

SPEECH BY MR ANDILE SANGQU
VISIT BY UNAIDS PCB
18TH OCTOBER 2018, THE LAKES HOTEL, BENONI

The Deputy Chairperson of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Committee, Ms Shi Ying, Our esteemed guests who are members of the UNAIDS PCB, UNAIDS Co-sponsors, Our local dignitaries from the UN agencies:

- Regional Director UNAIDS, Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr Catherine Sozi,
- Country Director UNAIDS, South Africa, Dr Mbulawa Mugabe,
- Director Decent Work Team for ILO Eastern and Southern Africa, Dr Joni Musabayana,

My colleagues, the members of the Masoyise Steering Committee
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure and a privilege for us as Masoyise iTB to host this esteemed delegation from the UNAIDS PCB, with representatives from across the world. We are honoured that you have included a meeting with us during your stay in our beautiful country, South Africa, and are eager to share with you the work that the mining industry has done on TB and HIV/AIDS.

Our industry is from a dark past where, due to complex social and working conditions such as the migrant labour system and high rates of silica dust exposure, we had the worst TB and HIV epidemics. Through concerted efforts, both as a nation, as an industry and as individual companies, we have turned that around.

The results for TB and HIV in our industry have surpassed our expectations. In 2014, the mining industry committed to reduce the TB incidence to at or below that of the national South African rate by 2024. We also committed to offer voluntary counselling and testing to all our employees annually.

Results for the industry in 2017, show that we screened 96% of employees for TB, and that the crude incidence for TB was 567/100 000, much lower than the 834/100 000 recorded in 2016. This is borne out by the number of cases of TB in 2017, which was 32% less than in the preceding year. Employees that took up the offer for HIV counselling were 70%, and 63% of those also tested for HIV.

The screening and testing in our industry has been driven through a multi-stakeholder initiative, Masoyise iTB, which means “Lets Beat TB and HIV” In the three years that Masoyise iTB has been in existence, since 2016, it aimed to have a meaningful impact on the TB and HIV challenges in the industry and the country, reducing the current high incidence rate as we sought to ultimately eliminate these diseases.

Masoyise iTB is firmly rooted in the Sustainable Development Goals, the WHO End TB Strategy targets of 90:09:90, the UNAIDS Fast Track Strategy 90:90:90 targets on HIV, the South African Strategic Plan for HIV, TB and STIs and the mining industry milestones set through the Mine Health and Safety Council. The industry is fully committed to beating TB and HIV and has made financial commitments to this end, both as the Minerals Council South Africa, and as individual companies.

The greatest strength for Masoyise has been its multisectoral and multi-stakeholder nature, which has enabled the industry to learn very quickly from the best. UNAIDS has guided us on our HIV/AIDS response, the most recent example being the challenge by Dr Mugabe that we should pilot HIV self-screening. You will hear more about this during this session. The WHO supported us by assessing our contact tracing methods in the Bojanala district and made valuable recommendations on how to improve the practice. These recommendations are currently being implemented. The ILO has been instrumental in guiding our strategic approach as employers. Our new strategy for Masoyise is heavily influenced by the ILO’s Decent Work Programme, ILO Recommendation 200 on HIV and AIDS and the World of Work, and many other workplace instruments.

We are optimistic about the future of Masoyise iTB. We are currently reviewing the project and going forward, it will be a programme that addresses conditions beyond TB and HIV, by

including occupational lung diseases and non-communicable diseases. This is in line with current best practice of managing health comprehensively through a wellness approach.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I hope I have provided you with a clear context for our response as the mining industry to TB and HIV and that I have whetted your appetite to hear more about the interesting case studies our companies will share with you.

Various stakeholders from our Steering Committee will also provide their insights on the value they have derived from Masoyise iTB, and we look forward to your counsel and wise words on how we can improve our response to TB and HIV.

Once again, you are welcome. I thank you.