

REMARKS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE
INDUCTION WORKSHOP OF PEGAC MEMBERS AT EUPHORIA,
MODIMOLLE–MOOKGOPONG MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT

30 January 2026

Director-General, Mr Nape Nchabeleng,
Members of the Executive Council,
Heads of Departments,
Members of the Premier's Economic Growth Advisory Council,
Provincial Commissioner and Public Service Commissioner, Mr N. Sekonya,
Government Officials,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

It is both an honour and a privilege to welcome you to this induction workshop of the Premier's Economic Growth Advisory Council—PEGAC. Today marks an important milestone, not only in formalising your role as members of this Council, but also in strengthening our collective resolve to shape the economic trajectory of Limpopo. You bring with you a wealth of experience, insight and leadership and we look forward to your contribution in guiding the province toward inclusive and sustainable growth.

This induction follows the inception meeting of PEGAC held on the 29th of October 2025, where the foundation of this advisory structure was laid.

Today's engagement is intended to ensure that you have a clear understanding of the purpose, scope, mandate, authority and limitations of the Council, while aligning your work with the strategic priorities of the Limpopo Provincial Government and the Limpopo Development Plan.

We convene at a time when Limpopo's economy is showing encouraging signs of recovery. Our provincial unemployment rate declined to 29.8 percent in the third quarter of 2025, the lowest among South African provinces. This improvement has been driven by growth in finance, personal services and a steadily expanding property market. These gains demonstrate that focused interventions, sound policy direction and collaboration can yield tangible results.

However, we are now operating under increased pressure to accelerate economic growth as we confront the urgent task of rebuilding Limpopo following the devastating floods that severely affected several of our districts. The estimated damage of approximately R10 billion presents a sobering challenge that requires decisive and coordinated action.

Recovery on this scale cannot be achieved through short-term interventions alone. It demands a resilient, growing and increasingly self-reliant provincial economy, one capable of financing reconstruction, restoring infrastructure, protecting livelihoods and securing long-term development. In this context, economic growth is not optional; it is essential to the recovery and renewal of our province.

At the same time, shifting global economic trends are compelling us to rethink how and where we grow our economy. Increasing global uncertainty requires us to look inward by strengthening domestic production, industrial capacity and local value chains, while also positioning Limpopo to take advantage of regional and continental markets. The Southern African

Development Community offers access to a market of over 300 million people, while the African Continental Free Trade Area, an African Union flagship initiative opens a unified market of 1.4 billion people with a combined GDP of approximately US\$3.4 trillion. Our task is to ensure that Limpopo's products, industries and services are competitive and positioned to find meaningful expression within these expanding markets.

Against this backdrop, PEGAC has a critical role to play. Members are expected to provide independent, evidence-based advice, uphold the highest standards of governance and ethical conduct and maintain a deep understanding of the Limpopo Development Plan and the province's strategic priorities. Your work must be practical, forward-looking and responsive to the economic realities confronting Limpopo.

To enable this work, the Office of the Premier, sector departments and state-owned entities must build effective working relationships with PEGAC. This includes promoting collaboration with external stakeholders, familiarising members with government policies and strategies, reinforcing shared values and culture and providing credible status reports on catalytic projects supported by relevant source documents.

The province's positive economic outlook anchored by Limpopo's 7.8 percent contribution to South Africa's GDP in late 2025, depends on a coordinated development approach guided by the Limpopo Development Plan 2025–2030. Central to this strategy is sustained investment in infrastructure, including road upgrades, improved water security for communities and strategic projects such as the Musina-Makhado and Fetakgomo-Tubatse Special Economic Zones, reliable energy supply with a growing emphasis on renewables and expanded digital infrastructure to support Fourth Industrial Revolution-driven growth.

Industrialisation and economic diversification remain critical pillars of our growth agenda. The accelerated development of Special Economic Zones is intended to shift Limpopo from exporting raw materials toward producing higher-value, beneficiated goods. This must be supported by mineral beneficiation, revitalisation of industrial parks, strengthened manufacturing and agro-processing and targeted support for SMMEs across priority value chains.

Mining, agriculture and tourism continue to serve as key drivers of economic activity. Mining benefits from improved infrastructure and skills development, agriculture is strengthened through export opportunities and support for emerging farmers transitioning to commercial production and tourism is advanced through conservation, sports and hospitality initiatives that leverage Limpopo's natural and cultural assets.

Ultimately, sustainable growth depends on strong human capital development, effective governance and strategic partnerships. Aligning education and training with economic needs, strengthening municipal capacity and decisively combating corruption are essential to creating a stable and attractive investment climate. Collaboration with the private sector and proactive investment promotion will remain central to sustaining economic momentum.

Members of PEGAC, the responsibility before us is significant. The people of Limpopo expect action, innovation and results.

I therefore call upon you to hit the ground running, to guide us, challenge us where necessary and help us translate opportunity into inclusive economic growth for our province.

I thank you.