



**European Commission Delegations  
to the Southern African Region**

**Lilongwe,  
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## **Press Release**

.../for immediate release

### **European Commission makes HIV Prevention central to its partnership with Southern Africa**

*With five new HIV infections reported for every two individuals able to access anti-retroviral therapy for the first time, it is clear that the fight against HIV/Aids requires far greater commitment and vigilance, especially in the world's worst affected region – Southern Africa. Not to be underestimated is the impact of the pandemic on the region's economically active population and the enormous strain it places on limited resources throughout Southern Africa. Confronted by this situation, and building on significant European resources dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS, the European Commission Delegations to ten Southern African(\*) countries have since 2006 operated a network to share ideas and best practices as well as to develop a collective approach.*

"We have to do more on prevention, and we have to do it better and faster" says Alessandro Mariani, the EU's Ambassador to Malawi, who currently chairs the group. "I am particularly pleased that this year we were joined by colleagues from UNAIDS and the Global Fund, allowing us to explore more broadly how to maximise our synergies to better serve the region."

This EC Action Against AIDS Group has, since its creation, worked to increase attention on the pandemic in Southern Africa. In this light,

1. The EC Action Against AIDS Group recognises the fight against HIV/AIDS as an imperative for the stability and prosperity for the Southern African region in the short, medium and long term. The Group commits itself to placing the fight against HIV/AIDS, specifically **prevention**, on the agenda of all its interactions with host governments as well as all other interlocutors in the region.
2. The EC Action Against AIDS Group expresses its commitment to intensify its action against AIDS and to safeguard funding, and calls on other development partners to do likewise. The Group undertakes to mainstream HIV/AIDS throughout all European Commission funded programmes in the region. This commitment will be implemented in line with international best practice, thus supporting and partnering host countries in their initiatives in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
3. The EC Action Against AIDS Group salutes those who have taken the lead in this fight and is committed to support leadership at a political level.

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*(\*) Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe.*