

**CLOSING REMARKS BY THE MEC FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
ENVIROMENT AND TOURISM, MR MN MOKOENA, MPL, DURING THE  
DEPARTMENTAL STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT AT SKUKUZA CAMP,  
KRUGER NATIONAL PARK (28-30 JULY 2011)**

**Friday, 30 July 2011**

**The Facilitator – Dr Adrian Sayers**

**The Head of Department, Dr Vusanani Dlamini;**

**Deputy Chair MGB: Ms Mildred Sephiri**

**CEO of the MGB, Mr Bheki Mlambo;**

**Acting CEO of MEGA, Mr Rabeng Tshukudu;**

**Senior Management and officials from the Department and Public Entities;**

**Ladies and gentlemen;**

***Once More, Good Afternoon***

The first day of DEDET deliberations about constructing an APP for the 2012/2013 financial year and a multi-year strategic management arrangement consistent with the requirements of the MTSF has thus far produced some interesting insights.

It has been observed that the review process of the implementation of programmes 1-6 and that of the public entities has revealed the extent to which work has been performed towards attaining the goals set by the MTSF that was adopted by national government in 2009.

I wish to restate as indicated in my opening remarks that our intention of meeting here together with our agencies over three (3) days in the main is to take stock of progress made in the first quarter for the year under review and more importantly to respond to the warning signs by putting appropriate corrective measures in place.

The retreat output we had set out included aligning priority interventions to project matrix and programme of actions for 2012/13. Judging from the presentations since

this morning I am beginning to get a sense of hope that we are slowly getting our ducks in a row.

## **MATTERS OF EMPHASIS**

Since the department is at the centre of ensuring that the implementation of Outcomes 4 and 10 subscribe to the notion of sustainable development that underpins a balance between economic development and growth and protecting our complex and globally important environmental heritage.

We have a responsibility to secure the future for the coming generations. This means that in our quest to create jobs and grow our economy we must remain mindful that without our greatest assets **our people**, our planet and the envisaged growth will be short lived.

Growth if pursued in an unsustainable manner will ultimately erode our soils, diminish our plant and animal species, pollute our air and water and ultimately deprive us of the basics of life. We therefore need to strengthen in practical terms not just environmental enforcement regulations but also our impact management strategies.

## **CONSTRUCTION OF A 2012/2013 WORK PROGRAM FOR THE DEPARTMENT AND ITS AGENCIES**

It is in this context the charting a new path of economic growth and development with an emphasis on the creation of decent employment, reduced poverty and inequalities becomes a complex task.

Firstly, there is a need to articulate more clearly the detailed interventions in sectors that are considered appropriate and critical job drivers in Mpumalanga, based on the social and economic profile of the province. It is therefore not entirely sufficient to refer to agriculture, mining and manufacturing in the broad sense of the term but we need to drill down by disaggregating these sectors to enable more specific interventions.

The spatial profile of these sectors should also enable us to ascertain more effectively the benefits of such interventions for particular localities and districts. This should enable us to facilitate more specific integrated economic measures to support the CRDP, a programme vital to the rural character of Mpumalanga and LED programme.

Secondly, this will only have meaning if we proceed from the premise of developing appropriate and feasible programmes and projects to ensure successful interventions in these identified old and new economic sectors.

Hence the need to avail required resources, human and financial, for its implementation and the monitoring thereof on an annual basis and a longer ten year period.

Thirdly, it is important to ensure that the development of these programmes and projects in these sectors are supported by the necessary measures that promote investment and the development of enterprises more attune with the need to transform the overall economic landscape.

It is thus critical that we invest in the development of the integration of the first and second economies. This can best be attained by addressing issues such as the need to invest in appropriate economic, social and human resource infrastructure, skills development, research and development and social capital development.

We should also re-emphasize the numerous areas where the department has a regulatory responsibility. While it is important to reduce the 'red tape' that constitutes stumbling blocks to doing business that permits the economy to grow and develop, it should not be at the expense of our environmental heritage that is essential to securing the interest of future generations.

Fourthly, we reside in a changing global environment that requires us to embrace regional integration and international co-operation.

Through multi-lateral institutions such as SADC and initiatives such as the Maputo Corridor the basis has been laid for this level of co-operation between Mpumalanga and surrounding countries such as Swaziland and Mozambique. Promoting trade and foreign direct investment requires us to address the competitiveness of our enterprises and economic sectors. An area where agencies such as MEGA together with social partners such as organized business can play an important role.

Fifthly, we need to overcome our existing institutional constraints. The review process illustrated that we need to overcome institutional constraints induced by working in 'silos' and thinking the panacea for our economic ills resides in working in isolation. It is thus imperative that we develop more effective ways of ensuring co-operation and co-ordination among components of DEDET and the activities of other provincial and national departments and public entities such as MEGA, NDA, SEDA, NYDA and the IDC. This will aid the more effective and efficient use of our scarce human and financial resources.

Sixthly, it was clear from the review session that, there is an urgent need to strengthen our capacity in research and data management.

We need to understand our economic space in order to manage it. It is for this reason that as we emerged from this session we must have a clear skills development plan for the growth path.

Furthermore, we need to engage our social partners who are important drivers of economic and social activities in Mpumalanga. This involves understanding organized business, organized labour and the rest of civil society.

Significant human and financial resources reside among them to aid and abet our cause if we craft joint actions through the development of social compacts in the interests of broader society.

The process of forging an APP based on the MEDGP provides us with a basis for such engagement. This requires us also to embrace the need to effectively engage them by developing our capacity to manage what can be considered at times to be conflicting relations when we convene the required Implementation Forum as part of phase two of this process of finalizing and implementing the MEDGP.

### **Strategic Support Systems**

Fascinating ideas have emerged during the course of our discussion, and I would urge you to pursue some of the proposed with the potential high economic impact to our province in the long run, inter alia:

#### *Industrial Support Systems as an Intervention:*

- Industrial Innovation Hub;
- Mpumalanga Economic Research Council capability will help the province have better insight of the regional and local economic profiles;
- Agro-Processing Technology Station with Department of Science and Technology-housed in strategic FETs / AR College;
- Establishment of a Project Management Unit;
- Mpumalanga Growth Path Manufacturing Working Group with the Industrial partners to craft and execute major projects to grow industries based on output, employment growth, wage growth, and profit growth as strategic variables for monitoring and evaluation;
- Social investment Trust with the Mines, and the Financial Institutions to fund CRDP initiatives and mega size projects.

Finally, HOD I would like have the following documents on my table by next week:

1. Program of action that aligned to the government priority outcome based approach.
2. Human resource requirement to execute the program.
3. Financial resource requirement

Please, ensure that more resources are deployed to districts and other strategic points of delivery machinery, in particular paying attention to the functionality of our Regional Office.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen as we carry out this wide-ranging mandate the department should continue to focus on improving institutional capacity and administrative efficiencies because our priority in this administration is not about further debate or lamentation but rather implementation.

In conclusion I urge you all to support our National Rugby Team when they take on the All Blacks during the Tri-Nations tournament tomorrow morning in Wellington, New Zealand.

**Viva Mabokho bokho!! VIVA!!**

**I thank you!**