

**ADDRESS BY THE MEC FOR FINANCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, MR SIKHUMBUZO ERIC KHOLWANE, MPL, DURING THE 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SAB KICKSTART NATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY AT THE EMNOTWENI ARENA AT RIVERSIDE, MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

**Thursday, 19 November 2015**

- **Programme Director, Nompumelelo Mbethe;**
- **Hon Minister of Small Business Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu;**
- **Representing the Executive Mayor of Mbombela Local Municipality, Cllr Constance Maseko;**
- **All Councillors present here this evening;**
- **Acting Director General of Mpumalanga Mr Thulani Mdakane;**
- **Acting Head of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Mr Jacob Mgidi;**
- **SAB Corporate Affairs Director, Mr Monwabisi Fandesu;**
- **SAB Head of Sustainability and Transformation, Mrs Mpho Sadiki;**
- **SAB National Corporate Affairs Manager, Mrs Shobnah Persadh;**

- **SAB North Region Corporate Affairs Manager, Mr Sandile Nkosi;**
- **SAB Economic Development Manager, Mr Ocatvius Phukubye;**
- **Our esteemed guests – the prospective recipients of the *KickStart Awards*;**
- **Government officials;**
- **SAB employees;**
- **Members of the media;**
- **Distinguished guests;**
- **Ladies and gentlemen;**

**Good Evening/San' bonani**

1. Programme Director;

We are humbled and honoured to have been selected as this year's host of the **20<sup>th</sup> Annual SAB KickStart National Awards**.

2. We can assure you that you have made the right choice, and we hope you will consider making **Mpumalanga the permanent home of the Awards**.

3. We invite you to take a ***Sho't left*** in our Province, and experience a **myriad of breath-taking God-made scenic views**, including ***God's Window, Kruger National Park and Makhonjwa Mountains amongst others.***
4. This is the perfect time to host the 2015 SAB National Kick-start awards because it coincides with the Global Entrepreneurship Week which is the largest global celebration of the innovators and job creators.
5. This week and beyond we must continue to celebrate the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship so that we can inspire more prospective entrepreneurs and show them the possibilities and support systems which are available to them.
6. I agree with the Chief Economist at the Efficient Group, Dawie Roodt when he said:

Open quote ***“South Africa’s economy is dependent on entrepreneurs, the real employment in our economy is happening right under our noses in the small micro business sectors and we need to capitalise on that.”***

Close quote

7. 68% of South Africa's current workforce are employed by businesses with fewer than 50 people and these employment prospects can diminish if nothing is done to support emerging entrepreneurs and innovators.
8. The SAB Kick-start awards are therefore making a bold statement and are a step in the right direction to addressing the needs of nurturing the country's emerging entrepreneurs, paying increased attention to the women and youth entrepreneurial spirit.
9. Government in partnership with the private sector needs to do more to support the fundamentals of entrepreneurship particularly by easing access to finance and improved logistical assistance.
10. We must also connect the young entrepreneurs with potential partners, mentors and investors.
11. The ruling party is alive to the reality that a slowing of small business activity could lead to economic stagnation and thus it will continue to strive for an integrated and growing economy from which all South African's can benefit.

**12. Programme Director;**

I therefore wish to take this opportunity to thank SAB for agreeing to take up the challenge led by the Honourable Premier of Mpumalanga, Mr DD Mabuza when he called upon the private sector to work with government to address the **triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.**

**13. We have set a target in the National Development Plan (NDP) – that of creating an inclusive society that builds the capability of its active citizenry by 2030.**

**14. The National Youth Policy 2020 seeks to create an environment that enables the young people of South Africa to reach their potential** through identification of mechanisms and interventions that will act as catalysts to help clear critical blockages.

**15. The *SAB KickStart Programme* is at the core of the issues being pursued by our government through the National Youth Policy-2020 which is underpinned by the NDP, amongst others.**

16. It is in this context, that as a Province and the Department, we have set aside resources to work with SAB in order to implement the **Youth Employment Accord**.
17. The **Mpumalanga Youth Employment Programme**, will be used as a platform to create opportunities for the Youth of the Province who have ideas to start their own enterprises.
18. We will assist young people to participate in the **SAB KickStart Programme** in order to realise their dreams.
19. The programme will also assist those with operational enterprises to find opportunities within SAB's value chain, as suppliers of goods and services, and also even to participate in internship programmes so that they can undergo experiential training.
20. While we welcome this working relationship, as a responsible government we also take cognisance of the impact of alcohol abuse. In this regard, we continue to appreciate **SAB's Awareness Campaigns** on the dangers of irresponsible indulgence in alcoholic beverages.

21. As I close, Winston Churchill once said and I quote:

***“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts” [Close quote]***

22. To all those who will receive the ***KickStart Award*** tonight, congratulations for believing in yourself – remember that you are the architect of your own destiny.

23. I wish you well in your businesses, and hope you will be a shining example to other Youth, thus indirectly persuading them to be independent and start their own businesses.

24. To those who will not receive anything, you have not lost, you are all winners by merely being nominated for these Awards.

25. This should in fact motivate you to work even harder next year. Do not despair – the road ahead is very bright.

***26. Together, We Move the Youth of Mpumalanga and South Africa Forward!***

27. Ngiyabonga/ I thank you