MEDIA ALERT

SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

MR BOB McMULLAN

VISIT TO KIGALI 18-21 AUGUST 2012

The Special Envoy of the Australian Prime Minister to Rwanda, Mr Bob McMullan will visit Kigali from 18 to 21 August. His visit will build on the good bilateral relationship between Australia and the Government and people of Rwanda. While in Rwanda, Mr McMullan will meet senior government officials and will take the opportunity to visit the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology, and The Village of Hope.

Australia has a strong partnership in development with Rwanda in Mining and Scholarships. Speaking at the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), Mr McMullan announced support for three education and training initiatives in the mining sector. "Australia is ready to support the Government of Rwanda in developing its mining sector by providing training and expertise to local officials" he said.

The Australian Government is working with KIST to prepare a curriculum for a Diploma in Mining Engineering which will be available to students in September 2012. Development of a curriculum compliments the Australian Government's growing scholarship program, which saw 32 Rwandans offered scholarship opportunities in Australia in 2012.

The Village of Hope is a self-sustaining community of 28 homes that provides for the needs of children, women and the community. The Village provides counselling services, skills training and work opportunities for its residents. It was established by Australian Darlene Zschech in 2000 and is regularly visited by Australian volunteers.

"The Village of Hope is a prime example of how the strong people-to-people links between our two countries can lead to a wonderful initiative" commented Mr McMullan.

Special Envoy McMullan will be accompanied during his trip by Australia's High Commissioner to Rwanda, HE Geoff Tooth.

Special Envoy McMullan is available for interviews. Enquires should be made to Ms Amanda Davis (ph: +254 705 000 908, email: amanda.davis@dfat.gov.au)