

ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, MR CHUPU MATHABATHA ON
THE OCCASION OF THE BREAKFAST WITH THE LIMPOPO UNITED
BUSINESS FORUM, HELD AT POLOKWANE ROYAL HOTEL.

23 August 2019

Programme Director, Mme Tshepo Mathabatha;
The leadership of the Limpopo United Business Forum;
MECs present here;
Representatives of various government agencies;
Local and National business leaders,
Senior government officials;
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:

Thank you for inviting me for breakfast.

It is not often that one gets an invitation to a decent breakfast, which is coupled with the privilege of rubbing shoulders with leaders of business.

I truly appreciate and value your generous invitation. I actually believe that we should have more of these interactions so that we can narrow the gap between business and government.

Such regular interactions will lay a solid foundation for more cooperation and mutual exchanges.

I must say from the onset that as government we truly value the continued partnership and friendship we enjoy from members of the business community. I am saying this because we believe that the task of growing South Africa and the task of growing Limpopo requires partnership between government and important stakeholders such as business.

I always say that our political objectives and the objectives of the compatriots in business are mutually inclusive.

The open truth is that the transformation of our society requires the greatest possible cooperation between the business community and political leadership.

All of us have an inherent obligation to service the interest of our people. As I have said, neither political nor business objectives can be achieved in isolation. We are and should continue to remain partners in the building of our country.

Our interaction this morning is therefore part of the necessary efforts to solidify relations for our mutual benefit.

It is an open secret that the government need business to achieve some of its imperatives, and I guess it is also true that business does require the support of government for it to thrive.

Our objectives are not mutually exclusive; instead, our objectives are complementary in nature and character.

I want to believe that this meeting is itself an appreciation of the reality of the mutual symbiotic relationship between business and government. We are however not oblivious, we know that business as an entity is not homogeneous.

You would know that in history there have been business entities which positioned themselves against governments and against the people. We know of businesses that have sponsored wars and the killings of innocent people. There are businesses that have sponsored rebel and terrorists activities in this continent.

There are businesses which specialises in stealing from the poor. I take it that you are all aware of the report of the commission which was led by former President Thabo Mbeki on the Illicit Financial Flow from Africa; the report as you know, was commissioned by the AU Conference of Finance Ministers.

It emerged as part of the investigation by the commission that:

- Total illicit outflows from Africa may be as high as 1.8 trillion US Dollars;
- Sub-Saharan African countries experienced the bulk of illicit financial outflows with the West and Central African region posting the largest outflow numbers;
- The top five countries with the highest outflow measured were: Nigeria at 89.5 billion US Dollars, Egypt 70.5 billion US Dollars, Algeria 25.7 billion US Dollars, Morocco 25 billion US Dollars, and South Africa 24.9 billion US Dollars;
- Illicit financial outflows from the entire region outpaced official development assistance going into the region at a ratio of at least 2 to 1;
- Illicit financial outflows from Africa grew at an average rate of 11.9 percent per year.

In as far as our country is concerned; you will agree with me that an amount of 24.9 billion US Dollars is too much to can change the face of this country. However, we also know of many business entities which have positioned themselves with the agenda for progressive change.

Those are businesses that conduct their activities in an ethical manner. Those are the businesses that pay their taxes as an when they become due and payable.

In this Province there are so many schools and community centres which were built with the help of the business community.

There are countless young people whose tertiary studies have been financed by the generosity of men and women of business.

I am convinced without any shadow of doubt that these are the type of business men and women I am interacting with this morning.

For that I want to say that keep it up and never tire from doing what is good. You must know that you do not have to be a business of multimillion returns before you can play your corporate social responsibility.

As you know, in our African culture we share the little that we have.

Programme Director;

We are interacting in this manner for the first time since our national elections and since we delivered the State of the Province Address sometime in June. As you know, the ruling party went to the elections with a commitment to grow South Africa and create jobs.

We said that we would ensure the transformation of the economy to serve all people, through interventions that promote a developmental growth path to create more jobs and decent jobs. As you would agree, this will need sustainable and radical land reform and a plan to broaden ownership of the economy.

It will mean that we must address the monopoly in the economy, and we must deal with the growth-inhibiting structure of the economy. This will also require us to advance an industrial plan for localization.

We have further committed ourselves to drive innovation and the digital revolution. We said that we would increase levels of investment in the economy, accelerate the provision of infrastructure to support the economy, transform and diversify the financial sector. We said we would go on to consolidate support for small businesses and cooperatives, as well as growing the township and village economy.

We said that these interventions will be accompanied by the development of an appropriate macroeconomic framework to support the transformation of the economy to serve all people.

With regard to the agenda to advance social transformation we said that we will continue to make education and health our priorities. In this regard we have

committed ourselves to radically improve access and quality, building more homes, ensuring affordable, accessible and reliable public transport system. All these commitments come with opportunities for you as business people to exploit. I am confident that as you identify opportunities for yourselves, you will work with us to assist in realising the commitments of our election manifesto.

Programme Director;

Although we are experiencing some minor hiccups here and there, on the overall, the spirit of the new dawn is well embraced in the country.

As a result of this New Dawn, investor confidence is improving, more and more foreign capital is coming to our country.

This creates opportunities for you as local businesses to also benefit. As a matter of fact, you should be the major beneficiaries of this new dawn which is being spearheaded by our President.

We also want you to become the beneficiaries of opportunities that come with major projects which are happening in this Province.

You would know that our Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone Project is finally taking shape. We have recently finalised strategic appointments for the SEZ Company, with Ntate Lehlogonolo Masoga as our inaugural CEO.

This is the man you should work closely with so that as local businesses you are the main beneficiaries of this massive project.

Programme Director;

I know of the dangers of prolonging a speech when people can already smell what is coming out of the kitchen.

After all, this session was just one of the many to come.

I once again wish to thank the leadership of the Limpopo United Business Forum for inviting us.

We are always available for sharing ideas and receiving advice. Our doors are always open.

I wish you a delicious and mouth-watering breakfast.

Lets begin with the networking sessions.

I thank you.