

## New Ambassador from Namibia reiterates support for a temporary waiver to certain provisions of the TRIPS agreement to prevent, contain and treat COVID-19

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Brussels, 18 March 2021/OACPS: Secretary-General of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), H.E. Mr Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, presented Dr Mekondjo Kaapanda-Gimus, Ambassador of the Republic of Namibia to the Kingdom of Belgium, the Netherlands, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Mission to the European Union, to the OACPS Committee of Ambassadors (CoA) at their 936<sup>th</sup> session.

During her inaugural address to the CoA, Ambassador Kaapanda-Gimus touched on a number of current challenges, such as the Coronavirus, which she noted, is having a "disproportionate impact on developing and emerging economies" and which is further putting decades of progress in health, education and economic development at risk. In addition, speaking about the difficulties experienced by countries with limited capacities in the pharmaceutical sector, Ambassador Kaapanda-Gimus, "reiterated Namibia's support for the joint initiative by South Africa and India to seek a temporary waiver to certain provisions of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement in order to prevent, contain and treat COVID-19."

Prior to taking up her post in Brussels, Dr Kaapanda-Gimus worked for nine years as Commercial Counsellor at the Namibian Embassy in Germany and served for one year at the Namibian High Commission in the UK, representing the Ministry of Trade and Industrialisation and specifically, the Namibia Investment Centre. In her address, the new ambassador spoke of the critical role of OACPS interventions to support the socio-economic development agenda of Member States and in particular, the "Framework programme for support to ACP agriculture value chains development" which aims to empower actors along sustainable and climate resilient agricultural value chains.

The holder of a PhD in international law from the University of Cambridge (UK), Dr Mekondjo Kaapanda-Gimus, has in the past, taught public international law and human rights at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

Noting the knowledge and experience of the new ambassador on the many topics raised in the course of her presentation, the Dean of the OACPS CoA, H.E. Daniel Evina Abe'e of Cameroon, pledged the support of the Brussels ambassadors and welcomed Dr Kaapanda-Gimus on behalf of the CoA.

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