

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING
THE MEDIA LAUNCH OF THE LIMPOPO GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP 2026 AT
THE RANCH RESORT, POLOKWANE MUNICIPALITY, CAPRICORN
DISTRICT**

09 September 2026

Programme Director;

MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Dr Tshitereke Matibe;

Chairperson of the Limpopo Tourism Agency Board, Mr Freddy Greaver, together with members of the Board;

Chief Executive Officer of the Limpopo Tourism Agency, Mr Moses Ngoben, and the LTA team;

Representatives of the Sunshine Tour;

Our sponsors and private-sector partners;

Members of the media;

Professional golfers and representatives of the golfing fraternity;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

We live in an era where artificial intelligence can generate images, stories and experiences at the click of a button. Yet there is one thing that technology can never replicate—authenticity. That is Limpopo's greatest competitive advantage.

Our authenticity is reflected in the warmth of our people, the vibrant colours of our diverse cultures, the rhythmic movements of the BaPedi dancers performing Dinaka, the timeless majesty of our ancient baobab trees, and the breathtaking landscapes that continue to captivate all who visit our province.

Limpopo is not merely a destination. It is an experience. It is a place that leaves a lasting impression on every visitor, and today we invite the world to discover, experience and remember our province.

Programme Director,

Few provinces can match the richness and diversity of Limpopo's tourism offering. From wildlife and heritage to adventure, culture and eco-tourism, our province offers experiences that appeal to every traveller. Among these is one of our fastest-growing niche markets—sports tourism, with golf occupying a prominent place.

Golf in Limpopo is unlike golf anywhere else in the world. Here, the game is played against spectacular backdrops of mountains, bushveld and wildlife, where every fairway tells a story and every round becomes an unforgettable experience.

Only in Limpopo can golfers take on the world-famous par-three 19th hole at Legend Golf and Safari Resort, teeing off from Hanglip Mountain towards a green shaped like the African continent. Only here can visitors enjoy championship golf while immersed in pristine bushveld landscapes at destinations such as Zebula Golf Estate, Koro Creek Bushveld Golf Estate and Hans Merensky Golf Club, where nature and sport exist in perfect harmony.

This year, we gather at the beautiful Ranch Resort to launch the 2026 Limpopo Golf Championship, while the tournament itself will once again be contested at the magnificent Euphoria Golf Estate, where competitors will play beneath the iconic cable cars that have become synonymous with this remarkable golfing destination.

These are not merely golf courses. They are world-class tourism assets that position Limpopo as Africa's premier golf destination.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Limpopo Golf Championship has evolved into far more than a sporting event. It has become a strategic platform for tourism promotion, destination branding and economic development.

Every major sporting event presents an opportunity to stimulate local economies, and this championship is no exception. It attracts professional golfers, sponsors, officials, media representatives, spectators and business leaders, all of whom contribute to our provincial economy.

Golf tourists seldom travel alone. They travel with families, colleagues and friends. They stay in our hotels and guesthouses, dine in our restaurants, make use of local transport services, visit our attractions and purchase locally produced goods and services. The economic impact therefore extends far beyond the golf course, creating opportunities for businesses and communities throughout the value chain.

This is precisely the kind of inclusive economic growth that we seek to promote.

The success of previous editions demonstrates the value of this investment. The 2025 Limpopo Championship attracted a highly competitive professional field, offered a prize purse of R2.5 million, created employment opportunities for 156 local caddies and generated more than 80 temporary jobs in hospitality and event management. Accommodation establishments, transport operators, caterers and numerous tourism enterprises also benefited from increased visitor activity.

These outcomes affirm that tourism is not simply about showcasing beautiful places; it is about creating jobs, supporting small businesses and improving livelihoods.

Programme Director,

The championship's partnership with the Sunshine Tour and SuperSport provides Limpopo with exceptional exposure across Africa and internationally. Millions of viewers will witness not only outstanding golf but also the beauty of our landscapes, the richness of our culture and the hospitality of our people.

Our objective is simple. We want every viewer, whether watching from Johannesburg, Cape Town, Nairobi, London or elsewhere, to see Limpopo and say, "That is a place I must visit."

This tournament therefore serves as a powerful marketing platform that strengthens our destination brand, increases visitor arrivals, encourages

longer stays, promotes local tourism products and positions Limpopo as a preferred destination for international sporting and business events.

Equally important is our commitment to ensuring that communities participate meaningfully in the benefits generated by this event.

The Sustainability Village remains one of the championship's most impactful initiatives. Last year it provided local SMMEs with an opportunity to showcase their products and services to players, visitors, sponsors and tournament stakeholders. This year, we will once again create opportunities for local entrepreneurs, community tourism projects, artists, crafters, food producers, agricultural enterprises and youth-owned businesses to access new markets and grow their enterprises.

The true success of this championship will therefore not be measured solely by television audiences or prize money, but by the opportunities it creates for ordinary people and the lasting economic value it leaves behind.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we officially launch the 2026 Limpopo Golf Championship, let us recognise that this event represents far more than competition. It represents confidence in our province, investment in our tourism economy and belief in the limitless potential of Limpopo.

Together with government, our private-sector partners, the Sunshine Tour and all stakeholders, we are building a globally recognised event that showcases the very best our province has to offer.

As the players prepare to tee off at Euphoria in the coming weeks, let every drive, every putt and every broadcast become an invitation for the world to discover Limpopo.

Because when the world discovers Limpopo, it discovers authenticity, opportunity and unforgettable experiences.

I thank you.