



13 March 2026

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Minerals Council South Africa

### **Minerals Council Women in Mining Breakfast**

Good morning. It is both an honour and a privilege to welcome you to the **fifth Minerals Council Women in Mining Breakfast**, hosted in commemoration of **International Women's Day**, observed globally on **8 March** each year.

This breakfast has become a signature moment on our industry calendar—an occasion where we pause to reflect on progress, recommit to action, and proudly celebrate our **homegrown Women in Mining Heroes**, whose leadership and impact extend far beyond the mine gate.

For **International Women's Day 2026**, South Africa has embraced the global theme "**Give to Gain.**" This theme is especially powerful as it coincides with **70 years since the historic 1956 Women's March**, a defining moment in our struggle for equality. *Give to Gain* reminds us that when we actively invest in women's rights, safety, and leadership, we strengthen not only women—but society as a whole. The focus this year is clear: dismantling harmful attitudes, advancing economic equality, and confronting the scourge of **Gender-Based Violence**.

On the global stage, this year also marks the **70th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women**—the foremost intergovernmental body dedicated exclusively to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. Closer to home, South Africa proudly celebrates **30 years of our Constitution and Bill of Rights**, a cornerstone of our democracy and a vital enabler of the freedoms and protections we enjoy today as women. Together, these milestones remind us that progress is possible—but never accidental. It must be intentional, sustained, and collective.

At the **Minerals Council**, the advancement of women and the inclusion of women in mining are not optional—they are a priority. In **2019**, we launched the **Women in Mining Initiative**, which culminated in the adoption of our first **Women in Mining Strategy** by the Board. In **2020**, this commitment was

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Board: P Dunne (President), M Madondo (Vice President), R Stewart (Vice President), M Zikalala (Vice President), M Mthenjane (Chief Executive Officer), C Badenhorst, R Cox, W Duvenhage, N Fakude, J Fullard, V Gadodia, M Houston, R Koppeschaar, V Kumar, M Lamont, E Lotlhare, B Magara, Z Matlala, C Miller, B Mokoatle, N Muller B Nel, B Petersen, N Pillay, N Pretorius, V Sibiya, E Smart, M Taylor, M Teke, P Tobias, C Walters

further strengthened through the establishment of the **Women in Mining Leadership Forum**, chaired at CEO level—sending a powerful signal of accountability and leadership from the top.

I am pleased to share that the Forum is now chaired by **Mr Craig Miller, CEO of Valterra Platinum**—a clear demonstration of the seriousness with which our industry continues to treat matters affecting women in mining.

Our initial strategy was built on **seven foundational measures**. Building on lessons learned, the strategy was refreshed for the **2025–2027 period**, now anchored on **five strategic pillars**—ranging from creating **safe, equitable and dignified workplaces**, to **industry collaboration, value-chain transformation**, and **broader societal impact**.

Over the past few years, we have made meaningful progress.

Through our **Women in Mining Pulse Check Surveys**, we have gained invaluable insight into the lived experiences of women across the sector. Our most recent survey, conducted last year, shows that the industry has moved beyond merely establishing foundational policies. Encouragingly, many respondents report environments where gender equality is beginning to normalise. At the same time, the findings also remind us that for others, equality remains compliance-driven rather than fully embedded in organisational culture. These insights are critical—they sharpen our focus and help us answer the central question: *how deeply and consistently are gender equality frameworks embedded across our industry?*

In addition, the Minerals Council hosts a **Women in Mining Gender and Diversity Inclusion Dashboard**, which tracks member investment in education and skills development. This data allows us to measure progress and guide targeted action for real socio-economic impact. Through this dashboard, we can confidently report that women's representation increased from **17% in 2022 to 21% in 2025** among reporting companies. This is progress—and while we acknowledge it, we also recognise that more remains to be done.

We are particularly proud of our work in addressing **Gender-Based Violence and Femicide**, which remains a national crisis in South Africa. Our position is unequivocal: **zero tolerance**. Through partnerships with the **National Prosecuting Authority** and the **GBVF Response Fund**, mining companies have supported the establishment, refurbishment, and operation of **Thuthuzela Care Centres** across the country. In the past year alone, industry funding enabled the rollout of signage and educational materials nationwide, with a new care centre currently under construction in **Kopanong**. This reflects a deep and sustained commitment to supporting women and survivors of violence.

Today, we also pause to honour exceptional women within our member companies—women who have gone **beyond the call of duty** to champion the education and development of women and girls. Their impact is felt not only within their organisations, but across communities. As the programme unfolds, we

will learn more about these remarkable individuals, who have been selected as our **2025 Women in Mining: Education and Development Heroes**.

When South Africa marked International Women's Day this year, Government called on all sectors of society to work together to build a nation free from Gender-Based Violence—one in which the rights, safety, and empowerment of women are fully realised. I am proud to say that the mining sector is responding to this call. We have made meaningful strides, and we remain committed to doing more—so that human rights are not only protected in principle but experienced as a **lived reality** by every woman.

Ladies and gentlemen, once again, **welcome to our Women in Mining Breakfast**. We look forward to a morning of reflection, inspiration, and renewed commitment.

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