

REMARKS BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE
PREMIER'S ECONOMIC GROWTH ADVISORY COUNCIL (PEGAC)
MEETING AT FOREVER RESORT, BELA-BELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY,
WATERBERG DISTRICT

10 September 2026

Members of the Executive Council,
Director-General, Mr Nape Nchabeleng,
Special Advisors,
Heads of Departments,
Members of the Premier's Economic Growth Advisory Council,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

It is indeed my pleasure to be meeting with you today as we convene this important sitting of the Premier's Economic Growth Advisory Council. Your presence reflects our shared commitment to advancing Limpopo's economic transformation through strategic partnerships, innovation and evidence-based advice.

Today marks another great day on our calendar, a new chapter in Limpopo's journey towards inclusive economic transformation. Following the appointment and induction of the new members of the Premier's Economic Growth Advisory Council, we gather with renewed purpose, fresh perspectives and a shared responsibility to shape the economic future of our province.

The expectations of our people are high and rightly so, because the decisions we make in this room must ultimately translate into jobs, investment, industrial growth and improved livelihoods.

The establishment of PEGAC was a deliberate decision to bring together the finest minds from government, business, academia and broader society to provide independent, evidence-based advice that strengthens our development agenda.

This Council was never intended to be a ceremonial structure; it is a strategic platform designed to challenge conventional thinking, inspire innovation and guide government towards practical solutions that accelerate the implementation of the Limpopo Development Plan 2025–2030.

Our economic outlook remains positive. Limpopo is richly endowed with abundant mineral resources, fertile agricultural land, significant renewable energy potential and a strategic location that provides access to the SADC region. Yet these advantages have not translated into the level of industrialisation and employment that our province deserves.

Mining contributes 19.1 per cent to our provincial GDP, while manufacturing contributes only 3.6 per cent, highlighting a significant industrialisation gap. Equally concerning is that, while our unemployment rate remains at 32 per cent, employment continues to be concentrated in the tertiary sector, with manufacturing employing only about 78,000 people.

These realities compel us to think differently. We must strengthen the linkages between mining, agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure development, innovation and the green economy to build value chains that

create sustainable jobs and unlock inclusive growth. This is precisely where the expertise of this Council becomes indispensable.

Our mandate is therefore clear. PEGAC must provide independent and evidence-based recommendations on the implementation of the Limpopo Development Plan 2025–2030, with particular attention to catalytic projects.

The Council must also assist government in reviewing economic policies and development strategies, advise on job creation and economic growth opportunities, assess global and national economic trends and their implications for Limpopo, identify emerging economic challenges, and provide strategic advice on interventions that can accelerate our development trajectory.

I am encouraged that, ahead of this meeting, the Technical Working Groups engaged extensively with provincial departments and state-owned entities and undertook visits to catalytic projects across the province. These engagements have provided valuable insights that will enrich our discussions and ensure that our recommendations are informed by practical realities rather than theory alone.

The consolidation of the Working Groups into Industrialisation, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Infrastructure Development further positions the Council to provide focused and impactful strategic advice.

As we deliberate today, I urge every member to engage with courage, honesty, and a solutions-driven mindset. Let us challenge assumptions, identify opportunities, confront implementation bottlenecks and recommend bold interventions that will reposition Limpopo as a competitive, industrialised and investment-friendly province.

Let this meeting not end with resolutions captured on paper, but with a clear programme of action, measurable commitments, and renewed determination.

As champions of inclusive development and good governance, our responsibility extends beyond this meeting. In the coming weeks, as we engage communities, business leaders, organised labour, institutions of higher learning and civil society, let us also encourage active citizenship and democratic participation.

The Local Government Elections on 4 November 2026 present an important opportunity for our people to shape the future of the municipalities that are central to economic growth, service delivery and local development.

Let us therefore encourage every eligible citizen to exercise their constitutional right to vote peacefully, responsibly and in their numbers. Strong municipalities are built on active citizen participation, and a vibrant democracy remains the strongest foundation upon which we can build a prosperous, inclusive and resilient Limpopo.

Let this meeting, therefore, pave a decisive way forward for PEGAC. Let us move from consultation to implementation, from recommendations to measurable outcomes and from potential to tangible economic opportunity.

The people of Limpopo do not need another set of good intentions; they need an economy that creates opportunities, industries that create jobs, infrastructure that unlocks investment and partnerships that change lives.

The time for ideas is important, but the time for action is now. Let us make PEGAC a catalyst for the economic transformation that Limpopo deserves.

I welcome you all and look forward to productive deliberations that will strengthen our collective efforts to drive inclusive growth, industrialisation and sustainable development in our province.

I thank you.