

Roger Baxter Speech

CEO of the Chamber of Mines

17 March 2016

Good morning ladies and gentleman

Thank you all for joining us today. Thank you in particular to the British High Commission for facilitating the Community-Based Renewable Energy Project and to Promethium Carbon for conducting the related research.

As you are all aware, South Africa is currently grappling with many socio-economic issues, including low economic growth, high levels of unemployment and inequality. For many years, the South African mining industry has played a pivotal role in the development of our country as a regional and continental economic powerhouse. And we are determined to continue playing our part. As an industry, we can assist in creating sustainable solutions to the issues we face and facilitate local economic growth within our communities. The Chamber and its partners are committed to the development of economic and social objectives as outlined in the National Development Plan.

Integral to assisting in creating solutions is our acknowledgement that the mining industry has a substantial impact on the environment and the communities where it operates. Mining rehabilitation processes of 100 years ago – anywhere in the world – are very different to what they are today, as knowledge, expertise and technology have been developed to enable us to put into place measures to prevent and correct negative environmental impacts. So too, we have seen mining communities becoming a part of mining activities – from the initial phases of exploration, through to the actual operation and even ownership of projects. Today, we consider both mining land rehabilitation and local economic development in mining communities, imperatives for our business.

But, we are the first to admit that there are negative legacies that we need to address.



The Community Based Renewable Energy Project is an environmental and socio economically sustainable initiative that is aligned with the Chamber of Mine's objective of creating viable initiatives that best serve mining communities. The outcomes of the project highlight that post mine life sustainability of communities and land rehabilitation can be effectively achieved.

Through projects such as the Community Based Energy Project, mining's potentially negative impact on the environment can be transformed into an economically viable opportunity for mining communities. The project further equips the community with skills that will enable long term sustainability of the project.

And so it is that we are particularly pleased and proud to participate in the launch of the Community-Based Renewable Energy Project.

Harmony – which has been a key partner to Promethium in this initiative - is a prime example of a mining company that is taking action to mitigate any negative impacts that the business may have had on the environment whilst creating development opportunities for mining communities.

One of the company's initiatives is a bio-energy project that involves the propagation of biocrops on mining impacted land in the Free State. The biocrops generate natural gas as a substitute for fossil fuels used in the company's elution plants and carbon regeneration circuits.

This project thus rehabilitates mining impacted land while creating a value adding use for it. It also promotes skills development and job creation for communities, ensuring a lasting mining legacy in the Free State.

The mining industry needs more projects such as the Community-Based Renewable Energy Project to ensure that a positive mining legacy is achieved.

Thank you all for your time.