

SPEAKING NOTES FOR THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE, MR. CHUPU STANLEY MATHABATHA DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF THE 2023 LIMPOPO INVESTMENT CONFERENCE AT THE RANCH PROTEA HOTEL, POLOKWANE ON 17 OCTOBER 2023.

Programme Director, Mr Victor Kgomoewana;  
Honourable Deputy Minister of Finance, Dr. David Masondo;  
Honourable Deputy Minister in the Presidency, Mme Pinky Kekana;  
Honourable Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Mr. Fikile Majola;  
MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Mr Rodgers Monama;  
MECs present;  
Honourable MEC for Economic Development in the Free State, Mr. Thabo Maeko;  
His Worship the Executive Mayor of Polokwane, Cllr Makoro John Mpe;  
Your worships Mayors present;  
Our guests from the Republic of China, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Zimbabwe and Namibia;  
Captains of industries;  
Investors present;  
Members of the various business forums;  
Friends from the Media  
Distinguished Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good morning and welcome to the third edition of the Limpopo Investment Conference.

On behalf of the people of the Limpopo, it gives me great pleasure to express a warm welcome to all of you including delegates joining virtually from across the world.

We are greatly pleased to host you in our beautiful province and hopefully, you will enjoy your stay as you deliberate on the important topics of this investment conference.

This third instalment of the Limpopo Investment Conference focuses on both the extractive industry and beneficiation of the primary resources.

We have a vision of Limpopo that has total employment, with a strong economy that focuses beyond the extractive industry and graduate into manufacturing and services.

We are honoured by your presence, distinguished guests and business leaders, our friends from China, Russian Federation, Zimbabwe, Namibia and across the globe

Limpopo is blessed with natural resources such as climatic conditions for agricultural produce, minerals, flora, fauna, and wildlife.

It is also strategically located as an access gate to the SADC market with over 300 million citizens.

Programme Director

Our country embraces global sustainable development goals of improving the planet, and the lives of all citizens. Our Province of Limpopo is well aligned with these noble goals.

It is therefore against this background that we have adopted that the theme of the conference is 'INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH'.

This theme resonates well with these sustainable developmental goals as well as the country's primary message of Growing South Africa together.

We are humbled by the growing desire and interest by people inside the country, and from across the world to participate in this conference.

We believe that the Limpopo is hitting the right notes in terms of growing the economy on sustainable basis.

We are inspired by the continued support and interest from global communities, embracing and participating in this conference through representatives from their countries.

As a growing brand, Limpopo Investment Conference will contribute immensely in the economic growth of the province in particular and South Africa at large.

Therefore, over the next two days, this province will lay bare the investment opportunities to the world through various panel discussions.

It is in this context, our topics are well-researched and well-aligned, and we hope to attract investment inflows into those latent untapped sectors of our economy.

Similarly, the conference is also a networking opportunity to establish and build solid and long-lasting relationships across various industries.

We are therefore elated that our country has recently hosted a successful BRICS summit, and it is against that background that business-to-business relationship in the context of this emerging trading block should be strengthened at investment and commercial levels.

Programme Director

I am pleased to report that during the past two conferences that the province hosted, we demonstrated the competitive strength of all economic regions of our province.

We are therefore calling upon investors to tap into secondary industries of these sectors, to expand manufacturing for finished products to enhance the localisation of those products.

The industrialisation path for Inclusive economic growth in Limpopo hinges on the beneficiation of agricultural produce, abundance of minerals resource, tourism and infrastructure development.

The Limpopo Provincial Government is rolling out massive infrastructure to lay the basis for this industrialization agenda.

We are making progress with our Special Economic Zone programme. We have laid the bulk infrastructure in the North Site of Musina-Makhado SEZ and are inviting industrialists to set up their productive infrastructure in light and metallurgical industries.

We are also at an advanced stage to attain the designation of the Fetakgomo-Tubatse Industrial Park as an SEZ focusing on the beneficiation of platinum group metals to produce fuel cells, jewellery, and other industrial products.

The implementation of the Limpopo Industrial Master Plan, with the support of our private sector partners, will certainly propel our economy to a high-growth trajectory and create wealth and much-needed jobs.

We are humbled by local, national and international investors who have already invested in this economy. We call on more investors to partner with us as we build a Limpopo that we all yearn for.

Programme Director

The status quo is that our villages have become semi-urban, because majority of our people in rural areas have embraced the fourth industrial revolution (4IR).

As our renowned international scholar and academic, Professor Tshilidzi Marwala has pointed out, we are currently witnessing that more and more of our people in Limpopo are mobile-first. They wake up with the mobile device in their hands and that is how their daily life begin.

The new economic paradigms towards renewable and green energy, agro-processing and mineral beneficiations, are at the apex of sustainable development that we are all yearning for.

We therefore urge potential and existing investors to envision an inclusive global economic growth characterized by equitable distribution of investment, for a better life for all the citizens of the world.

This conference is therefore an opportunity to reflect on progress made thus far, and to harness new opportunities brought about by the changing demands of the world through sustainable developmental goals.

Programme Director

In the past two years, the Limpopo Investment Conference has yielded R209 billion and R34.7 billion pledges, respectively.

Of these, R52.44 billion has already been realized, resulting in the creation of 9 429 full-time equivalent jobs and 5 300 construction jobs across all districts in mining, agriculture, agro-processing, and tourism.

We continue to interact with investors, unlocking bottlenecks, and ensuring the facilitation and implementation of all pledges.

Our target for this year's conference is R30 billion, and we are confident that we will attain it.

Programme Director

We are confident that you will have a successful conference, following the most successful instalments of two conferences in the past two years.

As Limpopo, we remain firmly committed to creating conducive environment for investments to thrive, make returns for shareholders, and contribute to social upliftment of the people.

It is incumbent on all of us, government, business, and communities, to ensure that we put shoulders on the wheel, to build this economy and create the much-needed decent jobs, reduce poverty, and close the inequality gap.

Limpopo is ready to do business with your good selves. I urge you to seize this opportunity and invest in our province.

It is during time like this, that we recall the words of our international icon, Tata Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela when he said:

“Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and descent life. While poverty persist, there is no true freedom”.

I wish you a progressive and fruitful Limpopo Investment Conference 2023. With your due indulgence of course, the conference is officially declared opened.

I thank you!