

**NORTHERN CAPE**

**SKILLS DEVELOPMENT ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

**10 October 2017**

**Programme Director, *Ms M Marais-Martin – Public Service Commissioner*, Premier: *Ms. Sylvia Lucas*, MEC: *Ms. M Bartlett*, other MECs present, the Mayor, Councilors, Members of business constituency, organised labour, community constituency, Provincial HRDC, Members of the National Skills Authority, Provincial Skills Development Forum (PSDF), Heads of Institutions of education and training, Government officials, ,all protocols observed ladies and gentleman.**

**A Good Morning to you all,**

Madam Premier, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Northern Cape Province Government under your leadership for allowing the NSA to collaborate with the HRDC and PSDF in convening this roundtable.

Honourable Premier, I am certain by now that there is no need to convince you about the importance of the value of an active and vibrant skills development sector if we want to witness socio-economic growth. It is against this understanding that the NSA took a conscious decision of supporting the PSDFs across the country to review their Provincial Skills Development plans and strategies of which Northern Cape was the first. The NSA is here today to catalyse the discussions amongst relevant and prospective skills development stakeholders with an aim of forging partnerships and collaborations that should ensure that we practically realise the aspirations of the NSDS III Vision and outcome 5 of the Medium Term Strategic Framework of government. For this reason, we have convened here to forge the required partnerships since government cannot do this alone. Programme Director, a good skills development system is able to: anticipate skill needs; engage employers and workers in decisions about training provision, including in specific sectors; maintain the quality and relevance of training; make training accessible to all sectors of society; ensure viable and equitable financing mechanisms; and continuously evaluate the economic and social outcomes of training.

I believe that over and above strengthening our collaboration in the acceleration of skills for inclusive growth path, this meeting should also seek to:

* Support Institutions of education and training particularly the public ones in their quest to address strategic challenges in the sector,
* Mobilise public and private sector for work experience and training
* Improve FET quality and completion rates whilst creating community education and training centres to increase offerings to unemployed youth
* understand the skills development challenges facing the province and the challenges facing all role players in the implementation skills development in the province
* share good practices and determine possible interventions for identifies challenges
* make use of the PSDF or establish a Premier’s Task Team to set in motion the recommendations of this roundtable with clearly defined action list with timeframes

Lastly, honourable Premier, it is prudent that our immediate takeaway from this meeting should be a commitment by all stakeholders to secure work placement opportunities for 1000 learners and graduates from Universities, TVET Colleges, Community Colleges, and Private Institutions annually within the province ***(i.e, for starters, and this number should be reviewed annually).*** This initiative has to be facilitated and financially supported by SETA’s with business, government, trade unions and community constituents collaborating in opening up workplaces.

As I round-off, let me remind you that ILO stated that ‘’*Institutions to sustain the involvement of employers and workers and their representative organizations are critical to keeping training relevant and ensuring that training costs and the gains of productivity improvement are shared equitably. Maintaining a close connection between training policies and employment policies creates an effective bridge between the worlds of learning and of work. Policies to improve skills combined with policies to sustain growth and investment, facilitate job search, and support entry and re-entry into the labour market can lead to more and better jobs. Many benefits derive from making training and skills opportunities broadly accessible to all women and men.’’*

On behalf of the NSA, I wish you all of the best in your endeavours to making a difference in the lives of our youth, the communities and the workers. May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your contribution to the skills development revolution and let us all continue to be active delivery partners in building a skilled and capable workforce that shares in, and contributes to, the benefits and opportunities of economic expansion and an inclusive growth path.