

# Botswana business; now is the time to go global as a centre of African excellence

Canada, one of the world's biggest economies has its eyes set on Botswana.

Next month, Botswana businesses will have the chance to shine – accessing new export opportunities, financing, trade deals and even incentives to set up an office in Canada for access to North America at the upcoming Canada Africa Business Conference to be held at GICC in Gaborone, Botswana.



Vuyiswa Mojela

*Director - Soapbox Communications (PTY) Ltd*

On the 26th and 27<sup>th</sup> of March, hundreds of millions of dollars in investment capital will be represented, looking for a home across a host of sectors; Michael Wilkerson of Fairfax Capital addressing delegates, with his fund alone of over USD 500 million in sectors that include mining, hotels and resorts, health, manufacturing, energy and agro-energy.

The Vice President, Hon. Slumber Tsogwane will open the conference and Hon. Bogolo Kenewendo will deliver the keynote address. Also, various Ministries and local governments will be represented.

Canadian engineering and management consulting firm Hatch is the premier sponsor for the two-day gathering.

"The Canada-Africa Chamber of Business recognizes the wide range of opportunities that lie ahead," said Chamber President Garreth Bloor. "With our Soapbox Communications partner, led by Vuyiswa Mojela, we are looking forward to the biggest event of the year for Canada and Africa."

The Canadian government will share its financial incentives to support Botswana and SADC companies exporting to North America, through Canada.

All delegates attending will have their businesses profiled not only at the conference but to the 6000 members of Canada-Africa Chamber database who have their eyes on trade and business in Africa, most on SADC. In specific sectors like mining and mining services, that number of companies to which Botswana businesses will be promoted is as high as 15 000 Canadian counterparts.

"Access between the two countries is growing and is easier than ever: departing from Gaborone at 3pm on Ethiopian Airlines gets one into Toronto the next morning by 7.30am, with a brief layover at Addis Ababa's world class new airport terminal," says the Investment Promotion and Facilitation & conference

organizer, Vuyiswa Mojela.

Toronto is the biggest city-region in Canada and third biggest in North America, alongside New York City and Los Angeles. It is the most diverse city in the world with over 6-million people.

Canada has more free trade agreement within any other country in the developed world and as a result is a base for access to the United States, Europe and Japan.

"In turn, Botswana is a gateway of choice for investment and trade in Africa," explained Garreth Bloor during a recent visit to Gaborone. "The Fraser Institute in Canada has shown business across North America and the world that Botswana has consistently ranked highest on the annual Economic Freedom of the World Report since it was first published decades ago".

"Canadians who recognize this fact are excited to find local partners and I hope Botswana see the opportunity to come out in numbers and be proud of what this country has achieved and stands to achieve - as a gateway of trade and investment".

Diamond partners in the event include the Ministry of Health and Wellness and MineAfrica.

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