

# MEDIA STATEMENT

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**Attention: Assignment Editors/ Economic Beat Writers**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **KHOLWANE URGES POLISH BUSINESS DELEGATION TO INVEST IN MPUMALANGA**

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**Mbombela** – The MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Sikhumbuzo Eric Kholwane has urged foreign companies to come and invest in Mpumalanga, sighting an abundance of investment opportunities available.

Speaking during a meeting with the business delegation from Poland's Region of Wielkopolska at the Mercure Hotel in Mbombela on Thursday, MEC Kholwane said "Mpumalanga boast a variety of business and investment opportunities in various sectors which are supported by world class infrastructure".

"Mpumalanga just like the rest of South Africa, continues to face the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality. In order to address these challenges, we must implement economic growth initiatives such as trade and investment promotion. Mpumalanga is thus any investor's dream investment destination," explained Mr Kholwane.

Investment opportunities available in Mpumalanga are in the manufacturing sector such as in steel, stainless steel, petro-chemicals, food and agro-processing, paper, sugar and timber. In the mining they range from coal, gold, chrome, vanadium, granite, and various clays.

Similarly the agriculture sector presents trade and investment opportunities through the cultivation and processing of a variety of cash crops such as corn, sunflower seed and canola in addition to a range of fruit and vegetable.

In renewal energy, an abundance of opportunities exist in this emerging green energy sector such in the:

- Production of smokeless stoves which use ethanol gel – the green energy source which could replace paraffin given the high incidents of paraffin-caused fires and deaths;
- Production of solar panels and solar water heaters;
- Establishment of charcoal producing plants using agricultural, forestry and municipal waste;
- Supply of clean technology equipment to Eskom's *Kusile* Power Station. The power station will be South Africa's first station to use flu gas desulphurization method;
- Establishment of LED lights production plant.



MEC Kholwane added that the level of trade between Mpumalanga Province and Poland is growing, though the balance of trade is in favour of Poland. The total export to Poland grew from 25.24 percent in 2011 to 37.57 percent in 2013, whereas the total import grew from 11.22 percent in 2011 to 54.83 percent in 2013.

The top five (5) **export** products to Poland in 2013 were:

1. Textiles and textile articles
2. Mineral products
3. Machinery and mechanical appliances; electrical equipment; parts thereof.
4. Live animals, animal product.
5. Raw hides and skins, leather, fur-skins and articles thereof; saddlery and harness; travel goods, handbags and similar containers; articles of animal gut.

On the other hand, the top five (5) **import** products from Poland in 2013 were:

1. Machinery and mechanical appliances, electrical equipment, parts thereof.
2. Base metals and articles of base metal.
3. Vehicles, aircraft, vessels and associated transport equipment.
4. Articles of stone, plaster, cement, mica or similar materials
5. Optical, photographic, cinematographic measuring, checking, precision, medical and surgery instruments.

The Polish delegation was led by the Deputy Marshall of the Wielkopolska Region, Mr Mateusz Klemenski, who shared MEC Kholwane's sentiments by indicating that his country once had the similar problem of high unemployment. He said by investing and SMMEs and co-operatives, quite a number of jobs were created and consequently the unemployment rate has decreased drastically in Poland.

The Polish Business delegation has committed to invest in Mpumalanga, and has indicated that they are looking for partners in the following investment areas:

1. Household appliances
2. Food products, soft and natural drinks
3. Electronic and electrical appliances
4. Trading and processing in spices and herbs
5. Transportation (such as buses and coaches);
6. Doors and window making; and
7. Legal fraternity (law firms)

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***Issued by the Communication Directorate***

***Mpumalanga: Economic Development and Tourism***

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