

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO MR. CHUPU MATHABATHA ON THE OCCASION OF THE MINING, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIALISATION CONFERENCE, THE RANCH HOTEL, POLOKWANE.

29 September 2022

Programme Director, Mr Thakhani Makhuvha LEDA Group CEO;
Minister for Minerals and Energy, Minister Gwede Mantashe;
MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism; Ntate Thabo Mokone;
Other MECs present;
Our Director General, Ntate Nape Nchabeleng;
Acting HOD for LEDET, Mr Matodzi Rathumbu;
CEO for Musina-Makhado Special Economic Zone, Mr Lehlognolo Masoga;
Representatives of Mining Houses;
Colleagues from DBSA, IDC, NERSA, MINTET and Transnet;
Friends from the Media;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you very much for honouring our joint invitation to this important mining, energy, and industrialisation investment conference.

I want to start by extending my appreciation to all of you for your overwhelming response to this call.

As you know, this conference is a follow up to our provincial mining and investment conference which was held in August last year.

This conference also follows up on the Mining and Energy conference which was hosted by Minister Mantashe here in our province last year in September.

Naturally, today, and tomorrow should be about taking stock and assessing progress we have made since then.

Today is not about saying the same things we said last year in a different English or with a different accent.

We are here for progress. This is among others because we have gathered here today as our country is celebrating one of our struggle icon, Mama Winnie Mandela.

We are here to find practical solutions to the challenges faced by our economy and the mining industry in particular as Mama Winnie directed us to do so.

This conference is taking place during this Heritage Month of September, a month of reflecting on our socio-economic status.

There are many things that form the collection of our national heritage.

Our mineral resources are equally part of our collective heritage as the people of this country.

As the people of Limpopo we have been particularly blessed with the abundance of this heritage.

It is for this reason that we have made this call because we have identified mining as one of the strategic drivers of the economy.

In this way, we want our people, to benefit from this national treasure.

This conference is therefore expected to investigate ways to unlock economic growth and development opportunities that are presented by mining in our Province.

We say that the future is in growth.

We also believe that industrialisation is the most viable mechanism to put us to a higher growth and development trajectory.

At the core of all we do, and all we must do, should be a collective commitment to drive our people out of the dehumanising web of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment.

Our battle cry is that mineral resources should be utilised in a manner that promote local and rural development.

These resources should be used in a manner that promotes the social upliftment of communities affected by mining.

Naturally, the situation in Limpopo needs to change. This is because you can't have mines in Limpopo whilst their final processing plants and headquarters are in other provinces.

This must change because Limpopo cannot be left to produce raw materials with unskilled labours, while other provinces get beneficiation advantages.

At the same time, collectively, we carry an obligation to ensure that mining activities are conducted in a manner that protects the environment for the benefit of future generations.

We indeed can and must advance our economic and social development while at the same time caring for our environment, the two are not mutually exclusive.

Programme Director

We are confident that in this room we have men and women of good intellect and capacity to equal the challenges and the task at hand.

We have come this far working together, and together let's continue to make the difference.

It is now my pleasure to officially welcome all of you to this important conference.

I welcome Minister Gwede Mantashe, whose political history is rooted in Limpopo.

Honourable Minister, we will not forget your role in the trade movement at Steelpoort Valley, now the Dilokong Platinum Corridor.

In your honour and that of many other unsung heroes and heroines of our liberation struggle, we are poised to successfully establish Fetakgomo-Tubatse Special Economic Zone.

With the number of mines in that part of Limpopo, one, we are confident that we will build the first democratic City in Burgersfort, two, we will achieve our aim of having Black Industrialist, and three, we will successfully fight poverty, unemployment, and inequality in the province.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are poised to leverage all opportunities available in all our key economic focus areas of mining, agriculture, and tourism.

Limpopo is ready, and it depends on how you make use of the available opportunities as this current generation.

I thank you!
Ndaa!
Inkomu!
Kea Leboga!