

SPEECH BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURIN A WELCOME GALA DINNER AT STEELPORT, SEKHUKHUNE

Programme Director,

Chinese Ambassador to South Africa, Mr Wu Peng,

MEC for LEDET, Mr Tahitereke Matibe,

Sekhukhune District Executive Mayor, Cllr, Minah Bahule,

Fetakgomo-Tubatse Municipality Mayor, Cllr, Eddie Maila,

Vice President of CGN Energy, Mr Fang Likui,

Samancor Chrome CEO, Mr Desmond McManus,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thobela, Ndi Matsheloni, Avuxeni, Good Morning, Goie More.

It is a profound honor to stand before all of you, at this sod-turning ceremony for the 100-Megawatt Solar Energy Project. Today, as we break ground, we mark a new chapter in Limpopo's journey toward sustainable energy and economic growth. This ambitious project, championed by Kona Maanda in collaboration with Samancor, the China-Africa Fund, and CGN Africa Energy, is a testament to our commitment to renewable energy, environmental stewardship, and economic progress.

Programme Director, the recent 2024 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Summit held in Beijing, which brought together leaders and visionaries from our two continents, has played an instrumental role in advancing projects like this. We are delighted to have our esteemed Chinese partners here, as they bring invaluable expertise and resources to help us realize this vision. Limpopo greatly values its relationship with China, and we commend the commitment of Chinese companies to the development of our province.

Programme Director, as we all know, the shift to green energy is no longer just an option; it is an imperative. Worldwide, communities are coming together to reduce carbon emissions and protect the environment. Here in Limpopo, we are equally committed to building a greener, cleaner future. This solar energy project, with its two phases of 60 and 40 megawatts, is both a symbol and a strategy for achieving a sustainable future. It promises to provide Samancor with renewable energy while contributing to a healthier environment for generations to come.

But beyond environmental impact, this project brings significant economic benefits to Limpopo. The construction alone will generate jobs, offering opportunities for our youth and skilled professionals alike. For the people of Limpopo, these jobs represent more than just income; they represent growth, stability, and the chance to contribute to something meaningful. This project also addresses the need for affordable, reliable energy. By harnessing the sun's power, we can reduce costs for families and businesses, easing the financial burdens on households and fostering a stronger economy.

Programme Director, this ceremony also reflects the momentum gained at the recent Limpopo Provincial Government's investment conference, where companies pledged over R120.329 billion towards our future. Many of the largest pledges came from those invested in solar and renewable energy, showing the strong commitment of the private sector to support our sustainable vision. The 100-Megawatt Solar Project is proof of the confidence businesses have in our province, and we stand ready to ensure these investments succeed.

Today's project is an excellent example of what can be achieved through public-private partnerships. With the collaboration of Kona Maanda, the China-Africa Fund, Samancor and CGN Africa Energy, we are witnessing a remarkable synergy between government and business. The path to green energy requires the strength of both sectors working together, and Limpopo

is dedicated to creating an environment where these partnerships can thrive.

Furthermore, Samancor's commitment to sourcing renewable energy through this project sets a powerful precedent. It demonstrates that industry and sustainability can go hand in hand, offering a model for other sectors to reduce their carbon footprint while remaining productive. This solar project will help us move closer to energy self-sufficiency, a significant milestone for our province and a clear step toward reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Programme Director, today's sod-turning ceremony represents more than just the start of construction; it is a turning point in our journey towards a sustainable, economically resilient Limpopo. It is a message to the world that we are open to green business and that we prioritize our people and environment over short-term gains.

Programme Director, Limpopo stands ready and open for business, with a commitment to driving economic growth that uplifts our communities, creates sustainable jobs, especially for our youth, and strengthens our infrastructure. Our government is dedicated to fostering an environment where businesses can thrive, innovate, and contribute meaningfully to the region's development.

We invite both local and international investors to join us in building a new Limpopo: a province where partnerships between the public and private sectors empower communities, expand economic opportunities, and lay the foundation for a prosperous future. Together, let us harness the potential of this land and its people, forging pathways that lead to shared progress and resilience.

As we look to the future, I wish to extend my gratitude to our partners—Samancor Chrome Holding (Pty) Limited, CGN Africa Energy, the China-Africa Fund, and Kona Maanda. Your commitment is invaluable, and together, we are setting a standard of progress and sustainability.

Let us turn the sod today with a shared vision of progress, hope, and a commitment to a brighter, greener Limpopo. Together, we are lighting the way forward.

I thank you.