MINERALS COUNCIL
SOUTH AFRICA

FOGAP DAY OF LEARNING
Opening Address by the Minerals Council CEO, Mzila Mthenjane

28 March 2025 | Emperors Palace

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour and my pleasure to welcome you all to the 2025 **Fall of Ground Action Plan** Day of Learning. This annual gathering plays a critical role in our ongoing efforts to eliminate fall-of-ground (FOG) fatalities in our industry. Today is more than about reporting our progress on this journey to Zero Fatalities; rather, given the lessons from our performance of previous years and recently since the beginning of the year — it is about bringing to bear the leadership humility to share our experiences and learn from one another, the outcome of which will be a strengthening of our collective commitment to making our operations safer and better places to work.

We are privileged, *firstly*, to be amongst one another and *secondly*, in the presence of representatives, from various and different mining operations, who will share their experiences in implementing the FOGAP initiatives. Their insights — both in terms of *successful preventative achievements and the remaining challenges* — will provide valuable learning opportunities for us all. We will also hear from researchers who have been working on FOGAP-related projects, giving us a deeper understanding of the *science and innovation* behind these safety measures. Combined, these learning experiences will provide us with fundamental and enduring safety practices that will help us continue to prevent harm and reduce fatalities caused by falls of ground.

However, as we gather here today, we must acknowledge the sobering reality of our current FOG safety performance. Since 1 January 2025, we have already lost **seven** of our colleagues to fall-of-ground accidents. This contrasts with the one fatality recorded during the same period last year. These are tragic losses that occurred in the gold sector, across three separate accidents, each claiming multiple lives. This is unfortunate and unacceptable, and it is a harsh reminder that our work is far from finished **(observe a moment of silence)**.

Yet, we are gathered here today, undeterred by this setback. We are here, humbled by the loss of lives, and at the same time inspired to continue to drive the implementation of Fall of Ground Actions Plans across the industry. Whilst some initiatives are still in the research phase, and others will take time to show measurable results, we must stay the course. Every effort we make today will contribute to a safer tomorrow.

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Let us be actively engaged and immersed in today's discussions, so that we can take the learnings for adoption and adaptation to our operations, and champion the implementation of FOGAP initiatives. Every step we take towards improving FOG safety performance is a step towards ensuring that *every mineworker returns home safely at the end of their shift*.

Thank you for prioritising this important event. Let us make the most of the day — *to share, learn and collaborate* — because together, we can change the trajectory of FOG safety in our industry.

I wish you all a productive and insightful session. Thank you.