

**Mandela Mining Precinct: Organised Labour Consultative Forum TOR Signing
Ceremony**

**Address by the Minerals Council South Africa
President Nolitha Fakude**

26 October 2021

Thank you, Programme Director, Dr Sherin Ramparsad of the Mandela Mining Precinct;
Dr Phil Mjwara, Director-General of the DSI and other DSI representatives;
Mr Xolile Mbonambi, Deputy Chief Inspector of the DMRE and other government
representatives;
Dr Thulani Dlamini, CEO of the CSIR and other CSIR representatives;
My Minerals Council colleagues;
The Mandela Mining Precinct team;
Esteemed representatives of AMCU, NUM, NUMSA, Solidarity and UASA;
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour to be part of today's landmark event. While today marks the formal signing of the Terms of Reference that will give effect to the long awaited Organised Labour Consultative Forum, today is more than a signing – it is a celebration.
A celebration of South Africa's commitment to inclusion, to engagement and to the future.
A celebration of the role every stakeholder must play in the just transition to a more modernised, rapidly changing industry and a celebration of innovation.
A celebration of collaboration in mining.

The Minerals Council South Africa is proud to be part of the Mandela Mining Precinct – the largest public-private partnership of its kind in South Africa. We are encouraged by the progress that has been made in research, development and innovation and we acknowledge that while there is still much for us to do if we wish to reclaim our place as one of the most innovative mining industries in the world, the Precinct, and indeed the industry, has evolved over the last three years.

The Mandela Mining Precinct was officially launched by the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Gwede Mantashe, and the former Minister of Science and Innovation, Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, in September 2018. Three short years later and the Precinct, which was established to implement the South African Mining Extraction, Research, Development and Innovation or SAMERDI strategy, is home to six research programmes. These programmes are aligned with the National Development Plan's aim of economic transformation, inclusive growth and competitiveness, as well as with the Africa Mining Vision of ensuring optimal use of the continent's mineral wealth for the benefit of its people.

From the start, the Precinct insisted that its work could not exist in isolation and that it was only through collaboration with all stakeholders within the mining ecosystem, that it could ensure meaningful engagement and together with its stakeholders, create impactful change. This change, however, always had people at its centre.

People-centred modernisation is the South African mining industry's core strategy, but what does that mean? It's about putting South Africa and her people at the heart of the industry's transformation to more modernised, tech-driven operations. It's about being mindful of how technology can impact and improve the lives of those who work at our mines and for those who are affected by mining – our communities.

As a model for greater collaboration in an innovation ecosystem, the Precinct has already brought together industry players – from companies to OEMs, to academics and academic institutions to find implementable, game-changing solutions to some of the industry's toughest challenges. Today, it formally welcomes organised labour as a partner.

Organised labour is the voice for one of the largest stakeholders in mining – its 450,000 employees. It is critical to have unions meaningfully involved in the modernisation journey and it is vital that unions recognise that modernisation of mining is an imperative to extend the lives of mines, save current jobs in mining and create new opportunities in South Africa.

Having unions on board with us at the Precinct demonstrates their commitment to the global competitiveness of mining – not only economic metrics, but also on ESG measures that guarantee a more sustainable mining industry; one that contributes positively to a better world for individuals and society at large.

We commend the Mandela Mining Precinct for all it has done to facilitate organised labour's meaningful involvement and to all universities and suppliers who hosted immersive visits, helping our unions to experience the benefits that modernisation can bring.

I congratulate all parties on what has been achieved together so far, and I believe that together we can achieve so much more.

Thank you.