

## **WELCOME ADDRESS BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA AT THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS BREAKFAST, PREMIER HOTEL, THOHOYANDOU**

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08 MARCH 2025

Programme Director, Mr Tshitereke Matibe,

MECs,

Executive Mayor and Local Municipality Mayors,

Chairman of the House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leader, Hosi Peni Ngove,

Traditional leadership, Leaders of the Faith-Based Organisations,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ndi mats Sheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good morning, Goie more,

I stand here today with deep gratitude, honored to share this morning with such esteemed guests, our members of the diplomatic corps and business community together with the captains of industries. This breakfast is a moment of connection, a space where ideas meet over steaming cups of coffee, where partnerships take shape with every handshake, and where the seeds of economic growth are planted in warm conversation.

Throughout history, breakfast has always carried significance beyond nourishment. In ancient times, leaders gathered at dawn to chart the course of their empires, breaking bread as a symbol of trust and unity.

In the royal courts of great civilizations, morning feasts were where alliances were forged, where wisdom was exchanged over golden platters, and where the first light of day brought forth new beginnings. So too, this morning, we sit together not just as diplomats and investors but as architects of progress, ready to craft a future of shared prosperity.

As we continue with engagements in meaningful dialogue today, we invite you to look at Limpopo not just as a province but as a land of boundless opportunity. Our economy is powered by three key drivers, mining, agriculture, and tourism, each offering lucrative potential for investment and growth.

Programme Director, we cannot reiterate more that our province is rich in mineral wealth, home to vast deposits of platinum, diamonds, and rare earth minerals that are crucial to the modern world. The global demand for these resources continues to grow, and Limpopo is well-positioned to be a leading supplier, offering a stable and investor-friendly environment for responsible mining and beneficiation.

Limpopo remains the breadbasket of South Africa, producing a significant portion of the country's fresh produce, including citrus, avocados, and macadamia nuts. With fertile lands and a climate suited for year-round production, we are not just feeding the nation—we are feeding the world. We seek partnerships that will drive agro-processing, value addition, and sustainable farming practices, ensuring that our agricultural sector remains a pillar of economic resilience.

Our province is a place where nature, culture, and heritage converge. From the breathtaking landscapes of the Kruger National Park to the ancient wonders of Mapungubwe, we offer an unparalleled tourism experience.

Ladies and gentlemen, the hospitality of our people, combined with world-class facilities, makes us a premier destination for both domestic and international travellers.

We therefore invite you to join us in expanding this sector, developing eco-tourism, luxury lodges, and cultural heritage sites that will continue to draw visitors from across the globe.

Our province is not just an economic hub; it is a strategic gateway to Africa. Limpopo shares borders with Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique, making it a key trade corridor for goods and services moving across the continent. Our Transfrontier parks and cross-border infrastructure position us as a link between SADC markets and global investors looking for an entry point into Africa's growing economies.

The start of the outreach program of the G20 yesterday in Limpopo is a historic milestone, world leaders, for the first time, convening on African soil to discuss economic and sustainable development challenges.

The G20 represents 85% of global GDP, 75% of global trade, and two-thirds of the world's population. This outreach is more than just a dialogue; it is a powerful opportunity for the people of Limpopo to understand and engage with South Africa's G20 Presidency.

Moreover, it allows us to showcase our investment potential in mining, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and the green economy. As a province, we are ready to open our doors to investors, to forge new partnerships, and to build a future where Limpopo stands as a global leader in industrialisation and sustainable development.

We have just emerged from a successful provincial investment conference where we witnessed commitments from investors that strengthened our ties and paved the way for new opportunities. Today, we reaffirm our commitment to global partnerships. We do not just invite you to invest; we urge you to seize the moment.

Limpopo is open for business. Our investment landscape is rich with potential, and we stand ready to work alongside you to turn vision into reality. Let today's gathering be the start of a journey, one where collaboration transforms economies, where shared growth uplifts communities, and where Limpopo shines as a beacon of prosperity.

Let us not just discuss investment, let us act on it. Let us not just envision progress, let us build it together.

I thank you.