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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SOUTH AFRICAN AMBASSADOR AND MUSICIANS WELCOMED AT EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE**

Reaching out to the far southern hemisphere, on Saturday 25 June the European University Institute welcomed a group of young South African musicians to perform for the EUI community and its friends.

Under the instruction and direction of Berthine van Schoor, one of South Africa's finest cellists, Sifiso Khebeza, Neo Buthelezi e Mpho Ngobeni made their European debut playing for an international audience at the EUI's villa Schifanoia in Florence. The young artists are all students of Ms. Van Schoor's cello academy community outreach project in Pretoria. The project allows for young cellists from previously disadvantaged communities to receive world-class cello instruction.

The South African Ambassador to Italy Nomatamba Tambo visited the EUI on the occasion, expressing her enthusiasm for the beautiful research environment of the Institute and her hopes for future collaborative efforts involving her country. It is the first time that a representative from South Africa has visited the Institute.

The EUI is a unique international centre for doctorate and post-doctorate studies and research in Florence, Italy. Its four departments of Economics, History and Civilization, Law, and Political and Social Sciences, along with the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS), focus on inter-disciplinary, comparative and policy research on the major issues affecting Europe and Europe in the world.

According to EUI Secretary-General Vincenzo Schioppa Narrante, formerly Italy's Ambassador to South Africa, the concert marked an important first step towards a structured relationship between the EUI and South Africa, 'a major African country and an important point of reference for young democracies on that continent.'

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