

## MEDIA INVITE

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***15 November 2011 - Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Andries Nel, to open high-level Southern African Development Community (SADC) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Expert Group Meeting to discuss and endorse the proposed Regional Programme to make Southern Africa safer from drugs and crime***

**Date:**

***Tuesday 15 November 2011***

**Time:**

***08:30***

**Venue:**

***Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa, Oliver Tambo Building Pretoria, 460 Soutpansberg Road, Rietondale, Conference Venue 1***

From 15 – 16 November 2011 the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) of the Republic of South Africa will host high-level government experts from member states of SADC, representatives of the SADC secretariat and UNODC in Pretoria for an Expert Group Meeting to discuss the proposed Joint SADC-UNODC Regional Programme aimed at making Southern Africa safer from drugs and crime.

SADC and its member states have been noting with concern the escalation of crime at both national and transnational levels. The role of increasingly easy access to free cross-border movement was also noted as enabling offenders to escape arrest, prosecution, conviction and punishment. In order to eliminate this rising threat to the security of citizens, SADC stresses the urgency of integrating the activities of its Member States. UNODC, as the global leader in the fight against illicit drugs, transnational organised crime, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, terrorism and corruption, is ideally placed to provide support to the Member States with the promotion of the rule of law and human security in the region.

The Regional Programme will provide a common framework to address these challenges and develop an integrated response in the region, in three thematic areas:

1. Illicit Trafficking and Organised Crime
2. Criminal Justice and Mutual Legal Assistance
3. Drug prevention and treatment and HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care

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**MAKING THE WORLD SAFER FROM DRUGS, CRIME AND TERRORISM**

**UNODC Southern Africa**

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Representatives of the media are invited to attend the Opening Session on 15 November 2011 at 8:30am. The Director of SADC's Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, Tanki Mothae, will welcome the delegates and other guests. The Ambassador of Austria, Otto Ditz, will deliver a message of support, after which Mr. Mandiaye Niang, UNODC Regional Representative for Southern Africa, will address the delegates and guests. The Deputy Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Mr Andries Nel, will then officially open the Expert Group Meeting and the experts will move into closed discussion sessions.

The speakers will be available for photos and interviews with the media after the Opening Session.

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**Please RSVP as soon as possible to:**

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