

CLOSING REMARKS BY THE PREMIER OF LIMPOPO, DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA, AT THE LIMPOPO INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

Theme: From Pledges to Prosperity

Programme Director,
The Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Paul Mashatile,
Members of the Executive Council,
Distinguished captains of industry,
Investors and business leaders,
Representatives of our development finance institutions,
Traditional leaders,
Social partners,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As we draw this important Limpopo Investment Conference to a close, allow me to begin by expressing our sincere gratitude to the Deputy President, Mr Paul Mashatile, for honouring us with his presence, for officially opening this conference, and for laying a firm foundation for our continued efforts to translate investment pledges into tangible economic growth and prosperity for our people.

We also wish to thank all the investors, business leaders, development partners and stakeholders who have participated in this conference. Your engagement demonstrates that Limpopo has opportunities worth pursuing and the potential to become an even stronger contributor to South Africa's economic growth.

Ladies and gentlemen, the message from this conference is clear: our work does not end when the pledges are announced. In fact, that is where the real work begins.

Our focus must now shift decisively from pledges to prosperity. We must measure our success not only by the value of investments announced at conferences, but by the projects that reach implementation, the factories and mines that become operational, the infrastructure that is built, the businesses that grow, and the jobs that are created for our people.

From R138.43 billion in pledges to measurable results

This conference has attracted investment pledges amounting to R138.43 billion. This is a significant commitment to the economic potential of Limpopo and an increase on the pledges recorded at our previous conference.

We welcome this commitment, but we are equally conscious that the true value of investment lies in its implementation.

We cannot afford to celebrate pledges year after year without seeing a corresponding change in the lives of our people. Our responsibility is to ensure that the commitments

made here translate into real economic activity, expanded production, new enterprises and sustainable employment.

As a province, we want to set ourselves an ambitious but necessary target: to see at least 30% of the pledged investment implemented within a single year.

Thirty per cent of R138.43 billion is approximately R41.53 billion. This is the scale of implementation we must work towards, with clear milestones, responsible project owners and regular monitoring of progress.

This target must not remain a statement made at the closing of a conference. It must become a measure against which we hold ourselves accountable.

We must know which projects are ready to proceed, which are experiencing delays, what obstacles are preventing implementation, and what interventions are required to unlock them. Where government processes are slowing down investment, we must act. Where infrastructure is a constraint, we must coordinate our interventions. Where investors require certainty and support, we must provide clear guidance and timely responses.

Our investors must also honour their commitments. Pledges must be backed by financing plans, implementation schedules and a willingness to work with government and communities towards projects that are economically viable and socially beneficial.

InvestSA One Stop Shop: Turning commitments into action

One of the important developments associated with this conference is the opening of the InvestSA One Stop Shop by the Deputy President.

This facility has significant potential to help accelerate regulatory processes, improve coordination among government departments and reduce unnecessary delays that investors sometimes encounter when establishing or expanding their operations.

We recognise that investment decisions depend not only on the availability of opportunities, but also on the ease with which businesses can navigate regulatory requirements, secure the necessary approvals and move from planning to implementation.

The One Stop Shop must therefore become more than a point of contact. It must be an effective instrument for resolving bottlenecks, coordinating government services and providing investors with the support they need to proceed with confidence.

As the Limpopo Provincial Government, we will continue working with national government, municipalities and our relevant institutions to ensure that the facility delivers practical results.

Our approach must be one of partnership and problem-solving. When investors encounter obstacles, our first response must be to understand the problem, identify the responsible institution and work towards a lawful, practical solution.

We have already been engaging investors between conferences to assist them in meeting their investment and operational requirements. These engagements are encouraging because they demonstrate that sustained follow-up can help move projects forward

An example of the potential of such engagement is Bokoni Platinum Mines, which has returned to operations and presents the prospect of growing employment to approximately 2,000 jobs by 2030.

This development illustrates why we must maintain continuous engagement with investors beyond the conference platform. Investment is not a once-off announcement; it is a process that requires cooperation, problem-solving and sustained commitment.

For communities around mining operations, the significance of investment extends beyond the value of the capital committed. It includes employment opportunities, skills development, support for local suppliers, opportunities for small businesses and improved economic activity in surrounding towns and villages.

We want more of our investments to produce these kinds of outcomes. We want local people to be prepared for available opportunities, young people to gain relevant skills, women and people with disabilities to participate meaningfully in the economy, and local enterprises to become part of the supply chains created by major projects.

At the same time, we must ensure that economic development takes place responsibly, with due regard for environmental sustainability, community interests and the long-term future of our province.

As we move forward, our investment priorities must reflect both Limpopo's competitive advantages and the developmental needs of our people.

The provincial government must provide leadership, but we cannot do this work alone. Municipalities must play their part in providing an enabling local environment. Investors must deliver on their commitments. Communities must be engaged constructively, and our development partners must help us unlock opportunities that have the potential to benefit the province as a whole.

This is how we build a credible investment environment: through cooperation, transparency, consistency and results.

When we speak about R138.43 billion in investment pledges, we must always remember the people behind the figures.

We must remember the young person who is looking for a first job, the family hoping for a more secure livelihood, the emerging entrepreneur who needs access to markets, and the rural community seeking opportunities closer to home.

For these people, the success of this conference will not be determined by the speeches delivered or the figures displayed on the conference screens. It will be determined by whether new opportunities become available, whether businesses expand, whether workers acquire new skills and whether livelihoods improve.

Conclusion

As we leave this conference, let us leave with a shared understanding that the measure of our success is not the pledges we announce, but the prosperity we deliver.

I thank you.