

SPEECH BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA AT THE LIMPOPO INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC INVESTMENT ROUNDTABLE, 07 MAY 2025, THE RANCH RESORT, POLOKWANE

Programme Director, MEC for LEDET Mr Tshitereke Matibe

Other MECs present

Executive Mayor of Capricorn District Municipality

Executive Mayor of Polokwane Municipality

Mayor of Fetakgomo-Tubatse Municipality

Mayor of Musina Municipality

The Director General

Heads of Department

CEOs

Municipal Managers

Representatives from the Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Representatives from the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition

Representatives from Council for Mineral Technology (MINTeK), the Independent Development Corporation (IDC), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the WITS School of Governance

Members of the media

Ladies and gentlemen,

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

Today, we gather at a crucial turning point in our province's economic journey. It is with great pride that I welcome you to the Limpopo International Economic Investment Roundtable, the first of its kind since 2018. This gathering speaks directly to our renewed commitment to exploring and harnessing the immense international investment potential that lies in Limpopo.

The significance of this roundtable cannot be overstated. We stand at a juncture where our global economic landscape is rapidly evolving and with Limpopo hosting key Group of 20 sessions in health and agriculture, it has never been more critical to consolidate our international partnerships. This moment calls for us to rethink our approach to international relations and investment, ensuring that they are driven by one overarching goal: the sustainable growth of our province's economy.

As we embark on this journey, we must gauge the global political environment to effectively reposition Limpopo within the spheres of international diplomacy and trade. The geopolitical shifts occurring worldwide mean we cannot afford to focus solely on developments in erstwhile major markets such as the United States. Instead, we must engage directly with our potential trade partners, identifying specific areas that align with Limpopo's unique strengths and resources.

Statistics South Africa indicates that Limpopo possesses over 40% of South Africa's mineral wealth, yet it remains underutilised in driving our economic potential. Our rich agricultural landscape, combined with the strategic establishment of special economic

zones in Musina-Makhado and Fetakgomo-Tubatse, provides us with a golden opportunity to create our factories, industrialise and lessen our dependency on other provinces and countries. This is an essential move towards creating sustainable jobs, uplifting our communities and fighting poverty.

To realise our vision, the Limpopo Economic Development Agency (LEDA) must lead the charge on how we navigate this terrain. Our focus should be on articulating the benefits that this investment will bring to our portfolio while advancing job creation in various sectors, including mining, agriculture, and tourism. Together, we will identify how to leverage our existing assets and create an environment that enhances foreign investment while preserving the interests of our local communities.

As we discuss critical topics today - ranging from the overall South African Economic Diplomacy within the current global geo-political trends to the vibrational impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) - each of you plays a vital role in shaping the future of our province. Your insights on mining and mineral beneficiation as key anchors for investment attraction, project preparation in critical sectors and value chain analysis for manufacturing and industrialisation will be invaluable.

Additionally, we must draw upon our relationships within BRICS to deepen our economic ties with member countries that see the potential in our province. Engaging in initiatives that foster cooperation will enable us to preserve and grow foreign investments in Limpopo, providing a solid foundation for long-term economic stability.

At the conclusion of this roundtable, I want each of you to leave not only informed but empowered to package our investment agenda effectively. It is imperative that we convey a clear message: Limpopo is open for business, and we have the resources, partnerships and political will to ensure successful outcomes.

In closing, I would like to thank all the participants here today: MINTEK, the Independent Development Corporation, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, the WITS School of Governance, the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation. Your expertise and support are critical to the success of this initiative and together we can build a prosperous future for Limpopo.

Let us embrace this opportunity with determination and commitment, paving the way for a dynamic and prosperous Limpopo.

Thank you.