

**SPEECH BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA,
DURING THE MEDIA LAUNCH OF THE 2026 LIMPOPO INVESTMENT
CONFERENCE AT EUPHORIA GOLF ESTATE, MODIMOLLE-
MOOKGOPHONG MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT**

18 September 2026

Programme Director,
MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Dr Tshitereke
Matibe,
HOD for LEDET, Dr Matodzi Rathumbu,
GCEO of the Limpopo Economic Development Agency, Mr Jason Ngobeni,
together with the CEOs of our provincial entities,
Senior government officials,
Representatives of the business and investment community,
Members of the media,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Ndi Matsheloni, Thobela, Avuxeni, Dumelang, Goeie More, Good morning.

As we gather here today to launch the 2026 Limpopo Investment Conference
I am reminded of lines from a poem 'Africa' by David Diop.

It speaks to the idea that the future is built **patiently, through struggle and growth**. Diop reminds us in *Africa*, our future does not appear overnight - it springs up anew, patiently and obstinately, until its fruit is finally realised."

It gives us a great pleasure to be part of this significant occasion. Today, we continue another important chapter in our province's economic development journey, a journey that brings together government, business, investors and communities under one roof, united by a common purpose: to unlock opportunities, attract investment, create jobs and build a more prosperous Limpopo.

Investment is not merely about capital entering a province. It is about the transformation that follows when capital meets opportunity, when ideas become enterprises, when infrastructure enables production and when economic growth improves the lives of our people.

As the 7th Administration, we carry a fundamental mandate from the people of Limpopo: to use our skills, expertise and resources to plan properly and above all, to deliver.

We recognise that government is judged not only by the policies it develops, but by the difference those policies make in the lives of citizens. We must therefore move decisively from planning to implementation, from commitments to action, and from promises to measurable results.

This is the spirit of our investment mobilisation programme. It is also the foundation upon which we are building a Limpopo that works for all.

Ladies and gentlemen,

When we engaged the investment community in previous years, we presented Limpopo as a province of immense potential. We spoke of our strategic position as a gateway to the SADC region, our mineral wealth, productive agricultural land, tourism assets, renewable energy opportunities and emerging industries.

The investment community responded with confidence.

Over the past five years, Limpopo has **secured more than R450 billion** in cumulative investment commitments, including approximately R170 billion pledged at the 2025 Limpopo Investment Conference. **These commitments have been associated with the creation of more than 23,000 jobs.**

These figures represent a significant vote of confidence in our province. However, they also impose a responsibility upon us. An investment commitment must not remain a figure in a presentation or an announcement at a conference. It must translate into projects, construction, production, employment and sustainable economic activity.

That is why the 2026 Limpopo Investment Conference will place a sharper focus on implementation.

Our theme, *“From Pledges to Prosperity: Accelerating Limpopo’s Industrial Future,”* captures the transition we are determined to achieve.

We are moving beyond the celebration of commitments towards the acceleration of bankable projects, capital mobilisation, industrial development and inclusive economic participation.

The success of this conference will therefore not be measured only by the value of investment announced. It will also be measured by the projects that advance, the barriers that are removed, the enterprises that are established and the opportunities created for our people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our investment strategy is anchored in three interconnected priorities.

The first is mineral beneficiation and green energy. Limpopo's mineral resources provide a foundation for industrial development, but our ambition must extend beyond the extraction and export of raw materials. We must promote value addition, strengthen local supply chains and attract investment into industries that create greater economic value within the province.

The second priority is agricultural modernisation and agro-processing. Limpopo is endowed with productive agricultural land and a diversity of agricultural activities. Our task is to modernise production, improve infrastructure, strengthen market access and expand agro-processing.

The third priority is **the development of special economic zones and economic infrastructure.** Industrialisation requires reliable infrastructure,

efficient logistics, appropriate investment facilitation and an environment in which businesses can operate and expand.

Together, these priorities are intended to advance industrialisation, expand investment, create jobs and position Limpopo more firmly within regional, national and global value chains.

Our ambition is clear: to build an economy that does not merely export its resources, but develops the capacity to process, manufacture, innovate and create value.

Programme Director,

Our young population is one of Limpopo's greatest economic assets. We shall create an economy with the capacity to absorb our young people, develop their skills and provide meaningful opportunities for participation.

This is why we are also opening Limpopo to opportunities in information and communication technologies, artificial intelligence and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The discussions emerging from the Limpopo 4IR, ICT and AI Summit have reinforced the importance of digital infrastructure, digital skills, cybersecurity and partnerships between government and the private sector.

We expect the value of new investment commitments in 2026 to exceed the R120 billion target set by the Limpopo Economic Development Agency in its

Business Plan. However, our emphasis remains on the quality, sustainability and implementation of these commitments.

We want to see investment that creates productive capacity, supports local enterprises, develops skills and generates employment.

Members of the media,

You are important partners in this journey.

Your role extends beyond reporting on conferences and investment announcements. You help shape public understanding of our province, communicate opportunities to potential investors and track the progress of commitments made.

We ask you to tell the story of Limpopo's transformation accurately and responsibly. Report on our opportunities, interrogate our performance, ask difficult questions and hold us accountable.

Where progress is made, let it be recognised. Where challenges remain, let them be brought to our attention. A strong partnership between government and the media promotes transparency, informed public discourse and accountability.

We said previously that Limpopo is an emerging investment frontier. Our responsibility now is to demonstrate this through visible progress and tangible results.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 2026 Limpopo Investment Conference will take place on 15 October 2026 at The Ranch Resort in Polokwane. But the work towards that conference and beyond it has already begun.

Through our buildup programme, we have been engaging investors, preparing projects, strengthening our economic sectors and identifying practical interventions to address implementation challenges.

From the Renewable Energy Seminar led by MEC Dr Matibe, to our engagements through the Africa Tourism Leadership Forum, the Limpopo 4IR, ICT and AI Summit and regional investment discussions, we are building a continuous platform for investment facilitation.

To the business and investment community, we say: Limpopo is open for business, partnership and innovation. We invite you to work with us to unlock the province's full economic potential.

As we close let us take a leaf from our poet Laurette Keorapetse Kgositsile who writes that society must actively *"rehabilitate our wounded dreams to reclaim and nourish the song of the quality of our vibrant being."*

I thank you.