

SADC, China meeting cancelled

A major SADC-China trade fair and investment forum which was due to be held in Johannesburg this week from 18-20 May 2011, has been cancelled. The trade fair and investment forum, IMEXPO 2011, was to have been the first demonstrable result of BRICS membership and the benefits it will have for the SADC region as a whole.

It was widely expected to kick start the biggest-ever investment of Chinese money into the South African & SADC economies. Thirteen SADC countries and numerous investment agencies had booked to attend, and a large delegation of Chinese investors was on their way to South Africa.

The organisers have expressed their deep regret and disappointment in this regard: "We had been working on IMEXPO 2011 for 18 months," said Glenn Hawes, the event director.

Withdrawal of support

"We had put together a meaningful event which would have been to the benefit of all SADC role players. The event has unfortunately had to be cancelled at very short notice due to the unexpected withdrawal of previously-committed support, from some exhibitors and other role players advising that they were no longer planning to meet their commitments to previously signed agreements."

"We did everything in our power to resolve the issues and I am deeply disappointed by the decision we have been forced to take. I would further like to thank the SADC Secretariat and Mr Hennie Erasmus in particular for the effort and advice provided from his side and wish to make it quite clear the decision to cancel was not that of the SADC Secretariat."