

MEDIA STATEMENT

MINERALS COUNCIL AND EASTERN CAPE GOVERNMENT PROVIDE JOINT OVERVIEW OF MINING INDUSTRY'S OXYGEN RELIEF INITIATIVE IN THE PROVINCE

Collaboration key to addressing COVID-19

Johannesburg, 16 September 2020: The Minerals Council South Africa and the Eastern Cape Government, represented by Head of the Department of Health in the Eastern Cape, Dr Thobile Mbengashe today hosted a joint media briefing to provide an overview of the mining industry's oxygen relief initiative to provide oxygen and/or oxygen-related products for the Eastern Cape.

Minerals Council members – African Rainbow Minerals, Anglo American, AngloGold Ashanti, Exxaro, Fraser Alexander, Glencore Alloys, Gold Fields, Harmony, Impala Platinum, Northam Platinum, Royal Bafokeng Platinum, Seriti and Sibanye-Stillwater have together contributed R4.7 million towards oxygen and oxygen-related products for the Eastern Cape.

The funds have been spent on oxygen-related products such as oxygen concentrators, and products within the oxygen value chain including rebreather masks, CPAP ventilators, oxygen flow meters, oxygen regulators, re-breathable masks and oxygen nasal cannulas.

To date, 450 fingerprint pulse oximeters; 900 batteries; 200 oxygen regulators; 30,000 oxygen nasal cannulas; and 49 pulse oximeter desktops have been delivered to hospitals located in the areas identified for particular support including the Chris Hani and OR Tambo districts.

Dr Thuthula Balfour, Head of Health at the Minerals Council noted: "Our approach to addressing COVID-19 has, from the outset, been based on collaboration at our operations, in our communities, in the provinces where we operate, and nationally. And there are many examples of mining companies working collaboratively in their province of operation either through the Minerals Council or directly.

"While the Eastern Cape does not have much mining activity, it is a mining-affected province as the industry has historically drawn many thousands of employees from the region. Currently, around 15% of Minerals Council members' workforce come from the Eastern

Cape. We also recognise that this is a province with great need requiring infrastructure, healthcare facilities, supplies and personnel.

“For many people who become seriously ill from COVID-19, particularly those who are most vulnerable, oxygen represents life. We appreciate the sincere efforts by the Eastern Cape Government in working closely with us on this initiative. Together, we believe that we have been able to make a very real and meaningful difference in the province.”

Dr Thobile Mbengashe, Head of the Department of Health in the Eastern Cape noted: “We welcome the generous contribution made by the Minerals Council and its members in the fight against COVID-19. Chris Hani and OR Tambo districts are well known to be key labour-sending areas for the mining industry.

“With TB being among the co-morbidities that are the causal factors of COVID-19 deaths, and the lungs in many cases the most affected organ, oxygen is what is most needed. The equipment donated through this initiative will go a long way in helping us in our fight against COVID-19.”

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