



Address by Honourable Jerry Thibedi, MEC for Public Works, North West, delivered during the sod-turning ceremony at the Styldrift Project held at Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mine in Phokeng

Date: Thursday, November 06, 2008

- Programme Director:
- His Majesty: **Kgosi Leruo Molotlegi**
- Dikgosana le Boetapele ba Bafokeng jo bo kokoaneng fano
- Executive Mayor Of Rustenburg Local Municipality: **Clr Matthew Wolmarans**
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Anglo Platinum: **Neville Nicolau**
- Distinguished guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great honour for me to address this historic occasion. My special greetings to all of you gathered here today as witnesses.

Witnesses to usher in an advent.

Allow me to first congratulate the Royal Bafokeng Nation (RBN) and the world's largest platinum group metals producer, Anglo Platinum on the historical landmark deal.

Ladies and gentlemen, for us as the Provincial Government, this agreement marks a milestone and adds momentum, in our government's continued quest to redress the imbalances of the past.

We need no reminder, that under the apartheid rule, black people, mining communities and women were excluded from participating in the mining industry and the economy at large.

It was only in a democratic South Africa, after 1994, that the tide against such discrimination started to turn. The turn may have been slow then, but there is movement now.

Now the pace has accelerated.

One of the democratic dispensation's priorities was to transform our economy and level the playing fields to ensure participation by South Africans irrespective of race, gender or age.

In the mining industry, to be specific, government crafted policies such as the Broad-Based Socio-Economic Empowerment Charter, for the South African Mining Industry (Mining Charter).

We also have the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act.

These complement one another, in fostering and encouraging Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) and the transformation in areas of:

Ownership; management; skills development; employment equity; procurement and rural development.

Programme Director:

Mining is one of the multi-million rand industry and a third major contributor to our country's Gross Domestic Product.

It comes third on the ladder after Manufacturing and Services sectors.

Having the largest platinum group metals resources in the world (over 85 percent); South Africa's platinum wealth can not be overemphasized.

The cherry on top is the fact that our province, the North West, produces a lion's share of the platinum group metals in the country.

According to Invest North West, our province accounts for some 64.7 percent of the country's total platinum group metals output.

Given this, it is only fair and just that communities in mining areas benefit from the profits made through the gems that are located beneath their land.

However, this beneficiation appears to be moving at a snail's pace.

Addressing the Mining Indaba held in Cape Town, in February this year, Minerals and Energy Minister Buyelwa Sonjica noted that:

"With mining industry activities ongoing for well over a century in this country, there has been limited value addition or beneficiation of some of the commodities produced in this country."

As the North West administration, we are therefore delighted to witness the birth of "NewCo Platinum" - a platinum group metal producer to be wholly controlled by the Royal Bafokeng Holdings.

We are pleased to see a big industry player such as Anglo Platinum showing its support and commitment for B-BBEE and the Mining Charter.

We hope this will be an encouragement for other players in the mining sector to come aboard to advance this course and help build a better and economically-sound South Africa.

We still maintain that through private-public partnership, more strides can be made to achieve an annual 6 percent economic growth in order to halve unemployment by 2014.

This is in line with the Accelerated and Shared Growth for South Africa (Asgi-SA).

In conclusion: Programme Director;

I am indeed enchanted by the historical significance of this occasion. I have no doubt; this occasion will henceforth become one of the milestones, a hallmark in the history of Phokeng, its people and for generations to come.

While some of us just cannot wait to see in action, some of the world's best soccer players at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium in 2010, the sweet success we celebrate today, can best be traced back to prophecies made on June 26 1955.

That was during the Congress of the People, gathered in Kliptown whose visions have come true, 53 years later, in that:

The People Shall Share in the Country's Wealth!

The Land Shall be Shared Among Those Who Work It!

Have we arrived at that point? One may ask.

Yes indeed!

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, is seen to be restored to the people of Phokeng.

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, here in Styldrift, is being transferred to the ownership of the people of Phokeng as a whole.

Pula!... Pula!.....Ke a leboga

