

SPEECH OF Ms DIPUO PETERS, MP, MINISTER OF ENERGY OF SOUTH AFRICA, AT THE DINNER FOR CLEAN ENERGY EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE (C-3E): SASOL GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS, ROSEBANK, 30 AUGUST 2010

Programme Director

Executives from the Private Sector, academia and professionals

Invited guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to thank Sasol for agreeing to host us tonight on this important occasion which comes barely a day before the end of what has become known as the women's month. Every day of our lives, which is a wonderful gift that God has bestowed on us, should always be dedicated to the advancement of the cause of women.

When we make this statement some people often refuse to understand that those of us who have dedicated our entire lives to the struggle for freedom do not regard this issue just as a pious statement of self congratulation. It is rather a solemn commitment to strive for a society that is founded on the values of *ubuntu*.

It is therefore a "democratic must" that we put our shoulders into the wheel and do everything in our power to ensure that women are fully recognized and given their rightful place in our country. It is no accident of history that the premier liberation movement of this country, the ANC, the real parliament of the people, understood this question quite early on in its history.

Most countries and in particular liberation movements always have lofty ideas about what it is that they can do to address the question of the emancipation of women. Words and declarations are not always backed by action. In our case the political transition of 1994 elevated women to a point where we (and not they) are no longer bystanders in determining our (their) own destinies.

We are right in the proverbial thick of things. There is large number of women in the both the legislature and the executive. This is work in progress, it reflects, the reality articulated in the freedom charter that “the people shall govern.” The charter did not say men shall govern; it called for the people (as a whole) to govern. It was effectively calling for the creation of a non-racial, democratic and non-sexist South Africa. 1994, to us, was about that and nothing else.

What we are essentially about is the realization of the dreams and aspirations of generations of women who fought for change in this country. In our country, being the last but one to achieve *Uhuru* in this continent, we have a chance to avoid mistakes that are sometimes made by the liberation movements of both Africa and Latin America. These often assume that the political empowerment of women, alone, is enough. In our country we are not going to allow that to happen.

The best area to start to move beyond these political virtues is by doing something in the areas where we are currently deployed. I am pleased to see so many women tonight. The very fact that they are drawn from wide and diverse backgrounds such as academia, business and professional sectors is a blessing in disguise.

One official who left our department a few months ago even spoke about the existence of a personal sector – even those ones from that sector are most welcome.

We are quite pleased that you have responded positively to our invitation following the pledge that I made at the July Washington Clean

Energy Ministerial Meeting. I am also pleased that Nolitha Fakude, who also attended the meeting on behalf of business, is our host tonight. This gathering represents the first of many initiatives that we will be embarking upon to promote clean energy and its' twin sister the empowerment of women.

The point of departure tonight is the reality that we are emerging from the proverbial ashes of an economy that relied heavily on fossil fuels. This is to be expected as we have an abundance of coal and we still have large reserves from which we will continue to produce both electricity and liquid fuels. This is happening at the time when we are all concerned about the impact of global warming which emanates directly from climate change.

This abundance of coal gave us competitive advantage in that our electricity prices were among the lowest in the world. Our very own Eskom was and still is one of the utilities that are heavily relying on coal to produce electricity.

As government we have taken the following initiatives to live up to the expectations that are emanating directly from the Copenhagen Accord.

Firstly, Medupi and Kusile power stations will be fitted with flue gas desulphurisation technology (FGD) to reduce emissions and to comply with the minimum requirements for such fossil-fired power stations.

In this regard, we will be releasing the Integrated Resource Plan 2010 (known as IRP2) at the beginning of the last quarter. This is expected to define our power station investment programme, indicating the different technologies that will be used over the next 25 years.

In IRP1 which we released at the end of last year covered the period up to 2013. We intend, over the next 3 years, to diversify our energy mix to give impetus to our inexorably march towards our target of achieving 10 000GWh (or 5%) of electricity from renewable energy sources.

In doing so we will be trying to achieve the targets spelt out in the Renewable Energy White Paper of 2003. This will be achieved through the

introduction of, amongst others, the 100MW Sere Wind and the 50MW concentrating solar power (CSP) projects in the Northern Cape.

In September we will be hosting a conference, in partnership with the Clinton Climate Initiative, to encourage investment opportunities in the envisaged Solar Park that will be established in the Northern Cape. This has the potential to generate 6000 MW from solar owing to the huge amount of radiation that can be generated in this part of our country. I will be announcing further details in due course.

In addition, we will introduce 1 million solar water heaters in the domestic sector. This is an energy efficiency measure to displace the electrical load which is a direct result of water heating. This programme which will focus on the domestic sector will be complemented by an incentivized industrial energy efficiency program, or Energy Conservation Scheme, in terms of which consumers will receive a rebate (the standard offer) as they reduce their electricity consumption to set targets.

Secondly, we have taken a keen interest in carbon capture and storage. In this regard, we have joined the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum in 2003. We have finalized the Carbon Geological Storage Atlas whose results we will release in the next few weeks. The purpose of the Atlas is to locate and characterize potential geological storage sites for carbon dioxide. This will form the basis for future geological storage work in South Africa. I am pleased that companies such as SASOL and others have already done a lot of work on this issue.

Thirdly, we are a key participant in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and this is a catalyst that will help us to obtain funding to implement clean energy projects. Given that our economy is largely coal based, there is a great potential in the CDM initiatives from renewable energy, energy efficiency, cogeneration and energy generation from waste.

Fourthly, working together with the Department of Public Works we have released draft regulations to enforce energy efficiency in government buildings. This will be expanded to include the general building and construction industry by next year.

We have also recently joined IRENA (an international renewable body dedicated to ensuring that there is collaboration among its members in relation to technological developments in this important area of renewable energy).

These are but some of the interventions that we have embarked upon, as a government, to ensure that we are not in denial with regard to the dangers of climate change. Tonight is not and should not just be about wining and dining. It should also be about women coming together to discuss what it is that they can do to promote the use of clean energy in our country.

I am informed that later this evening, in your various, tables you will be having discussions about this issue. These conversations should not just end here. They should serve to invoke in all of us the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi in that we should “be the change that we want to see in the world.” We need to take part in this energy revolution in the real revolutionary sense of the word.

We have to encourage women to study engineering, science, technology and mathematics. We should take part in actions that are meant to eschew the exclusion that Verwoerd espoused when he and some of his ilk conceived *apartheid*.

The private sector and the universities have to continue with their employment equity provisions in terms of which they place greater emphasis on finding women graduates in the disciplines I mentioned earlier. It is only by doing these right things that we can create a country that truly belongs to all who live in it, black and white.

I thank you!

