

16 October 2024

**SPEECH FOR NOMBASA TSENGWA
PRESIDENT
MINERALS COUNCIL SOUTH AFRICA**

**DELIVERED BY JAPIE FULLARD
CHAIR
MINERALS COUNCIL'S CEO ZERO HARM FORUM
MHSC SUMMIT**

Honourable Minister of the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources, Mr Gwede Mantashe or Honourable Deputy Minister, Ms Judith Nemadzinga-Tshabalala,
Honourable Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi,
Representative from the Department of Employment and Labour,
Esteemed principals from organised labour,
Office bearers of the Minerals Council,
The Director General of the DMPR, Mr Jacob Mbele,
The Chief Inspector of Mines, Mr David Msiza,
Our colleagues in the media,
Ladies and gentlemen.

Good morning,

It is an honour and a privilege for me to address this Mine Health and Safety Summit during this, a very significant year, when we review our progress against the milestones we set 10 years ago, and we commit ourselves to achieving the new milestones we have collectively set to accelerate our quest for Zero Harm in our industry.

As the Minerals Council South Africa, we convey our heartfelt sympathies to the families, friends and colleagues of our colleagues who did not return home from work unharmed. We are unrelenting in our ambition to eliminate health and safety incidents across the mining industry, including beyond employment. The Minerals Council remains committed to the industry goal of Zero Harm in which every mine worker returns from work without harm every day.

In reflecting on our history, I would like to acknowledge the Leon Commission in 1994 that led to the promulgation of the Mine Health and Safety Act, and to the establishment of the tripartite Mine Health and Safety Council. We have made significant progress in making our industry a healthier and safer place to work in the past three decades.

Through the MHSC, we boldly agreed our first occupational health and safety milestones in 2003. These were followed by a second iteration of the milestones in 2014.

It is now an appropriate time to review the progress we have made through our interventions during the past 10 years, and to affirm that we believe Zero Harm is possible.

Since 2014, incidents of occupational diseases in the mining industry have decreased by 72%. The number of fatalities related to safety incidents have declined by 35% between 2014 and 2023.

We must acknowledge our interventions and programmes are delivering the changes we wish to see. Today, we have a workplace where there are less airborne pollutants, less noise and generally fewer hazards, and that mining is a far safer place to be than when we started this journey. Jointly, with the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources and organised labour, we are creating an inclusive working environment where health and safety are of paramount importance.

All of our achievements do not take away from the reality that we have a long way to go to reach our goal of Zero Harm. Our health and safety statistics must give us reason to pause and reflect that our work will not be done until we eliminate occupational incidents. This is where the concept of milestones is critical as we embark on the third decade of making inroads in addressing and improving health and safety. This can only be achieved through our mutual

collaboration as tripartite partners to reach our jointly agreed new milestones on our collective journey to Zero Harm.

We believe that you cannot manage that which you cannot measure. Data is critical for us to demonstrate our progress. I am proud that our industry is a leader on health and safety statistics as this makes it possible for us to take informed decisions on how to continually improve health and safety for all of us.

Although the collection and collation of health data has historically lagged behind safety data, we now have reliable health data from 2003, and it is showing an encouraging performance by the industry.

Downward step changes in health and safety incidents are not achieved overnight. Our experience as the Minerals Council has shown that it takes years of focused, iterative, strategic interventions led by our member CEOs to produce the results we are seeing and want to see. That journey starts with CEOs who are committed to visible felt leadership and a steadfast belief that we can achieve Zero Harm.

Since 1994, the number of fatalities on mines has decreased by 88% from 484 to 55 in 2023. Injuries have decreased by 75% to 2,080 from 8,347 in that period.

In 2009, we established the Mining Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) Learning Hub to encourage mining companies to learn from the pockets of excellence in the industry.

The Leading Practice Adoption System is a people-centric, change management approach “for industry by industry” to identify and facilitate the widespread adoption of leading occupational health and safety practices in four risk areas, namely dust, noise, transport and machinery, and falls of ground.

It leads to faster and better learning from each other and from other industries, both locally and internationally, for improved occupational health and safety performance.

Our companies have over the years adopted scores of leading practices from MOSH and we believe that these, together with the interventions by other stakeholders, have made a

significant contribution to reductions in dust, noise, transport and machinery accidents and falls of ground.

These leading practices and initiatives include but are not limited to:

- The Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) which provides a structured process to assess the risk and escalate according to the severity of the risk identified and to withdraw from a dangerous working place.
- Blast-on Permanent Workface Areal Mesh that prevents and minimises uncontrollable rockfalls from the hanging wall.
- Improved Underground Workface Visibility (or Illumination) gives a sense of security to workers and enhances the easy identification of hazards during inspections and to see obstacles which could ordinarily result in slips and falls.

In 2020, the Minerals Council Board reaffirmed its commitment to achieving Zero Harm by investing close to R30m in an Industry Alignment on TMM Regulations Implementation as a multi-year special project to facilitate a holistic, risk-phased and common member differentiated approach towards compliance with the TMM Regulations to ensure ecosystem readiness for a complex, globally leading Collision Prevention System, and striking a balance between saving lives and saving livelihoods.

Procuring and maintaining equipment that meets the Noise Milestone level throughout its operational lifespan is the cornerstone of the Industry-wide Buy and Maintain Quiet Initiative (IBMQI) which plays a central role in noise risk management across the South African mining sector. The initiative follows a multi-disciplinary approach aimed at eliminating noise from the source while also recognising the importance of continuing to effectively use hearing protection devices (HPDs) to deal with residual risk. To this end, I urge that the usage of HPDs be included in existing Planned Task Observations (PTOs).

As we continue to intensify our efforts towards the elimination of occupational lung diseases, dust management systems such as fogger sprays systems, scraper winch covers, footwall and sidewall treatment, multi-stage filtration systems, in-stope atomization, and various forms of continuous real-time monitors have proven to be effective in reducing dust exposure of employees, when adopted appropriately.

The details on all these leading practices and initiatives are easily accessible through the MOSH website – www.mosh.co.za

The Minerals Council's Fall of Ground Action Plan (FOGAP) is a robust and comprehensive programme that is focused on proactive collaborating and consolidating knowledge from leading experts to address this high-risk area of mining.

The plan has contributed to the number of fatalities from falls of ground significantly reducing by 95% to 15 from 239 in 1994. The industry reported a record low of 6 (six) FOG fatalities in 2022, which is a 97.5% reduction, a true indication that the FOGAP is working. In 2022, the industry reported 49 fatalities, a record low.

Our focus on transport and machinery incidents have resulted in fatalities decreasing by 91% to 8 from 87 three decades ago.

We have also made significant inroads in reducing cases of silicosis and noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL), with reductions of 90% and 86% respectively between 2003 and 2022.

In 2011, the Minerals Council initiated CEO-level discussions on health and safety which are now institutionalised as the CEO Zero Harm Forum. This forum meets quarterly to review and advise on our performance regarding health and safety.

Our Board has initiated a monthly Safety Hour of Learning where recent incidents are shared with the sole purpose of learning from each other and preventing similar incidents in the future.

Equally, the Forum has added an OSH Pontsho platform to showcase successes. Both these interventions have proved to be valuable resources for our CEOs, and the latter is open to our broader community of practitioners and technical experts.

We augmented our CEO-led initiatives in 2019 by adopting the Khumbul'ekhaya Health and Safety Strategy which is holistic in its approach and is a rallying cry for step-change efforts on health and safety.

This 2024 milestone year is the right time for reflection on safety and health performance and how we enhance the Khumbul'ekhaya Strategy to a second version to take us forward in our journey to Zero Harm.

The objectives of Khumbul'ekhaya are:

- To promote a holistic approach to the elimination of fatalities
- To develop a system of understanding occupational deaths in and beyond employment
- To adopt methods for more effective and competitive training, for example through centralisation and modernisation
- To adopt global leading practice to learn better and faster from others

To address our health challenges, we launched Masoyise iTB in 2015. This project, on TB and HIV, matured into Masoyise Health Programme which is a Minerals Council-led multi-stakeholder programme focused on leading the mining industry's commitment in the fight against TB, HIV, occupational lung diseases and non-communicable diseases, including mental health.

All stakeholders in this room, including international organisations such as the ILO, UNAIDS and WHO, are part of Masoyise. Masoyise has been such a success that it is recognised internationally as a best practice on TB, HIV and wellness. We regularly host delegations from other countries that want to learn about Masoyise and its achievements.

At the peak of the tuberculosis (TB) epidemic in the early 2000s, incidence rates in the mining industry were about seven times the rates in the general population. By 2023, the incidence rate was well below the national rate. This is a remarkable and laudable achievement in improving the health of mineworkers.

Through all these initiatives, we are making a difference and showing why mining matters for our employees and their families.

The theme for this Summit is "Innovate and Elevate: breaking boundaries to achieve Zero Harm". If we study all our metrics, one will note that our performance has plateaued in several areas. This calls for innovation going forward as that is the one of the sure ways we can make a difference. This is a challenge for us as individual stakeholders and collectively.

I congratulate the industry on the new milestones which are giving us further stretch targets on our journey to Zero Harm. I am particularly pleased that we are evolving and appreciating our new context, where mental health and the presence of women in the mining sector are recognised, and milestones have been set for these two topics for the first time.

Honourable Minister and colleagues, the Minerals Council fully supports the new milestones, and we will review our initiatives and interventions as we strive to achieve our ambition of Zero Harm. We are working with all stakeholders on research, technology and innovation to modernise our industry and to make it safer and healthier.

We look forward to our collaboration in reaching the milestones as tripartite partners in the coming years.

I thank you.

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