

WELCOMING SPEECH BY NORTH WEST MEC FOR PUBLIC
WORKS, MR H.D.YAWA,MPL YAWA AT THE CIDB PROVINCIAL
STAKEHOLDER'S WORKSHOP HELD ON MONDAY 30 APRIL
2007 IN RUSTENBURG

Programme Facilitator

Representatives of the CIDB

Head of Department-Mr Obakeng Mongale

Senior Government officials from the National Department of Public
Works and the North West Department of Public Works

Representatives of Public Entities & Municipalities

Representatives from the University of the North West

Representatives of Professional Bodies

Representatives of organised business, NAFCOC & construction
associations

Members of the North West Construction Liaison Committee

Representatives of the Banking Sector

Representatives of organised labour

Contractors

Ladies and Gentlemen

In his beautiful poem, "Dancing with Change", Ben Okri, the Booker
Prize-winning, African genius, novelist and poet has captured both
our natural resistance to change, as well as the rewards of embracing

change. The metaphor for his vision is that of a dance of elegance and grace, our reaction to the rhythm of our world, its future and the constancy of change.

First, our tendency to resist "'Change is good, but no change is better' - It rang through the great hall as it has resounded silently through the ages. It rang past the faces of stern masters and poets and lords of learning, asleep in their hidden academies".

In contrast, Okri closes his poem with lyric praise of the value of change: "But the river flows, and so must we. Change is the happy god that Heraclitus saw in the golden river. Spread illumination through this darkening world; spread illumination through this darkening world. No change is good, but dancing gracefully with change is better."

In his State of the Nation Address delivered on the 9 February 2007, President Thabo Mbeki committed government to a renewed partnership for a better life for All.

Today we are here to give that pledge for a renewed partnership for a better life for all meaning in the construction sector. We are here to narrow the gap between the Construction Industry Development Board and stakeholders in the construction industry.

As a province, we welcome the inclusive approach adopted by the Minister of Public Works towards the National Stakeholder Forum Process particularly because it affords stakeholders in the provinces an opportunity to contribute solutions towards challenges facing the construction sector.

We believe that stakeholders in the province are equally excited to participate in the process and contribute towards a transformed construction industry.

This Provincial Stakeholders Forum will strengthen the partnership to which we have committed ourselves as a department. The approach not only allows us to tap into the vast experience of various sectors but allows the sectors to inform and influence the Construction Industry Development Board.

We believe that the process will also contribute towards mobilisation of positive change within the respective constituencies as well as effectively strengthen partnership with critical stakeholders such as the banking sector.

Programme Facilitator, the construction industry is an important vehicle for the delivery of infrastructure and job creation. It is therefore not surprising that the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) has placed special responsibility on this sector to spearhead

job creation and skills development so that our growing economy is increasingly accessible to all citizens and in the turn is injected with the vigour of expanding productive participation.

The GDS and subsequent Provincial Growth and Development Summits served as positive signals of the ability of South Africans to work together to meet our economic goals. The challenge remains for us to move forward together in unity to push back the frontiers of poverty, to expand access to a better life for all, to extricate millions of our people from the second economy which condemns them to poverty, underdevelopment, marginalisation and loss of human dignity.

As government, we count on the partnership of your organisations as we strive to actively promote a vibrant transformed and competitive construction sector that provides adequate services to the domestic economy. A transformed and competitive sector that reflects the South African nation as a whole and contributes to the establishment of an equitable society.

The growth and expanded role of the construction sector is a key element of Asgisa in creating and maintaining the infrastructure that our country needs for shared economic growth.

The signing of the Construction Charter has bound all stakeholders in the industry to meet specified transformation targets and to ensure

the democratisation and equitable growth of the industry.

It is estimated that the country needs to produce about 50 000 artisans over the next four years.

Among Questions that we have to grapple with in this engagement is, Whether we, individually and collective have a role in contributing solutions to the challenges facing the construction sector?

Is there a contribution we can to improve registration of emerging contractors particularly women contractors if we are to meet the 30 % target ASGISA has set for participation of women in construction.

What contribution can institutions of higher learning, organised business, the banking sector and SETAS make to alleviate the critical skill shortage facing the construction sector?

We appreciate your partnership and value your continued support.

In conclusion, we hope that this engagement will be characterised by out-of-the box thinking that will enrich the National Stakeholder Forum Process and contribute towards accelerating the transformation of the construction sector.

As Ben Okri said, "Dancing with change is better". Acting together, we have made decisive advances over the past thirteen years and laid a solid basis for sustainable growth and development. We indeed have a reason to celebrate our Freedom and achievements thus far and work harder towards an economy that benefits all.

Ke a leboga.