minister of Science and Technology, Her Excellency, **Minister Naledi Pandor**.

Within the framework of the **South Africa -European Union Strategic Partnership**, there is a shared policy conviction that **science and technology are critical instruments for sustainable growth and development**, which also play an essential role in poverty alleviation efforts. It is against this background that 'Innovation for Poverty Alleviation' programme has been developed. It is funded for an amount of **€30 million** by the EU and implemented by the DST, to complement and enhance the Department’s programmes to deploy science and technology and harness innovation to fight poverty in South Africa. The Conference will include presentations of **success stories** implemented under the cooperation programme, for example related to support for **innovative ICT platforms** to bring connectivity to remote rural areas. In this regard the “wireless mesh network” project provides 185 schools and 60 000 citizens with connectivity, with the support of 17 new small enterprises established in these communities. Other examples include **technology transfer partnerships**, including with industry, to foster the creation of **sustainable community owned enterprises** in poverty-stricken areas. These enterprises are for example active in sectors such as essential oils and medicinal plants.

Proceedings will conclude with a **panel discussion** on how science and technology’s potential to contribute to poverty alleviation could best be leveraged under the **South Africa – EU Strategic Partnership**, as well as under the broader **Joint Africa-EU Strategy**. This discussion should be especially relevant for the current consideration of the development of **new cooperation instruments**. The conference agenda is available at <http://www.dst.gov.za>. The event will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Brussels (Place Rogier 3, Metro: Rogier.) Enquiries regarding registration should kindly be addressed to Ms Françoise Dassy of the South African Mission to the European Union at [francoise.dassy@belgacom.net](mailto:francoise.dassy@belgacom.net).