

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF  
MINES**

**MR MIKE TEKE ON THE OCCASSION OF THE OPENING OF THE  
MINING LEKGOTLA 2014, GALLAGHER ESTATE**

Honourable Minister of Mineral Resources, Adv Ngoako Ramathlodi  
The Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma  
Honourable Minister of Labour, Ms. Mildred Oliphant  
Honourable Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources, Godfrey Oliphant  
Honourable Deputy Minister of Labour, Inkosi Phathekile Holomisa  
Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Mineral Resources, Hon. Zet  
Luzipho

Honourable members of the Portfolio committee here present

The general Secretary of NUM, Mr Frans Baleni

The General Secretary of Solidarity, Mr. Gideon Du Plessis

General Manager of USAS, Mr Franz Sterhing

Director General of the Department of Mineral Resources, Dr. Thibedi  
Ramontja

President of the Mining Industry Association of Southern Africa (MIASA) &  
CEO of the Chamber of Mines of Botswana, Mr Charles Siwawa

Members of MIASA

Captains of Industry and Chamber Council members

Fellow South Africans,

Good morning and welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Mining Lekgotla where divergent minds  
and views meet to converse and craft a common path in the work that we do.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Chamber of Mines is once again pleased to be a partner in the hosting of the Mining Lekgotla, which has grown from strength- to- strength since its inception in 2012.

Mining Lekgotla 2014 takes place just after the Mining Industry, especially the platinum sector, has gone through the longest strike ever seen in the industry. This happened at the backdrop of an industry that was steadily recovering from the Marikana Tragedy where 44 people tragically lost their lives. We are still anxiously waiting for the Farlam Commission to shed light on the Marikana incident so that, as a country, we never see the repetition of such a calamity.

We convene at a time when the economy is growing slowly (recently projected at 1.9% at the end of this fiscal year), making it difficult to create more jobs and to have a prosperous mining industry. The economy is faced with the threat of recession and global markets are also seriously depressed. The recent earthquake which registered 5.5 on the Richter scale was a symbolic indication that we are indeed going through turbulent times. We can sit and hope that this turbulence will pass or like an aircraft in the sky we can forge ahead and fly on with our belts tightly fastened. I am sure that as South Africans who have gone through the worst of times we can hold hands and work together through the torrent winds until we get to a position where we all are reasonably comfortable that we are sailing peacefully towards a common destination.

## **2. EXPECTATIONS OF THE MINING LEKGOTLA**

The Mining Lekgotla is a platform for strategic engagement. As different stakeholder groupings, even beyond the traditional tripartite, we have an opportunity to exchange views on pertinent issues in the mining sector. Allow me to start reflecting briefly on

the Chamber's initiative since the last Mining Lekgotla. The Chamber and its members continued to engage with all stakeholders on matters that take the mining industry forward. On Economics, the Chamber has continued to engage with relevant stakeholders to deal with the constraints that discourage investment in the South African Mining Sector. This is an ongoing process and the Rating Agencies have not made our task easy because of the broader economic challenges of our country. We need to work even harder to promote South African mining as an investment destination. The Fraser Institute Report presented at last year's Lekgotla did not portray a good picture. Our challenge this year is to think more creatively on how to change the perception of the global investment community to be positive towards our sector. I believe that we can dispel some of these perceptions if we act with common purpose.

In order to improve the Industrial Relations environment the mining industry has been involved in the Stability Framework that was led by then Deputy President Motlanthe. We believe that this initiative needs to continue relentlessly until we achieve peace and stability in our workplaces and communities surrounding the mines.

In order to improve the safety and welfare of the employees, the Chamber and its members have worked hard in partnership with organised labour and the state to improve our safety record. As the Chamber we are proud that in the past year we had less than 100 people losing their lives on our mines. We still need to work hard to achieve our vision of zero harm. We commit to even stronger collaborative efforts that will lead to further improvements in the health, safety and welfare of employees.

On the skills front, the mining industry has continued to support the youth with bursaries, workplace experience and employment opportunities to contribute towards reduction of unemployment. We need to come up with creative ideas on how to grow this industry with the purpose of creating more jobs.

The 2013 Mining Lekgotla raised a number of concerns about the living conditions of workers. The industry has purposefully been moving away from hostels and significant progress has been made in improving the living conditions of workers, especially in the past year. I am sure that when the Mining Charter Results are made public by the DMR we will see significant progress in the living conditions of workers in the mining sector. This assertion does not in any way mean that our work is done. More work needs to be done. We take pride in the strides we have made in improving working conditions, industrial relations, skills development, community development, environmental impact, health and safety and I invite us to build on the progress made thus far.

We also take pride in the fact that we have been able to attract international and national speakers of note who will share with us their wisdom and advise on how we can do things differently in our sector. We are grateful that this year we will focus on how we can play a significant role in the growth of Africa through our deliberations on the Africa Mining Vision.

I can say, with authority, that the Mining Lekgotla is the only tripartite-led platform for critical strategic engagement any sector has convened and this is a clear demonstration that indeed we are committed to Putting South Africa First.

On that note Ladies and Gentlemen, I welcome you to Mining Lekgotla 2014 and we invite you to engage and make constructive contributions for the future prosperity of the Mining Sector.