

Welcome remarks by MEC of Economic Development and Planning, Mr CNM Padayachee at the launch of B-BBEE Advisory Committee and Forum held in Nelspruit

20 October 2008

Programme director
Premier Thabang Makwetla
Executive Mayor of Mbombela, Lassy Chiwayo
Members of the Executive Council present
Head of Department of Economic Development, Mr Mandla Mazibuko
CEOs of our parastatals
Captains and leaders of industry
Organized business
Members of the B-BBEE Advisory Committee and Forum
Senior government officials
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome you to the launch of the provincial Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Advisory committee and the forum.

Ladies and gentlemen, the transformation agenda that we undertook when we ushered the new democratic dispensation in the country meant that all our people must be given an opportunity to play a role, be allowed to participate and as individuals and co-operatives make an effort to benefit from the economic opportunities that the country provides.

The reality that we lived in then necessitated the introduction of Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) as one of the key instruments designed to confront the legacy of economic exclusion of Black people from the main stream economy. The policy regime that we adopted and that which we continue to implement was and is still aimed at addressing inequity in terms of resource distribution in the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have made many strides towards implementation of the recommendations and resolutions of the B-BBEE conference that we held last year.

It gives us a great pleasure to report that since the last conference we have:

- Beefed up the directorate that will be responsible for B-BBEE in the province,
- Held workshops on B-BBEE in all the three districts of the province to interrogate the recommendations and refine the way forward on implementation of the B-BBEE legislation and codes,
- Completed the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment strategy and will in due course take it through the approval processes.

We have ensured that implementation of the recommendations of the conference are implemented as part of our programme of action as we chart the path for inclusive socio-economic environment in the province.

Ladies and gentlemen, the launch today of the Provincial B-BBEE Advisory committee and the B-BBEE Forum is to us a key milestone in pursuit of the recommendation of that conference.

The B-BBEE forum will assist us to interrogate our performance on Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and take the debate on economic emancipation of all our people to greater heights.

The forum will provide us with an opportunity to work together to ensure that we unlock the bottlenecks that stand on our way of ensuring that all our people can participate fully and

make a meaningful contribution to the economic development of the province.

The launch of this Advisory Committee and the forum give us the hope that the economic transformation agenda of our province has acquired a necessary ally.

We are optimistic that through the participation of the esteemed members in this forum and other people who supports this initiative, that our role to fastrack transformation, foster partnerships with the private sector and lobby for the implementation of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment will be much easier.

The forum will indeed be a strategic hub which will serve as the conceptual home of the provincial B-BBEE strategy that we have just completed.

Ladies and gentlemen, the work that we are celebrating and launching today comes a long way. In this regard I would like to acknowledge the task team that we assembled to assist us to get where we are today.

- Mr Hendry Pieterse, Chairperson of Afrikaanse Handelinstituut (AHI)
- Mr Gay Mokoena, Provincial Secretary of National African Federated Chambers of Commerce (Nafcoc)
- Ms Lydia Schumann, Sasol BEE Manager.

To all of you, we say thank you for a work well done.

And to the members of the advisory committee and the members of the forum, we say thank you too for agreeing to be part of this new beginning in the chapter of economic transformation in the province.

We are indeed a province with a pioneering spirit because the establishment of the B-BBEE forum is one of the firsts that we pride ourselves with as the province.

I thank you.