

## INPUT FOR MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM, MR M.N MOKOENA, MPL: COSATU PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

### *MEGDP*

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has since the early stages of conceptualising our own growth path in 2010, been in engagement with COSATU, during the process of crafting a new growth and development trajectory for the Province. You indicated your support for the process, but were upfront to caution us towards not making the mistake of planning without end and failing to implement.

We have taken note of this advice and are pleased to report back that, after an initial round of consultations in 2011 with various stakeholders which included organised labour, business, NGO's and traditional leaders, the *Mpumalanga Economic Growth and Development Path (MEGDP)* framework was adopted by government in November 2011. We have since been working on finalising a Programme of Action for 2013-14 to prioritise key interventions and will be tabling it to our leadership for adoption during this month.

We have sought to engage our stakeholders, with a focus on business, towards collaboration in practical interventions that breathe life into the *MEGDP* framework.

Based on the prioritised sectors namely;

- Agriculture and forestry value chains
- Mining and Mineral beneficiation
- Manufacturing
- Tourism and Cultural Industries
- Energy and the Green Economy
- ICT.

We have sought out interventions that focus on:

- skills development,
- rural development,
- economic, social infrastructure as well as a special focus on water infrastructure
- Production and beneficiation.

There is a realisation that although a large number of interventions need to be carried out over the next ten years, we need to act with speed to realise key catalytic projects. We are busy laying the groundwork for a number of interventions, and some are still to under review to update plans such as the Moloto Rail Development Corridor. Our Programme of Action however, moved to prioritise implementation of the following projects in the coming year:

1. The construction of a University for the Province that will anchor future higher levels of skills development to support our growth and development;
2. The development of a Fresh Produce Market that is supported by both large scale farmers and small scale farmer co-operatives and linked to international export markets. This will make a difference in linking rural development to industry and international markets;
3. The setting up of a food technology centre as a base for entrepreneurs to enter into production through agro-processing in the food processing sector;
4. Addressing the unfortunate environmental side effects of mining through land rehabilitation drives of old mining areas;
5. Working with mining houses towards developing key foundation skills through a maths and science academy, and also developing SMMEs through an entrepreneurial development centre for supply of goods and services to the mines.

6. Working with the mines and key state entities such as Eskom on water reclamation and water infrastructure projects;
7. Working with industry in developing a key infrastructural logistics port along the Maputo Development Corridor, in the form of the Komatipoort Dry-Port;
8. The rehabilitation of our infrastructure in the reserves which are key for our eco-tourism offerings, as well as the setting up of new infrastructure for a high performance training centre, thus enhancing both our sport tourism capacity and general sporting excellence to inculcate a culture of healthy living.

We believe this is a firm start in this crucial phase of converting theory into practice in order to start collectively working towards addressing **unemployment, inequality and poverty**. We believe that these interventions will start to enhance opportunities for the youth in particular, and also the broader previously marginalised, in accessing greater participation within the mainstream economy.

On finalising adoption of this Programme of Action, it will serve as a basis upon which we shall constitute an Implementation Forum that oversees progress as well as advising on the way forward.