

WELCOME REMARKS BY MEC TSOTSO TLHAPI

ON THE OCASSION

OF THE AFRICA MINING EXPO

MONDAY, 09 NOVEMBER 2026

SUN CITY, MOSES KOTANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

09:00

Programme Director,

Ministers and Deputy Ministers Present,

The Hon Premier in absentia,

Members of the Executive Council present,

Executive Mayors and Mayors,

MMCs and Councillors present,

Representatives of Mining Companies and Industry Leaders,

Organised Labour,

Business Leaders and Investors,

Leaders of Faith-based organizations,

Dikgosi tsotlhe, Dikgosana, and the North West House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders,

Distinguished Delegates,

Government officials,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Receive my warm greetings.

1. **Ladies and Gentlemen**, the Premier of the North West Province is unfortunately unable to be with us today due to other pressing commitments beyond his control. He has therefore delegated me, in my capacity as the MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, to represent him and deliver his message on this occasion.

2. On behalf of the Premier and the North West Provincial Government allow me to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to all delegates, exhibitors, investors, industry leaders, policymakers, development partners and stakeholders gathered here today for the **Africa Minerals Expo**.

3. Today, we gather here not only as participants in a conference, but as custodians of a shared vision for the future of Africa's mineral wealth and its transformative potential for the advancement of our continent and its people.

4. The convening of this prestigious Expo in Sun City, the North West Province is both significant and timely. It provides an important platform for dialogue, innovation, investment and collaboration among those who shape the future of one of Africa's most strategic economic sectors.

5. As we welcome you to this gathering, we do so from a province that occupies a distinguished place in the global mining industry. The North West Province is vested with some of the world's richest mineral deposits and remains a leading producer of platinum group metals, which contributes significantly to both the South African economy and the international minerals market. Hence, North West

is known and referred to as the Platinum Province.

6. The importance of minerals extends far beyond the boundaries of our province and our country. Across the African continent, mineral resources have long been central to economic development, industrial growth and regional integration.

7. Africa owns vast reserves of platinum group metals, chromium, manganese, cobalt, lithium, copper, bauxite, gold, diamonds and rare earth minerals, resources that are increasingly critical to advance manufacturing, renewable energy technologies, digital infrastructure and the global transition towards a low-carbon future.

8. From the platinum belts of Southern Africa and the copper-rich regions of Central Africa to the bauxite deposits of West Africa and the emerging critical minerals industry across the continent, Africa is strategically positioned to contribute to the industries that will define the twenty-first century.

9. These resources present a historic opportunity not only to participate in global value chains, but also to drive industrialization, beneficiation, infrastructure development and economic transformation across the continent. However, while Africa's mineral endowment presents vast opportunities, it also compels us to confront difficult realities.

10. Across many mineral-rich regions of our continent, our communities continue to experience poverty, inequality, unemployment and underdevelopment, despite massive wealth generated from their natural resources.

11. Africa continues to export raw minerals while a greater share of value addition, manufacturing and industrial development occurs elsewhere. This result in African countries who merely remain suppliers of raw materials rather than producers of finished products and advanced technologies.

12. In transforming Africa's image as a continent burdened with poverty, underdevelopment, inequality and unemployment despite its vast mineral deposits, deliberate steps should be taken, such as Africa investing in mineral processing, rather than exporting raw materials. This shift will unlock significant economic opportunities, stimulate industrial development, create jobs and accelerate sustainable economic growth.

13. The continent also faces persistent challenges associated with illegal mining, mineral smuggling, illicit financial flows, environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure and limited participation of local communities in the benefits derived from mining activities. These challenges diminish the developmental impact of our mineral wealth and remind us that natural resources alone cannot guarantee prosperity.

14. The experience of many resource-rich regions across the world teaches us that mineral wealth must be supported by strong institutions, sound governance, policy certainty, responsible investment and meaningful partnerships between government, industry, labour and communities. Without these foundations, the promise of resource wealth can too easily become a paradox of abundance amidst deprivation.

15. It is precisely because of these challenges that the Africa Minerals Expo remains so important. This gathering provides a platform for governments, investors, mining companies, organised labour, academics, innovators and communities to engage on practical solutions that will enable mineral wealth to become a catalyst for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

16. **Ladies and Gentlemen,** one of the greatest developmental challenges confronting the African mining sector is the continued export of raw mineral resources with limited local value addition. For far too long, Africa has supplied the world with the minerals that drive industrial development elsewhere, while capturing only a fraction of the value generated from its own resources.

17. This pattern must change, the future of Africa's mining industry cannot be confined to extraction alone. It must be anchored in beneficiation, industrialisation and the development of integrated regional value chains. Our collective objective must be to move progressively from being exporters of raw materials to becoming producers of refined minerals, manufactured products, advanced industrial inputs and innovative technologies.

18. The platinum mined in the North West Province should not merely leave our shores as raw material. It should create opportunities for local refining, fuel cell production, green hydrogen technologies, catalytic converter manufacturing and a range of downstream industries capable of creating sustainable jobs and expanding our industrial base.

19. Similarly, Africa's reserves of lithium, cobalt, manganese, copper

and other critical minerals present a historic opportunity to participate meaningfully in the rapidly growing industries of electric vehicles, battery manufacturing, renewable energy technologies and advanced manufacturing.

20. The continent must position itself not only as a supplier of strategic minerals, but as a competitive center of industrial production and technological innovation. Beneficiation is not simply an economic objective. It is a developmental imperative. It is about retaining greater value within our economies, creating decent employment opportunities, expanding the skills base of our people, developing local enterprises and strengthening the productive capacity of African nations.

21. For South Africa and the North West Province, beneficiation offers a pathway towards economic diversification and greater resilience. It enables us to reduce dependence on commodity cycles, unlock new sectors of growth and ensure that mineral wealth contributes more directly to broad-based development.

22. Achieving this vision will require deliberate collaboration between government, industry, research institutions, development finance institutions and the private sector. It will require investment in infrastructure, energy security, industrial parks, technical skills, research and innovation.

23. Most importantly, it will require a shared commitment to ensuring that Africa's mineral wealth becomes the foundation of Africa's industrial future. The twenty-first century cannot be another century in which Africa exports its wealth and imports

prosperity. It must be a century in which Africa leverages its mineral resources to build industries, create jobs, develop technology and generate shared prosperity for its own people.

24. That is the beneficiation agenda to which we must collectively commit ourselves. For our province, mining is far more than an economic activity. It is woven into the social and economic fabric of our communities. It has shaped the growth of our towns, sustained generations of workers and their families, and continues to play a vital role in our aspirations for economic growth, industrial development and social progress.

25. This Expo therefore represents more than an exhibition of mineral resources and investment opportunities. It represents a collective commitment to ensuring that Africa's vast natural wealth becomes a catalyst for shared prosperity, inclusive growth and sustainable development.

26. It is an affirmation of our belief that the continent's mineral endowment must serve not only global markets, but also the developmental aspirations of the African people themselves.

27. At a time when the world is increasingly looking to Africa for the critical minerals required for the energy transition, electric vehicles, advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies, we must work together to ensure that Africa derives maximum developmental benefit from its resources.

28. This requires a renewed focus on beneficiation, industrialisation, skills development, technological innovation and the strengthening of regional value chains under the framework of the African

Continental Free Trade Area.

29. Over the course of this Expo, I am confident that meaningful engagements will take place, valuable partnerships will be forged and new opportunities for investment and collaboration will emerge. The conversations held here will contribute towards building a mining sector that is more inclusive, more competitive, more sustainable and more responsive to the developmental aspirations of our people.

30. On behalf of the Government and the people of the North West Province, I wish to express our sincere appreciation to all delegates and stakeholders who have travelled from across South Africa, the African continent and beyond to be part of this important occasion.

31. May your deliberations be fruitful, your partnerships enduring and your engagements productive as together we shape a future in which Africa's mineral wealth becomes a foundation for industrialisation, economic transformation and shared prosperity.

It is therefore my distinct honour and privilege to declare you warmly welcomed to the **Africa Minerals Expo**.

Welcome to Sun City, the North West Province. And most importantly Welcome to the home of platinum.

I thank you.