

ADDRESS BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE G20
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA SPORTS GROUND,
THOHOYANDOU, LIMPOPO

07 March 2025

Programme Director, Mr. Tshitereke Matibe,
Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ms. Thandi Moraka,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
MECs,
Members of the Provincial Legislature,
Executive Mayors,
Local Municipalities Mayors,
Chairperson of the House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, Hosi Peni Ngove,
Traditional Leadership,
Government Officials,
Business Community,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ndi matsheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good morning, Goie more.

It is a great privilege to stand before you today as we welcome the esteemed members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, business leaders, and all distinguished guests to this historic occasion, the first-ever G20 community outreach to be held in our province. Programme Director, it is with great honor and pride that we welcome esteemed guests from across the world, our diplomatic representatives from South Korea, Japan, Singapore, China, Namibia, Guinea, Kenya, Senegal, Nigeria, Germany, Indonesia and Namibia.

Your presence here is not just a demonstration to the growing significance of our province in the national and global economic landscape but also a reflection of the commitment to bringing international conversations closer to the people and a testament to the power of collaboration including the importance of bringing global conversations to local communities.

This engagement is an opportunity to strengthen ties, advance collaboration, and ensure that global economic policies translate into meaningful opportunities for local communities. It is also a symbolic gesture, a recognition of the role that provinces like Limpopo play in shaping the broader economic landscape of South Africa and the African continent. We are truly honored to host this prestigious gathering and once more we extend our warmest welcome to you.

Programme Director, there is something profoundly captivating about the town we are at, Thohoyandou, the soul of Vhembe, a land where ancient wisdom and modern aspirations meet. This is a place where the echoes of great kings still linger in the winds that sweep through the sacred Venda mountains. It is a land of poets and philosophers,

of artisans and visionaries, of warriors who stood firm in the face of adversity and of leaders who shaped history with their wisdom.

The very name, Thohoyandou, speaks of resilience and leadership, a tribute to the legendary King Thohoyandou, who united his people and built a nation of strength and purpose. Today, as we gather in this remarkable town, we add another chapter to its rich legacy, welcoming, for the first time in Limpopo's history, the G20 community outreach.

Limpopo is a province defined by its economic dynamism and strategic importance. It is an agricultural powerhouse, a global player in citrus, avocados, macadamia nuts, and maize production, feeding both the nation and international markets. Our fertile lands and hardworking farmers make Limpopo the heart of South Africa's food security.

Programme Director, beyond agriculture, Limpopo boasts a thriving tourism sector enriched by our heritage and natural wonders. Our province is home to the ancient Mapungubwe, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that tells the story of an African kingdom that once traded with the world, and the iconic Kruger National Park, a sanctuary that draws global visitors eager to witness the beauty of Africa's wildlife.

These are not just sites of cultural and natural significance, but they are engines of economic growth, fostering job creation and rural development.

Mining remains a critical pillar of our economy, with Limpopo's rich mineral deposits making significant contributions to South Africa's industrialisation. However, we are deeply conscious of the need for sustainable mining practices that balance economic progress with environmental responsibility.

Our vision is to ensure that the wealth beneath our soil translates into long-term benefits for the people of Limpopo, driving industrialisation, skills development, and local business opportunities.

As the only African nation represented in the G20, South Africa carries a profound responsibility in ensuring that the voices of developing economies, particularly those in Africa, are heard on the global stage. The G20's focus on economic growth, trade, investment, climate action, and digital transformation resonates deeply with our development priorities in Limpopo.

We understand that global economic policies have real, tangible effects on the lives of ordinary people, and it is our duty to ensure that these policies translate into meaningful opportunities for our communities.

This G20 community outreach is more than just a formal engagement. It is a bridge between international policy and local realities. It is an opportunity for our business community, our youth, and our entrepreneurs to engage with global economic conversations and position themselves to benefit from South Africa's role in the G20.

We, therefore, urge local businesses to seize the trade and investment opportunities that come with our province's strategic location and economic potential. We call on young people to see themselves as future leaders in diplomacy, business, and governance. And we encourage community leaders to actively participate in shaping the policies that will drive Limpopo's growth.

Limpopo is open for business, and as such, we are hopeful that this engagement will present an opportunity for deeper collaboration between government, business, and international partners.

As we continue to invest in infrastructure, education, and industrialisation, we invite the global community to be part of Limpopo's growth story. We are committed to fostering an environment where international investors find a home, where small businesses thrive, and where economic transformation reaches every corner of our province.

This is not just about economic transactions, it is about building lasting partnerships that create sustainable development.

Programme Director, today marks a turning point in how Limpopo positions itself within the global economic framework. As we look ahead, let us embrace the spirit of innovation, collaboration, and ambition.

Let us recognize that our local ambitions are not separate from the global agenda but are, in fact, essential to shaping a prosperous and inclusive future. The conversations we will have here today must translate into action, into policies that support

entrepreneurs, into investments that empower our youth, and into initiatives that ensure that Limpopo remains a key player in South Africa's growth story.

One of the most revered figures in our society, the father of our democracy, Nelson Mandela, once 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 a decent life."

These profound words embody the very essence of the G20's mission of championing economic inclusivity, fostering trade and investment, and driving sustainable development.

They remind us that eradicating poverty is not merely an act of goodwill but a moral and economic imperative. As we engage in global partnerships, we must remain committed to building a world that is not only prosperous but also just and equitable for all.

It is with great pride that we host this G20 community outreach, knowing that it symbolizes not just Limpopo's readiness to engage with the world but also the world's recognition of our province's potential.

Let this be the beginning of a new era of global partnerships, where Limpopo stands not only as a contributor to South Africa's economy but as a beacon of opportunity, innovation, and progress on the African continent.

I thank you.